



Civil Service



Diversity & Inclusion

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[Home](#) > LGBT - history, religion and faith

LGBT - history, religion and faith

Written by Stephen Foreshow-Cain, Executive Director, Government Digital Service on 26 February 2016

This month, indeed every February, is [LGBT History Month](#) [1]. It's a chance to reflect on the positive contributions that lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people make to our society, and to promote diversity and inclusion.

The theme for this year's LGBT History Month has been "religion, belief and faith". It reminds me that despite our differences - whether they be of faith, sexuality, race, gender or background - our diversity makes us stronger. That's evident through the progress we've made over the years as a country and as a civil service.

The theme is also intensely personal for me.

I [married my husband](#) [2], an incredibly dedicated and caring parish priest, a year and a half ago. As the Church of England's official stance on our marriage is less than Christian, I think I could be forgiven for despairing of the role of religion in modern life, and in my life. But I don't despair. My husband's congregation and the wider network of [inclusive churches](#) [3] (who believe in a church that does not discriminate, on any level) have been amazingly supportive. Although not religious myself, their generosity and welcome have restored my faith in people of faith. It also makes me thankful to work in an organisation where diversity and inclusion are valued and, indeed, championed.

Civil servants at the forefront

We shouldn't forget to celebrate that the UK has come a long way on LGB&TI equality - and civil servants have been at the forefront of this work.

Together, we've supported the introduction of marriage equality legislation, ensured fair treatment in the workplace and in the sale of goods and services, and much more. We are some of the most [open and inclusive organisations in the country](#) [4] for LGB&TI staff.

As the Cabinet Office LGB&TI Diversity Champion, making the department one of the most inclusive

and diverse organisations in government is something I care passionately about; and that sentiment is shared by my executive committee colleagues. Improving diversity is something we're actively discussing, building on the excellent work we already do as a department.

I want particularly to highlight the great work our diversity networks do at times like this. This year, members of the Cabinet Office LGBT network have done a great job in submitting our bid to Stonewall for its [Workplace Equality Index](#) [5]. We've just had our results back and will be sharing more information about that, and the things we'll do because of the results, soon.

View the online article here; <https://civilservice.blog.gov.uk/2016/02/26/lgbt-history-religion-and-fa...>
[6]

Stephen Foreshow-Cain, Executive Director, Government Digital Service

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Links

[1] <http://www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk/>

[2] <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/video/2014/jul/11/vicar-wedding-same-sex-marriage-rev-andrew-cain>

[3] <http://inclusive-church.org.uk/>

[4] <https://civilservice.blog.gov.uk/2016/01/21/civil-service-among-the-best/>

[5] <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/get-involved/workplace/workplace-equality-index>

[6] <https://civilservice.blog.gov.uk/2016/02/26/lgbt-history-religion-and-faith/>