

The letter we have sent to MPs is

At the start of Pride Month, we write to you to request that you take a stand for the dignity, rights, and safety of trans* and non-binary members of your community.

As you will be aware, there has been a sharp escalation in anti-trans policies and rhetoric across the UK. These have not only harmed individuals but have also undermined public trust in institutions meant to uphold equality, a core value of your party.

Unfortunately the following decisions, coupled with a widespread failure to consult trans organisations, have made life increasingly difficult for trans* and non-binary residents:

- The continued ban on puberty blockers for trans youth on the NHS;
- The criminalisation of obtaining such care privately or via the EU;
- Government endorsement of the Supreme Court ruling in *For Women Scotland*, which declared that trans people remain their "biological sex" under the Equality Act;
- The EHRC's non-statutory guidance recommending the exclusion of trans women and trans men from single-sex spaces;
- Draft school guidance that remains on the table and has not been withdrawn.

As representatives, we ask you to break the silence, correct harmful stereotypes within your parliamentary party and take every opportunity to vote against attacks on trans* people and their rights.

Reading Pride has consistently maintained that we only welcome participation in our events from organisations that align with our values of equality, inclusion, and safety for all LGBTQ+ people. In 2024, following discussions, we conditionally allowed Labour to participate in the parade. However, in light of recent events, we are carefully considering the growing call from [Trans Pride Collective](#) and other UK Prides to block party political participation in Reading Pride. However, we are continuing to engage directly with parties and individuals who wish to show leadership.

With that in mind, we invite you to publicly commit to the following five actions:

1. Speak out publicly in support of trans* rights, including during Pride Month, in Parliament, on social media, and in your constituency.
2. Support residents with casework relating to their gender identity, especially where they face barriers in accessing healthcare, legal documentation, or safety in public services.
3. Vote against any reduction in the rights of trans people, including legislative changes that would curtail legal protections or limit access to services.
4. Sign motions and petitions that defend and advance trans rights, including calls for NHS reform, safe access to services, and inclusive education policy.
5. Intervene with public services such as the NHS, local councils, and the police, when failures or discrimination affecting trans residents arise.

These are not abstract concerns, they are about real people's lives, rights, and safety. Pride is more than a celebration; it is a movement rooted in self-expression, justice and survival. You have the platform to be part of that progress.

We look forward to your response and public commitment.

Yours sincerely,

Sophia 'Phi' James, Vice Chair on behalf of the Board of Reading Pride

Reading Pride

The letter sent to councillors is

Dear Councillor

On the eve of Pride Month, we are writing to you on behalf of Reading Pride to urge the Council to take strong and proactive steps to defend the rights and dignity of trans and non-binary people across our town.

In recent months, we have witnessed a concerning rise in transphobic rhetoric and actions across the UK. Trans people, particularly trans women and non-binary individuals, are being increasingly subjected to surveillance, harassment, and exclusion when accessing public spaces — especially toilets and changing facilities. These actions not only breach the spirit and letter of the Equality Act 2010, but also risk normalising discrimination in our communities.

We are therefore asking Reading Borough Council to adopt a clear and enforceable policy that protects the rights of trans and non-binary people. This includes ensuring that Reading Borough Council:

1. Issue strict regulations against gender-policing in council building toilets and changing rooms, specifically that Council staff will not:
 - Interrogate any person using these facilities regarding their gender, who is not otherwise causing a nuisance.
 - Ask individuals to produce documentation to “prove” their gender
 - Ask individuals to partially or fully undress to prove their gender
 - Search, touch or otherwise manhandle individuals with the intent of determining their gender
 - Carry out internet, records or database searches with the intent of identifying an individual's gender with regard to the use of these facilities
 - Remove individuals from these facilities or call the Police to do so, solely on the grounds of their perceived gender
 - Advise anyone or adopt any policy of advising to use the disabled toilets solely on the grounds of their perceived gender

2. Ensure that there is a consistent policy respecting the rights of trans and non-binary people across all council establishments including council offices, libraries, community centres and leisure facilities. Specifically that the Council will:
 - Promptly update the gender recorded for residents when requested to do so
 - Manage the data related to such changes as Sensitive in the context of data protection regulations
 - Treat trans people for all purposes in the gender they present in, understanding trans people may not have updated their identity records
3. Respect the dignity of trans and non-binary people by:
 - Using the correct name or pronoun for individuals, noting it is OK to ask what these are
 - Ensuring professionalism of the highest standards by training employees on trans rights
4. Ensure that all council services direct and contracted respect the rights of trans and non-binary people. Specifically that the Council will:
 - Identify what services have previously had no valid means of achieving a legitimate aim under Schedule 3, Paragraph 26 & Schedule 3, Paragraph 27 of the Equality Act 2010
 - Explicitly declare that those services identified continue to have no valid means of achieving a legitimate aim
 - Where services have had a valid means of achieving a legitimate aim, the Council will continue to operate these services as normal and advise publicly of that.
5. Encourage schools to adopt Amnesty International's guidance on the themes of access to spaces, access to services and dignity and inclusivity
6. Commit to engaging directly with Trans affirming & Trans-led organisations on the drafting and implementation of any new policies arising directly from a Statutory Code of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission
7. Agree to publish a public statement reaffirming your support in line with organisations such as [Lush](#) and the [British Medical Association](#).

These commitments are not only a legal obligation under the Equality Act but a moral imperative to ensure that Reading remains a safe, welcoming, and inclusive borough for all.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how the Council can implement and publicly endorse these vital protections. Together, we can ensure that Reading leads by example in championing equality for everyone in our community.

Yours sincerely,

Sophia James, Vice Chair on behalf of the Board of Reading Pride

Reading Pride

www.readingpride.co.uk