



Liberal Democrats for Seekers of Sanctuary

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President Lord Roger Roberts of Llandudno

POLICY AFFECTING LGBT+ ASYLUM SEEKERS AS AGREED AT LIB DEM CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 2018

Too many LGBT+ asylum claims are failing at the first stage due in part to less than adequate legal advice in the preparation of the initial claims and because a large number of legal practices advertising immigration specialism have no expertise in relation to sexual orientation or gender identity grounds for asylum.

The system as it stands is riddled with humiliating, unfairly intrusive elements that Conservative Ministers continue to defend despite the evidence being they are not necessary. For LGBT+ applicants, there is a culture of disbelief about their sexuality with officials requiring applicants to make public social media postings of a personal sexual nature, screen capture dating apps and produce submissions by sexual partners as to their sexuality. There is also evidence that highly traumatised individuals, including survivors of child sexual abuse, have been refused due to their suppressed emotional responses, with no reference to any of the extensive knowledge base in the area.

Liberal Democrats want to see:

- The eradication of the presumption of disbelief about the sexuality or gender identity of LGBT+ applicants, specifically ending the practice in which officials appear to habitually state that an applicant is not LGBT+ merely to justify an initial refusal, or refuse an LGBT+ applicant on the basis that they could be discreet.
- Review and reform all aspects of current asylum rules and operations that offend basic fairness and justice, doing away with the culture of disbelief of many groups, including LGBT+ applicants, who are at risk if returned.