

Now & Then: Being Jewish and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) in the UK

## ANSWER SHEET

### Part 1

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| <p><b>Question 1: INTERVIEWEES</b></p> | <p><b>Elli:</b> Rabbi Elli Sarah Tikvah. Born in 1955. Rabbi at Brighton and Hove Progressive Synagogue for 13 years; ordained 24 years ago; has a lovely wife/partner, married in 2006 called Jess. Involved via Jewish Lesbian and Gay group but before that to the Jewish lesbian community, back to the beginning of the 1980s; trying to making it more inclusive for LGBT people - what her Rabbinate has been about.</p> <p><b>Peter:</b> lives in Brighton, a member of the synagogue where Elli is Rabbi; also chair of the synagogue; works in recruitment. Involvement with the LGBT community fairly limited; used to be a member of JGLG; involvement is mostly through the synagogue in Brighton.</p> <p><b>Peggy:</b> Peggy Sherwood, president of the Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group (JGLG), was a children's nurse, now retired from the NHS, a member also of the Brighton and Hove Progressive synagogue; is civil-partner shipped with her female partner, <i>JGLG</i> mainly social, Chavurah: an opportunity to go to a synagogue service that is exclusively LGBT.</p> <p><b>Sacha:</b> Holocaust survivor from Paris; lives in Camden Town, has two children and grandchildren from a previous marriage; a member of JGLG, retired and enjoying life. Involvement is non-religious: Jewish gay group and friends; belongs to the London gay men's chorus.</p> |
| <p><b>Question 2: ACRONYM HUNT</b></p> | <p>Chavurah: meaning is meeting a friend. Here: a service which is led by an out lesbian or gay Rabbi. it has a religious component but it has equally a social component as well</p> <p>Chuppah: portable canopy you stand under when you get married.</p> <p>Tallit: prayer shawl that people wear in synagogue.</p>  |
| <p><b>Question 3: THE PAST</b></p>     | <p>What do they say about their coming out experience? Elli: in 1978, discovered the women's liberation movement and radical feminism and became a lesbian separatist. Peter: gradual process, late, around '92/'93 following a divorce from wife. Peggy: Rabbi Elli Sarah put her in touch with the Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group; like coming home and it's probably the best decision in my life that I ever made actually. Sacha: was nearly fifty</p>   |

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|                                       | <p>when I actually properly came out as a gay man.</p> <p>Was it ok to be Jewish and gay/lesbian back then? Elli: tried to avoid the pressure by getting married. Peter: being gay portrayed in the media being as a degenerate kind of existence and not something you could have a viable career and be a part of a family and religious group, being Jewish. Peggy: never thought could marry two parts of her life: being a lesbian and being Jewish. Sacha: realized was gay as teenager but couldn't really formulate it, never seemed a possibility to lead any kind of a gay life.</p>   |
| <p><b>Question 4: THE PRESENT</b></p> | <p>Elli: 'I decided to put those two things together and want to include myself, for me being Jewish and being a lesbian, I cannot separate those and that has been a huge struggle because actually a many of people do not accept that twenty five years ago, thirty years ago when I started. So it's been quite a journey.'</p> <p>Peggy: It's definitely getting easier because twenty years ago you couldn't belong to a synagogue'.</p> <p>Peter: 'I didn't feel up to until about five years ago that I could go to a synagogue and be gay.'</p> <p>Sacha: 'I don't have the same conflict because, you know, religious services just don't mean anything for me.' 'I think it's quite remarkable the speed at which changes have happened.'</p> |
| <p><b>Question 5: MARRIAGE</b></p>    | <p>'Covenant of Love' is a marriage-like same-sex commitment ceremony for Progressive Jews.</p> <p>Peggy wants to have a traditional Jewish wedding</p>  |
| <p><b>Question 6: THE FUTURE</b></p>  | <p>Elli: 'we need more campaigning: need to be doing something on behalf of our LGBT brothers and sisters across the globe.'</p> <p>'Challenge to be as inclusive (transgender, bisexual etc) as we want the wider society to be.'</p> <p>Peggy: 'I would like to see us welcome by the Orthodox community.'</p> <p>All: Equal marriage.</p>   |

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Part 2:

Answers may vary

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| <b>Question 1: INTERSECTION</b> | See transcript – answers may vary  |
| <b>Question 2: SIMILARITIES</b> | Answers may vary   |
| <b>Question 3: THE PRESENT</b>  | Answers may vary   |
| <b>Question 4: THE FUTURE</b>   | <p>Tim: ‘incorporating gender identity issues into Jewish education can only have positive influences in terms of our progressiveness as a people.’</p> <p>‘No one necessarily bats an eyelash about us being there, it’s just another form family.’</p> |