



**TOWER Pride is the LGBTQIA+ Staff and Friends Forum for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets**

## **Purpose**

The group's purpose is to make Tower Hamlets Council a great place of work for everyone.

## **Aims & Objectives**

### **Our Aim**

We aim to:

- be an inclusive, welcoming and supportive network for all LGBTQIA+ employees and straight allies
- promote equality, inclusivity and diversity in the workplace

### **Our Objectives**

1. **To support each other:** To be a safe space for members to meet together, creating a forum for discussion on important issues;
2. **To be a voice:** To identify and represent the group's views on particular employment and residence issues affecting the LGBTQIA+ community;
3. **To encourage good practice:** To promote good employment practices and service delivery to residents; to act as a critical friend to London Borough of Tower Hamlets;
4. **To communicate with each other:** To run a series of network meetings to allow the exchange of views and deliver key messages on diversity and inclusivity issues;
5. **To build friendships:** To facilitate and or promote a series of social events throughout the year for members of the network and, where appropriate, their partners and straight allies;
6. **To work with others:** To work closely with other bodies to promote good practice in the workplace and other cross-cutting issues;

7. **To develop ourselves:** Share knowledge and experience of experiences, and highlight mentoring and professional development opportunities to members of the network.

### **Principles**

- Validating and supporting members' various sexual identities and gender identities (e.g. lesbian female, gay male, bisexual, transgender, and other non-heterosexual and non-cis-gendered identities)
- To welcome new members
- Protecting the confidentiality of those group members who do not wish to be openly associated with the group (e.g. by not disclosing those group members' names to non-members, and not forwarding group e-mails to non-members)
- Acknowledging the identities and welcoming the contributions of heterosexual group members and allies

### **Structure**

The LGBTQIA+ staff and Friends Forum is a self-determining, voluntary staff group supporting and championing issues feeding into Tower Hamlet's Council Corporate Equality Board.

### **Corporate Equality Board Representation**

The Tower Pride Co-Chairs represent the voice of LGBTQIA+ staff at the CEB.

### **FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS**

The meetings are held every six to eight weeks for the duration of one hour. Dates of meetings will be arranged in advance and circulated to all staff members of the group via the Tower Pride Yammer group and by blind copy emails for members who do not wish to be identified.

NB: The group may need to meet more frequently if the group decides to hold seminars, cultural events, workshops, conferences etc. On such occasions a separate working party will be set up to lead on this.

### **Current Roles**

<b>Co chairs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anna Finch-Smith</li><li>• Laila El-Metoui</li></ul>
<b>Branch Secretary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ross Walton</li></ul>
<b>Communication officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Richard Hurley</li></ul>
<b>Research and Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Suzanna Yong Lee</li></ul>

<b>Trans and NB Rep</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBC</li> </ul>
<b>Bi Rep</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBC</li> </ul>

### **Background**

Tower Pride was established in November 2018 and is **open to all staff**, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identities. Our network comprises of over 70 staff who identify as LGBTQIA+ or heterosexual/straight (also known as ‘friends’ or ‘allies’ who want to show their support for the LGBTQIA+ community). Our staff network aims to:

Tower Pride is replacing the LGBT and friends staff forum. It has made excellent progress in LGBTQIA+ workplace inclusivity at Tower Hamlets Council, as demonstrated by our recent ranking on Stonewall’s Top 100 employers to work for their 2018 Workplace Equality Index.

### **What does our Forum do?**

We provide advice and signposting to members and colleagues about the needs of LGBTQIA+ employees as well as a confidential support service.

We work together with other forums such as the LGBT Practitioners Forum and the LGBT community forum run by ELOP to ensure the needs of our communities are met.

The network offers a unique opportunity to meet other LGBTQIA+ employees within the Council, to make new contacts and to share knowledge.

We promote the LGBT events in the borough.

**To join our staff network, join the Tower Pride closed group on Yammer**