

Bi People

Additional Findings Report

December 2008

Count Me In Too



LGBT Lives in Brighton & Hove

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in consultation with:

Count Me In Too Bi Analysis Group

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Synopsis of key findings

This report addresses the lives and experiences of bisexual people in Brighton & Hove because bisexual people are consistently one of the groups of LGBT people who are most vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion on a number of measures, notably relating to health and wellbeing (including mental health), discrimination, prejudice and abuse, housing, safety, and the use of services. 47 respondents self-identified as bisexual. Bisexual identities are complex and heterogeneous. Some bisexual respondents identify themselves in terms of those they find sexually attractive, while current sexual relationships also figure in respondents' accounts of their identities.

20% (n. 9) of bisexual respondents say their relationship with their family of origin is poor or very poor. Many bisexual people face marginalisation and exclusion from both straight society and from LGBT communities and scenes. Bisexual people often find themselves having to negotiate others' expectations about performance, appearance and identity both within straight scenes and lesbian and gay scenes. Bisexual respondents testify to the norms and expectations that many straight, lesbian and gay people have that individuals should be either unambiguously straight or unambiguously lesbian or gay. Bisexual people especially face hostility within LGBT communities when they are in relationships or express intimacy with a member of the opposite sex.

Bisexual people are not well catered for in relation to sexual health information. Accounting for gender differences as well as differences in sexuality is important in the production of appropriate sexual health information. Less than a quarter of bisexual respondents (23%) have disclosed their sexual and/or gender identities to their GPs.

Bisexual and queer respondents (88%) are more likely to have experienced mental health difficulties than lesbians or gay men. Bisexual respondents are more likely to have had serious thoughts of, and attempted suicide in the last five years when compared to lesbians or gay men. Bisexual respondents (41%) are more likely to feel isolated in Brighton & Hove than lesbians (33%) or gay men (30%). Half of bisexual respondents said that experiences of discrimination and exclusion keep them isolated. The qualitative research suggests the need for training for all mental health professionals so that they are able to offer services and advice appropriate for bisexual service users.

A third of respondents who identify as bisexual have experienced homelessness and bisexual and queer respondents are more likely than lesbians and gay men to have experienced harassment, negative comments, teasing or bullying. Bisexual and queer respondents are more likely to have experienced hate crime in an LGBT venue and are more likely to have experienced hate crime from an LGBT person or an LGBT service or group than lesbians or gay men are. Bisexual respondents are more likely to have experienced abuse, violence or harassment from a family member or someone close to them than are lesbians or gay men.

Bisexual respondents (23%) are more likely than lesbians or gay men (14%) to have experienced discrimination on the basis of their sexual or gender identities from someone or some organisation providing goods, services or facilities. 80% of bisexual respondents will give information regarding their sexual/gender identities for the purposes of monitoring if the information is confidential and the service is LGBT friendly.

Executive Summary

Demographics

- 6% of the sample identified as bisexual
- The majority of bisexual respondents (62%) identify as female. 19% of bisexual respondents identify as of 'no gender' or a gender 'other' than male or female.
- 9% of bisexual respondents identify as trans.
- 17% of bisexual respondents live with a same-sex partner (compared to 52% of lesbians and 38% of gay men who live with same-sex partners).
- Bisexual respondents are more likely than those of other sexual identities to be aged under 35.
- Those identifying as bisexual are more likely (68%) to have an income of less than £20,000 a year than the rest of the sample.
- 21% of bisexual respondents are disabled, making them more likely to be so than lesbians or gay men.
- 24% of bisexual respondents are parents, compared to 16% of the overall sample.
- 91% of bisexual respondents say they already have or would contemplate entering into a civil partnership. This compares to 79% of the entire sample.

Bi identities

- 'Bisexual' and 'bi' are widely used descriptors when bisexual respondents are asked to identify themselves.
- Bisexual respondents also identify themselves in terms of who they find sexually attractive and their current relationships.
- For bisexual women in relationships with other women, emphasizing their monogamy may be a way of dealing with stereotypes of bisexual people as 'greedy' or having excessive sexual desire.
- Many bisexual people find themselves having to negotiate others' expectations regarding their appearance and performance in both straight and lesbian and gay scenes.

- Bisexual respondents make up 16% of respondents who say that they are not out to their family of origin but who think their family would be supportive if told about their sexual identity.
- Bisexual respondents make up 31% of those who say that they would never tell their family of origin about their sexual or gender identity.
- 20% of bisexual respondents say their relationship with their family of origin is poor or very poor.

Discrimination, prejudice and abuse

- 30% of bisexual respondents have experienced bullying, abuse, discrimination or exclusion from LGBT people.
- Nearly one in five (19%) of bisexual respondents have experienced bullying, abuse, discrimination or exclusion from LGBT venues and events.
- Bisexual respondents allude to norms and expectations that underlie their exclusion from LGBT spaces and scenes by both businesses and individuals. The effects of such exclusion is that LGBT communities and scenes are often, in effect, only lesbian and gay communities and scenes.
- Bisexual respondents are often subject to stereotypes that they are 'greedy' and 'cannot make up their minds' between being heterosexual or being lesbian or gay. In turn, these stereotypes are used to make lesbians and gay people distrust bisexual people.
- Bisexual people especially face hostility within LGBT communities when they are in relationships or express intimacy with a member of the opposite sex. 38% of bisexual respondents disagree with the statement that when they are in relationships with partners of a different sex, lesbian and gay scene venues are welcoming.
- Those who run venues or club nights can also marginalise bisexual people by marketing their venues or club nights only at lesbians or gay men, and occasionally actively discriminate against bisexual people.
- 20% of bisexual respondents disagree with the statement that when in relationships with same-sex partners, straight venues and services are welcoming.

Health

- 39% of bisexual respondents are in a sexual relationship with a same-sex partner, 27% of bisexual respondents are in a relationship with an opposite sex partner, and 20% (n. 8) of bisexual respondents are not in a partnership or relationship at present.

- 78% of both bisexual and queer respondents say they usually have monogamous relationships. 10% of bisexual respondents say they usually have open relationships, while 5% say they are polyamorous.
- Bisexual respondents are less likely (17%) to have had a sexual health check up in the past six months than gay men (but more likely to have had one than lesbians).
- Bisexual respondents are more likely (21%) to have last had a sexual health check within the last 7-12 months than other respondents.
- 34% of bisexual respondents have never had a sexual health check up, making them more likely to have never had one than gay men or those identifying as an other sexual identity than lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- Among those who have had sex within the past three years, bisexual respondents (18%) are less likely to have had a sexual health check in the last six months than gay men (29%).
- Bisexual respondents are more likely than other sexual identity groups to have last had a sexual health check up at a sexual health clinic outside Brighton & Hove (21%) or with the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT), or at an LGBT venue or elsewhere (10%).
- 11% of bisexual respondents have taken payment of sex.
- All of the bisexual respondents who have sold or exchanged sex have done so with men, while 40% of them have also done so with women.
- Bisexual respondents are the most likely (39%) group by sexual identity to disagree or strongly disagree with the proposition that 'information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is appropriate to my gender identity or sexuality.'
- They are also more likely (39%) than other sexual identity groups to disagree or strongly disagree that information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is diverse and caters for all groups.
- 28% (n. 11) of bisexual respondents disagree or strongly disagree that sexual health information available in Brighton & Hove is appropriate to their sexual practices.
- Qualitative data shows that bisexual respondents feel that there is little information on sexual health that is appropriate for them as bisexual people.
- Accounting for gender differences as well as differences in sexuality is important in the production of appropriate sexual health information.
- Less than a quarter of bisexual respondents (23%) have disclosed their sexual and/or gender identities to their GPs.

Mental health

- Those identifying as bisexual (57%) are significantly less likely to describe their emotional and mental wellbeing as good or very good in

the last twelve months compared to lesbians (65%) and gay men (64%).

- Bisexual and queer respondents (88%) are more likely to have experienced mental health difficulties than lesbians or gay men.
- Bisexual and queer respondents are also more likely than lesbians or gay men to have experienced difficulties with: significant emotional distress; depression; anxiety; isolation; confidence/self esteem; anger management; insomnia; fears/phobias; problem eating disorders; panic attacks; self harm; addictions/dependencies; and suicidal thoughts.
- 45% of bisexual respondents who indicated that they have experienced difficulties with their mental health have had serious thoughts of suicide in the last five years, compared to 30% of the overall sample of those who have experienced mental health difficulties.
- Bisexual and queer respondents are more likely (15%) to have thought about and attempted suicide in the last five years than lesbians or gay men.
- 5% of bisexual and queer respondents have thought about and attempted suicide in the last twelve months.
- Bisexual respondents (41%) and queer respondents (46%) are more likely to feel isolated in Brighton & Hove than lesbians (33%) or gay men (30%).
- 50% of bisexual respondents say that experiences of discrimination and exclusion keep them isolated.
- The qualitative research suggests the need for training for all mental health professionals so that they are able to offer services and advice appropriate for bisexual service users.

Housing

- Bisexual people (15%) are more likely to live in social housing than lesbians or gay men.
- Only 35% of bisexual respondents own their own home, making them less likely to do so than lesbian or gay male respondents.
- A third of respondents who identify as bisexual have experienced homelessness.
- Those who identify as queer and those who identify as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are more likely than other groups to live in areas of potential social deprivation.

Safety

- Bisexual and queer respondents are more likely than lesbians and gay men to have experienced harassment, negative comments, teasing or bullying.
- Bisexual and queer respondents (29%) are more likely to experience hate crime in an LGBT venue than lesbians (6%) or gay men (12%).
- 22% of bisexual and queer people have experienced hate crime from an LGBT person, compared to 3% of lesbians and 8% of gay men.
- Bisexual and queer people (7%) are more likely to have experienced hate crime from an LGBT service or group than lesbians or gay men.
- Bisexual and queer respondents (23%) are significantly more likely to feel unsafe inside LGBT venues than lesbian (3%) or gay (2%) respondents.
- Bisexual and queer respondents (31%) are more likely than gay men (25%), lesbians (15%) or those identifying other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (5%) to feel unsafe in the 'gay village'.
- Those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are less likely than these other groups to feel very safe at home or very safe outside in Brighton & Hove in the day or at night, and more likely than these other groups to feel unsafe in places, services and facilities in Brighton & Hove.
- Bisexual respondents (44%) and respondents who identify as an other sexual identity than lesbian, gay or bisexual (50%) are more likely to have experienced abuse, violence or harassment from a family member or someone close to them than are lesbians (34%) or gay men (25%).
- 33% (n. 6) of bisexual survivors have experienced abuse from a male partner or ex-partner, while 22% (n. 4) of bisexual survivors have experienced abuse from a female partner or ex-partner.
- 39% (n. 7) of bisexual survivors of abuse, violence or harassment have experienced such abuse from family members.

Use of services and monitoring

- Bisexual respondents (23%) and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (34%) are more likely than lesbians or gay men (14%) to have experienced discrimination on the basis of their sexual or gender identities from someone or some organisation providing goods, services or facilities.
- 80% of bisexual respondents will give information regarding their sexual/gender identities for the purposes of monitoring if the information is confidential and the service is LGBT friendly.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Brighton & Hove has a reputation for being a city that offers a friendly environment and appropriate services for LGBT people. However, LGBT lives in the city are diverse and some groups of LGBT people face a greater likelihood of marginalisation than others, a key area of concern for LGBT communities in the city as well as LGBT communities more broadly. Previous Count Me In Too reports have highlighted how bisexual people and those who identify their sexuality other than 'lesbian' or 'gay men' are consistently one of groups of LGBT people who are most vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion according to a number of criteria, notably relating to health (including mental health), discrimination, prejudice and abuse, housing, safety, and the use of services (see Browne, 2007a, b; Browne and Davies, 2008; Browne and Lim 2008 a, b, c). In this context, it is important to examine bisexual people's experiences regarding the quality of their lives and their use of services in the city. Therefore, this report will outline findings from the Count Me In Too study that focus on bisexual people who live, work and socialise in the city. It then offers recommendations to address the concerns raised in the report.

This chapter will firstly look at the Count Me In Too research, then explore key terms used in this report. It will then outline the structure of the remainder of the report.

1.2. Count Me In Too: Background, Research Methods & Analysis notes

In 2000, the award winning Count Me In survey was developed from the grassroots of the then predominantly lesbian and gay communities, with backing from the East Sussex Brighton & Hove Health Authority. This research was used to inform the LGBT community strategy for Brighton & Hove 2000-2006. Count Me In Too was initiated in 2005 as a joint venture between Spectrum¹ and the University of Brighton. It is a community led action research project that seeks to advance progressive social change in the city. The research phase ran from January 2006 to October 2006. The research consisted of a large scale questionnaire with 819 respondents

¹ Spectrum is Brighton & Hove's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Forum established in 2002 to provide infrastructure and community development support to LGBT communities and promote partnership work and community engagement in the planning of services and policy. www.spectrum-lgbt.org

and 20 focus groups that had 69 participants. The questionnaire offers both qualitative and quantitative data. The questionnaire was routed, such that not all respondents answered every question. This is relevant for this report as respondents whose answers meant that, for the purposes of this study, they could be identified as bisexual were routed to specific questions about experiences that might relate to their bisexual identities. The quantitative data has been analysed in SPSS software and we have used a significance level of $p < .05$.

This data was analysed in depth focusing on bi issues with the help of an analysis group that consisted of representatives from a broad range of statutory services and voluntary groups. During the analysis, the group advised on the information that would be most relevant to the analysis and that would progress positive social change for LGBT people. The report was then co-authored by Dr. Kath Browne and Dr. Jason Lim who sent draft reports to the analysis group and received comments back from this group.

Count Me In Too allows us to understand the diversity and complexity of the LGBT communities in greater depth and detail than ever before. Further details regarding the Count Me In Too research can be found in the initial findings reports located at www.countmeintoo.co.uk.

1.3. Key terms

1.3.1. Definition of bisexual used for this research

Respondents to the questionnaire were asked which of a number of sexual identity categories they most identified with. 'Bisexual' was one of the tick-box answers given, so those who ticked this box compose the sample of 'bisexual' (or 'bi') respondents for the purposes of this report. 6% of respondents identified as bisexual. It should be noted that the sample of bisexual respondents who completed the Count Me In Too questionnaire are not necessarily representative of all bisexual people in Brighton & Hove. This is because some bisexual people do not identify with or participate in the LGBT community and would therefore have been very unlikely to have completed the Count Me In Too questionnaire. It should also be noted that, for the purposes of analysis in this report, 'bisexual' is a matter of identification rather than of sexual 'orientation'. Relatedly, there are some individuals who might, under certain circumstances, be understood as 'bisexual' on the basis of who they find sexually attractive but who identify with other terms (such as 'pansexual') rather than the term 'bisexual'. Because the analysis for this report is based on respondents' self-identification with given categories, such individuals would not be classified as 'bisexual' in this report; such individuals may, however, have ticked 'other' when asked about their sexual identity, and there is some discussion of the experiences and lives of those who identify as an 'other' sexual identity than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer in this report.

1.3.2. Other terms

There are other terms that are used in this analysis that are unique to the questionnaire or that require some understanding at the outset. Table 1.3a outlines these terms.

Table 1.3a: **Categories and definitions**

Category	Definition
Sexual identity	The question used as the basis of this category asked for the sexual identity with which the respondent most closely identified. Those who defined as gay and female were recoded into the lesbian / gay woman category.
LGBT- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans	The term LGBT is used for ease of understanding and to ensure that the diversity within these communities are partially acknowledged. The authors recognise the difficulties of categorising sexual and gender identities in this way. The term includes those who are questioning, unsure or do not identify with particular sexual or gender identities.
Trans	These were respondents who identified as being trans. Two of those who answered 'yes' to the question 'Do you identify yourself as being trans or have you ever questioned your gender identity?' were removed from this category as they argued in comments sections that they were not trans but had questioned their gender identity.
Ethnicity	The question used for this category asked for ethnicities with which respondents most closely identified. Respondents were given four choices: White, BME (Black and Minority Ethnic), gypsy traveller and other
Deaf, hard of hearing, deafened or deaf-blind	The question used as the basis of this category was 'Are you or do you identify yourself as being deaf, hard of hearing, deafened or deaf-blind?
Disability	This category includes those who answered yes to the question: 'are you or do you identify as having a long term health impairment or a physical disability?' This category is not limited to physical disability and cannot be disaggregated by physical, sensory or mental disabilities or long term health impairments
Age	This was done in numerically with the following categories used: young people were defined as those under 26 and older people defined as those over 55.
Income	Income levels were measured in categories that asked for income before deductions.

Mental Health	<p>The 'mental health' category in this report refers only to those who ticked that they had difficulties with any of the following: depression, anxiety, significant emotional distress, suicidal thoughts, panic attacks, problem eating / distress, fears / phobias, addictions / dependencies, anger management and self harm. The question also asked about stress, insomnia, confidence / self esteem and isolation but these categories were excluded because they included large proportions of the sample. Moreover, comments were written in the questionnaires such as - "sometimes not being able to sleep or getting stressed does not mean one has mental health difficulties" (questionnaire 74). These suggested that this question was read as 'have you ever experienced', rather than 'have you ever experienced difficulties'. These issues caused the action group to rethink the category of 'mental health difficulties' for the purposes of the initial findings report, and particularly in the cross tabulating with other identity categories. This category may be reconsidered in further analyses but a robust category was thought to be most appropriate for this report.</p>
Isolation	<p>Isolation was measured by those who answered 'yes' or 'sometimes' to the question 'Do you feel isolated in Brighton & Hove?' The figure was broken down into Yes / sometimes and no (the small category unsure (1.9%) was removed to ensure statistical significance). This captured current perception and therefore was chosen over the question that asked about 'isolation' under mental health difficulties experienced in the past 5 years.</p>
HIV positive	<p>This category was comprised of those who answered that their most recent HIV test result had been positive.</p>
Domestic violence and abuse	<p>This is defined as those who have experienced harassment, violence and/or abuse from a family member or someone close to the person (see Browne, 2007a)</p>
Neighbourhood area	<p>17% of our sample lived in St. James Street and Kemptown. 26% lived in 'areas of potential deprivation'; these are:</p> <p>North Portslade, Hangleton & Knoll, Brunswick (East), Hollingbury, Hollingdean, Saunders Park, St Peters, Tarner (South Hanover), Bristol Estate, Bevendean, Moulsecoomb, Whitehawk & Manor Farm, Queens Park & Craven Vale.</p> <p>57% do not live in any of these areas and are categorised as living in 'none of the areas listed'.</p>

Tenure

The majority of the sample lived in privately owned accommodation (47%). Just under a third (30%) lived in rented accommodation, and 7% lived in Council housing. A small number (5 people) lived in sheltered and supported accommodation. In order to describe the sample and undertake statistical tests, the tenure categories have been grouped into those that are meaningful for the data and housing services. Throughout this report social housing (9% of the sample) will be used to describe everyone who lives in rented Council housing, rented association, sheltered and supported housing, temporary accommodation or who is homeless. This will be compared to those who privately rent, those who own their own homes and those who exist in another of these categories.

1.4. Outline of the report

The next chapter will address the demographic characteristics of the bisexual sample of respondents to Count Me In Too. The demographic characteristics considered are: gender, trans, household composition, age, income, employment, educational qualifications, ethnicity, disability, families, partnerships and parenting, and religious identity.

Chapter 2 will address the complexity of bi identities, and in particular how they are complicated by different usages and meanings, choices of relationships and partners, appearance, practices, and performances. The chapter also considers bisexual respondents' relationships with their families of origin and how these relationships are shaped by the respondents' sexual and gender identities. The chapter also looks at the place of bisexual respondents within LGBT communities.

Chapter 3 considers the marginalisation, discrimination, prejudice and abuse that bisexual people experience, often on a frequent basis. Bi respondents' accounts of the abuse, negative comments and stigmatisation they face will be discussed. The chapter will also examine respondents' accounts of stereotypes about bisexual people and will look at the norms and expectations that shape how these stereotypes are used to marginalise bisexual people. Bi people's marginalisation from lesbian and/or gay scenes will be considered, including discrimination faced in the context of venues and events. The difficulties of socialising when with an opposite-sex partner will be explored. In addition to this, bisexual people are marginalised from straight venues and this will also be addressed.

Chapter 4 explores a number of issues surrounding health in general (excluding mental health) as they pertain to bisexual people. It begins by considering the consumption of alcohol and drugs among bisexual respondents and then moves on to consider bisexual people's sexual health. In particular, there is a discussion of the how bisexual people access sexual health care and advice and of the appropriateness of sexual health information to bisexual people's needs and practices. Bisexual

respondents' involvement with sex work will also be considered. The discussion moves on to consider bisexual people's engagement with health services, specifically with GPs.

Chapter 5 addresses bisexual people's mental health. The chapter will consider the overall prevalence of mental health difficulties before moving on to examine the prevalence of specific mental health difficulties. Two particular mental health difficulties will then be considered in more depth: suicide and isolation. Finally, the chapter will explore how the management of and support for mental health difficulties needs to account for the specificities of bisexual needs.

Chapter 6 considers bisexual people's vulnerabilities in relation to housing. It looks at the prevalence of bisexual people in social housing, their likelihood of experiencing homelessness, and their likelihood of living in areas of potential social deprivation.

Chapter 7 looks at bi respondents' experiences of hate crime and the relative likelihoods different sexual identity groups have of experiencing specific hate crimes. It will consider who perpetrates these hate crimes and the likelihood different sexual identity groups have of reporting hate crime. The chapter will then examine feelings of safety in different locations in Brighton & Hove, before considering the behaviours bisexual, queer and 'other' respondents avoid in order to avoid hate crime. Finally, the chapter considers the vulnerabilities to domestic violence and abuse of those who identify as bisexual or a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Chapter 8 considers the experiences bisexual people have with regard to discrimination by those who provide goods, services or facilities, and the preferences they have with regard to how they access mainstream and LGBT services. It will also look at preferences regarding the use of information for monitoring purposes.

The conclusion offers an overview of all the chapters.

2. Demographics

2.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the demographic characteristics of the bisexual sample of respondents to Count Me In Too. These characteristics should be considered as a context for interpreting the findings presented in subsequent chapters. The chapter will discuss sample composition and the following demographic characteristics of the bisexual sample: gender; trans identity; household composition; age; income; employment; educational qualifications; ethnicity; disability; HIV status; families, partnerships and parenting; and religious identity.

2.2. Sample composition

Table 2.2a shows that 47 respondents identify as bisexual. This figure makes up 6% of the total sample. 28 respondents identify as queer, and 33 respondents identify as an 'other' sexual identity than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer. These figures make up 3% and 4% of the total sample, respectively.

Table 2.2a: Respondents categorised by sexual identity

	Frequency	Percent
Lesbian	280	34.1
Gay	431	52.6
Bisexual	47	5.7
Queer	28	3.4
Questioning	2	0.2
Unsure	6	0.7
Straight/heterosexual	7	0.9
Other	18	2.2
Total	820	97.7

It should be noted that this sample only contains those who ticked the box 'bisexual' when asked about their sexual identity and who identify with LGBT communities (indicated by their participation in this research). This means that it does not include many (perhaps more vulnerable) people who may define themselves, or may be understood as, bisexual, and do not identify either with the label 'bisexual' and/or with LGBT communities.

2.3. Gender

Table 2.3a shows that 62% (n. 29) of bisexual respondents identify as female, 19% (n. 9) of bisexual respondents identify as male, and a further 19% (n. 9) of bisexual respondents identify as of no gender or a gender identity other than male or female.

43% (n. 12) of respondents who identify as queer are male, 46% (n. 13) of respondents who identify as queer are female, and 11% (n. 3) of queer respondents identify as of no gender or a gender identity other than male or female.

24% (n. 8) of respondents who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer identify as male. 64% (n. 21) of those of an 'other' sexual identity are female, and 12% (n. 4) of those identifying as an 'other' sexual identity identify as being of no gender or a gender other than male or female.

Table 2.3a: **Gender by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Male	No.	1	422	9	12	8	452
	%	.4	98.4	19.1	42.9	24.2	55.5
Female	No.	273	0	29	13	21	336
	%	98.6	.0	61.7	46.4	63.6	41.3
No gender or other	No.	3	7	9	3	4	26
	%	1.1	1.6	19.1	10.7	12.1	3.2
Total	No.	277	429	47	28	33	814
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

2.4. Trans

9% (n.4) of bisexual people identify as trans. 48% (n. 29) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual also identify as trans (table 2.4a).

Table 2.4a: **trans by sexuality**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
Trans	No.	9	1	4	29	43
	%	3.3	.2	8.5	48.3	5.3
Not trans	No.	264	423	43	31	761
	%	96.7	99.8	91.5	51.7	94.7
Total	No.	273	424	47	60	804
	%	100	100	100	100	100

2.5. Household composition

17% (n. 8) of those who define as bisexual live with a same-sex partner (see table 2.5a), a significantly lower proportion than the 52% (n. 142) of lesbians and 38% (n. 162) of gay men who live with a same-sex partner ($p=.0005$). 26% (n. 7) of queer respondents and 14% (n. 4) of those of an 'other' sexual identity live with a same-sex partner.

Table 2.5a: **Living with same-sex partner by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
No	No.	131	261	38	20	24	474
	%	48	61.7	82.6	74.1	85.7	59.5
Yes	No.	142	162	8	7	4	323
	%	52	38.3	17.4	25.9	14.3	40.5
Total	No.	273	423	46	27	28	797
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

11% of bisexual respondents live with gay and lesbian friends. 26% of those who define as queer live with gay and/or lesbian friends. None of those who are otherwise coded live with gay and/or lesbian friends.

2.6. Age

Table 2.6a: **Age by sexual identity (queer and other sexual identities combined)**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
Under 26	No.	40	58	13	11	122
	%	14.3	13.5	27.7	18	14.9
26-35	No.	92	116	18	16	242
	%	33	26.9	38.3	26.2	29.6
36-45	No.	86	138	9	17	250
	%	30.8	32	19.1	27.9	30.6
46-55	No.	45	69	5	7	126
	%	16.1	16	10.6	11.5	15.4
Over 55	No.	16	50	2	10	78
	%	5.7	11.6	4.3	16.4	9.5
Total	No.	279	431	47	61	818
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table 2.6a shows the age distribution of respondents by sexual identity. Bisexual respondents in this research are significantly likely to be younger – aged under 35 – than those of other sexual identities ($p=.019$). 28% (n. 13) of bisexual respondents are aged under 26, compared to 14% (n. 40) of lesbians, 14% (n. 58) of gay respondents, and 18% (n. 11) of those who identify as other than lesbian, gay or bisexual. 38% (n. 18) of bisexual respondents are aged between 26 and 35, compared to 33% (n. 92) of lesbians, 27% (n. 116) of gay respondents, and 26% (n. 16) of those of an

'other' sexual identity than lesbian, gay or bisexual. By contrast, only 19% (n. 9) of bisexual respondents are aged between 35 and 45, compared to 31% (n. 86) of lesbians, 32% (n. 138) of gay respondents, and 28% (n. 17) of those of an 'other' sexual identity than lesbian, gay or bisexual.

While table 2.6a has combined the categories of 'queer' and 'other' sexual identities into a category of 'otherwise coded' (than lesbian, gay or bisexual), table 2.6b shows the age distributions for 'queer' and those who identify as an 'other' sexual identity than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer separately. However, when 'queer' and 'other' are separated in this way, there is no longer a statistically significant relationship between age and sexual identity.

Table 2.6b: **Age by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Under 26	No.	40	58	13	6	5	122
	%	14.3	13.5	27.7	21.4	15.2	14.9
26-35	No.	92	116	18	8	8	242
	%	33	26.9	38.3	28.6	24.2	29.6
36-45	No.	86	138	9	8	9	250
	%	30.8	32	19.1	28.6	27.3	30.6
46-55	No.	45	69	5	4	3	126
	%	16.1	16	10.6	14.3	9.1	15.4
Over 55	No.	16	50	2	2	8	78
	%	5.7	11.6	4.3	7.1	24.2	9.5
Total	No.	279	431	47	28	33	818
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

2.7. Income

Those identifying as bisexual are more likely (68%) to have an income of less than £20,000 a year than the rest of the sample. Only 22% of those in other sexuality categories (than gay men, lesbians, or bisexual people) have an income of over £20,000 a year. As a comparison, 58% of gay men have an income of over £20,000 a year. This may be related to age categories above.

2.8. Employment

Table 2.8a shows that 57% (n. 27) of bisexual respondents are employed full time, compared to 56% (n. 456) of the total sample. 2% (n. 1) of bisexual respondents are self employed or work for their own or their family's business, compared to 12% (n. 94) of the total sample. 4% (n. 2) of bisexual respondents are not employed and looking for work. 11% (n. 5) of those who identify as bisexual say they are unable to work, compared to 6% (n. 52) of the total sample.

38% (n. 23) of those identifying as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are employed full time, compared to 56% of the total sample. 10%

(n. 6) of those identifying as an 'other' sexual identity are employed in 'other' kinds of work (seasonal, casual, cash in hand etc). 15% (n. 9) of those identify as an 'other' sexual identity say they are unable to work.

Table 2.8a: **Employment by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
Employed full-time (for employer)	No.	144	262	27	23	456
	%	51.8	60.9	57.4	37.7	55.9
Employed part-time (for employer)	No.	40	40	5	6	91
	%	14.4	9.3	10.6	9.8	11.2
Self-employed or own/family business	No.	34	53	1	6	94
	%	12.2	12.3	2.1	9.8	11.5
Retired	No.	9	26	0	3	38
	%	3.2	6	0	4.9	4.7
Other (e.g. seasonal/casual/cash in hand)	No.	9	7	4	6	26
	%	3.2	1.6	8.5	9.8	3.2
Not employed and looking for work	No.	10	13	2	4	29
	%	3.6	3	4.3	6.6	3.6
Not employed and not looking for work	No.	12	11	3	4	30
	%	4.3	2.6	6.4	6.6	3.7
Unable to work	No.	20	18	5	9	52
	%	7.2	4.2	10.6	14.8	6.4
Total	No.	278	430	47	61	816
	%	100	100	100	100	100

2.9. Educational qualifications

34% (n. 16) of bisexual respondents say that their highest educational qualification is a first degree, a higher proportion than the 23% (n. 184) of the overall sample, although there is no statistical significance in this difference. 21% (n. 10) of bisexual respondents say their highest educational qualification is an A or AS level or equivalent, again higher than the figure for the overall sample (12%, n. 96). No bisexual respondents said that they had no educational qualifications. All bisexual respondents had achieved at least qualifications at GCSE grades A-C or equivalent.

Only 4% (n. 1) of respondents who identify as queer say that A or AS levels are their highest educational qualification, compared to 12% of the overall sample. 32% (n. 9) of queer respondents say that their highest qualification is a first degree (compared to 23% of the overall sample), and 25% (n. 7) of queer respondents say their highest qualification is a higher degree (compared to 17%, n. 134 of the overall sample).

13% (n. 4) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer have no educational qualifications, a higher proportion than the 2% (n. 18) of the overall sample who have no educational qualifications. 16% (n. 5) of those identifying as an 'other' sexuality say their highest qualification is a first degree, while 22% (n. 7) say their highest qualification is a higher degree.

Table 2.9a: Highest educational qualification attained by sexual identity

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
No educational qualifications	No.	2	11	0	1	4	18
	%	0.7	2.6	0	3.6	12.5	2.2
GCSE (D-G) CSE (2-5)	No.	5	15	0	0	1	21
	%	1.8	3.5	0	0	3.1	2.6
GCSE (A-C), O Level, CSE (1)	No.	17	42	2	1	3	65
	%	6.1	9.8	4.3	3.6	9.4	8
A or AS Level	No.	22	60	10	1	3	96
	%	7.9	14.1	21.3	3.6	9.4	11.8
Vocational qualification	No.	28	55	3	4	3	93
	%	10	12.9	6.4	14.3	9.4	11.4
Foundation Degree	No.	17	36	1	1	3	58
	%	6.1	8.4	2.1	3.6	9.4	7.1
First Degree	No.	76	78	16	9	5	184
	%	27.2	18.3	34	32.1	15.6	22.6
Higher Degree	No.	50	63	7	7	7	134
	%	17.9	14.8	14.9	25	21.9	16.5
Professional qualification	No.	57	54	6	4	2	123
	%	20.4	12.6	12.8	14.3	6.3	15.1
Other qualification	No.	5	13	2	0	1	21
	%	1.8	3	4.3	0	3.1	2.6
Total	No.	279	427	47	28	32	813
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

2.10. Ethnicity

Table 2.10a: Ethnicity by sexual identity

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
White	No.	257	413	40	26	29	765
	%	92.1	96.3	87	92.9	87.9	93.9
BME	No.	7	8	3	1	2	21
	%	2.5	1.9	6.5	3.6	6.1	2.6
Traveller/ Other	No.	15	8	3	1	2	29
	%	5.4	1.9	6.5	3.6	6.1	3.6
Total	No.	279	429	46	28	33	815
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

87% (n. 40) of bisexual respondents identify as white, 7% (n. 3) as BME and 7% (n. 3) as traveller or an other ethnicity.

93% (n. 26) of queer respondents identify as white, 4% (n. 1) as BME and 4% (n. 1) as traveller or an other ethnicity. 88% (n. 29) of respondents who identify as an 'other' sexual identity than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer say they identify as white, 6% (n. 2) as BME and 6% (n. 2) as traveller or an other ethnicity.

2.11. Disability or long term health impairment

Respondents who identify as bisexual, queer or an 'other' sexual identity (than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer) are more likely than lesbians or gay men to be disabled ($p = .047$). 21% (n. 9) of bisexual respondents, 21% (n. 6) of queer respondents and 30% (n. 9) of those of an 'other' sexual identity are disabled.

Table 2.11a: **Disability by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
No	No.	32	63	9	6	9	119
	%	11.7	14.9	20.5	21.4	30	14.9
Yes	No.	242	361	35	22	21	681
	%	88.3	85.1	79.5	78.6	70	85.1
Total	No.	274	424	44	28	30	800
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

2.12. Families, partnerships and parenting

24% of bisexual respondents are parents, compared to 16% of the overall sample. 91% of bisexual respondents say they already have or would contemplate entering into a civil partnership. This compares to 79% of the entire sample and only 57% of those identifying as queer and 56% of those identifying as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer.

2.13. Religious identity

Table 2.13a: **Religious identity by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
No	No.	65	103	15	10	11	204
	%	23.3	23.9	34.1	37	33.3	25.1
Yes	No.	214	328	29	17	22	610
	%	76.7	76.1	65.9	63	66.7	74.9
Total	No.	279	431	44	27	33	814
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

34% (n. 15) of bisexual respondents say they are religious. 37% (n. 10) of queer respondents and 33% (n. 11) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer say they are religious. There is no significant relationship between sexual identity and religious identity.

2.14. Conclusions

Bisexual respondents are more likely to be younger (under 35) than the rest of the sample. 28% of bisexual respondents are aged under 26, and 38% of bisexual respondents are aged between 26 and 35. Those identifying as bisexual are more likely (68%) to have an income of less than £20,000 a year than the rest of the sample. Bisexual respondents are also more likely to be disabled than lesbians or gay men. 17% (n. 8) of those who define as bisexual live with a same-sex partner, making them less likely to do so than lesbians or gay men.

3. Bi identities

3.1. Introduction

Bisexuality and bisexual identities are complex and multi-faceted. 'Bisexual' is a label or term that can pertain to identification, choice of relationships, choice of partners, participation in communities etc. Those who claim 'bi' or 'bisexual' identities are heterogeneous, and they use many terms to identify themselves. The term 'bisexual' is not necessarily used by all those who are attracted to both women and men, and so the term does not provide a definitive identity for all such people. Some people who are attracted to members of more than one sex or gender sometimes use the term 'polysexual' to describe themselves in order not to imply a restriction to two binary genders (male and female). For others, while they might identify as bisexual, they might also use other descriptors and/or descriptions of their identity in conjunction with the term 'bisexual'.

In this research, respondents describe their identities in terms of their relationships, their appearance, and their practices and performances. This chapter considers some of the issues surrounding bisexual respondents' self-identification. It also considers the relationships that bisexual respondents have with their families of origin and how these relationships are shaped by bisexual respondents' sexual and gender identities. Finally, this chapter will introduce a discussion on the place of bisexual respondents within LGBT communities, although this will be examined in more depth in the following chapter.

3.2. Self-identity

Table 3.2a and table 3.2b show groups of qualitative responses to the question 'How would you describe your identity? Use words and phrases that you feel most comfortable with.' This question was asked only to respondents who answered 'bisexual' to an earlier tick-box question about their sexual identity. Other identifications such as 'queer' were not examined in such depth although subsequent discussions with bisexual groups have suggested that these terms and identities can, for some, be closely aligned.

As can be seen from table 3.2a, respondents offer a wide variety of ways to identify themselves, but many of them do use the terms 'bisexual' or 'bi' to describe their own identity. While most of the respondents who answered

this question use a simple identity descriptor such as 'bisexual' or 'woman', many respondents also go on to describe their identities in more complex ways. Primary among these are ways of thinking about their identities in terms of the sex or gender of those they find attractive, and in terms of their current relationships. Some respondents also define themselves in terms of personal characteristics or affects, while others describe themselves in terms of their appearance or how they act or perform their own identities.

Table 3.2a: **Major Categories: How would you describe your identity? Use words and phrases that you feel most comfortable with.**

Categories	No. Of Responses
Identity	
Bisexual/Bi	23
Female/Woman	10
I'm me	4
Queer	3
Male/Man	2
Polyamorous	2
Dyke-y/bi dyke	2
Out	2
Parent (father)	2
Other identities – each only given by one respondent	12
Defined in terms of sex/gender of those found sexually attractive	11
Defined by current sexual relationship	7
Current relationship is monogamous, committed, long term etc	6
Current relationship is with another woman/lesbian relationship	3
Current relationship is with opposite sex partner/ heterosexual relationship	3
Currently in long term relationship with woman; if was to end, would be open to relationship with man or woman	1
Defined in terms of personal characteristics/affects	7
Appearance and performance	5
I don't understand the question	1

Notes

1. Major categories appear in bold type.
2. The category 'Identity' is broken down into each of the major (with more than two responses) sub-categories of identity that were given by respondents.
3. The category titled 'Defined by current sexual relationship' has a two level hierarchy of sub-categories, but only the first level is shown in this table (in italics). For the second level, please see table 3.2b (below).

Table 3.2b: **Major Categories and summary of responses: How would you describe your identity? Use words and phrases that you feel most comfortable with.**

Categories	No. of responses
Identity	
Bisexual/Bi	23
Female/Woman	10

I'm me	4
Queer	3
Male/Man	2
Polyamorous	2
Dyke-y/bi dyke	2
Out	2
Parent (father)	2
Sexual	1
Allsexual	1
Young	1
Single	1
Intersexed	1
Transwoman	1
Black	1
Biracial	1
Disabled	1
Don't feel the need to pin myself down to an identity	1
Sexuality should not be the main focus	1
Bisexual, but have to battle assumptions from L&G community re: appearance (butch femme)	1
Bisexual, but isolated as scene geared towards poly people	1
Only say I'm bisexual if it's relevant, not to hide behind 'lesbian' title, and to counter misconceptions of bisexuals (greedy/cannot make up their minds)	1
Defined in terms of sex/gender of those found sexually attractive	11
Need/equally attracted to both sexes; Can have relationships/socialise with both sexes	4
Woman, prefer women/more lesbian than straight	3
Man, prefer men/more gay than straight	1
Attracted more to women than men, but have had relationships with men	1
Open to people of varying sexualities	1
Would like to meet one person of each gender for long term committed relationship	1
Not narrowed down to notion of world where only two genders exist	1
Defined by current sexual relationship	7
Current relationship is monogamous, committed, long term etc	6
Current relationship is with another woman/lesbian relationship	3
Currently in long term monogamous relationship with woman, but am attracted to both sexes	1
Bisexual, but sometimes identify as lesbian as female partner and I to register partnership; have had male partners in past	1
Currently in committed lesbian relationship, but have been impulsively drawn to men	1
Monogamous, have to defend against partner's anxieties of me going off with a man (opposite sex)	1

Current relationship is with opposite sex partner/ heterosexual relationship (, but...)	3
Currently in relationship with man, but more attracted to women	1
Currently in long term relationship with person of opposite sex, so keep bisexual identity to myself	1
Currently in committed, monogamous, heterosexual relationship [with man]	1
Monogamous, have to counter assumptions of bisexual people being 'greedy'	1
Currently in long term relationship with woman; if was to end, would be open to relationship with man or woman	1
Defined in terms of personal characteristics/affects	7
Outgoing	2
Lonely/isolated	2
Tall, dark featured	1
Friendly	1
Happy	1
Faithful, caring, loving	1
Intelligent	1
Alternative	1
Chilled out/hippy	1
Confident	1
Confused	1
Messed up	1
Appearance and performance	5
Straight looking/acting	3
People can pick out that I'm not totally straight	1
Somewhat camp, but mostly straight looking/acting	1
Camp	1
Tom-boy, sometimes girlish	1
Neither feminine nor masculine	1
Would like to be Tank Girl	1
I don't shout about my sexuality	1
I don't hide my sexuality	1
I don't understand the question	1

Notes

1. The table is split into sections. The first section, denoted by the title 'Identity' comprises individual major categories.

2. The titles 'Defined in terms of sex/gender of those found sexually attractive', 'Defined by current sexual relationship', 'Defined in terms of personal characteristics/affects', and 'Appearance and performance' each indicate a new section comprised of the sub-categories immediately below them. Further, each of the section titles are, in themselves, a major category.

3. The section titled 'Defined by current sexual relationship' has a two level hierarchy of sub-categories. The first level of sub-category appears in italics. The second level – sub-categories of the first level of sub-category – appears indented.

Table 3.2b shows a more detailed breakdown of the kinds of descriptions that the respondents gave to this question. In addition to offering the terms 'bisexual' or 'bi' as ways of describing their identities, respondents also describe their identities with a range of other terms. Some of these terms refer to other aspects of their sexual identities – 'polyamorous', 'queer', 'single' and 'allsexual', for example – while others refer to other aspects of

their identities altogether – ‘young’, ‘transwoman’, or ‘biracial’, for instance. Patterns of attraction are a key way in which many of these respondents understand their identification as bisexual. These understandings can also relate to current and past relationships and identification can also be associated with practices and only one part of how the person understands themselves.

3.2.1. Patterns of attraction

Eleven respondents offer answers that describe their own identities in terms of those they find sexually attractive.

I am a bi sexual woman which means I am attracted to both genders although I'm currently in a long term monogamous relationship with a woman

(Questionnaire 179)

Some respondents specify that they find one sex more attractive than other(s).

Bisexual female, mostly lesbian but currently with a male partner

(Questionnaire 525)

Like questionnaire 525, questionnaire 297 also specifies that s/he finds one sex more attractive than the other, but also indicates that the balance of her/his preference for men or women has changed over time.

Have had relationships with men in the past, am currently attracted to women more than men and am in a long term relationship with a woman. If this was to end, I would be open to having either male or female lovers.

(Questionnaire 297)

Questionnaire 38 shows that a bisexual identity does not simply have to be defined by finding both women and men attractive. Rather, this respondent also defines herself/himself in relation to people of ‘varying sexualities’.

Open to people of varying sexualities. Queer, dyke-y, comfortable with relating to/socialising with both men and women.

(Questionnaire 38)

3.2.2. Current relationship

For some respondents, defining their identity in terms of their current sexual relationship is important. Several respondents understand themselves through their being in a monogamous and committed relationship.

bisexual woman in a committed, monogamous, heterosexual relationship.

(Questionnaire 717)

Several bisexual women identify themselves in terms of presently being in a relationship with another woman. While some would understand this as being in a 'lesbian' *relationship* (see questionnaire 664 below), the following respondent sometimes prefers to identify *herself* as a lesbian given that her present relationship is with a woman.

Bisexual, but sometimes prefer to identify as lesbian since I'm now living with female partner and we soon to register our partnership. However, I have always had male partners in the past.

(Questionnaire 535)

Whilst bisexuality can be understood as the potential to be attracted to a person of either sex, bisexual people who enter into monogamous one partnered relationships usually do so with either a man or a woman. It could be that the idea of 'faithfulness' underlying the concept of a monogamous relationship provides a reason why some bisexual people in monogamous relationships draw attention to, firstly, the monogamy of their relationships and, secondly, the *contrast* between their current monogamy and their potential to be attracted to those of either sex. Questionnaires 179, 297, 525 and 535, above, all either specify a distinction in time between their current relationships and either their attraction to both sexes in the past, or the potential of their attraction to both sexes in the future, should their current relationship end.

Another reason why bisexual respondents might emphasize their monogamy is, as the following respondent implies, to counter stereotypes about bisexual people being 'greedy'. Stereotypes of being 'greedy', can be used to police bisexual people's desires, and it is understandable in this context that bisexual respondents try to keep being bisexual to themselves:

I'm a "monogamous bisexual" - I guess that's important because people tend to joke about [bisexuals] being "greedy", but I'm in a long term relationship with a partner of the opposite sex so it tends to be something I keep to myself. It is just part of my personality - it doesn't define me.

(Questionnaire 673)

3.2.3. Personal characteristics and affects

Some bisexual respondents define themselves in terms of how they see their own personal characteristics and affects. As with questionnaire 673, this means that being bisexual is only one 'part of my personality':

I am tall, dark featured, female. I am gentle, faithful, caring and loving, and equally attracted to both sexes.

(Questionnaire 68)

Confident, outgoing, bisexual, female, happy, friendly, bubbly, camp

(Questionnaire 636)

These respondents paint two different but equally positive pictures of themselves. It is noticeable that, for each of them, being bisexual occurs in a series without hierarchy: bisexual seems to be neither more nor less important than any of the other characteristics listed. This is not the case for others:

Bisexual, lonely, Messed up

(Questionnaire 489)

Putting bisexual in a series of negative characteristics suggests that in each case being bisexual is associated with either a positive or negative assessment of one's entire life and perhaps becomes understood in the context of such an overall assessment of one's life.

3.2.4. Appearance and performance

A number of bisexual respondents identify themselves through their appearance and how they act out or perform their identity in everyday life. Respondent 139 understands their identity through her performances of gender more than simply through the idea of sexual attraction. Their gender performances can vary between being tom-boyish to being 'girlish', but they leave the relationship between this variation of gender performance and their relationship to bisexuality unclear:

Tom boy, sometimes girlish. Often just feeling I'm me, neither feminine nor masculine just me. Would like to be Tank Girl though!

(Questionnaire 139)

The following respondent also picks up upon the appearance and performance of gender – being a man and a father – and associates it with his sexuality: preferring men, but appearing straight.

A straight looking father and man who is bi, and prefers men

(Questionnaire 98)

Clearly, these respondents are having to negotiate everyday stereotypes and assumptions about what straight, gay, and lesbian people look like. The following responses suggest that appearance can be as much about how one acts as how one 'looks'.

Out. Fairly straight acting, although people would not have any difficulty in picking up that I am not totally straight

(Questionnaire 37)

Mostly straight in appearance, but at times somewhat camp. I don't shout about my sexual orientation, but I don't hide it

(Questionnaire 264)

These respondents' comments also suggest that they may have to negotiate expectations and assumptions about the performances of being gay, lesbian or straight in both LGBT space and straight spaces. Implicit in questionnaire 264's comment is the idea that LGBT individuals are sometimes required (or feel required) to hide outward signs of their sexual identity, especially given the expectations of heteronormal society. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, bisexual people can sometimes be marginalised from LGBT scenes; in this context, it might also be that bisexual individuals may have to hide their bisexuality in specifically LGBT spaces, too.

The following quote brings together several of the themes discussed in this section as well as raising a number of other interesting and important issues (such as violence and abuse in relationships).

I am bisexual, mainly drawn to women, sometimes impulsively towards men. I am in a committed lesbian relationship. The best relationships I have had have been lesbian, but then again they have also been the most violent (charged, not abusive). I identify as queer, bi or a bi dyke (but my gf hates that term). I came out 2 years ago, subconsciously much before that, when I was 16. I have encountered very real problems within my relationship due mainly to my partner's anxieties of me 'going off with' a man. I have had to repeatedly defend myself and been made to feel as if I have something to apologise. The truth of it is that she was unfaithful, not me. Being bi has been very isolating for me. I have tried to get on with the [name of a bisexual group], but it seems much more geared towards poly ppl [people]. I am 100% monogamous. I also feel the bi label can't = automatic friendship. There is no uniformed club like the dykes get, and it is hard to fit in there, especially if I wear a skirt. PPI [people] look at my GF & I as butch femme, when we really aren't - I am far more butch than she in ways other than appearances. I am tired of battling with assumptions from L&G community, equally, I feel limited and restricted in the hetero outside world.

(Questionnaire 664)

This respondent's comments exemplify how difficult it can be to stake out a bisexual identity when having to negotiate, or even battle against, prevalent assumptions and trends in bisexual, lesbian and gay communities and heterosexual communities. One of the dangers that many bisexual people face in attempting to find a way to belong – or a place or community to belong to – is feeling isolated if they don't fully succeed. This respondent outlines the fine distinctions made between different communities and sub-groups, and what is required in order to be recognised as belonging to

one of these groups. Hence, her monogamy leaves her feeling like an outsider from the predominantly polyamorous bisexual group she mentions, while her appearance is read as too 'femme' (or insufficiently butch) for her to be properly accepted as a dyke. Indeed, she implies an objection to how appearance is used to judge individuals' identity and rights to belong, asserting instead that there are 'ways other' than appearance in which she is butch. What such testimony implies is how belonging and identity are governed by how one is recognised by others. Yet, even when one is recognised by others as belonging, it is not enough to guarantee a feeling of belonging: this respondent may be recognised by other bi people as bi, but sharing a bi identity does not constitute friendship.

Another theme that this respondent raises is how people within lesbian and gay communities often think of bisexual people as 'promiscuous' or 'greedy'. Although the respondent does not explicitly state that her partner identifies as lesbian rather than bisexual, such understandings can be used by those in lesbian scenes. This respondent suggests that her partner has made her anticipate her own guilt of 'going off with a man' on the basis of her being bisexual. Given that it is her partner who has actually been unfaithful, the respondent seems to suggest that her partner is projecting her anxieties about being unfaithful onto her (the respondent). If bisexual people are often stereotyped as promiscuous, it may be because bisexual desires are seen as excessive within lesbian and gay relationships – excessive because lesbian and gay partners might assume that these desires cannot be fulfilled within the relationship and that the bisexual partner might then look outside of the relationship for the satisfaction of those desires. These stereotypes will be further examined in the next chapter.

3.3. Relationships with family of origin

Table 3.3a: Quality of relationship with family of origin

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
Very good	No.	111	184	14	10	319
	%	40.7	43.9	31.8	17.2	40.2
Good	No.	99	133	15	21	268
	%	36.3	31.7	34.1	36.2	33.8
Neither good nor poor	No.	32	58	6	9	105
	%	11.7	13.8	13.6	15.5	13.2
Poor	No.	16	21	3	12	52
	%	5.9	5.0	6.8	20.7	6.5
Very poor	No.	15	23	6	6	50
	%	5.5	5.5	13.6	10.3	6.3
Total	No.	273	419	44	58	794
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Bisexual respondents and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are more likely to say that they have a poor or very poor relationship with their family of origin, compared to lesbians and

gay men ($p < .001$). 20% (n. 9) of bisexual respondents and 31% (n. 18) of those identifying as an 'other' sexual identity say their relationship with their family of origin is poor or very poor.

3.4. 'Gay Capital'

Those who identify as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are less likely (48%) than these other groups to want Brighton & Hove to be the 'gay capital' of England ($p = .019$).

Table 3.4a: Do you want Brighton & Hove to be the 'gay capital' of England?

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Yes	No.	194	247	27	17	15	500
	%	71.1	59.4	61.4	60.7	48.4	63.1
No	No.	25	55	7	7	6	100
	%	9.2	13.2	15.9	25.0	19.4	12.6
Unsure	No.	54	114	10	4	10	192
	%	19.8	27.4	22.7	14.3	32.3	24.2
Total	No.	273	416	44	28	31	792
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 3.4b shows that those who identify as an 'other' sexual identity than lesbian or gay are less likely than these two groups to have been to Pride every year (26%, n. 27, compared to 43% and 50%, respectively) and are more likely than these two groups to have not yet been to Pride but possibly to consider going (16%, n. 17, compared to 8% and 7% respectively) ($p < .001$).

Table 3.4b: Have you attended Pride in Brighton & Hove in the last five years?

		Lesbian	Gay	Other	Total
Every year	No.	121	213	27	361
	%	43.4	50.0	26.0	44.6
2 to 4 times	No.	111	133	40	284
	%	39.8	31.2	38.5	35.1
Once	No.	25	38	16	79
	%	9.0	8.9	15.4	9.8
not been yet	No.	21	31	17	69
	%	7.5	7.3	16.3	8.5
never been & don't want to	No.	1	11	4	16
	%	.4	2.6	3.8	2.0
Total	No.	279	426	104	809
	%	100	100	100	100

If the figures for sexual identities 'other' than lesbian and gay are broken down into queer and otherwise coded, there is no significant relationship between sexual identity and attendance at Pride. The figures show that

30% (n. 14) of bisexual respondents have been to Pride every year, but only 19% (n. 6) of those of a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer have been to Pride every year. 17% (n. 8) of bisexual respondents and 19% (n. 6) of those of an 'other' sexual identity have not yet been to Pride (but may consider going), while the figure for queer respondents is lower at 11% (n. 3).

Table 3.4c: **Have you attended Pride in Brighton & Hove in the last five years?**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Every year	No.	121	213	14	7	6	361
	%	43.4	50.0	30.4	25.9	19.4	44.6
2 to 4 times	No.	111	133	16	13	11	284
	%	39.8	31.2	34.8	48.1	35.5	35.1
Once	No.	25	38	8	4	4	79
	%	9.0	8.9	17.4	14.8	12.9	9.8
not been yet	No.	21	31	8	3	6	69
	%	7.5	7.3	17.4	11.1	19.4	8.5
never been & don't want to	No.	1	11	0	0	4	16
	%	.4	2.6	.0	.0	12.9	2.0
Total	No.	279	426	46	27	31	809
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

3.5. Conclusions

In this research, 'bisexual' or 'bi' are widely used terms of self-identification, yet 'bisexual' is a heterogeneous category that cannot be easily reduced to one simplistic definition. Many bisexual respondents identify themselves in terms of those they find sexually attractive, while recognising that such understandings of themselves can change over time. Current sexual relationships also figure strongly in bisexual respondents' accounts of their identities. Monogamy seems to be particularly important in such accounts, especially for bisexual women who understand themselves as currently being in a lesbian relationship. Emphasising one's monogamy may be a way of dealing with stereotypes of bisexual people as 'greedy'. Thus it is important to recognise the diversity of sexual relationships and sexual practices amongst bi people. Appearance and performance play an important role in marking and regulating identity. How masculinities and femininities are performed can be a sign of sexual identity for many bisexual people. Many bisexual people find themselves having to negotiate others' expectations about performance and identity both within straight scenes and lesbian and gay scenes.

Bisexual respondents and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are more likely to say that they have a poor or very poor relationship with their family of origin than lesbians or gay men. 20% (n. 9) of bisexual respondents and 31% (n. 18) of those identifying as an 'other' sexual identity say their relationship with their family of origin is poor or very poor.

Those who identify as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are less likely (48%) than these other groups to want Brighton & Hove to be the 'gay capital' of England. Those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian or gay are less likely than these two groups to have been to Pride every year (26%, n. 27, compared to 43% and 50%, respectively) and are more likely than these two groups to have not yet been to Pride but possibly to consider going (16%, n. 17, compared to 8% and 7% respectively).

4. Best of both worlds? Discrimination, prejudice & abuse

4.1. Introduction

Bisexual people not only experience marginalisation from heterosexual society, but also face being marginalised with LGBT communities and scenes. This chapter examines the discrimination, prejudice and abuse experienced by bisexual people in Brighton & Hove. The discussion starts by looking explicitly at respondents' accounts of their experiences of marginalisation. There are norms, expectations and stereotypes that shape how bisexual people are marginalised in everyday life. Bisexual people also face abuse, negative comments and stigmatisation. These aspects of marginalisation will be examined before moving on to consider in more depth how bisexual people are marginalised from lesbian and/or gay scenes and communities. The ways that venues and events are not always welcoming to bisexual people will be explored, and the difficulties of socialising when with an opposite-sex partner will be considered. The chapter will also look at how bisexual people are marginalised from straight venues.

4.2. Marginalisation

Table 4.2a shows that the majority (60%, n. 26) of bisexual people feel marginalised by their bisexual identities.

Table 4.2a: **Do you feel marginalised by this aspect of your identity? Bisexual identity**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid %
Yes	26	55.3	60.5
No	17	36.2	39.5
Total	43	91.5	100
Missing	4	8.5	
Total	47	100	

Such marginalisation may be experienced for a number of reasons. Yet, throughout the qualitative responses it was clear that marginalisation experienced by bisexual respondents was the result of the actions of straight and LGBT people, often on the basis of bisexual people not fitting into one sexual identity or the other.

The following table (table 4.2b) presents qualitative responses given when bisexual respondents were asked why they felt marginalised on the basis of their bisexual identity. A variety of answers are offered, with five people pointing out the norms, expectations and stereotypes that shape belonging and marginalisation for bisexual people in everyday life, and another five respondents indicating that they experience stigmatisation, disparaging comments and/or abuse.

Table 4.2b: **Major categories in Bisexual responses: Do you feel marginalized by this aspect of your identity? If 'Yes', why do you feel marginalized?**

Categories	No. of responses
Norms, expectations and stereotypes	5
Stigma, disparaging comments, abuse etc.	5
Lack of knowledge of and need to explain bisexuality	4
Don't fit into either straight or lesbian/gay communities	4
Bisexual people are stereotyped as greedy, not able to make up their minds etc.	4
Exclusion from lesbian and/or gay scene	3
Difficulties of having opposite sex partner	3
Psychological and affective effects of marginalisation (general, not specifically with respect to either LG or straight communities)	3
Few bisexual people/events	2
Others think that I'm really heterosexual	1
Not sure what people make of me as I'm fairly out	1
Being black I can sometimes feel marginalised	1
Depends on the situation	1

Table 4.2c: **Summary of discourse in Bisexual responses: Do you feel marginalized by this aspect of your identity? If 'Yes', why do you feel marginalized?**

Categories	No. of responses
Norms, expectations and stereotypes	5
Other people feel uncomfortable because bisexual people don't fit into their preconceived ideas of identity	2
People can't pigeonhole me – they'd be more comfortable if I was gay	1
I don't need to pigeonhole myself, but large LGBT events often have 'identity workshops'	1
Work colleague said he thought I was strange	1
Stereotypes – I am straight acting, so when I say that I sleep with men people say they couldn't have told and expect me to be pleased that I don't fit into some stereotype	1

Straight men act differently towards me (compared to how they treat 'obviously' gay friends) when I come out	1
People treat me as if I can't be taken at face value	1
Gay men rarely make first move	1
Door staff at gay clubs check that I know this is gay club (night) even though it's obvious	1
Few people understand intersexuality and gender and appearance being separate	1
Abuse from some lesbians re: intersexuality and difference between gender and appearance	1
Not fitting in to 'norms'	1
Stigma, disparaging comments, abuse etc.	5
Encountered verbal abuse and mistrust from other LGBT people because of attitude that bisexual women are no longer bisexual if in relationship with a man	1
People look at you as if you have two heads and a tail	1
I've heard that some lesbians blame bisexual women for spreading STIs in lesbian community	1
Abuse from some lesbians re: intersexuality and difference between gender and appearance	1
Bisexual people stigmatised in way that gay and lesbian people are not	1
Disparaging comments about bisexuals make me feel uncomfortable in gay clubs	1
Lack of knowledge of and need to explain bisexuality	4
I out myself so other people know there are people like me	1
Most people haven't met any other bi people	1
I don't hide my sexuality, but neither do I feel I have to explain it to people – do gay or straight men do this?	1
There seems a need to explain bisexuality to people	1
Some people don't understand bisexuality – even a lot of gay and lesbian people you would expect to	1
Don't fit into either straight or lesbian/gay communities	4
I don't feel I fit into either the gay scene/services or the mainstream world	1
I cannot settle in either the gay scene/services or the mainstream world if I'm true to myself	1
Both gay and straight communities can be dismissive	1
Bisexual people are neither gay nor straight – difficult to fit into either group	1
LG and straight communities are not accepting of bi people and don't provide inclusive services or scene	1
Bisexual people are stereotyped as greedy, not able to make up their minds etc.	4
Both gay and straight people assume bisexual people can't make up their minds	1
Stereotypes that bisexuals are greedy or cannot make up their mind	1
I've always had male partners until current female partner, so I feel people don't accept my bisexual identity	1
Bi people who become more involved in LG scene are seen as greedy, pushy or privileged	1

Exclusion from lesbian and/or gay scene	3
Disparaging comments about bisexuals make me feel uncomfortable in gay clubs	1
Others on gay scene don't class me as 'one of them'	1
I feel people judge me differently if I mention my bisexuality	1
Difficulties of having opposite sex partner	3
Hostility within LGBT community to sexual/intimate relationships with opposite sex	1
Worried and uncomfortable about being honest re: bisexuality because LGBT community hostile to opposite-sex relationships	1
Attitude among L and G that bisexual women are no longer bisexual if in long term relationship with a man	1
Encountered verbal abuse and mistrust from other LGBT people because of attitude that bisexual women are no longer bisexual if in relationship with a man	1
I feel excluded from gay and lesbian events because I am a bisexual woman with a male partner, which makes me look 'straight'	1
Some people think it's ok to be bisexual if you have a same sex partner, but not if you have an opposite sex partner (shouldn't identify as queer either)	1
Psychological and affective effects of marginalisation (general, not specifically with respect to either LG or straight communities)	3
I feel shunned or made to feel eccentric when I come out to people as bi.	1
People don't realise how hard it is to be comfortable with one's own bisexuality	1
Marginalisation of bi people results in exclusion and closeting (although recognise that less likely to be queerbashed for showing intimacy with opposite sex partner in public)	1
Silenced, adrift, invisible, hidden on the surface; but not marginalised in terms of homophobia from prejudiced bigots	1
Few bisexual people/events	2
Bi events are rare but I feel like I can fit in there and not hide any aspect of my identity or background	1
There aren't many bisexual people	1
Others think that I'm really heterosexual	1
Friends and family sometimes think I'm going through a phase and hope I'll become heterosexual again	1
Occasionally experienced lesbians being suspicious of women who've previously been straight	1
Not sure what people make of me as I'm fairly out	1
Being black I can sometimes feel marginalised	1
Depends on the situation	1

Notes

1. Major categories are marked in bold type. Sub-categories of major categories are indented beneath the major category entry, except for sub-categories of the major category entitled 'Norms, expectations and stereotypes'. For the major category 'Norms, expectations and stereotypes', there is a two level hierarchy of sub-categories. The first level of sub-category appears in italics. The second level – sub-categories of the first level of sub-category – appears indented.
2. Some discursive entries (sub-categories) are counted under more than one major category.

Many respondents' comments either explicitly or implicitly describe the norms and expectations that can inform the marginalisation of bisexual people:

Sometimes. I am a straight acting man, not by any type of choice, this is simply who I am. I find it annoying when I tell people I sleep with men that they say "Oh, well I couldn't have told" as though I should be pleased by this. They have no concept of the utter nightmare it causes, and I'm sure they'd object if I said "Oh, you don't seem straight at all". Most-, but not all-, straight men act differently toward me when they find out, though not always toward my "obviously" gay friends. As though I can't be taken at face value. Although men around my own age seem far less concerned. But I can't just say to people when I first meet them, "Hello ... and by the way I sleep with men" that would just be weird. I don't hide my sexuality, but nor do I feel the need to constantly explain it to people. Do gay or straight men do this? I doubt it. Gay men rarely make the first move on me, which is just plain annoying since I'm shy, unless of course they're the lecherous type who come on to everyone. I find that uncomfortable, which then requires more explanation about being gay but not attracted to them, which causes offense obviously, despite being tactful, - see, nightmare. Oh yes, and being told when entering gay clubs "This is a gay club/ night" I'm like, yes I know this, in fact it's fairly obvious, this is why I am here, the giant penis made out of fruit on the front door gave you away, although a "Yeah I know" usually has to suffice. My sexuality seems more important to other people than it does to me, I simply enjoy having sex with attractive people. Simple as.

(Questionnaire 314)

This comment shows stereotypes about how gay and straight men are supposed to act are used by others to police sexual identities and belonging. Differences between those who act 'straight' and those who act 'gay' can be used to take away space for bisexual people or men who have sex with men but who are believed to act and look 'straight'. Bisexual people and men who have sex with men but who 'act straight' are rendered illegible, unrecognisable. This respondent describes some of the effects of not having one's identity recognised: not having other men 'make the first move' and having one's sexual identity and belonging in a gay space challenged by door staff at gay clubs. He implies that he faces a pressure (that he resists) to either hide or have to explain his sexuality to new acquaintances or strangers.

It is not only strangers and LGBT people that have negative reactions to bisexual identities:

Sometimes friends and family think that I'm going through a "phase" and hope I will become heterosexual again. To give them credit, this is new for them to come to terms with, and they have all been supportive. I feel that some lesbians feel suspicious of women who

sleep with women who have previously been "straight". I've only occasionally experienced this personally, though. As a generalisation, I've heard that some lesbians blame bisexual women for spreading STDs in the lesbian community.

(Questionnaire 297)

One kind of norm that is clearly illustrated in this narrative: the respondent's family and friends place value on heterosexuality. Again, the norm that individuals should either be unambiguously straight or unambiguously gay or lesbian is apparent. The latter is also evidenced by lesbians who are suspicious of women who have previously been 'straight'. A third type of stereotype that this respondent has encountered is the idea that bisexual women spread sexually transmitted infections within lesbian communities.

Straight, gay and lesbian people can show a lack of understanding of bisexuality and attempt to police what they see as the sharp boundaries between heterosexuality and being lesbian or gay. Anything outside of the categories created by these boundaries might seem 'strange' to them.

Sometimes I feel shunned, when I come out to people as Bi. Or feel eccentric. A work colleague today said in disbelief he has never met anyone as strange as me. It is just they can't pigeonhole me. They haven't experienced anyone saying they are bi before. I think they would feel more comfortable if I said I was gay. That is why I'm outing myself, so people know that there are people like us out there, who lead a different life.

(Questionnaire 139)

Bisexual people can feel excluded from both straight communities and so-called LGBT communities. Indeed, as respondent 77 suggests, what are described as LGBT communities and scenes are often in effect only lesbian or gay communities and scenes. Consequently, this respondent feels the need to hide her/his identity. Events specific to bisexual people might help in providing a space where bisexual people can belong without feeling like outsiders or interlopers.

Because it often feels like there is no one place where I fit it. Gay people fit in the gay scene and services, straight people fit in the mainstream world. I often feel like I'm bouncing between the two and don't feel like I can settle as long as I am true to myself. In rare events such as bi specific events, I finally feel like I am at home and can be truly "me" and not have to hide any aspect of my identity or background

(Questionnaire 77)

This respondent also feels excluded from both lesbian and gay communities and straight communities. Moreover, as already discussed in the last chapter, one kind of stereotype that recurs in several bisexual respondents' accounts is that bisexual people are 'greedy' and 'cannot make up their minds' between being heterosexual or being lesbian or gay.

The following respondent is clearly familiar with the stereotype of bisexual people being greedy or pushy and links this to perceptions that lesbians and gay men might have about bisexual people being privileged or at least exempt from the effects of queerbashing if they are with an opposite-sex partner.

It's been my experience that neither the LG community nor the straight community is even prepared to accept bi people, let alone provide truly inclusive services or an inclusive scene - and bi people who try and become more involved in the LG (and supposedly BT) scene are generally seen as greedy, pushy, or approaching issues from a position of privilege. Although in terms of homophobic attack, of course I'm less likely to be queerbashed for walking hand in hand with my opposite sex partners, I feel the continued marginalisation of bi people results in a high level of exclusion and closeting for bi people.

(Questionnaire 646)

The lack of an 'inclusive scene' and of services where bi people can feel included can result in bi people being closeted and in forms of marginalisation that can be different from those experienced by lesbians and gay men.

The following comments all remark upon the perception that others see bisexual people as greedy and unable to make up their minds.

Because of the misconception that 'bisexuals are just greedy or cannot make up their mind' I do not think people realise just how hard it is for some to be comfortable with their bisexuality

(Questionnaire 471)

Both gay and straight communities can be dismissive, assuming you can't make up your mind.

(Questionnaire 179)

Because I've always had male partners until my current female partner I feel people don't truly accept my identity

(Questionnaire 535)

Questionnaire 535 shows that entering into a relationship with a partner of a different sex from one's previous partners is viewed with suspicion by others, again invoking the idea that one's 'true identity' must either be straight or lesbian (or gay male). Thus bisexual people can be perceived as individuals who have not yet decided which sexuality they will 'really' identify with. This might be understood as part of a wider pressure that is exerted socially towards having what is understood as a definitive and consistent self identity.

Because every larger-scale LGBT event you ever see has 'identity workshops' and similar and I seem to be in a minority in not feeling the urge to find a pigeonhole for myself.

(Questionnaire 321)

4.3. LGBT scenes and communities

Bisexual respondents were asked in the questionnaire about their experiences of bullying, abuse, discrimination, exclusion from services, and inability to access services in Brighton & Hove. The following table (table 4.3a) shows that 30% of bisexual respondents have experienced bullying, abuse, discrimination or exclusion from LGBT people, while 19% have experienced these forms of marginalisation from LGBT venues and events.

Table 4.3a: **Sources of experiences of bullying, abuse, discrimination, and exclusion in Brighton & Hove in the last five years**

LGBT people	30%
LGBT venues and events	19%
LGBT services and groups / Mainstream venues and events	11%

Bisexual people often have to negotiate hostility against them with lesbian and gay scenes.

Ruth: **It is actually scary being out on the gay scene. Say if I'm chatting somebody up in the Marlborough or wherever, or chatting a female up, and it's all going well and I'm like 'Oh no, I've got to do the bisexual bit - now is this going to be the end of it, it's either going to go two ways, she's either going to go 'Great, fine, not a problem'; the other way she'll be like 'Bye!'.**

Hayley: **It's also contagious. An ex-girlfriend when she identified very strongly as a lesbian, when she started dating a bi woman all her lesbian friends ostracised her and she got chucked out of the lesbian scene for, you know, 'contamination'.**

(Bisexual focus group)

Hayley's comment also shows that the social enforcement of the purity of lesbian communities is also exercised upon lesbians who enter into relationships with bisexual women.

Similarly, for the following respondent as for other bi people, LGBT spaces can be less than welcoming:

Sashi: [they were] told [that] they weren't bisexual - these were women - they were just straight girls wanting to get on the gay scene. That was in one of the clubs they were told that.

Ruth: It was the [name of a club] Manager. It is actually scary being out on the gay scene. I actually feel really frightened.

(Bisexual focus group)

Ruth says that she feels frightened on the gay scene and Sashi recounts an incident at a club where the group members' bisexual identities were rejected and they were labelled 'straight', suggesting that bisexual identities are seen by some others within LGBT communities as not 'gay' enough for the 'gay scene'.

The following responses were given to the question: 'Do you feel marginalized by this aspect of your identity? If 'Yes', why do you feel marginalized?'

Have come across hostility in the LGBT community to the idea of being intimate emotionally and sexually with the opposite sex. This can make me feel uncomfortable and worried about being honest about my bisexuality.

(Questionnaire 38)

There is a prevailing attitude that bisexual women are no longer bisexual if in a long term relationship with a man. I have encountered verbal abuse and mistrust from other LGBT folk

(Questionnaire 76)

I feel that bisexual people have a stigma attached to them that gay and lesbian people don't have. Because we are neither gay nor straight, it sometimes feels hard to fit into either group; some people don't understand bisexuality, even people that you assume would understand, like a lot of gay and lesbians. I have felt uncomfortable in gay clubs before because of the bitching I hear about bisexuals; although I am not personally being attacked it still hurts and makes me feel uncomfortable because they are attacking a part of me that I feel is important in defining who I am. Not only that, but because I am a bisexual female with a male partner I feel excluded from gay and lesbian events; I 'look' straight because I have a male partner and sometimes feel marginalized by people because of that. Some people think it's ok to be bisexual if you have a same sex partner, but if you get an opposite sex partner then you shouldn't hold the label 'bisexual' anymore, or identify as queer in anyway. Crazy but true

(Questionnaire 525)

These answers show the hostility faced by bisexual people within LGBT communities, especially when they are in relationships with opposite-sex partners or simply express any intimacy with a member of the opposite sex. Other members of LGBT communities sometimes act as if having a relationship or being intimate with a member of the opposite sex disqualifies one from being part of LGBT communities. Again, bisexual people are can feel that they only belong if they are 'really' gay or lesbian, as evidenced by their relationships or intimacy with those of the same sex.

4.3.1. Marginalisation from LGBT scenes

Table 4.3b: "I enjoy using/going to the LGBT commercial venues and events in Brighton & Hove" by sexual identity

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
Agree	No.	188	339	30	34	591
	%	67.6	79.0	63.8	55.7	72.5
Disagree	No.	16	28	4	8	56
	%	5.8	6.5	8.5	13.1	6.9
Don't use	No.	46	37	7	13	103
	%	16.5	8.6	14.9	21.3	12.6
Unsure	No.	28	25	6	6	65
	%	10.1	5.8	12.8	9.8	8.0
Total	No.	278	429	47	61	815
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4.3b shows that 56% (n. 34) of those who define themselves as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual enjoy the scene compared to 79% of gay men, 68% of lesbians and 64% of bisexuals. However, due to small numbers this test is not statistically significant.

Table 4.3c: "I enjoy using/going to the LGBT commercial venues and events in Brighton & Hove" by sexual identity

		Lesbian	Gay	Other	Total
Agree	No.	188	339	64	591
	%	67.6	79.0	59.3	72.5
Disagree	No.	16	28	12	56
	%	5.8	6.5	11.1	6.9
Don't use	No.	46	37	20	103
	%	16.5	8.6	18.5	12.6
Unsure	No.	28	25	12	65
	%	10.1	5.8	11.1	8.0
Total	No.	278	429	108	815
	%	100	100	100	100

Table 4.3c shows that 19% of those who identified other than lesbian or gay and 17% of lesbians do not use the LGBT scene compared to 9% of gay men. Those who identify as other than lesbian or gay are less likely (59%, n. 64) than lesbians (68%, n. 188) or gay men (79%, n. 339) to enjoy using LGBT commercial venues and events ($p < .0001$).

36% of bisexual people agree with the statement that when they are in relationships with partners of a different sex, lesbian and gay scene venues are welcoming; however, 38% of bisexuals disagree with this statement. It is not only the venues themselves that are unwelcoming to bisexual people in relationships with opposite-sex partners, but it is also other patrons of the venues who regulate bisexual people's behaviour, making them feel uncomfortable and making them alter their practices.

Ruth: I've got a boyfriend, we are both as gay as each other, you know, we've been out as queer, gay, whatever you want to call it for years and years and years, and he comes down here and we wanna go out and going to a straight venue it just doesn't cross our minds. It's just, you know, "Where shall we go? Shall we go to the Marlborough? Shall we go to the Queen's Head, Queen's Arms?" We've got a queer history as everybody else in the pub. [But] when we go out to these places we can't be affectionate with each other and we can't kiss and cuddle and be obviously together like you would same sex couples in the same place and it feels uncomfortable. Sometimes we're like we're getting filthy looks from people like, you know, "What's that straight couple doing in here?" I have to regulate my behaviour to gay pub.

(Bisexual focus group)

The following table (table 4.3d) shows qualitative responses to the question 'Do you feel that lesbian and gay venues and events demonstrate that they include and welcome bisexual people?'

Table 4.3d: Summary of responses: Do you feel that lesbian and gay venues and events demonstrate that they include and welcome bisexual people?

Categories	No. of responses
Attitudes, prejudices, stereotypes	5
Attitudes of lesbians and gay men:	
Make me say I'm gay in order to fit in	1
'Sitting on fence', 'confused', 'can't make up mind'	1
Attitudes in lesbian community/on lesbian scene:	
Bisexuals are unable to choose 'what they want'	1
Bisexuals are untrustworthy	1
Expectation that bisexual people are bad news/seedy (even if lesbians in relationships with bisexuals are accepted)	1
Stereotypes operating in 'gay' venues (e.g. long hair) means bisexual people sometimes mistaken for 'straight'	1
Have been asked to leave a 'gay venue' because it was assumed I am straight	1
Events, club nights etc are run for lesbians and gay men; Venues target or advertise to lesbians and gay men	4
Bisexual people are only welcomed if in same-sex relationships/not welcome if in opposite-sex relationships	3

'B' in 'LGBT' seems 'tacked on'	1
Bisexual people feel left out	1
Bisexual people face ridicule from gay comedian	1
Word of mouth re: venues, events etc usually defined as 'gay' or 'lesbian'	1
Not clear whether bisexuals are welcome at many venues/events	1
I have to go out as either a 'straight' person (pursuing those of opposite sex in straight venues) or a 'gay' person (pursuing those of same sex in gay/lesbian venues)	1
I feel awkward being with opposite sex partner in gay/lesbian venue and awkward being with same sex partner in straight venue	1
Bias in lesbian community against bisexual people	1
Lesbian scene needs more variety/less cliquy	1
I don't fit into straight, gay or bisexual	1
Gay and straight people don't welcome bisexual people because (other) bisexual people seem to 'sleep around a lot'	1
Bisexual people would be more welcome if understood options such as long term committed polyamorous relationships	1
How would venues 'demonstrate' welcome?	1
Cannot comment: it's not the first or most obvious thing	1

Notes

1. Major categories are marked in bold type. Sub-categories of major categories are indented beneath the major category entry, except for sub-categories of the major category entitled 'Attitudes, prejudices, stereotypes'. For the major category 'Attitudes, prejudices, stereotypes', there is a two level hierarchy of sub-categories. The first level of sub-category appears in italics. The second level – sub-categories of the first level of sub-category – appears indented.
2. Some discursive entries (sub-categories) are counted under more than one major category.

Some bisexual respondents indicate that it is the businesses that run LGBT clubs and venues or those who run club nights who marginalise bisexual people by marketing their club nights only at lesbians or gay men. In such cases, it is unclear if bisexual people are welcome.

Although bisexual people are represented in the category LGBT, often club nights specifically say 'gay' or 'lesbian', bisexual people are neither gay nor straight and so while it could be assumed that gay and lesbian nights will include and welcome bisexual people, it is not clear.

(Questionnaire 525)

Sometimes, lesbian or gay venues and club nights can be unwelcoming to bisexual people if they are in an opposite-sex relationship.

Although it has not happened to me personally, i think that some gay venues are unwelcoming if at that particular time a person is in a male-female couple.

(Questionnaire 542)

Venues and club nights might effectively require bisexual people to demonstrate that they are in a same-sex relationship or have lesbian or gay friends.

Often it seems as though the 'B' in 'LGBT' is just tacked on and the event is run for those who can demonstrate a same-sex relationship or social circle.

(Questionnaire 38)

In other words, there are conditions placed upon bisexual people's belonging on the LGBT scene. This can result in active discrimination against bisexual people from venues or club nights. This respondent suggests that this discrimination can take place based on stereotypes regarding bodily appearance.

Even LGBT venues and events often have LESBIAN and GAY throughout and it seems like they are only targeting bi people if they are with same sex partners. I (and bi friends of mine) have had a number of bad experiences in gay venues where we have been treated badly or asked to leave because they assumed we were straight. Often it can be based on stereotypes such as having long hair! It's ridiculous.

(Questionnaire 77)

More generally, lesbian and gay people who socialise on LGBT scenes can also make venues and events unwelcoming towards bisexual people. The following quote illustrates how hostile attitudes towards bisexual people can effectively silence bisexual people and make them hide their identities.

The attitudes towards bisexuals by openly gay and lesbian people can sometimes lead you to say you are gay just to fit in and keep the peace.

(Questionnaire 408)

This respondent also suggests how attitudes can be understood to be so prevalent that speaking up against them seems fraught with social risks.

When acts like [name of drag act] who I am a fan of, at the Harlequin or a Pride this year, when he does his hackneyed who are gay, lesbian, bi and straight in the audience question routine. When it comes to bi, he says 'Confused.com' or at the Harlequin one time his response was 'Stop sitting on the fence'. I hope I have a sense of humour. But I feel humiliated when the audience laugh and misunderstood. It is not helpful he is not trying to understand what it is to be bi. But perhaps he does and it is cheap laugh for his routine. I want to challenge him, if I'm near enough next time, to say 'It cos you are scared, and you have had thoughts of having sex with a woman and that is why us bi people worry you'. But perhaps not. I can imagine being whiplashed by his tongue

(Questionnaire 139)

Prominent figures on the gay scene making fun of bisexual identities can make bi people feel 'humiliated' when the 'joke' is recognised and agreed with as evident in the laughter of the audience. This agreement with the themes of the joke is interpreted by this respondent as insecurity on the part of those who rigidly define their identities as either gay or straight. However, as noted earlier, one of the stereotypes upon which suspicion about bisexual people is based is that they are 'greedy' and 'can't make up their minds'.

There tends to be a bias in the lesbian community against Bisexuals as they are considered "untrustworthy" and unable to "choose what they want"

(Questionnaire 717)

Here, respondent 717 suggests that, among many lesbians, the idea that bisexual people are unable to 'choose what they want' is associated with bisexual people being untrustworthy. The respondent associates this idea with the entire 'lesbian community'.

The following respondent describes how others within lesbian and gay scenes see her as 'seedy' by virtue of the fact that she is bisexual.

I am female & bi. My partner is lesbian. The L&G scene recognises my partner, but people expect bad things from me, or presume me to be something seedy, something I am not. The scene could be more varied, less cliquey...

(Questionnaire 664)

This respondent is asking for a more accepting and varied scene in order to accommodate a range of sexual identities, including those whose gender identities cannot be forced into one 'camp' or the other.

Overall, these kinds of attitudes, stereotypes and discrimination can leave many bisexual people feeling excluded from lesbian and gay scenes and excluded from straight venues, too.

I feel that sometimes when I go out I either have to go out as a gay person (to gay clubs etc, pursuing women) or as a straight person (going to straight clubs pursuing men) it is often hard to be myself as i feel awkward being with a man in a gay club or a woman in a straight club

(Questionnaire 636)

4.4. Straight/heterosexual venues

The quantitative data shows no significant differences by sexual identity in how comfortable respondents feel using straight spaces. The figures show

that 49% of bisexual respondents agree that when in relationships with same-sex partners, straight venues and services are welcoming; 20% of bisexual respondents disagree.

Clare: **I go to straight pubs a fair bit because a lot of my friends are straight, and I want to socialise with them.**

(Bisexual focus group)

4.5. Conclusion

Many bisexual people face marginalisation and exclusion from both straight society and from LGBT communities and scenes. 30% of bisexual respondents have experienced bullying, abuse, discrimination or exclusion from LGBT people, while 19% have experienced these forms of marginalisation from LGBT venues and events. An understanding of this marginalisation must attend not only to discrimination, prejudice, and abuse, but must also attend to understanding how marginalisation operates through norms and expectations. These norms and expectations can shape how, for example, stereotypes are used to police sexual identities and belonging. They also underlie the costs incurred by bisexual people in not being recognised as a legitimate presence in lesbian and gay spaces such as clubs and bars. Bisexual respondents speak of norms which imply that they feel forced into binary categories of sexual identity: individuals should be either unambiguously straight or unambiguously lesbian or gay. Such a norm allows a policing of LGBT communities and scenes by both businesses (such as LGBT venues) and individuals so that what are supposed to be 'LGBT' communities and scenes, are often in effect only lesbian or gay communities and scenes.

One of the stereotypes that recurs in several bisexual respondents' accounts is that bisexual people are 'greedy', 'cannot make up their minds' and 'sit on the fence' between being heterosexual or being lesbian or gay. This supposed inability to make up their minds is associated by many lesbians and gay men with bisexual people being considered untrustworthy. Bisexual people especially face hostility within LGBT communities when they are in relationships or express intimacy with a member of the opposite sex. 38% of bisexual respondents disagree with the statement that when they are in relationships with partners of a different sex, lesbian and gay scene venues are welcoming (36% of bisexual respondents agree with the statement). Other members of LGBT communities sometimes act as if having a relationship or being intimate with a member a different sex disqualifies one from being part of LGBT communities. Those who run venues or club nights can also marginalise bisexual people by marketing their venues or club nights only at lesbians or gay men. This can, potentially unwittingly, create an unwelcoming feeling for bisexual people if they are in an opposite-sex relationship. Moreover, the narratives of some bisexual respondents suggests that bisexual people sometimes face active discrimination from venues or club nights, often based on flimsy stereotypes regarding bodily appearance as well as being with a partner of a different sex. Heterosexual venues and club nights, however, can also be unwelcoming. 20% of bisexual respondents disagree with the statement that when in relationships with same-sex partners,

straight venues and services are welcoming; however, 49% of bisexual respondents do agree with the statement.

5. Health

5.1. Introduction

This chapter will examine health indicators, health-related practices, and relationships with health services and health information as they pertain to bisexual people. It will start by looking at the prevalence of consumption of alcohol and drugs among bisexual respondents. It will then move on to consider sexual practices and relationship forms: an understanding of these underpins the subsequent discussion of sexual health. After outlining the prevalence of HIV amongst the sample, two main dimensions of sexual health will be considered. The first is how bisexual and other respondents access sexual health care and advice, in particular sexual health check ups. The second is the appropriateness of currently available sexual health information to bisexual people's sexual practices and identities. The chapter will then move on to consider the extent and nature of bisexual respondents' involvement in sex work. Finally, the chapter will look at the extent to which GPs are perceived as bi-friendly.

5.2. Alcohol

79% (n. 34) of bisexual respondents say they drink alcohol. This compares to 89% (n. 372) of gay respondents, 89% (n. 24) of queer respondents and 81% (n. 220) of lesbian respondents. Only two thirds (66%, n. 19) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer drink alcohol (p=.001).

Table 5.2a: **Do you drink alcohol by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Yes	No.	220	372	34	24	19	669
	%	81.2	89	79.1	88.9	65.5	84.9
No	No.	51	46	9	3	10	119
	%	18.8	11	20.9	11.1	34.5	15.1
Total	No.	271	418	43	27	29	788
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

5.3. Drugs

Just under half the respondents (n. 406) say that they have taken illegal drugs or used legal drugs without a prescription or relevant medical advice. A significantly higher proportion of people who describe themselves as queer (85%, n. 23) and slightly higher proportion of bisexual people (62%, n. 29) have done this, compared with the other sexual identity groups (p=.001).

Table 5.3a: **In the last five years have you taken illegal drugs or used legal drugs without a prescription/relevant medical advice? By sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Yes	No.	125	217	29	23	12	406
	%	45	51.1	61.7	85.2	41.4	50.4
No	No.	153	208	18	4	17	400
	%	55	48.9	38.3	14.8	58.6	49.6
Total	No.	278	425	47	27	29	806
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

5.4. Sex

Sex is historically an important consideration for those considering LGBT health. Count Me In Too asked a number of questions about sexual practices, the data from which form the background for the discussion of sexual health below (see also Browne and Lim, 2008c). However, since Count Me In Too did not ask respondents to specify the precise nature of their sexual practices or whether or not they were practicing safer sex, care should be taken in drawing any conclusions about sexual health and/or the risks of the transmission of STIs from the data in this and the following sections.

Table 5.4a shows that 94% (n. 44) of bisexual respondents have had sex in the past three years. 81% (n. 48) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual have had sex in the past three years.

Table 5.4a: **Have you had sex with someone in the last 3 years? By sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
Yes	No.	260	407	44	48	759
	%	94.2	95.1	93.6	81.4	93.7
No	No.	16	21	3	11	51
	%	5.8	4.9	6.4	18.6	6.3
Total	No.	276	428	47	59	810
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Comparing lesbian and gay respondents against all other respondents yields a statistically significant relationship. Table 5.4b shows that a significantly smaller proportion (87%, n. 92) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian or gay say they have had sex in the past three years, compared to over 94% of lesbians and gay men ($p=.006$). This challenges the stereotypes addressed in chapter 4 that bisexual men and women are 'greedy' in terms of sexual relations.

Table 5.4b: **Have you had sex with someone in the last 3 years? By sexual identity, recoded**

		Lesbian	Gay	Other	Total
Yes	No.	260	407	92	759
	%	94.2	95.1	86.8	93.7
No	No.	16	21	14	51
	%	5.8	4.9	13.2	6.3
Total	No.	276	428	106	810
	%	100	100	100	100

5.5. Sexual partners and relationships

5.5.1. Are you in a partnership/relationship now?

39% (n. 16) of bisexual respondents are in a sexual relationship with a same-sex partner, 27% (n. 11) of bisexual respondents are in a relationship with an opposite sex partner, and 20% (n. 8) of bisexual respondents are not in a partnership or relationship at present (see table 5.5a).

Table 5.5a: **Current sexual relationships/partnerships by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
No	No.	70	170	8	11	15	274
	%	26.2	41.9	19.5	40.7	55.6	35.7
Yes - same gender/sex	No.	194	232	16	10	5	457
	%	72.7	57.1	39.0	37.0	18.5	59.5
Yes - opposite gender/sex	No.	1	1	11	4	5	22
	%	.4	.2	26.8	14.8	18.5	2.9
Yes - different gender/sex	No.	0	2	3	1	2	8
	%	.0	.5	7.3	3.7	7.4	1.0
Yes > one person	No.	2	1	3	1	0	7
	%	.7	.2	7.3	3.7	.0	.9
Total	No.	267	406	41	27	27	768
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

40% (n. 11) of queer respondents are not currently in a relationship, while 37% (n. 10) are in a same-sex relationship. 15% (n. 4) of queer respondents are in a relationship with someone of the opposite sex.

56% (n. 15) of respondents who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are not currently in a relationship. 19% (n. 5) of such respondents are in a same-sex relationship, and 19% (n. 5) are in an opposite-sex relationship.

The differences among different sexual identities regarding the sex or gender of their current partners are not statistically significant.

5.5.2. Types of relationship

78% (n. 31) of bisexual respondents say they usually have monogamous relationships with one person. The corresponding figure for queer respondents is also 78% (n. 21), while the figure for those who identify as an 'other' sexual identity than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer is 82% (n. 23).

10% (n. 4) of bisexual respondents say they usually have open relationships, while 5% (n. 2) say they are polyamorous. 3% (n. 1) of bisexual respondents say they do not usually have committed relationships. 11% (n. 3) of queer respondents usually have open relationships. Again, the differences among different sexual identity groups regarding the kinds of relationships they have are not statistically significant.

Table 5.5b: I usually have relationships with... By sexual identity

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
One person in monogamous relationship	No.	246	292	31	21	23	613
	%	94.3	72.6	77.5	77.8	82.1	80.9
I don't usually have committed relationships	No.	4	27	1	0	2	34
	%	1.5	6.7	2.5	.0	7.1	4.5
I am polyamorous (> 1 person)	No.	4	10	2	1	0	17
	%	1.5	2.5	5.0	3.7	.0	2.2
I usually have open relationships	No.	1	58	4	3	1	67
	%	.4	14.4	10.0	11.1	3.6	8.8
Other	No.	6	15	2	2	2	27
	%	2.3	3.7	5.0	7.4	7.1	3.6
Total	No.	261	402	40	27	28	758
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

5.5.3. Sexual partners in the last twelve months

Of those who have had sex in the past three years, table 5.5c shows that 32% (n. 14) of bisexual respondents have had one sexual partner in the past twelve months. 48% (n. 21) of bisexual respondents have had sex with between two and five people in the past twelve months. 54% (n. 26) of respondents who defined as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay or bisexual had sex with one person in the past twelve months, while 27% (n. 13) have

had sex with between two and five people. These differences by sexual identity are not statistically significant. However, it should be noted (again in contrast to assertions of 'greedy bisexuals'), that it is gay male respondents who make up the majority of those who have had sex with over 26 partners within the past year.

Table 5.5c: **How many people have you had sex with in the last twelve months? By sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
One	No.	186	112	14	26	338
	%	71.5	27.7	31.8	54.2	44.7
2 - 5	No.	50	100	21	13	184
	%	19.2	24.8	47.7	27.1	24.3
6 - 10	No.	9	57	4	3	73
	%	3.5	14.1	9.1	6.3	9.7
11 - 15	No.	1	29	1	3	34
	%	.4	7.2	2.3	6.3	4.5
16 - 20	No.	0	26	1	1	28
	%	.0	6.4	2.3	2.1	3.7
21 - 25	No.	0	15	1	0	16
	%	.0	3.7	2.3	.0	2.1
26 or more	No.	1	58	0	1	60
	%	.4	14.4	.0	2.1	7.9
None in last 12 months	No.	13	7	2	1	23
	%	5.0	1.7	4.5	2.1	3.0
Total	No.	260	404	44	48	756
	%	100	100	100	100	100

However, if lesbians and gay men are compared with all other respondents, then a statistically significant relationship is found ($p = .0005$).

Figure 5.5a: **No. of people respondents have had sex with in the last 12 months by sexual identity**

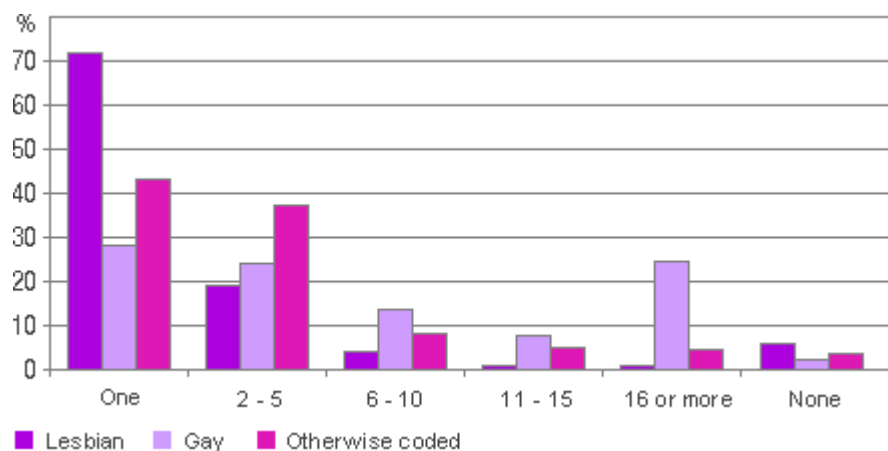


Figure 5.5a shows that those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian or gay are more likely (37%, n. 34) to have had sex with between two and five people in the past twelve months than are lesbians (19%, n. 50) or gay men (25%, n. 100). 44% (n. 40) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian or gay have had sex with only one person in the past twelve months, making such respondents less likely to have done so than lesbians (72%, n. 186), but more likely to have done so than gay men (28%, n. 112).

5.6. Sexual Health

5.6.1. HIV

Only one bisexual respondent has had a positive HIV test result. This is 2% of the sample of bisexual respondents. This figure contrasts with some stereotypes of bisexual people as vectors of disease. One respondent who identifies as queer has had a positive HIV test result.

5.6.2. Sexual health check ups

Table 5.6a: **When did you last have a sexual health check up? – by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
last 6 months	No.	23	122	8	9	162
	%	8.4	28.6	17	14.8	20
last 7 to 12 months	No.	19	70	10	7	106
	%	6.9	16.4	21.3	11.5	13.1
Between 1 – 5 years ago	No.	59	114	7	12	192
	%	21.5	26.7	14.9	19.7	23.7
Over 5 years ago	No.	36	44	4	10	94
	%	13.1	10.3	8.5	16.4	11.6
Don't need a sexual health check up	No.	28	16	2	8	54
	%	10.2	3.7	4.3	13.1	6.7
Never	No.	110	61	16	15	202
	%	40	14.3	34	24.6	24.9
Total	No.	275	427	47	61	810
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table 5.6a shows that 17% (n. 8) of bisexual respondents and 15% (n. 9) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual have had a sexual health check in the past six months. This makes both of these groups less likely to have had a sexual health check up in the last six months than gay men (29%, n. 122), but more likely to have done so than lesbians (8%, n. 23) ($p = .0005$). Bisexual respondents are more likely (21%, n. 10) to have last had a sexual health check within the last 7-12 months than other respondents. 16% (n. 70) of gay men, 12% (n. 7) of those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual, and 7% (n. 19) of lesbians have last had a sexual health check within the past 7-12 months.

Bisexual respondents (4%, n. 2), along with gay men (4%, n. 16) are less likely than lesbians (10%, n. 28) or those identifying as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (13%, n. 8) to say they do not need a sexual health check up. 34% (n. 16) of bisexual respondents have never had a sexual health check up. This makes them less likely to have never had a sexual health check up than lesbians (40%, n. 110), but more likely to have never had one than those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (25%, n. 15) or gay men (14%, n. 61).

5.6.3. Sexual health check ups among those who have had sex in the past three years

Among those who have had sex within the past three years, 18% (n. 8) of bisexual respondents and 19% (n. 9) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual have had a sexual health check up in the last six months. This makes these two groups more likely to have done so than lesbians (8%, n. 21), but less likely to have done so than gay men (29%, n. 116) ($p = .0005$). Bisexual respondents are less likely (5%, n. 2) than respondents of other sexual identities to have last had a sexual health check up more than five years ago.

Bisexual respondents (34%, n. 15) are less likely than lesbians (42%, n. 107) to have never had a sexual health check up, but more likely to have never had one than gay men (14%, n. 55) or those identifying other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (25%, n. 12). 5% (n. 2) of bisexual respondents and 6% (n. 3) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual say they do not need a sexual health check up. This compares to 3% (n. 11) of gay men and 9% (n. 22) of lesbians.

Table 5.6b: Sexual health check ups among those who have had sex in the last three years – by sexual identity

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
last 6 months	No.	21	116	8	9	154
	%	8.2	28.6	18.2	18.8	20.4
last 7 to 12 months	No.	18	70	10	7	105
	%	7	17.3	22.7	14.6	13.9
Between 1 – 5 years ago	No.	56	112	7	11	186
	%	21.8	27.7	15.9	22.9	24.7
Over 5 years ago	No.	33	41	2	6	82
	%	12.8	10.1	4.5	12.5	10.9
Don't need a sexual health check up	No.	22	11	2	3	38
	%	8.6	2.7	4.5	6.3	5
Never	No.	107	55	15	12	189
	%	41.6	13.6	34.1	25	25.1
Total	No.	257	405	44	48	754
	%	100	100	100	100	100

5.6.4. Location of most recent sexual health check up

Table 5.6c: **Where did you have your most recent sexual health check-up? – by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
GP	No.	73	31	6	8	118
	%	56.6	8.9	20.7	22.2	21.8
GU clinic, Warren Browne or other SH clinic in B&H	No.	11	85	4	9	109
	%	8.5	24.5	13.8	25	20.1
Claude Nicol	No.	25	160	10	12	207
	%	19.4	46.1	34.5	33.3	38.3
Other SH clinic outside B&H	No.	15	47	6	4	72
	%	11.6	13.5	20.7	11.1	13.3
THT, LGBT social venue or other	No.	5	24	3	3	35
	%	3.9	6.9	10.3	8.3	6.5
Total	No.	129	347	29	36	541
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Bisexual respondents are more likely than sexual identity other groups to have last had a sexual health check up at a sexual health clinic outside Brighton & Hove (21%, n. 6) or with the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT), at an LGBT venue or elsewhere (10%, n. 3) ($p = .0005$). 21% (n. 6) of bisexual respondents and 22% (n. 8) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual last had a sexual health check up at their GP; this makes both of these groups less likely to have done so than lesbians (57%, n. 73), but more likely to have done so than gay men (9%, n. 31). Table 5.6c also shows that 35% (n. 10) of bisexual respondents and 33% (n. 12) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual last had a sexual health check up at the Claude Nicol clinic; this makes them less likely to have done so than gay men (46%, n. 160), but more likely than lesbian respondents (19%, n. 25). Along with gay men (25%, n. 85), those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are more likely than bisexual respondents (14%, n. 4) or lesbian respondents (9%, n. 11) to have last had a sexual health check up at the Warren Browne clinic or an other GU or sexual health clinic in Brighton & Hove (excluding the Claude Nicol clinic).

5.6.5. Finding help around sex and relationships

Table 5.6d: **If you needed help around sex/relationships would you know where to find it? – by sexual identity**

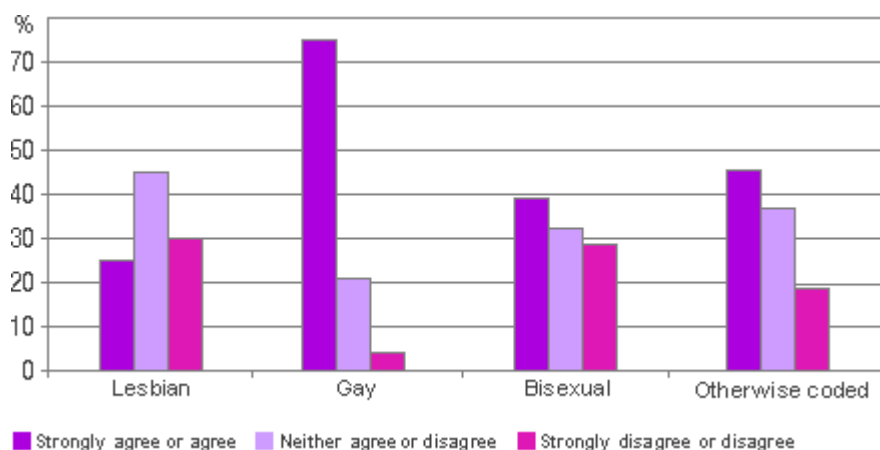
		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Yes	No.	151	279	30	13	16	489
	%	55.7	66.4	63.8	46.4	53.3	61.4
No	No.	120	141	17	15	14	307
	%	44.3	33.6	36.2	53.6	46.7	38.6
Total	No.	271	420	47	28	30	796
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 5.6d shows that those who identify as queer are more likely (54%, n. 15) to not know where to find help pertaining to sex and/or relationships, than those of a another sexual identity. Those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (47%, n. 14) and lesbians (44%, n. 120) are more likely than bisexual respondents (36%, n. 17) and gay men (34%, n. 141) not to know where to find help about sex and/or relationships (p = .01).

5.6.6. Appropriateness of sexual health information to sexual practices

Figure 5.6a shows that 28% (n. 11) of bisexual respondents disagree or strongly disagree that sexual health information available in Brighton & Hove is appropriate to their sexual practices. Along with lesbian respondents (30%, n. 70), this makes bisexual respondents more likely to disagree or strongly disagree that sexual health information is appropriate to their sexual practices than those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (19%, n. 8) or gay men (4%, n. 16) (p=.0005). While lesbians are the least likely group (25%, n. 59) to agree or strongly agree that information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is appropriate to their sexual practices, bisexual respondents (39%, n. 15) are less likely to do so than gay men (75%, n. 293) or those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (45%, n. 19).

Figure 5.6a: 'Information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is appropriate to my sexual practices' by sexual identity



The focus group data also shows that bisexual respondents feel that there is little information on sexual health that is appropriate for them as bisexual people. In the following quotation, a bisexual woman suggests how the information on sexual health that she needs is specific to her being *both* a woman and bisexual. Her needs, in this sense, are different from those of both straight women and lesbians, and it would be insufficient and inappropriate for her to be given sexual health information that pertained to either of these groups.

Ruth: Sexual health. I think there's... I know the Claude Nichol I've heard nothing but good about them and then there's... on top of that there's the Wilde Clinic for gay men and then there isn't so much here, but you know in London there was things specifically aimed at lesbians, but there's nothing aimed at bisexual people and that's a whole different thing on its own, because you've got... I mean I'm poly-amorous anyway, so I'm sleeping with people from both genders and so there isn't any information that's specifically aimed at bisexual people and about the issues around that and it's like, it's like if you look at the stuff that's aimed at straight women it doesn't really mention herpes that much about, you know, the chances of like contact between say women and oral sex with herpes and that sort of thing, so it's like it gets ignored, even though that from what I've heard, the actual health advisers up at the Claude Nichol seem to, you know, have a pretty good idea about it, but there doesn't seem to be, you know, you either go to a straight one or you go to gay one, there isn't anything in between.

(Bisexual focus group)

5.6.7. Appropriateness of sexual health information to gender or sexual identity

Figure 5.6b: 'Information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is appropriate to my gender identity or sexuality' by sexuality

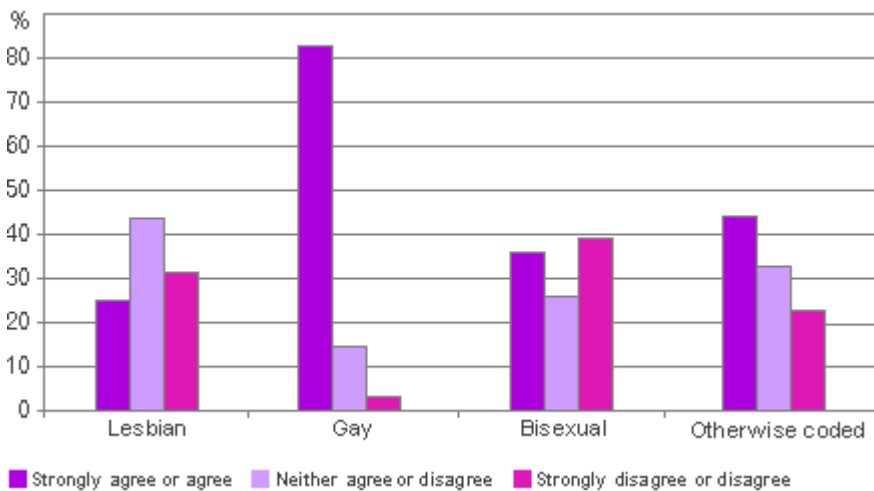


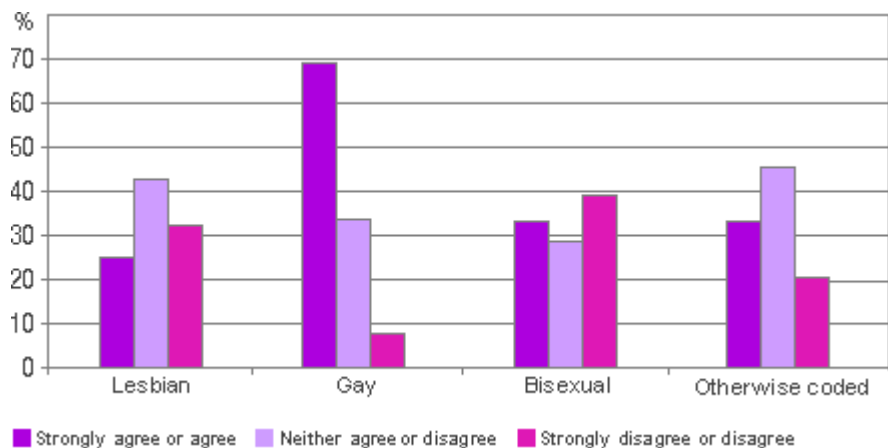
Figure 5.6b shows that bisexual respondents are the most likely (39%, n. 15) group by sexual identity to disagree or strongly disagree with the proposition that 'information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is appropriate to my gender identity or sexuality', compared with 3% (n. 11)

of gay men, 23% (n. 10) of those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual, and 32% (n. 74) of lesbians (p=.0005). Only lesbians (25%, n. 58) are less likely than bisexual people (36%, n. 14) to agree or strongly agree with the proposition. 83% of gay men (n.234) agree or strongly agree with this statement. For those identifying as other than lesbian, gay or bisexual, 44% (n. 19) indicate agreement or strong agreement.

5.6.8. Is sexual health information diverse, catering for all groups?

Bisexual respondents are more likely (39%, n. 15) than other sexuality groups to disagree or strongly disagree that information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is diverse and caters for all groups (p = .0005) (see figure 5.6c below). This compares to 33% (n. 77) of lesbians, 21% (n. 9) of those identifying as of an 'other' sexuality than lesbian, gay or bisexual, and only 8% (n. 30) of gay men. A third (33%, n. 13) of bisexual respondents, and 33% (n. 14) of those identifying as queer or an 'other' sexuality strongly agree or agree that sexual health information is diverse and caters for all groups, compared to 25% (n. 58) of lesbians and 58% (n. 227) of gay men.

Figure 5.6c: 'Information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is diverse, catering for all groups' by sexuality



5.6.9. Qualitative responses regarding sexual health information

Qualitative responses from the focus groups and questionnaires suggest that there is a need for more sexual health information for bisexual people, and that such information needs to account for gender differences as well as differences in sexuality.

I haven't found enough sexual health info specific to bi women, that cover safer sex with women - things to be aware of when you may be having sex with men/women of varying sexualities - e.g. I have sex with bi women, bi men, lesbian women, straight men. I would like safer sex info appropriate to all these groups in one place so I don't have to hunt it all down in different places! I also think it would be of use in the LGBT community as unsafe sex can happen when a person has sex with someone they wouldn't include in their primary identity (e.g. a lesbian having sex with a man).

(Questionnaire 38)

This respondent notes that bisexual women can have sex with people who collectively have various gender and sexual identities. The implications of this is that bisexual women might engage in a wider variety of different kinds of sexual practices than covered in sexual health literature targeted at either straight women or lesbians, and might therefore have different requirements for information regarding sexual health risks and precautions. Such an argument can be made for bisexual men, too. She also points out that a broader literature would be relevant for LGBT people who don't identify as bisexual. The bisexual focus group reiterated this point as the earlier quotation from Ruth suggests.

5.7. Sex Work

This section will consider the exchanging of sex for payment, including the use of sex to find housing or somewhere to stay. The questions that form the basis of this section were provided by Oasis, a female sex work project in Brighton & Hove.

Table 5.7a shows that 18% (n. 5) of queer respondents, 11% (n. 5) of bisexual respondents and 13% (n. 4) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer have taken payment for sex. Along with gay men (13%, n. 55), these groups are more likely to have taken payment for sex than lesbians (4%, n. 10) ($p = .001$).

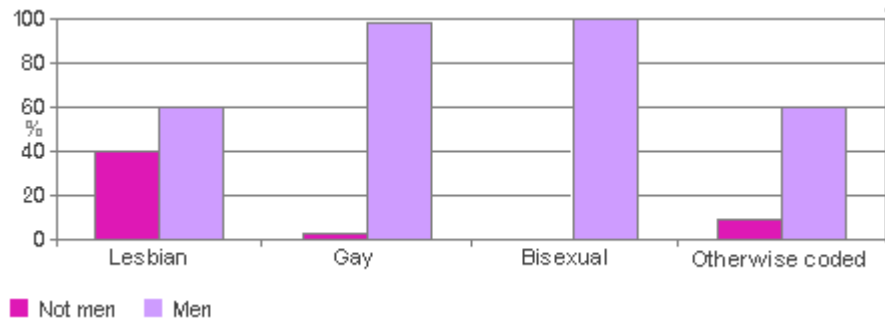
Table 5.7a **Payment for sexual acts by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Yes	No.	10	55	5	5	4	79
	%	3.7	13	10.6	17.9	12.9	9.8
No	No.	263	369	42	23	27	724
	%	96.3	87	89.4	82.1	87.1	90.2
Total	No.	273	424	47	28	31	803
	%	100	100		100	100	100

5.7.1. Selling sex to or exchanging sex with men

Figure 5.6c shows that all five bisexual respondents who have sold or exchanged sex, have done so with men. 90% (n, 9) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual have sold or exchanged sex with men. These figures also show that that 60% (n. 6) of lesbians who have had sex for payment or in exchange for goods other than money, say they have sold sex to or exchanged sex with men, while 40% (n. 4) of lesbians who have sold or exchanged sex, say they have never sold sex to or exchanged sex with men. 98% (n. 55) of gay men who have sold or exchanged sex report having sold sex to or exchanged sex with other men, with only 2% (n. 1) of gay men who have sold or exchanged sex saying they have never done so with men.

Figure 5.6c: **When you sold or exchanged sex, who did you have sex with? – Men by sexual identity**



5.7.2. Selling sex to or exchanging sex with women

Figure 5.6d: **When you sold or exchanged sex, who did you have sex with? – Women by sexual identity**

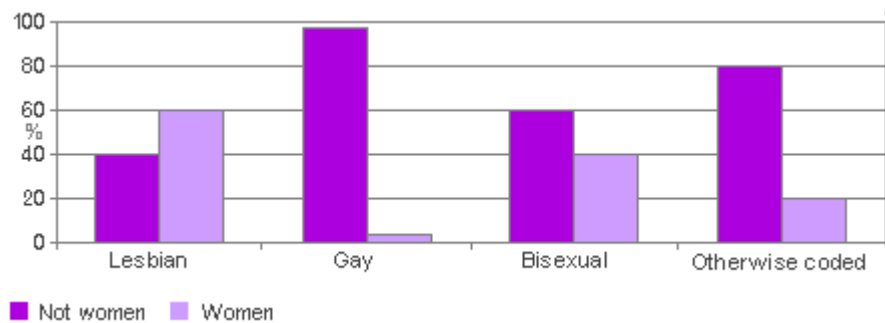


Figure 5.6d shows that 60% (n. 3) of bisexual respondents who have sold or exchanged sex have never done so with women, but 40% (n. 2) say they have sold sex to or exchanged sex with women. Of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual and who have sold or exchanged sex, 20% (n. 2) have sold sex to or exchanged sex with women. The figures also show that 60% (n. 6) of lesbians who have sold or exchanged sex report having sold sex to or exchanged sex with women,

while 40% (n. 4) of lesbians who have sold or exchanged sex say they have never sold sex to or exchanged sex with other women. 96% (n. 53) of gay men who have sold or exchanged sex have never sold sex to or exchanged sex with women, but 4% (n. 2) have sold sex to or exchanged sex with women.

No bisexual respondents report having sold sex to or exchanging sex with those of an 'other' gender.

5.8. GPs

GPs are an important point of initial contact for a wide range of health services, yet the extent to which they are used to do so varies according to perceptions and experiences of how GPs demonstrate prejudice towards and stigmatise LGBT people. It might be speculated that bisexual people may share some of the concerns other LGBT people have regarding how to find 'safe' and 'LGBT friendly' GPs (see Browne and Lim, 2008c).

Less than a quarter of bisexual respondents (23%, n. 11) have disclosed their sexual and/or gender identities to their GPs (table 5.8a). This compares to 71% (n. 20) of queer respondents, 68% of lesbian (n. 188) and of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (n. 21), and 58% (n. 248) of gay men who have made this disclosure.

Table 5.8a: Disclosure of sexual or gender identity to GP by sexuality

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Yes	No.	188	248	11	20	21	488
	%	67.6	58.1	23.4	71.4	67.7	60.2
No	No.	90	179	36	8	10	323
	%	32.4	41.9	76.6	28.6	32.3	39.8
Total	No.	278	427	47	28	31	811
	%	100	100		100	100	100

As suggested in the discussion above regarding sexual health information, sexual (and gender) identities can be important in diagnosis and treatment.

Rosa: **I've got a whole part of mind stream which is not heterosexual, part of it that's bisexual, but there's a bit of it that's trans. So unless the health providers understand that and they understand the issues around that, it's very hard for them to diagnose what the hell's wrong with me. I think respect talks about do they take into account in their diagnosis, you know, the fact that I'm trans-gendered and that fits other parts of my health system. They don't take that into account and even when I tell them it's important they still don't take it into account.**

(Trans focus group 1)

5.9. Conclusions

This chapter has highlighted some of the key areas of concern regarding health care for bisexual people. A slightly higher proportion of bisexual respondents (62%) and a slightly higher proportion of people who describe themselves as queer (85%) or as having a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer say that they have taken illegal drugs or used legal drugs without a prescription or relevant medical advice. Bisexual respondents, however, are slightly less likely (79%) to drink alcohol than queer respondents (89%) or gay men (89%). Only two thirds (66%, n. 19) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer drink alcohol.

A significantly smaller proportion (87%) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian or gay say they have had sex in the past three years, compared to over 94% of lesbians and gay men. 39% of bisexual respondents are in a sexual relationship with a same-sex partner, 27% of bisexual respondents are in a relationship with an opposite sex partner, and 20% (n. 8) of bisexual respondents are not in a partnership or relationship at present. 78% of both bisexual and queer respondents say they usually have monogamous relationships. 10% of bisexual respondents say they usually have open relationships, while 5% say they are polyamorous. Those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian or gay are more likely (37%) to have had sex with between two and five people in the past twelve months than lesbians or gay men.

Both bisexual respondents (17%) and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (15%) are less likely to have had a sexual health check up in the past six months than gay men (but more likely to have had one than lesbian respondents). Bisexual respondents are more likely (21%) to have last had a sexual health check within the last 7-12 months than other respondents. 34% of bisexual respondents have never had a sexual health check up, making them more likely to have never had one than gay men or those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual. Among those who have had sex within the past three years, bisexual respondents (18%) and those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are less likely to have had a sexual health check in the last six months than gay men (29%). Bisexual respondents are more likely than other sexual identity groups to have last had a sexual health check up at a sexual health clinic outside Brighton & Hove (21%) or with the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT), at an LGBT venue or elsewhere (10%). 11% of bisexual respondents have taken payment of sex. All of the bisexual respondents who have sold or exchanged sex have done so with men, while 40% of them have done so with women.

28% (n. 11) of bisexual respondents disagree or strongly disagree that sexual health information available in Brighton & Hove is appropriate to their sexual practices, making them more likely to disagree or strongly disagree than gay men or those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual. Bisexual respondents are the most likely (39%) group by sexual identity to disagree or strongly disagree with the proposition that 'information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is appropriate to my gender identity or sexuality.' They are also more likely (39%) than other sexual identity groups to disagree or strongly disagree that information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is diverse

and caters for all groups. Focus group data shows that bisexual respondents feel that there is little information on sexual health that is appropriate for them as bisexual people. Accounting for gender differences, as well as differences in sexuality, is important in the production of appropriate sexual health information.

Less than a quarter of bisexual respondents (23%) have disclosed their sexual and/or gender identities to their GPs. Bisexual identities can be important in considering the health issues, including experiences of GP's. The experience that bisexual people have of their GPs might also be shaped by how their GPs handle knowledge of their patients' bisexual identities.

6. Mental health

6.1. Introduction

Those identifying as bisexual and queer are more likely to have experienced mental health difficulties than lesbians and gay men. In this context, it is important to consider the variations in experiences of mental health difficulties among different sexual identity groups and how institutional biphobia can affect mental health. This chapter will consider the overall prevalence of mental health difficulties before moving on to examine the prevalence of specific mental health difficulties. Two particular mental health difficulties will then be considered in more depth: suicide and isolation. Finally, the chapter will explore how the management of and support for mental health difficulties needs to account for the specificities of bisexual needs. It should be noted that as bisexual respondents constitute a younger population than other groups in this research, it may be that issues here could be compounded throughout lifecourses and services need to consider preventative measures.

6.2. Prevalence of mental health difficulties overall

Experiences of emotional and mental wellbeing and mental health difficulties varied by sexual identities. Those identifying as bisexual (57%) and queer (48%) are significantly less likely to describe their emotional and mental wellbeing as good or very good in the last twelve months compared to lesbians (65%) and gay men (64%). Bisexual and queer (88%, n. 64) respondents and those who identified as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (82%, n. 27) are more likely to have experienced mental health difficulties than lesbians (66%, n. 183) or gay men (66%, n. 274) ($p = .001$).

6.3. Prevalence of specific mental health difficulties

There were significant differences in relation to sexuality by all the categories of mental health difficulties, except stress. The figures for all of the mental health difficulties considered in this section relate to experiences of such difficulties over the past five years. Looking at figures for those who did not identify any mental health difficulties, there were no significant differences across the categories.

6.3.1. Significant emotional distress

51% (n. 16) of bisexual respondents report having experienced significant emotional distress over the past five years. Along with queer identified respondents (64%, n. 18) and those who identified as an other sexuality than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (50%, n. 16), bisexual respondents are more likely to have experienced significant emotional distress than lesbians (35%, n. 95) or gay men (29%, n. 122) ($p = .0005$).

6.3.2. Depression

While the figures for lesbians (44%, n. 121) and gay men (42%, n. 177) are quite similar, the likelihood of bisexual respondents (56%, n. 25) and queer respondents (56%, n. 15) having experienced depression are noticeably higher ($p = .008$). However, those who identify as an 'other' sexuality are even more likely to have experienced depression (72%, n. 23).

6.3.3. Anxiety

The percentage of those identifying as bisexual (58%, n. 26) who have experienced difficulties with anxiety is noticeably higher than the 40% (n. 110) of lesbians and 44% (n. 184) of gay men who have reported having experienced difficulties with anxiety at some point during the past five years. However, those who identify as queer (70%, n. 22) or as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (69%, n. 22) are even more likely to have experienced difficulties with anxiety ($p = .001$).

6.3.4. Isolation

Using the measure of isolation taken from the question regarding the experience of mental health issues over the last five years (rather than using the question 'Do you feel isolated in Brighton & Hove?'), the likelihood of those who identify as bisexual (44%, n. 20) and those who identify as queer (48%, n. 13) experiencing isolation is significantly higher than that of lesbians (22%, n. 59) and gay men (26%, n. 110). However, the most likely group by far to have experienced isolation are those who identify as of an 'other' sexuality than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (70%, n. 23) ($p = .0005$).

6.3.5. Confidence/self esteem

Bisexual respondents (56%, n. 25) are more likely to have experienced difficulties with confidence and self esteem over the past five years than lesbians (43%, n. 118) or gay men (46%, n. 192), but queer respondents (70%, n. 19) and those identifying as of an other sexuality than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (66%, n. 21) are even more likely to have experienced such difficulties ($p = .009$).

6.3.6. Anger management

Queer respondents (26%, n. 7) and respondents who identify as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (26%, n. 8) are significantly more likely to have experienced difficulties with anger management than lesbians (11%, n. 30), gay men (10%, n. 40) or bisexual respondents (16%, n. 7) ($p = .008$).

6.3.7. Insomnia

Bisexual (42%, n. 19) and queer respondents (44%, n. 12) are more likely to have experienced difficulties with insomnia than lesbians (28%, n. 75) or gay men (36%, n. 151). Respondents identifying as of a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are the most likely to have experienced difficulties with insomnia (52%, n. 17) ($p = .012$).

6.3.8. Fears/phobias

A greater proportion of bisexual respondents (29%, n. 13) and queer respondents (26%, n. 7) experience difficulties with fears/phobias than do gay men (9%, n. 39) or lesbians (15%, n. 40), but those who identify as an 'other' sexuality are the most likely group to have experienced such difficulties (38%, n. 12) ($p = .0005$).

6.3.9. Problem eating disorders

22% (n. 7) of respondents who identify as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer have suffered problem eating disorders, and the proportion rises to 31% (n. 14) for bisexual respondents and to 37% (n. 10) for queer respondents. Lesbians (11%, n. 31) and gay men (14%, n. 57) are the least likely groups by sexual identity to have experienced problem eating disorders over the past five years ($p = .0005$).

6.3.10. Panic attacks

There is a significant relationship between sexual identity and the likelihood of respondents having experienced panic attacks over the past five years ($p = .014$). 27% of bisexual respondents have had experiences of panic attacks, and the proportion rises to 33% (n. 9) for queer respondents and to 34% (n. 11) for respondents who identified as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer. By contrast, 16% (n. 67) of gay men and 19% (n. 51) of lesbians report having experienced difficulties with panic attacks over the past five years.

6.3.11. Self harm

11% of both bisexual respondents (n. 5) and 11% of lesbians (n. 31) report difficulties with self harming. Queer respondents (22%, n. 6) are significantly more likely to have self harmed, as are respondents who identify as of an 'other' sexual identity (28%, n. 9). Gay men (5%, n. 22) are the least likely group by sexual identity to have self harmed ($p = .0005$).

6.3.12. Addictions/dependencies

16% of bisexual respondents report experiencing difficulties with addictions or dependencies. The most likely groups to have experienced such difficulties are those of a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (25%, n. 8), and queer respondents (30%, n. 8). Lesbians (10%, n. 28) and gay men (10%, n. 43) are the least likely groups by sexual identity to have experienced difficulties with addictions or dependencies ($p = .004$).

6.3.13. Suicidal thoughts

The likelihood of having experienced difficulties with suicidal thoughts is significantly related to sexual identity ($p = .004$), with those who identify as of a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (41%, n. 13), and queer respondents (37%, n. 10) being more likely to have experienced such difficulties than other groups. 33% of bisexual respondents reported difficulties with suicidal thoughts. This compares with 20% (n. 55) of lesbian respondents and 19% (n. 81) of gay male respondents.

6.4. Suicide

6.4.1. Serious thoughts of suicide

The table below (table 6.4a) shows that bisexual, queer and those of an 'other' sexuality (respondents who did not identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer) are more likely to have had serious thoughts of suicide during the last five years ($p = .007$). 45% (n. 18) of bisexual respondents who answered this question, 44% (n. 11) of queer respondents and 48% (n. 15) of 'other' respondents have had serious thoughts of suicide in the last five years, compared to 30% of the overall sample of those who have experienced any of the listed mental health difficulties.

Table 6.4a: **Serious thoughts of suicide in the last five years by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Yes	No.	58	90	18	11	15	192
	%	26.7	27.2	45	44	48.4	29.8
No	No.	159	241	22	14	16	452
	%	73.3	72.8	55	56	51.6	70.2
Total	No.	217	331	40	25	31	644
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

Note that in the following tables and analyses the sexual identity categories of 'bisexual' respondents and 'queer' respondents have been combined on the basis that they share similar statistical patterns for this question.

6.4.2. Attempted suicide in the past five years

15% (n. 10) of bisexual and queer respondents who answered this question have thought about and attempted suicide in the last five years, compared to 8% (n. 17) of lesbians and 6% (n. 20) of gay men ($p = .001$). Table 6.4b shows that those of a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are the most likely sexual identity group to have thought about and attempted suicide in the last five years (26%, n. 8).

Table 6.4b: **Attempted suicide in the last five years by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi & Queer	Other	Total
Thought about suicide but not attempted	No.	40	69	19	7	135
	%	18.5	20.9	28.8	22.6	21.0
Thought about and attempted suicide	No.	17	20	10	8	55
	%	7.9	6.1	15.2	25.8	8.6
Never thought about or attempted suicide	No.	159	241	37	16	453
	%	73.6	73.0	56.1	51.6	70.5
Total	No.	216	330	66	31	643
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table 6.4c: **Attempted suicide in the last five years by sexual identity including respondents who have not experienced any mental health difficulties**

		No mental health difficulties	Thought about and attempted suicide	Thought about suicide but no attempts	Mental health difficulties but no thoughts of suicide	Total
Lesbian	No.	51	17	40	157	265
	%	19.2	6.4	15.1	59.2	100
Gay	No.	80	20	69	231	400
	%	20.0	5.0	17.3	57.8	100
Bi & Queer	No.	7	10	19	35	71
	%	9.9	14.1	26.8	49.3	100
Otherwise coded	No.	1	8	7	16	32
	%	3.1	25.0	21.9	50.0	100
Total	No.	139	55	135	439	768
	%	100	100	100	100	100

When the entire sample is examined, there is an even stronger relationship between sexual identity and the likelihood of having thought about and attempted suicide over the past five years ($p < .0001$, see table 6.4c above). This is, of course, related to the prevalence of mental health issues within this grouping, but it emphasises the increased risks of suicide. 25% (n. 8)

of those of an 'other' sexuality have thought about and attempted suicide in the past five years, compared with 14% (n. 10) of bisexual and queer respondents, 6% (n. 17) of lesbians and 5% (n. 20) of gay male respondents. 49% of bisexual and queer people and 50% of those who are who identified as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer did not have serious thoughts of suicide compared to 59% of lesbians and 58% of gay men.

6.4.3. Attempted suicide within the last 12 months

When looking at only those who said they had experienced mental health difficulties, those of a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are the most likely (16%, n. 5) to have attempted suicide in the past twelve months ($p = .001$). By comparison, 5% (n. 3) of bisexual and queer respondents, 3% (n. 7) of lesbian respondents and 2% (n. 8) of gay male respondents have thought about and attempted suicide in the last 12 months.

Table 6.4d: **Attempted suicide in the last 12 months by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi & Queer	Other	Total
Attempted suicide but not in last 12 mths	No.	10	11	7	3	31
	%	4.6	3.3	10.6	9.7	4.8
Thought about and attempted suicide	No.	7	8	3	5	23
	%	3.2	2.4	4.5	16.1	3.6
Thought about suicide but not attempted	No.	40	69	19	7	135
	%	18.5	21.0	28.8	22.6	21.0
MH difficulties but never thought about or attempted suicide	No.	159	241	37	16	453
	%	73.6	73.3	56.1	51.6	70.6
Total	No.	216	329	66	31	642
	%	100	100	100	100	100

6.5. Isolation ('Do you feel isolated in Brighton & Hove?')

Table 6.5a: **Do you feel isolated in Brighton & Hove? By sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Yes / sometimes	No.	92	125	18	13	19	267
	%	33.9	29.8	40.9	46.4	61.3	33.6
No	No.	179	295	26	15	12	527
	%	66.1	70.2	59.1	53.6	38.7	66.4
Total	No.	271	420	44	28	31	794
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

The discussion in this section is based upon answer to the question 'Do you feel isolated in Brighton & Hove?' rather than the measure of isolation

taken from the question regarding the experience of mental health issues over the last five years. Bisexual respondents (41%, n. 18) and queer respondents (46%, n. 13) are more likely to feel isolated in Brighton & Hove than lesbians (33%, n. 92) or gay men (30%, n. 125) ($p = .002$). Those who are who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are the most likely to feel isolated in Brighton & Hove (61%, n. 19) (see table 6.5a).

6.5.1. What keeps you isolated?

Qualitative data from the questionnaire suggests that those who belong to groups that are marginal within the LGBT population find it difficult to find inclusion within LGBT communities or spaces. The following comment in response to the question 'In what ways do you feel isolated?' suggests that such difficulties in finding inclusion are compounded by the problem of facing discriminatory practices and judgements within the LGBT communities:

I know few other out bi people and the LG friends I have are often judgemental about my sexuality.

(Questionnaire 646)

Biphobia can mean isolation from lesbian and gay friends and spaces due to judgemental attitudes (see chapter 2, 3 and 7).

6.5.2. Discrimination and exclusion as a reason for experiences of isolation

In responses to the question 'what keeps you isolated?' 50% of bisexual respondents answer that experiences of discrimination and exclusion keep them isolated. This is also the most common response given by those of a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (47%). Half of the bisexual respondents who said they felt isolated, however, also selected 'Fear of not fitting in', whilst 47% of 'other' respondents also selected 'Can't afford to go out'. These answers are unsurprising given the discussion in chapters 2 and 3 where many respondents commented on the biphobic discrimination, prejudice and abuse they face from LGBT venues and events, and from lesbian and gay patrons of these spaces, which results in their exclusion from these spaces. It can also relate to the income levels discussed in chapter 1.

Table 6.5b: **What keeps you isolated? By sexuality identity:**

%	Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Chi Square
Discrimination / exclusion	27	24	50	47	P=0.019
Lack confidence	38	59	44	39	P=0.015
Fear of not fitting in	31	50	50	38	P=0.046

6.5.3. LGBT scene and isolation

In addition to the data presented in chapter 3, some of the focus groups spoke of the difficulties of multiple marginalisation and accessing the LGBT scene as reasons for continued isolation:

Rosa: **One of the things that's really surprised me is that there does appear to be a much stronger phobia towards the bisexual group and to some degree the trans-gender group as well from the lesbian and gay sections of the community, which I didn't notice as strongly in London. I had many, many good lesbian friends, it just wasn't the same, even when I see Mind advertising, you know, it's specific statements about lesbian and gay men who have got mental health problems and the other bits of the community aren't included.**

(Bisexual focus group)

Not belonging and an absence of community support networks can affect mental health and wellbeing. Feeling isolated therefore can impact on mental wellbeing, and this can be related to feelings and experiences of difference from straight and LGBT communities.

6.6. Management and support for mental health difficulties

If, as has been shown, bisexual people and those of other sexual identities than lesbian and gay, along with those who are multiply marginalised, are more likely to be isolated and experience difficulties with their mental health, then the provision of mental health services that are geared up to provide appropriate support for these groups becomes very important.

Sashi: **Right at the very beginning [of the focus group] I remember a statement was made that there's many people who are bisexual who maybe aren't connecting to the bisexual network, but nevertheless from both a sexual health and mental health thing, are facing the same issues. So therefore it's would seem that it's important for the national health community to reach out and provide actively that information just to manage it in a way which is beneficial to everyone.**

(Bisexual focus group)

The qualitative research points to the need for services that could address these issues, but suggests that many of those who are bisexual, queer or of other sexual identities than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are unable to find such services. In part, this can be because LGBT services are often only focused on lesbian and gay users:

Chris: Yeah, because these things are hard enough and there is enough, there's enough stigma around mental health and if you suffer from mental health, like I'm on incapacity benefit for depression and if you suffer from mental health problems it's hard enough accessing help, because it's hard enough to feel that you deserve it or for whatever reasons it's very hard to access help in the first place and then you have to jump through the hoops of trying to access help when there isn't help designed for you. I mean as far as I'm aware I know of one or two openly bisexual counsellors in Brighton, but then I know that because I work in counselling and because I'm inside the loop already and I think it would be quite hard, just if you didn't... I'm not aware of any of the straight of lesbian and gay, LGBT mental health services having a bisexual person you can go and talk to and stuff like that makes such a difference.

... it doesn't matter because if it had been an issue for me I wouldn't be able to access a bi person anyway and with mental health stuff it's so, you have to make this stuff as easy... I think things like the bi-phobia stuff really, really hit hard on stuff like this if you went... if you go to a lesbian and gay service and you experience bi-phobia in the place where you're trying to be your most open and you're at your most vulnerable, that's really dangerous. I mean I might be a bit over dramatic but it is really dangerous that sort of stuff. It really does wreck people's lives and mental health services need to a) be more educated about bisexuals; and b) to just have people that you can go and see, especially LGBT services, because they're already setting up for this niche thing. I think it's a real responsibility for those services to say, as they already do, "If you'd like to speak to a lesbian woman, you can." Again they should also be saying "If you'd like to speak to a bisexual man, if you'd like to speak to a trans-woman"

(bisexual focus group)

While Chris suggests a desire to have the option to see a bisexual mental health professional, this should not be taken as suggesting that all bisexuals would want to consult a bisexual mental health professional; indeed, some users of mental health services may want to see a professional of another identity to their own. Rather, the issues raised here regarding a desire for a choice of whom service users are able to consult. Moreover, the need for training for all mental health professionals so that they are able to offer services and advice appropriate for bisexual service users. Additionally, Chris also alludes to how institutional biphobia can worsen mental health difficulties by adding further distress at a time when one is already vulnerable. The following quote, which appears also in chapter 3, also suggests how institutional biphobia can worsen mental health difficulties.

Sashi: Recently I've started thinking about connecting to counselling and it just didn't... it seemed to be lesbian or gay, and there's nothing for bi and I actually got really intimidated about going and saying, "Well, I'm bisexual" because I just felt this whole thing, I was just going to be rejected, there was going to be this rejection from within the community itself, which makes it very difficult to kind of explore things that are obviously important to one's well being

(Bisexual focus group)

6.6.1. Mind Out

For some bisexual respondents, even specialist LGBT services such as that offered by Mind Out can be perceived as services that are not aimed at them because they are bisexual. This is especially the case when in a relationship with an opposite-sex partner.

Researcher: Have you used Mind Out or anything like that?

Zara: No, actually and I'm not sure why. Again I think [PAUSE] I didn't know about it for years because I wasn't going anywhere near LGBT... I lived in Brighton for a couple of years and this is a bisexuality thing with a male partner, with a monogamous male partner. I'd moved from somewhere, I'd had a big queer circle of friends but it's incredibly hard to walk into an LGBT service when you're a girl going out with a boy and feel like you belong there. It's incredibly hard to do that. So I didn't go anywhere near anything LGBT

Kriti: Do you feel confident it would be appropriate for you...

Zara: No.

Kriti: ... to go to Mind Out?

Zara: No, actually, on grounds of bisexuality and of ethnicity stuff, both and there is a bit of me that probably should. I should go and test this out but you ask and my instinctive response is just no.

Kriti: Yeah, but why do you think you should go and test it out, because my instinctive response is *not* to go and test it out [LAUGHTER] because if I need support it's everything you said, you don't wanna go in there, that's the worst possible time to test it, is when you need support.

(BME2 focus group)

As discussed in previous chapters, LGBT space can sometimes effectively seem to be lesbian and gay space, so that bisexual people feel disqualified and excluded from such spaces. The discussion above also shows that those who are experiencing mental health difficulties face the particular vulnerability, and may not want to take the personal and emotional risks associated with checking out their belonging in such spaces.

6.7. Conclusions

Overall, bi people are less likely to have good mental health. Bi people consist of a younger age demographic and it may be that as bi people age, these difficulties become more compounded because of experiences of hate crime and rejection from LGBT communities (see chapters 3 and 7). Those identifying as bisexual (57%) and queer (48%) are significantly less likely to describe their emotional and mental wellbeing as good or very good in the last twelve months compared to lesbians (65%) and gay men (64%). Bisexual and queer respondents (88%) and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (82%) are more likely to have experienced mental health difficulties than lesbians or gay men. Bisexual and queer respondents are also more likely than lesbians or gay men to have experienced difficulties with each of the following specific mental health issues ($p < .02$): significant emotional distress; depression; anxiety; isolation; confidence/self esteem; anger management; insomnia; fears/phobias; problem eating disorders; panic attacks; self harm; addictions/dependencies; and suicidal thoughts.

45% of bisexual respondents who have experience some form of mental health difficulty in the past five years (and 44% of queer respondents and 48% of 'other' respondents) have had serious thoughts of suicide in the last five years, compared to 30% of the overall sample of those who have experienced mental health difficulties. Bisexual and queer respondents are more likely (15%) to have thought about and attempted suicide in the last five years than lesbians or gay men. 5% of bisexual and queer respondents have thought about and attempted suicide in the last twelve months, but the most likely group to have done so are those who identify a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer.

Bisexual respondents (41%) and queer respondents (46%) are more likely to feel isolated in Brighton & Hove than lesbians (33%) or gay men (30%). Biphobia, discrimination and exclusion, especially from LGBT scenes, are often reasons why respondents experience isolation. 50% of bisexual respondents answer that experiences of discrimination and exclusion keep them isolated.

Services providing support for LGBT people with mental health difficulties are usually only focused on lesbian and gay users. The qualitative research suggests the need for training for all mental health professionals so that they are able to offer services and advice appropriate to bisexual service users.

7. Housing

7.1. Introduction

This chapter considers bisexual people's vulnerabilities in relation to housing. It looks at the prevalence of bisexual people in social housing, their likelihood of experiencing homelessness, and their likelihood of living in areas of potential deprivation (see definition in Introduction).

7.2. Housing and marginalisation

There are significant differences in the likelihood of living in social housing among different groups by sexual identity. 15% (n. 7) of bisexual people and 21% (n. 12) of those who identify other than lesbian, gay or bisexual live in social housing, compared to 8% of lesbians (n. 22) and gay men (n. 33) (see table 7.2a). Similarly bisexual (35%, n. 16), and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (29%, n. 17) are less likely to own their own homes than lesbians (48%, n. 134) and gay men (52%, n. 222) ($p < .0001$).

Although there are differences in the proportions of those in social housing by sexuality, it should be noted that the majority of those in social housing are lesbians and gay men (74%). However, these figures also indicate that bisexuals and those who do not identify within the categories lesbian, gay or bisexual are less likely to privately own their own homes and more likely to be located in state-supported housing.

Table 7.2a: **Housing tenure by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
social housing	No.	22	33	7	12	74
	%	7.9	7.7	15.2	20.7	9.1
privately owned	No.	134	222	16	17	389
	%	47.9	51.9	34.8	29.3	47.9
privately rented	No.	91	121	13	20	245
	%	32.5	28.3	28.3	34.5	30.2
all others	No.	33	52	10	9	104
	%	11.8	12.1	21.7	15.5	12.8
Total	No.	280	428	46	58	812
	%	100	100	100	100	100

7.2.1. Homelessness

A third of those who defined as bisexual, queer and a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives, compared to 22% of lesbians 19% of gay men. These figures are important because across the entire LGBT sample, homelessness is associated with increased likelihood of the following: the use of illegal drugs or the use of legal drugs without a prescription or medical advice; isolation; and experience of all the categories of mental health difficulty except anger management (Browne and Davis, 2008).

7.2.2. Areas of potential deprivation

Those who identify as queer and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are the most likely to live in areas of potential social deprivation (25%, n. 7 and 31%, n. 9, respectively). Those who identify as bisexual are the most likely group by sexual identity to live in other areas across the city (73%, n. 32) ($p < .001$).

Table 7.2b: **Area of residence by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Kempton and St James Street	No.	23	97	7	4	3	134
	%	8.5	23.5	15.9	14.3	10.3	17.1
Areas of potential deprivation	No.	74	107	5	7	9	202
	%	27.4	26	11.4	25	31	25.8
None of these areas	No.	173	208	32	17	17	447
	%	64.1	50.5	72.7	60.7	58.6	57.1
Total	No.	270	412	44	28	29	783
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

7.3. Conclusions

Bisexual respondents and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual tend to display particular vulnerabilities with regard to being marginalised in terms of housing. Bisexual people (15%) and those who identify other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (21%) are more likely to live in social housing than lesbians or gay men. They are also less likely to own their own home, with only 35% of bisexual respondents and 29% of those who identify other than lesbian, gay or bisexual owning their own home. A third of respondents who identify as bisexual or a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual have experienced homelessness. Homelessness across the LGBT sample as a whole is associated with a higher likelihood of using illegal drugs (or drugs without a prescription or medical advice), isolation, and experience of mental health difficulties (except anger management). Those who identify as queer and those who identify as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are more likely than other groups to live in areas of potential deprivation.

8. Safety

8.1. Introduction

This chapter will consider two major aspects of safety and their effects on bisexual people: hate crime, and domestic violence and abuse. It will firstly look at experiences of hate crime and the relative likelihoods of different sexual identity groups experiencing specific hate crimes. When assessing these relative likelihoods, it should be noted that all LGBT people experience a high likelihood of experiencing hate crime of some kind: 73% of respondents say that they have experienced some kind of hate crime on the basis of their sexual or gender identity in the past five years (Browne and Lim, 2008a). The chapter will then move on to consider who perpetrates these hate crimes, and the likelihood of different sexual identity groups reporting hate crime. The chapter will then examine feelings of safety in different sites in Brighton & Hove, before considering the behaviours bisexual, queer and 'other' respondents avoid in order to avert hate crime. Finally, the chapter considers the vulnerabilities to domestic violence and abuse of those who identify as bisexual, or a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual.

8.2. Hate Crime

The Association of Chief Police Officers define hate incident and hate crime as:

- 2.2.1 A Hate Incident is defined as: Any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.
- 2.2.2 A Hate Crime is defined as: Any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.
- 2.2.3 It is vitally important to note that all hate crimes are hate incidents. However some hate incidents may not constitute a criminal offence and therefore will not be recorded as a hate crime. For example, making inappropriate reference to the colour of someone's skin, in a non-confrontational social setting, may well be perceived as a racist incident. However there may be insufficient evidence that it would constitute a racist crime. It is important to understand this distinction....

2.3.3 Homophobic Incident Any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person.

2.3.4 Transphobic Incident Any incident which is perceived to be transphobic by the victim or any other person¹.

For this study, the question on hate crime was related to experiences of particular forms of violence, harassment and abuse. The question posed was: Have you experienced any of the following in the last 5 years that was due to your sexual orientation or gender identity:

- verbal abuse
- physical violence
- criminal damage
- harassment
- sexual assault
- negative comments
- teasing
- bullying
- other

Therefore, the definition of hate crime used here is the experience of any of these forms of violence and abuse where the violence or abuse was related to the gender identity and/or sexual identity of the respondent. Only the experience of hate crime in the past five years was considered in the study.

8.2.1. Experiences of hate crime


Bisexual and queer respondents are more likely to have experienced harassment, negative comments and teasing than other LGBT respondents. There are no significant differences in relation to other forms of hate crime. This means that no sexual identity group was more or less likely to experience these forms of crime.

Bisexual and queer respondents (21%, n. 15) and those who defined in a category other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (36%, n. 12) are more likely to have experienced harassment than lesbians (15%) or gay men (14%) ($p < .005$).

While the majority of all respondents have experienced negative comments, these are more likely to have been experienced by bisexual or queer people (67%, n. 49) and by those defined in a category other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (73%, n. 24) than by lesbians (57%) or gay men (52%) ($p = .01$).

24% (n. 8) of those identifying as other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer, and, even more notably, 48% of bisexual and queer respondents, have experienced teasing, compared to 18% of lesbians and 20% of gay men ($p < .0001$). Bisexual and queer people (23%, n. 17) and those identifying other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (27%, n. 9) are more likely to experience bullying than lesbians (11%) or gay men (9%) ($p < .0001$).

¹ ACPO, Hate Crime: Delivering A Quality Service, March 2005.

 www.acpo.police.uk/asp/policies/Data/Hate%20Crime.pdf

Those who identify in a category other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are more likely to have experienced sexual assault (12%, n. 4) than lesbians (3%, n. 7), gay men (4 %, n. 16) or bisexual or queer respondents (3%, n. 2) (p = .04).

8.2.2. Perpetrators of hate crime

Those who identify as bisexual or queer (29%) are more likely to experience hate crime in an LGBT venue than lesbians (6%) or gay men (12%) who have experienced hate crime (p=.0005). Of the 48 people who have experienced hate crime from an LGBT person, 34 of these have also experienced hate crime in an LGBT venue (6 identify as lesbian, 25 as gay, 9 as bisexual, 3 as queer and 5 as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer).

Experiencing hate crime in an LGBT venue can have specific effects for bi people, who may no longer feel safe in these venues and who may seek to hide or conceal their identities in order to avoid negative experiences (see chapter 4):

It's made me feel uneasy about disclosing my sexual orientation, as a gay man who was the manager of a big lgbt nightclub in Brighton asked me to leave the club after he overheard that I was bisexual.

(Questionnaire 136)

22% of bisexual and queer people have experienced hate crime from an LGBT person, compared to 3% of lesbians and 8% of gay men. Similarly bisexual and queer people (7%, n. 4) are more likely to say that they have experienced hate crime from an LGBT service or group than lesbians (2%, n. 3) or gay men (<1%, n. 1).

there are two issues for me really - the homophobia I experience from straight people and the biphobia I experience from both straight and LG people.

(Questionnaire 646)

Therefore, bi people are at risk of biphobic and homophobic hate crime. In the bisexual focus group, some solutions were suggested:

Sashi: **On the bi thing, on the scene, just a complete rethink of attitudes basically, accepting that LGBT means LGBT and we are part of that community and we belong here as much as anyone else.**

(Bisexual focus group)

8.2.3. Reporting hate crime

Those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are more likely (44%, n. 12) to report an incident of hate crime than bisexual or queer respondents (29%, n. 16). The least likely to report are lesbians (20%, n. 41) and gay men (26%, n. 81) ($p = .04$).

8.2.4. Dealing with hate crime

People can deal with the fear that follows being victims of hate crimes in diverse ways. Some respondents offered suggestions as to how hate crimes should be dealt with or tackled.

I realise that the police do care but there is so much going on and it is often not police related/crime related or it is really hard to catch the offenders. It has made me feel that it is through education and changing society in general that we will overcome these prejudices. I feel more cautious now when walking out and about, and when talking to colleagues and services, I often hold back on information until I know where they stand on bisexual or LGBT people. I often avoid certain LGBT clubs when with a partner who is not entirely of the same gender or am conscious of being affectionate to them in that environment. I often turn down invites to LGBT events if I don't feel like I would be comfortable taking my partner there.

(Questionnaire 77)

This respondent's comments suggest that certain beliefs might influence levels of reporting of hate crimes. These include: the belief that hate incidents are not crimes and are therefore not matters for the police; and the idea that if such incidents are crimes, then the perpetrators are difficult to catch, so there is still no point in reporting the incident to the police. The comment is in response to a question asking how the experience of a hate crime has affected the respondent, and also shows the impact of an experience of hate crime on the respondent. After experiencing a hate incident, this respondent has been left feeling the need to be cautious in public, and feeling the need to check out how colleagues and service providers treat bisexual people before trusting them. The respondent also avoids certain LGBT clubs and events, and is not affectionate with their partner in such spaces if their partner at the time is not of the same gender. For this respondent, education is vital to tackling hate crime, because it can change people's beliefs and prejudices.

The following respondent also discusses how they deal with having experienced a hate crime and what might be done about such incidents.

Street drinking and the close proximity of clubs & pubs to each other (e.g. West Street) are causes for concern. I often avoid these areas for fear of harassment as a young woman. I would like more

publicity & resources to be given to combating biphobia - I think the message that homophobic abuse/attacks will not be tolerated is quite explicitly put across, but I need help with biphobia within the LGBT community as well as outside, where attacks/abuse may only be provoked if I am with a girlfriend (if I am with a man I am often presumed to be straight, which is irritating!).

(Questionnaire 38)

The respondent deals with her experience of hate crime by avoiding areas in which she perceives she is likely to be harassed – notably where people drink in the streets and where pubs and clubs are near one another. She draws attention to the need for publicity to combat biphobia and to the fact that bisexual people face both biphobia (from inside and outside LGBT communities and spaces) and homophobia (especially from outside LGBT communities).

8.3. Feelings of safety

8.3.1. In Brighton & Hove

Only 43% (n. 23) of those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual feel very safe at home; by contrast, most gay (66%), lesbian (63%) and bisexual (62%) respondents feel very safe at home. Those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are also less likely to feel very safe outside in Brighton & Hove in the day or at night.

Those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are significantly more likely (79%, n. 19) to feel unsafe in places, services or facilities in Brighton & Hove than lesbians (50%, n. 99), gay men (57%, n. 175) or bisexual or queer respondents (48%, n. 26) ($p = .04$).

8.3.2. LGBT venues

Bisexual and queer respondents, and those who identify as of a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer, are significantly more likely to feel unsafe inside LGBT venues than lesbian or gay respondents ($p < .0001$), 23% (n. 6) of bisexual and queer respondents and 16% (n. 3) of those of an 'other' sexual identity do not feel safe inside LGBT venues, compared to 3% (n. 3) of lesbians and 2% (n. 4) of gay men.

8.3.3. 'Gay village'

Bisexual and queer respondents are the most likely group by sexuality not to feel safe in the 'gay village' (31%, n. 8). Gay men (25%, n. 44) are more likely not to feel safe in the 'gay village' than lesbians (15%, n. 15). 5% (n. 1) of those who identified as of a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer do not feel safe in the 'gay village' ($p = .05$).

8.3.4. Cruising grounds

15% (n. 4) of bisexual and queer respondents and 6% (n. 1) of those of sexual identities other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer do not feel safe in cruising grounds. Gay men are by far the most likely group by sexuality not to feel safe in cruising grounds ($p < .0001$). 34% (n. 60) of gay men feel unsafe in cruising grounds, and the corresponding figure for lesbians is 10% (n. 10).

8.4. Avoidance behaviours

Experiences of hate crime and/or feeling unsafe in various locations or spaces in Brighton & Hove can prompt some LGBT people to avoid certain kinds of behaviour, especially if these behaviours draw attention to their LGBT identities.

8.4.1. Public displays of affection

79% (n. 42) of bisexual and queer respondents say that they at least sometimes avoid public displays of affection. Similar proportions of lesbians (78%, n. 156) and gay men (80%, n. 247) avoided public displays of affection, but a significantly smaller amount of those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (52%, n. 12) avoided public displays of affection ($p < .0001$).

8.4.2. Going out at night

The data shows that those who identified as of a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are far more likely to at least sometimes avoid going out at night (73%, n. 19). However, bisexual and queer respondents are the least likely to at times avoid going out at night (23%, n. 12), compared to the 30% (n. 58) of lesbians and 33% (n. 102) of gay men who at least sometimes avoid going out at night.

8.5. Domestic violence & abuse

It is not only in public spaces that LGBT people's safety is threatened, and it is not only strangers who abuse or exercise violence against LGBT people. This section considers the vulnerabilities of those who identify as bisexual or a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual to domestic violence and abuse.

8.5.1. Prevalence

Slightly under half of bisexuals (44%, n. 19) and 50% (n. 30) of those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual state they have experienced abuse, violence or harassment from a family member or someone close to them. This makes them more likely to have experienced

of abuse, violence or harassment from someone close to them than lesbians (34%, n. 91) or gay men (25%, n. 104) ($p < .0005$).

Table 8.5a: **Experience of abuse, violence or harassment from someone close by sexual identity**

		Yes	No	Total
Lesbian	No.	91	181	272
	%	33.5	66.5	100
Gay	No.	104	314	418
	%	24.9	75.1	100
Bisexual	No.	19	24	43
	%	44.2	55.8	100
Other	No.	30	30	60
	%	50.0	50.0	100
Total	No.	244	549	793
	%	100	100	100

$P < 0.0005$

8.5.2. Perpetrators

Of those who have experienced abuse, violence or harassment from a family member or someone close to them, 33% (n. 6) of bisexual survivors have experienced abuse from a male partner or ex-partner (compared to 56% of gay men and 10% of lesbians), while 22% (n. 4) of bisexual survivors have experienced abuse from a female partner or ex-partner (compared to 47% of lesbians and 2% of gay men). 29% (n. 8) of those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual have experienced abuse from a male partner or ex-partner, and 14% (n. 4) have experienced abuse from a female partner or ex-partner.

39% (n. 7) of bisexual survivors of abuse, violence or harassment have experienced such abuse from family members. 43% (n. 12) of survivors who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual have experienced abuse from family members. The corresponding figures for lesbians and gay men are 46% (n. 40) and 41% (n. 43), respectively.

Table 8.5b: **Perpetrator of abuse by survivor's sexuality**

Abused by		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
Family members	No.	40	43	7	12	102
	%	46.0	41.0	38.9	42.9	42.9
Partner or ex-partner	No.	49	60	10	12	131
	%	56.3	57.1	55.6	42.9	55.0
Male partner or ex-partner	No.	9	59	6	8	82
	%	10.3	56.2	33.3	28.6	34.5
Female partner or ex-partner	No.	41	2	4	4	51
	%	47.1	1.9	22.2	14.3	21.4
Others	No.	21	27	4	12	64
	%	24.1	25.7	22.2	42.9	26.9
Total	No.	160	191	31	48	430
	%	100	100	100	100	100

8.5.3. Services for survivors of domestic violence and abuse

One area of concern regarding the provision of services for those who have survived domestic violence and abuse, is that very few of these services are aimed specifically at bisexual women. Most refuge organisations will, however, offer accommodation to women experiencing abuse from a female partner, and some projects have specialist services for lesbian and bisexual women or same sex female couples.

Another concern is that many services are organised around female survivors of domestic violence and abuse perpetrated by men; or female survivors of domestic violence and abuse perpetrated by women. Organising service provision around such assumptions means such services might not always meet the needs of all LGBT people. Bisexual people, in particular, might be at risk of falling through the gaps in provision because some bisexual people might experience a range of relationships in which there is domestic violence and abuse and may have relationships with perpetrators of different genders. Services should therefore develop to cater for the breadth of LGBT experiences.

8.6. Conclusions

Bisexual and queer respondents are more likely than lesbians and gay men to have experienced harassment, negative comments, teasing or bullying. Those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are more likely than any of these groups to have experienced harassment, negative comments, bullying and sexual assault.

Bisexual and queer respondents (29%) are more likely to experience hate crime in an LGBT venue than lesbians (6%) or gay men (12%). Such experiences may cause bisexual people to hide or conceal their identities from venue operators or other patrons. 22% of bisexual and queer people have experienced hate crime from an LGBT person, compared to 3% of lesbians and 8% of gay men. Similarly bisexual and queer people (7%) are more likely to have experienced hate crime from an LGBT service or group than lesbians (2%) or gay men. Those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are more likely (44%) to report an incident of hate crime than bisexual or queer respondents (29%), lesbians (20%) or gay men (26%).

Those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are less likely than these other groups to feel very safe at home or very safe outside in Brighton & Hove in the day or at night, and more likely than these other groups to feel unsafe in places, services and facilities in Brighton & Hove. Bisexual and queer respondents (23%) and those who identify as of a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (16%) are significantly more likely to feel unsafe inside LGBT venues than lesbian (3%) or gay (2%) respondents. Bisexual and queer respondents (31%) are more likely than gay men (25%), lesbians (15%) or those identifying other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (5%) to feel unsafe in the 'gay village'.

79% of bisexual and queer respondents at least sometimes avoid public displays of affection. This is a similar proportion to the proportion of lesbians (78%) and gay men (80%) who avoid public displays of affection. Those who identified as of a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are the sexual identity group most likely to avoid going out at night at least sometimes (73%, n. 19), while bisexual and queer respondents are the group least likely to at times avoid going out at night (23%, n. 12).

Bisexual respondents (44%) and respondents who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (50%) are more likely to have experienced abuse, violence or harassment from a family member or someone close to them than are lesbians (34%) or gay men (25%). 33% (n. 6) of bisexual survivors have experienced abuse from a male partner or ex-partner, while 22% (n. 4) of bisexual survivors have experienced abuse from a female partner or ex-partner. 39% (n. 7) of bisexual survivors of abuse, violence or harassment have experienced such abuse from family members.

9. Use of services and monitoring

9.1. Introduction

This chapter considers the experiences of bisexual people and those who identify as other than lesbian, gay or bisexual, with regard to discrimination by those who provide goods, services or facilities. It examines the preferences of these two groups with regard to how they access mainstream and LGBT services. It will also look at preferences regarding the use of information for monitoring purposes.

9.2. Goods and services

Bisexual people and those of a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are more likely to experience discrimination in the provision of goods and services compared to gay men and lesbians.

23% (n. 11) of bisexual respondents report experiencing direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of their sexual or gender identity from someone or some organisation providing goods, services or facilities (34%, n. 20, $p=.001$). Those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are the sexual identity group most likely to say that they have experienced such discrimination, while the corresponding figures for lesbians and gay men are 14% (n. 38) and 14% (n. 60), respectively.

Table 9.2a: **Have you received any direct or indirect discrimination from anyone providing services, goods or facilities on account of your sexual orientation/gender identity in the last five years? by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
Yes	No.	38	60	11	20	129
	%	13.8	14.1	23.4	33.9	16.0
No	No.	176	300	28	27	531
	%	63.8	70.6	59.6	45.8	65.8
Sometimes	No.	31	34	2	5	72
	%	11.2	8.0	4.3	8.5	8.9
Unsure	No.	31	31	6	7	75
	%	11.2	7.3	12.8	11.9	9.3
Total	No.	276	425	47	59	807
	%	100	100	100	100	100

9.3. Accessing services

9.3.1. Mainstream services

Bisexual people (26%, n. 11) and queer individuals (36%, n. 10) are more likely to feel uncomfortable because of their sexuality when using mainstream services than lesbians (22%, n. 59) or gay men (12% n. 49, $p < .002$, see table 9.3a).

Table 9.3a: **Do you ever feel uncomfortable using mainstream (public but not LGBT specific) services?**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Queer	Other	Total
Yes, (not sexuality / gender identity)	No.	37	63	8	6	8	122
	%	13.6	15.1	18.6	21.4	25	15.4
Yes, (sexuality / gender identity)	No.	59	49	11	10	5	134
	%	21.7	11.8	25.6	35.7	15.6	16.9
No	No.	127	242	19	9	15	412
	%	46.7	58.2	44.2	32.1	46.9	52.1
I don't know	No.	49	62	5	3	4	123
	%	18	14.9	11.6	10.7	12.5	15.5
Total	No.	272	416	43	28	32	791
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

9.3.2. LGBT specific services

Bisexual respondents are somewhat less likely (9%, n. 4) than lesbians (14%, n. 37) or gay men (12%, n. 50) to prefer using LGBT specific services. Bisexual respondents are less likely (21%, n. 9) than lesbians to prefer using explicitly LGBT friendly services, but more likely to prefer so than gay men (17%, n. 69) ($p = .004$). 34% (n. 15) of bisexual respondents say that

whether a service is LGBT friendly or specific is unimportant to them, compared to 40% (n. 166) of gay men and 22% (n. 58) of lesbians who agree with this statement.

Table 9.3b: **Type of service preferred by sexual identity**

		Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Other	Total
LGBT specific	No.	37	50	4	6	97
	%	13.7	12.0	9.1	10.5	12.3
LGBT friendly	No.	66	69	9	14	158
	%	24.4	16.6	20.5	24.6	20.1
A mixture of friendly and specific	No.	106	129	16	18	269
	%	39.3	31.0	36.4	31.6	34.2
Unimportant	No.	58	166	15	18	257
	%	21.5	39.9	34.1	31.6	32.7
Other	No.	3	2	0	1	6
	%	1.1	.5	.0	1.8	.8
Total	No.	270	416	44	57	787
	%	100	100	100	100	100

9.4. Monitoring

80% of bisexual respondents will give information regarding their sexual/gender identities for the purposes of monitoring if the information is confidential and the service is LGBT friendly. The figure is 77% for those who define as something other than lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Table 9.4a: **Are you willing to give information about your sexual orientation / gender identity when using or accessing services for monitoring purposes?**

		Bi	Other	Total
Yes always	No.	16	19	324
	%	35.6	32.2	40.1
Yes if information confidential	No.	11	11	157
	%	24.4	18.6	19.4
Depends on LGBT friendliness	No.	9	16	207
	%	20.0	27.1	25.6
Sometimes	No.	5	8	77
	%	11.1	13.6	9.5
Never	No.	2	4	17
	%	4.4	6.8	2.1
Don't know	No.	1	0	18
	%	2.2	.0	2.2
Other	No.	1	1	8
	%	2.2	1.7	1.0
Total	No.	45	59	808
	%	100	100	100

In the focus groups, there were clear warnings regarding the importance of the confidentiality of these enquiries:

Marilyn: I recently filled in - I work for [names statutory service] - their survey, and it came back, you know, 'One bisexual'. Me. I think they feel more uncomfortable now I've sort of outed myself. Because I don't think there're no bisexuals, you know. I'm the first to perhaps say 'That's what I am' and I've done that to sort of try and make it the norm, so that they'll get used to that there's an alternative way of living.

(Bisexual focus group)

9.5. Conclusions

Bisexual respondents (23%) and, even more so, those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (34%) are more likely than lesbians or gay men (14%) to have experienced discrimination on the basis of their sexual or gender identities from someone or some organisation providing goods, services or facilities. Bisexual respondents are somewhat less likely (9%, n. 4) than lesbians (14%, n. 37) or gay men (12%, n. 50) to prefer using LGBT specific services. 80% of bisexual respondents will give information regarding their sexual/gender identities for the purposes of monitoring if the information is confidential and the service is LGBT friendly.

10. Conclusions

10.1. Introduction

While Brighton & Hove enjoys a reputation as the 'gay capital' of the UK, the gains in rights, recognition and acceptance from the public, from communities and from service providers have not been enjoyed equally by the different constituencies of the LGBT grouping. Bisexual people are among the LGBT groups who have experienced the highest likelihood of being marginalised on a number of measures. Many bisexual people experience prejudice, discrimination and abuse from LGBT venues and events, as well as other LGBT scene users, which results in bisexual people being excluded from LGBT scenes and communities. Bisexual people also experience particular vulnerabilities around health care, mental health, housing and safety. This chapter will summarise the main findings of this research, providing an overview of each of the chapters. This overview will outline the key issues facing both bisexual people, and the policy makers and service providers who can help reduce the marginalisation faced by bisexual people.

10.2. Summary of the chapters

10.2.1. Demographics

Bisexual respondents are more likely to be aged under 35 than other respondents. 28% of bisexual respondents are aged under 26, and 38% of bisexual respondents are aged between 26 and 35. Those identifying as bisexual are more likely (68%) to have an income of less than £20,000 a year than the rest of the sample. Bisexual respondents are also more likely to be disabled than lesbians or gay men. 17% (n. 8) of those who define as bisexual live with a same-sex partner, making them less likely to do so than lesbians or gay men.

10.2.2. Bi identities

'Bisexual' or 'bi' are widely used terms of self-identification among the respondents to this research, yet 'bisexual' is a heterogeneous category that cannot be easily reduced to one simplistic definition. Many bisexual respondents identify themselves in terms of those they find sexually attractive, while recognising that such understandings of themselves can change over time. Current sexual relationships also figure strongly in bisexual respondents' accounts of their identities. It is important to recognise the diversity of sexual relationships and sexual practices

amongst bi people. Appearance and performance play an important role in marking and regulating identity. How masculinities and femininities are performed can be a sign of sexual identity for many bisexual people. Many bisexual people find themselves having to negotiate others' expectations about performance and identity both within straight scenes and lesbian and gay scenes.

Bisexual respondents and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are more likely to say that they have a poor or very poor relationship with their family of origin than lesbians or gay men. 20% (n. 9) of bisexual respondents and 31% (n. 18) of those identifying as an 'other' sexual identity say their relationship with their family of origin is poor or very poor.

Those who identify as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are less likely (48%) than these other groups to want Brighton & Hove to be the 'gay capital' of England. Those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian or gay are less likely than these two groups to have been to Pride every year (26%, n. 27, compared to 43% and 50%, respectively) and are more likely than these two groups to have not yet been to Pride but possibly to consider going (16%, n. 17, compared to 8% and 7% respectively).

10.2.3. Best of both worlds? Discrimination, prejudice & abuse

Many bisexual people face marginalisation and exclusion from both straight society and from LGBT communities and scenes. 30% of bisexual respondents have experienced bullying, abuse, discrimination or exclusion from LGBT people, while 19% have experienced these forms of marginalisation from LGBT venues and events. An understanding of this marginalisation must attend not only to discrimination, prejudice, and abuse, but must also attend to understanding how marginalisation operates through norms and expectations. These norms and expectations can shape how, for example, stereotypes are used to police sexual identities and belonging. They also underlie the problems bisexual people face in not being recognised as a legitimate presence in lesbian and gay spaces such as clubs and bars. The norms that bisexual respondents speak of imply that they feel forced into binary categories of sexual identity: individuals should be either unambiguously straight or unambiguously lesbian or gay. Such a norm allows a policing of LGBT communities and scenes by both businesses (such as LGBT venues) and individuals, so that what are supposed to be 'LGBT' communities and scenes are often in effect only lesbian or gay communities and scenes.

One of the stereotypes that recurs in several bisexual respondents' accounts is that bisexual people are 'greedy', 'cannot make up their minds' and 'sit on the fence' between being heterosexual or being lesbian or gay. This supposed inability to make up their minds is associated by many lesbians and gay men with bisexual people being considered untrustworthy. Bisexual people particularly face hostility within LGBT communities when they are in relationships or express intimacy with a member of the opposite sex. 38% of bisexual respondents disagree with the

statement that when they are in relationships with partners of a different sex, lesbian and gay scene venues are welcoming (36% of bisexual respondents agree with the statement). Other members of LGBT communities sometimes act as if having a relationship or being intimate with a member a different sex disqualifies one from being part of LGBT communities. Those who run venues or club nights can also marginalise bisexual people by marketing their venues or club nights only to lesbians or gay men. This can unwittingly create an unwelcoming feeling for bisexual people if they are in a relationship with someone of the opposite sex. Moreover, the testimony of some bisexual respondents suggests that bisexual people sometimes face active discrimination from venues or club nights, often based on flimsy stereotypes regarding bodily appearance, as much as being with a partner of a different sex. Straight venues and club nights, however, can also be unwelcoming. 20% of bisexual respondents disagree with the statement that when in relationships with same-sex partners, straight venues and services are welcoming; however, 49% of bisexual respondents do agree with the statement.

10.2.4. Health

There are a number of key areas of concern regarding health care for bisexual people. A slightly higher proportion of bisexual respondents (62%) and a slightly higher proportion of people who describe themselves as queer (85%) or as having a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer say that they have taken illegal drugs or used legal drugs without a prescription or relevant medical advice.

39% of bisexual respondents are in a sexual relationship with a same-sex partner, 27% of bisexual respondents are in a relationship with an opposite sex partner, and 20% (n. 8) of bisexual respondents are not in a partnership or relationship at present. 78% of both bisexual and queer respondents say they usually have monogamous relationships. 10% of bisexual respondents say they usually have open relationships, while 5% say they are polyamorous.

Both bisexual respondents (17%) and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (15%) are less likely to have had a sexual health check up in the past six months than gay men (but more likely to have had one than lesbian respondents). Bisexual respondents are more likely (21%) to have last had a sexual health check within the last 7-12 months than other respondents. 34% of bisexual respondents have never had a sexual health check up, making them more likely to have never had one than gay men or those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual. Among those who have had sex within the past three years, bisexual respondents (18%) and those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are less likely to have had a sexual health check in the last six months than gay men (29%). Bisexual respondents are more likely than other sexual identity groups to have last had a sexual health check up at a sexual health clinic outside Brighton & Hove (21%) or with the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT), at an LGBT venue or elsewhere (10%). 11% of bisexual respondents have taken payment of sex. All of the bisexual respondents who have sold or exchanged sex have done so with men, while 40% of them have done so with women.

28% (n. 11) of bisexual respondents disagree or strongly disagree that sexual health information available in Brighton & Hove is appropriate to their sexual practices, making them more likely to disagree or strongly disagree than gay men or those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual. Bisexual respondents are the most likely (39%) group by sexual identity to disagree or strongly disagree with the proposition that 'information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is appropriate to my gender identity or sexuality.' They are also more likely (39%) than other sexual identity groups to disagree or strongly disagree that information on sexual health available in Brighton & Hove is diverse and caters for all groups. Focus group data shows that bisexual respondents feel that there is little information on sexual health that is appropriate for them as bisexual people. Accounting for gender differences as well as differences in sexuality is important in the production of appropriate sexual health information.

Less than a quarter of bisexual respondents (23%) have disclosed their sexual and/or gender identities to their GPs. Bisexual identities can be important in considering the health issues faced by individuals, so non-disclosure to GPs might have health implications. Bisexual people's experiences of their GPs might also be shaped by how their GPs handle knowledge of their patients' bisexual identities.

10.2.5. Mental health

Overall bi people are less likely to have good mental health. As bi people in this sample are younger, it may be that as they age, these difficulties become more compounded perhaps because of experiences of hate crime, and rejection from LGBT communities. Those identifying as bisexual (57%) and queer (48%) are significantly less likely to describe their emotional and mental wellbeing as good or very good in the last twelve months compared to lesbians (65%) and gay men (64%). Bisexual and queer respondents (88%) are more likely to have experienced mental health difficulties than lesbians or gay men. Bisexual and queer respondents are also more likely than lesbians or gay men to have experienced difficulties with each of the following specific mental health issues ($p < .02$): significant emotional distress; depression; anxiety; isolation; confidence/self esteem; anger management; insomnia; fears/phobias; problem eating disorders; panic attacks; self harm; addictions/dependencies; and suicidal thoughts.

45% of bisexual respondents who experienced mental health issues in the past five years have had serious thoughts of suicide in the last five years, compared to 30% of the overall sample of those who have experienced mental health difficulties. Bisexual and queer respondents are more likely (15%) to have thought about and attempted suicide in the last five years than lesbians or gay men. 5% of bisexual and queer respondents have thought about and attempted suicide in the last twelve months, but the most likely group to have done so are those who identify as an 'other' sexual identity than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer.

Bisexual respondents (41%) and queer respondents (46%) are more likely to feel isolated in Brighton & Hove than lesbians (33%) or gay men (30%). Biphobia, discrimination and exclusion, especially from LGBT scenes, are often reasons why respondents experience isolation. 50% of bisexual

respondents answer that experiences of discrimination and exclusion keep them isolated.

Services providing support for LGBT people with mental health difficulties are often only focused on lesbian and gay users. The qualitative research suggests the need for training for all mental health professionals, so that they are able to offer services and advice appropriate for bisexual service users.

10.2.6. Housing

Bisexual respondents and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual tend to display particular vulnerabilities with regard to being marginalised in terms of housing. Bisexual people (15%) and those who identify other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (21%) are more likely to live in social housing than lesbians or gay men. They are also less likely to own their own home, with only 35% of bisexual respondents and 29% of those who identify other than lesbian, gay or bisexual owning their own home. A third of respondents who identify as bisexual or a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual have experienced homelessness. Homelessness across the LGBT sample as a whole is associated with a higher likelihood of using illegal drugs (or drugs without a prescription or medical advice), isolation, and experience of mental health difficulties (except anger management). Those who identify as queer and those who identify as a sexuality other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are more likely than other groups to live in areas of potential social deprivation.

10.2.7. Safety

Bisexual and queer respondents are more likely than lesbians and gay men to have experienced harassment, negative comments, teasing or bullying. Bisexual and queer respondents (29%) are more likely to experience hate crime in an LGBT venue than lesbians (6%) or gay men (12%). Such experiences may cause bisexual people to hide or conceal their identities from venue operators or other patrons. 22% of bisexual and queer people have experienced hate crime from an LGBT person, compared to 3% of lesbians and 8% of gay men. Similarly bisexual and queer people (7%) are more likely to have experienced hate crime from an LGBT service or group than lesbians (2%) or gay men. Those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are more likely (44%) to report an incident of hate crime than bisexual or queer respondents (29%), lesbians (20%) or gay men (26%).

Those identifying as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual are less likely than these other groups to feel very safe at home or very safe outside in Brighton & Hove in the day or at night, and more likely than these other groups to feel unsafe in places, services and facilities in Brighton & Hove. Bisexual and queer respondents (23%) and those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (16%) are significantly more likely to feel unsafe inside LGBT venues than lesbian

(3%) or gay (2%) respondents. Bisexual and queer respondents (31%) are more likely than gay men (25%), lesbians (15%) or those identifying other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (5%) to feel unsafe in the 'gay village'.

79% of bisexual and queer respondents at least sometimes avoid public displays of affection. This is a similar proportion to the proportion of lesbians (78%) and gay men (80%) who avoid public displays of affection. Those who identified as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer are the sexual identity group most likely to avoid going out at night at least sometimes (73%, n. 19), while bisexual and queer respondents are the least likely group to at times avoid going out at night (23%, n. 12).

Bisexual respondents (44%) and respondents who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (50%) are more likely to have experienced abuse, violence or harassment from a family member or someone close to them, than lesbians (34%) or gay men (25%). 33% (n. 6) of bisexual survivors have experienced abuse from a male partner or ex-partner, while 22% (n. 4) of bisexual survivors have experienced abuse from a female partner or ex-partner. 39% (n. 7) of bisexual survivors of abuse, violence or harassment have experienced such abuse from family members.

10.2.8. Use of services and monitoring

Bisexual respondents (23%) and, even more so, those who identify as a sexual identity other than lesbian, gay or bisexual (34%) are more likely than lesbians or gay men (14%) to have experienced discrimination on the basis of their sexual or gender identities from someone or some organisation providing goods, services or facilities. Bisexual respondents are somewhat less likely (9%, n. 4) than lesbians (14%, n. 37) or gay men (12%, n. 50) to prefer using LGBT specific services. 80% of bisexual respondents will give information regarding their sexual/gender identities for the purposes of monitoring if the information is confidential and the service is LGBT friendly.

10.3. Conclusion

Overall, these findings indicate considerable areas of need for bisexual people. Bisexual people experience marginalisation, exclusion and hate crimes in public and LGBT spaces and from mainstream and LGBT services. They are also often excluded or distanced from informal support networks such as families, LGBT networks and LGBT communities. With respect to health, mental health and housing service provision, these findings highlight areas where there are either gaps in the provision of appropriate services or scope for improvement in the services provided to bisexual people. There is a clear need to address this situation across services, scenes and communities in ways that help and support some of the most vulnerable in the LGBT collective.

11. Recommendations

11.1. General recommendations

It is recommended that:

- ▶ **'Biphobia'** is always included and considered when discussing issues of discrimination, prejudice and abuse against LGBT people
- ▶ **Statutory bodies and other service providers** organise their policies and the provision of services around an understanding of bi people in terms of their identities as well as in terms of behaviours.
- ▶ **An audit** be conducted of the training undertaken by frontline managers and workers in the relevant services to identify how to improve their ability to work with and deliver services to bi people.
- ▶ **Training** be commissioned to improve the ability of service providers to deliver their services to bi people in an effective and appropriate manner. Such training should be provided by bi groups and services offering opportunities for building capacity.
- ▶ **Statutory services** conduct gap analyses of their services with regard to their accessibility for bi people and that measures be taken to improve accessibility on the basis of the findings of such analyses.
- ▶ **Bi-focused social space** be funded and established.
- ▶ **Funding** be found for peer-support models that are bi-specific rather than targeted at LGBT people.
- ▶ **Service providers** build policies that acknowledge that LGBT spaces are not necessarily always safe for bi people. Service providers should also design means for checking that their services, spaces and policies are inclusive of bi people. All contracts should be given and subsequently assessed on these measures.
- ▶ **LGBT services** signal that they provide safe spaces for bi people where appropriate.
- ▶ **Service providers** conduct outreach work with bi people, and not presume that they are located in lesbian and gay space.
- ▶ **A local bi resource guide** be produced. This guide should list doctors, social groups, meeting places and housing providers that are bi-friendly.

- ▶ A bibliography of materials and references that can assist service providers and statutory bodies in more appropriately meeting the needs of the city's bi people be distributed to the appropriate managers and workers in these bodies.
- ▶ Statutory bodies and other service providers should always check that where referrals are made to LGBT services, these LGBT services are genuinely bi-friendly.

11.2. Bi identities and experiences of discrimination, prejudice and abuse

It is recommended that:

- ▶ Bi community networks be supported.
- ▶ Initiatives are undertaken to build awareness of the diversity of bi lives, experiences and issues and their difference from lesbian and gay lives, experiences and issues. Such awareness raising should also address the fact that bi people are located in both straight and LGBT communities.
- ▶ Awareness of the need for bi-inclusivity is developed among LGBT businesses and their staff.
- ▶ Police take harassment and biphobic hate incidents seriously in LGBT venues.
- ▶ LGBT services and businesses are offered awareness training regarding biphobia and how to provide good services for bi people.

11.3. Physical health and mental health

It is recommended that:

- ▶ Health service providers offer services to offset the compounding of mental health issues that bi people may experience as they age, including safety fears, experiences of hate crimes, and a lack of places to belong within LGBT communities and spaces.
- ▶ Sexual health resources and information be reviewed and revised so that they are more bi-inclusive, especially taking into account the needs of bi women. Sexual health services and information for bi men should be appropriate to the sexual health risks faced by bi men, and should not presume that these risks are only associated with having sex with men.
- ▶ Mental health service providers recognise bisexuality as a valid identity.

11.4. Housing

It is recommended that:

- ▶ all frontline housing needs staff receive bi awareness training
- ▶ Brighton & Hove Housing department work with Temporary Accommodation providers to ensure that they are safe and suitable for bi people e.g. requirement should be built into contracts that training is provided for staff to raise awareness and equip staff to deal with biphobic abuse.
- ▶ the introduction of the LGBT specialist worker who will work to make links with bi community groups and perhaps with a view to providing housing options surgeries at bi events
- ▶ monitoring and analysis of outcomes by gender and sexuality continues and is used to develop and improve services

11.5. Safety

It is recommended that:

- ▶ Criminal justice services put mechanisms in place to monitor, analyse and respond to hate crime against bi people. The police tagging of reports of crimes allow for such reported crimes to be labelled as 'biphobic' hate crimes at the first reporting of the incident. The 'biphobic' tag should be available as a subset of a tag for hate crimes against LGBT people, which once selected would require a subsequent tagging of one or more of the tags indicating hate crimes against lesbians, gay men, bisexual people or trans people. It is also recommended that training be provided to police officers in the use of such tags.
- ▶ Safety services incorporate bi inclusion into existing training and where appropriate provide specific training on bi awareness, utilising available community resources.
- ▶ LGBT and mainstream third sector services that provide support and safety related services to LGBT people, establish any training and service delivery gaps in addressing the needs of bi people, and work to address them utilising local community resources.
- ▶ Safe social spaces are established both within LGBT venues and in non specific LGBT venues. This should include training of security and bar staff on LGBT inclusion issues.
- ▶ Local LGBT community infrastructure geared towards addressing the needs of LGBT businesses, signal their intention to provide inclusive services to their bi customers.

- ▶ Fear of crime among bi people regarding the dual fears of prejudice and hate crime within LGBT and mainstream culture to be addressed by safety services.
- ▶ Organisations provide services to survivors of domestic abuse and establish levels of knowledge among staff about the various aspects of LGBT identify and provide training to fill any gaps utilising community resources to input/deliver training.
- ▶ Domestic abuse agencies shift away from thinking of same sex relationships as the entirety of LGBT experience, and towards data collection, monitoring and service delivery appropriate to people of various sexual orientations who may be in same sex or opposite sex relationships.
- ▶ Police to use bi inclusive language within press and safety initiatives aimed at tackling hate crime.
- ▶ Police and safety services to ensure that training on equality, hate crime, sexual violence and domestic violence training should be carried out with due regard to the needs of bi communities.
- ▶ Efforts to be made to increase the trust of bi people in criminal justice agencies and increase reporting of biphobic hate crime.
- ▶ Criminal justice services to include strategic aims and targets relating to improving the safety of bi people.

12. References

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Your feedback

We welcome any comments and suggestions.

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Downloadable copies of this and other resources are available from the Count Me In Too website including a directory of local LGBT support organisations and groups.