Updated Requirements of the LGBTQ+ Housing Pledge Scheme.

Evidence required for 'Pledge Pioneer' accreditation

1. LGBTQ+ residents can have input at executive / strategic level.

Provide a minimum of two of the following, including at least one criterion related to direct resident engagement (see guidelines for more details):

- Provide a terms of reference of a resident group demonstrating LGBTQ+ inclusion
- Evidence of a recent resident group meeting / calendar of meetings that demonstrates engagement with themes of LGBTQ+ inclusion
- Evidence of policy impact assessments that specifically consider the needs of LGBTQ+ residents
- Process map for LGBTQ+ residents to input at executive / strategic level and evidence this has been implemented
- Profile of a senior champion (CEO, director, executive member, board member) within the organisation. This should make explicit how this person is championing LGBTQ+ issues in the organisation
- Action plan of the resident group demonstrating LGBTQ+ inclusion
- Testimonial from an LGBTQ+ involved resident to confirm how they have been involved with the organisation
- Evidence of LGBTQ+ involvement residents' involvement at board and / or committee level

2. Increase LGBTQ+ visibility in your organisation.

Display the Pledge Scheme Logo in your internal and external communication channels, including website and social media within 3 months of signing up.

And provide a minimum of two of the following:

- Publishing your sign up to the pledge along with an explanation of what you are doing to achieve Pledge Pioneer (or Pledge Plus) status in your organisation
- Include the organisation's commitment to the Pledge Scheme in the annual report and explanation of actions taken
- Articles / news releases published, which explicitly mention involvement in the Pledge Scheme
- Evidence that you have included the Pledge Scheme in presentations given externally
- Evidence that you have included the LGBTQ+ Housing Pledge scheme in staff inductions
- Evidence of LGBTQ+ charities you have supported as a organisation

- Evidence of attendance at LGBTQ+ events with your staff and residents (Pride, LGBT+ History Month, Networking etc)
- Evidence of staff and resident initiatives aimed at increasing LGBTQ+ visibility (lanyards, email signatures, pronoun badges etc.)

3. Provide specific LGBTQ+ training to staff (we can provide you with a list of providers).

Provide a minimum of <u>one</u> of the following:

- Evidence of LGBTQ+ training delivered by a specialist LGBTQ+ provider
- Evidence of training that focuses on LGBTQ+ social housing residents
- Evidence to demonstrate that diversity and inclusion training for staff explicitly covers LGBTQ+ inclusion
- Evidence of E-learning used by staff members that specifically addresses LGBTQ+ inclusion
- Evidence that you have commissioned bespoke LGBTQ+ inclusion training for your organisation

When evidencing your training, please include figures on uptake (for example, the number or percentage of staff trained across departments) and EITHER of the following:

- evidence of engagement from resident-facing teams, such as slides showing training specifically designed for housing officers, scheme managers, repairs operatives, or other customer service staff
- testimonials from resident-facing staff describing what they learned and/or how their practice has changed as a result of the training.

<u>Evidence required for 'Pledge Plus' accreditation</u>

Organisations ready to take the step towards Pledge Plus accreditation, must be able to provide evidence for <u>all</u> the following:

- Evidence that LGBTQ+ residents have co-produced the Pledge Plus goals
- Evidence of an action plan that has been co-produced with LGBTQ+ residents to address particular issues
- Evidence that resources have been allocated to achieve the goals in the organisation (e.g. they have been included in team work plans, in someone's objectives etc)
- Evidence of progress towards the goals
- Evidence of outputs and outcomes against the goals
- Demonstrate that progress towards the goals has been communicated to residents e.g. news article or included in the organisation's annual report
- Testimonial from at least one LGBTQ+ resident to share their experience of co-producing the goals and the impact they have seen in the organisation

Guidelines

Please use the following guidelines to support your organisation alongside the Pledge requirements themselves.

1. Resident Engagement

We ask your organisation to submit evidence against **at least one criterion that demonstrates direct resident engagement** focused on LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Examples might include some of the following:

- A testimonial from an LGBTQ+ resident.
- A screenshot of an email exchange confirming a resident's involvement in shaping your services.
- Minutes or notes from a meeting that included LGBTQ+ resident input.

If you have engaged with residents who are allies of the LGBTQ+ community — for example, residents who are supportive of inclusion or have LGBTQ+ friends or family — we also welcome this evidence. Please make sure to specify that these residents are allies rather than LGBTQ+ community members.

All resident evidence must be anonymised, with names and any identifiable information removed. If you'd like help with this process, please reach out to the Pledge Coordinator for support.

We encourage organisations to make resident engagement innovative, inclusive and fun. The aim is to create spaces that LGBTQ+ residents genuinely want to be part of — where they feel heard, valued, and can see the impact of their input.

Think creatively about what resident engagement might look like. Examples could include:

- Meeting notes from staff who have worked closely with LGBTQ+ residents or supported community projects, along with anonymised quotes from participants.
- Consultation or focus groups specifically for LGBTQ+ residents.
- Social or creative events that bring people together, such as community gatherings, film nights, art workshops or even pantomimes.

Remember to make the feedback loop from residents back to senior leadership or board level clear and explicit. This demonstrates that residents' voices are influencing decision-making at every level of your organisation.

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2. Tone and Communication Style

The strongest submissions tend to be those with a **friendly, community-centred tone**, particularly in external communications linked to section 2: the visibility section. Submissions that sound overly corporate or formal in correspondences with residents can feel less relatable.

That said, it's also important not to lose your organisation's professional voice entirely. A strong submission strikes a balance between being approachable and professional — combining clear, confident communication with warmth and authenticity.

We encourage organisations to present their evidence in a bright, bold, and streamlined format that feels engaging while still including formal sections where appropriate. The emphasis should remain firmly on residents and their involvement, but a polished and well-structured presentation helps ensure your message lands effectively with all audiences.

We encourage you to use language and approaches that speak directly to LGBTQ+ residents — including those living in your homes and those on our assessment panels. If it would be helpful, the Pledge Coordinator can share examples of engaging, accessible and inspiring communications from other organisations.

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3. LGBTQ+ Awareness Training

The most effective examples of LGBTQ+ awareness training are those that are **specific to housing and focus on supporting residents**. Training that draws on real-life staff–resident interactions tends to have the greatest impact.

When evidencing your training, we ask that you include uptake figures, and evidence that resident-facing teams have engaged with the training, either through figures or testimonials.

This helps us see that the training has been embedded across your organisation and that it's building skills and confidence among your staff, particularly those teams who are having day-to-day interactions with residents.

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4. Proportionality and Scale

We recognise that Pledge Signatories include organisations of all sizes and structures — from smaller, community-based housing providers to large organisations managing tens of thousands of homes across multiple regions. The Pledge is designed to be flexible and supportive of this diversity.

Our assessment approach is **proportionate to your organisation's size, scope and capacity**. This means that what counts as strong, meaningful evidence will look different for a small, single-borough housing association than for a large national provider.

For larger organisations (for example, those operating across several regions or managing 10,000+ homes), we would like to see:

- Evidence drawn from more than one region or service area.
- Examples showing that successful inclusion initiatives in one area are being — or are planned to be — rolled out across other regions.
- Signs of organisation-wide coordination and shared learning, ensuring that good practice in one locality informs others.

For smaller organisations, we recognise that resources and capacity may be more limited. In these cases, we encourage a focus on depth and authenticity — strong examples of direct resident engagement, partnership working, and practical change within your communities.

Ultimately, the panel is looking for evidence that fits your organisation's scale, demonstrates genuine commitment, and shows that LGBTQ+ inclusion is being meaningfully embedded wherever you operate.

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5. Visual Evidence

When evidencing your work, we encourage you to go beyond written reports or policies and **include visual examples that show LGBTQ+ inclusion in action**. This helps the panel see your organisation's values brought to life and makes your submission more engaging for LGBTQ+ residents on our assessment panels.

Examples of visual or communications evidence might include:

- Photos from LGBTQ+ inclusion events, community celebrations, or staff training sessions.
- Screenshots of inclusive internal communications, newsletters, or social media posts.
- Campaign materials, posters, or resident-facing documents that highlight your commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Visual evidence can bring your submission to life and show the authenticity of your organisation's work. Please ensure any images or materials are used with consent and that resident privacy is always protected (for instance, by blurring faces or removing identifying details where appropriate).

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6. Intersectionality and Inclusion

We encourage organisations to **recognise and celebrate the diversity within the LGBTQ+ community**. Residents' experiences of housing and inclusion are often shaped by multiple aspects of identity — including race, ethnicity, faith, age, disability, migration background, and socioeconomic factors.

The strongest submissions demonstrate an intersectional approach, showing awareness that LGBTQ+ inclusion cannot be one-size-fits-all. For example, your organisation might:

- Work with community partners who support LGBTQ+ residents of colour, trans residents, or disabled LGBTQ+ residents.
- Adapt communications or services to make them accessible and inclusive of different languages, faith contexts, or cultural needs.
- Include quotes or feedback from a range of LGBTQ+ residents to reflect diverse voices and perspectives

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7. Breadth Over Depth

When submitting evidence, **aim for quality over quantity**. A smaller number of criteria met with clear, meaningful, and relevant evidence is stronger than trying to meet every criterion with weaker or less relevant examples.

Of course, if your organisation is already doing the work, please do evidence it fully — this is exactly what the panel wants to see. But do not feel pressured to create activity or evidence that doesn't exist just to tick boxes. Honest, authentic submissions that reflect real practice are far stronger than artificially generated examples.

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8. Embedding LGBTQ+ Inclusion Across the Organisation

LGBTQ+ inclusion should not be treated as a one-off project or an isolated activity — it should be **embedded across your organisation's culture, policies and everyday practice**.

We encourage you to show how LGBTQ+ inclusion is being woven into your broader equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) framework. Reach out to staff members across different departments and see whether they can contribute to this work.

Submissions that show systemic, organisation-wide commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion — rather than stand-alone initiatives — are often the most powerful. These examples demonstrate lasting cultural change that benefits both residents and staff.

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9. Demonstrating Progress

If your organisation already holds Pledge Pioneer or Pledge Plus status and is resubmitting to maintain it, please **show how your work has developed** over time.

We're keen to see how you've built on previous submissions and continued to strengthen resident involvement, comms, and training delivery in your LGBTQ+ inclusion work.

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10. Learning From Challenges

The panel is just as **interested in hearing about what didn't go to plan** as what worked well. Sharing your challenges helps us understand your organisation's learning journey and identify ways we can support you.

For example, if a resident group didn't materialise or engagement was lower than expected, let us know — we can help you action-plan alternative approaches or link you to other organisations with similar experiences.

Equally, if you promoted a comms campaign to engage with LGBTQ+ residents but didn't receive any interest, share this with us and we can strategize other ways to engage with the communities you support.

Ultimately, the LGBTQ+ Housing Pledge is built on encouragement, not criticism. Our aim is to celebrate good practice, share learning, and support continuous improvement across the sector. We understand that not every initiative will work perfectly — and that's okay.

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11. Sharing and Reviewing Submissions with Residents

Where residents' voices, experiences, or stories have contributed to your submission, we strongly encourage you to review the final evidence with those residents (or resident panels) before submission.

This step is not only about accuracy — it's also a valuable opportunity for co-production. Involving residents in reviewing your evidence helps ensure that the work truly reflects their experiences, priorities and perspectives, and that they can see how their contributions have shaped your organisation's progress.

Co-production sits at the heart of meaningful LGBTQ+ inclusion. Even a short discussion, feedback session, or email exchange with involved residents can turn a submission from being staff-led to truly co-created.

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12. Organising and Submitting Your Evidence

To make your submission as clear and accessible as possible, we strongly encourage organisations to use the provided template to compile all evidence into a single, well-organised document. This helps the assessment panel see the full picture of your work, ensures nothing is overlooked, and supports consistency across submissions.

When organising your document:

- Clearly label each section according to the relevant Pledge criteria (e.g., "Section 1a: 'Terms of reference from a resident group')
- Keep your evidence focused on LGBTQ+ inclusion and relevant to the criteria you are demonstrating.
- Use screenshots rather than links to websites or online content. This ensures your evidence remains accessible and avoids broken links.
- Make full use of the evidence template we provide, which allows you to tick off areas that have been submitted against and organise evidence into relevant sections. This helps you stay organised and ensures the panel can easily navigate your submission.
- Include a logical, easy-to-follow structure, combining written examples with visuals, screenshots, or short videos where relevant.

For larger files, we recommend using a secure file transfer service such as WeTransfer, Dropbox, or SharePoint to submit your evidence. Make sure any links work correctly and include any necessary access permissions.

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13. Support Available

We understand that some criteria may be more challenging to evidence than others. Please make full use of the **support available to Pledge Promisers**, including:

- One-to-one check-ins
- Signatory forums
- Buddying systems
- Access to a range of relevant resources and materials

For our full menu of support options available to Pledge signatories, please get in touch with houseproudpledge@stonewallhousing.or

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