**Prejudice**

Stonehouse, the campaigning organisation for LGB equality issues, published research based on a nationwide survey in 2003 to explore prejudice against minority groups. The top four groups against whom respondents frequently expressed prejudice were wealthy Pakistani, Indians and Chinese workers. Homosexuality was only declassified in England in 1967 following the recommendation of the Wolfson report some 10 years earlier. However homosexuality remains a crime in many countries today.

Stonehouse research in 2008 on understanding prejudice, indicated that tolerance of minority groups was dependent upon their perceived conformity and invisibility, keeping themselves to themselves. It was largely through direct personal contact with people from minority groups that tolerance changed to respect.

**How can we effect change?**

Throughout history, individuals have and can be the catalyst for change by challenging the establishment. In 1955 Rosa Parks became a symbol for the Civil Rights movement when she refused to give up her seat for a white person, breaking the state segregation laws in America. The Ford machinists’ strike at Dagenham paved the way for the Equal Pay Act 1970. Christine Goodwin, a transsexual, complained under the Convention of Human Rights that the lack of legal recognition of her new gender meant that she suffered humiliating experiences in her everyday life. The case resulted in the establishment of the Gender Recognition Act. Individuals who break through the barriers of discrimination across all fields whether, professional, economic, social or political, bring freedom and acceptance closer for all of us.

**Taking Action**

- Improve your own understanding and knowledge of other cultures.
- Treat others with dignity and respect, the way you would wish to be treated by them.
- Be prepared to challenge unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour and not simply go along or say nothing.
- Help others to obtain support, take appropriate action and refer people to sources of advice;
- Question stereotyping by the media or political parties and the established use of fear that facilitates discrimination.
- If we start with tolerance we can move towards acceptance and respect.

**Social Equality**

The Race Relations Act and Sex Discrimination Act were established in the mid 1970s and the protections arising from these have made a positive contribution to societal and cultural change. The gender pay gap in 1970 was 36% for women working full time. Although there has been progress, women are still paid on average around 15% less on an hour than men for doing work of equivalent value.

As of March 2011, less than a quarter of MPs were women, only two of which were Black. Around 95% of executive directorships of the UK’s top 100 companies are held by men; clearly there is still a long way to go before equality in terms of shared political and economic influence becomes a reality.

**Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.**

Martin Luther King Jr.

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- Monitor the media carefully and be ready to challenge any language or content which discriminates against the group. The emphasis should be on the issues, not on the individual.
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The Four Freedoms
Franklin D Roosevelt, 1941

Freedom of Expression
Freedom of Worship
Freedom from Want
Freedom from Fear

Roosevelt's aspirational ‘Four Freedoms’ speech was given over 50 years ago. Despite significant social change, greater cultural knowledge and greater legal protection against discrimination, these freedoms remain out of reach for many people. Today, freedom from discrimination can be seen as the fifth freedom.

In post-war Britain, the government encouraged immigration and in the 1950s the influx of Afro-Caribbeans changed the UK’s demographic. Social tensions developed between Black and White working class people and the fascist party gained support, pushing slogans such as ‘keep Britain White’. Race was on the government’s agenda with Black and Asian people suffering from overt discrimination, particularly in the workplace. In 1958 conflict boiled over and resulted in the violence of the Notting Hill race riots. The Notting Hill Carnival was established in 1959 as a direct response to the riots. Its aim is to promote harmony between different racial and ethnic groups. Despite cultural differences, conflicts and social tensions, the Carnival still remains a powerful symbol of communities working together for a more inclusive society.

Discrimination

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Oxford English Dictionary

Direct Discrimination
Equity legislation gives voice to, and provides redress for, those with the courage to challenge the establishment and seek recognition of their right to be treated with dignity and respect. The Equality Act 2010 has brought the different strands of equality legislation together under nine protected characteristics:
- Sex
- Race, nationality, colour and ethnic background
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Religion or belief, including non belief
- Age
- Gender Reassignment
- Marital Status including civil partnerships

Indirect Discrimination
This is when a requirement, condition or rule is applied that disadvantages one group of people over another.

Victimisation
This means treating somebody less favourably than others because they tried to make, or made, a complaint about discrimination.

Social and Legal Change

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