

Hello everyone,

My name is Phoenix and this is Ross and I have lived in Bath for 2 years. I work on the Bath Pride committee and I am the founder of Safe Space Bath. It is a UK wide project to involve as many local businesses as possible to show their support and inclusion of trans folk.

The UK Supreme Court recently ruled that the terms 'sex', 'man' and 'woman' in the Equality Act refer to 'biological sex' only, and do not extend to trans people. This decision has increased transphobic hate crimes and heightened fear within and for our trans community. It has made an already difficult environment even harder to navigate as a trans person.

LGBTQ+ people have been part of Bath for as long as it has existed. They are our family, friends, coworkers and members of our community.

We asked B&NES residents to share their experiences since the court ruling. This is what they said:

'As a victim of transphobia I find it very difficult to be honest about my gender identity & feel as though I have to lie about who I am for my own safety and sanity. Having to lie about myself for my own safety and happiness feels unjust and unfair.'

'I have recently bought a RADAR key so I can access disabled toilets when I'm out. I no longer feel safe using gendered toilets under the new guidelines, as either toilet I use leaves me open to verbal or physical abuse.'

Another trans person described being physically assaulted in the Labyrinth night club due to their gender identity. Security staff stood by and took no action. It was due to the actions of friends that they were able to escape this horrific situation.

You may have heard that a council library in Kent have removed LGBTQ+ books from their shelves in the children's section. We are fearful that it will not stop there, and hope that this is not something that will be repeated in B&NES.

Safe spaces are integral for LGBTQ+ folks to navigate society. We asked trans folk in B&NES what a safe space means to them:

"A safe space for me is somewhere that everyone can report hate of any kind and have it taken seriously."

"A safe space feels like a warm hug after a long day, or a breath of fresh air, or the first sip of a glass of water after exercise. It lets you focus on what matters in life - human connection and understanding."

"A safe space is somewhere that treats people as people no matter what."

We are aware of the council's support and acceptance of trans folk but we are asking this for real and meaningful action. We as trans folk should be leaving our homes feeling safe, welcomed and supported by the Bath community.

Stockport council have recently signed a movement that I have sent to Bath council ahead of time which could be used as a framework.

We have provided a separate document listing commitments for B&NES council to read through and we ask that you councillors agree and champion them.

We thank you for your commitment to creating a safe space for your residents. We know that as councillors your commitment to protecting marginalised groups from discrimination is a key task and we look forward to working with you to ensure that B&NES is a safe space for trans people as well.