You’re welcome!
A guide for gay visitors to Britain
Hello!

So you’ve come to Britain. Welcome! Hopefully you’ll have a great time here. This booklet tells you all you need to know about how the law protects you, as a lesbian, gay or bisexual person, while you’re visiting Britain. It explains what your rights are and where you can go for help if you have any problems.
It’s great to be gay

Happily laws in Britain protecting you if you’re lesbian, gay or bisexual are stronger than almost anywhere else in the world. This goes for men and for women. You can be open about who you are, and there are pubs and clubs for gay people in some of the big cities (as well as in some of the smaller ones!).

If you’ve used a service or made a complaint about something you might even be asked if you’re gay. Don’t worry – they’re not being nosy and they’re not checking up on you. Lots of organisations in Britain just want to make their services better for everyone – and these days that includes gay people too! But if you don’t feel comfortable telling them you’re gay then you never have to.
Eat, drink and be merry

If you’re in a shop, a restaurant or a pub, if you’re taking the kids to the zoo, attending a sporting event or getting into a taxi – wherever you are, basically – nobody can refuse to serve you simply because you’re gay. If somebody tries to refuse to serve you, tell them you know this is illegal and ask to speak to the manager. The law says that gay people have as much right to a plate of fish and chips as anyone else! Ok, not in so many words but you know what we mean.
Wherever you decide to stay while you’re in Britain, you’re perfectly entitled to share a room – and a bed – with your partner. Or to have a family suite if you have children, for that matter. If any hotel or bed & breakfast tells you they won’t offer a double room to two women or two men, they are breaking the law. It’s that simple. Ask to speak to the manager and tell them you know this is illegal.
It’s against the law in this country to hurt somebody because they’re gay – it’s called a ‘hate crime’. Don’t worry – it’s unlikely that someone will harass you or attack you for being gay while you’re here. But if it does happen – for example if you’re outside a gay bar or holding your partner’s hand in the street or on a train – you can tell the police, who should take the incident seriously. The police are there to help you, so if you see a police officer in the street don’t be afraid to ask them for help. If you’re really seriously hurt, phone 999 to speak to the police or call for an ambulance.
Hopefully you won’t have to go anywhere near a hospital while you’re visiting Britain. But if you or your partner does get ill, the emergency number to call for an ambulance is 999. It’s worth knowing that hospital staff have to recognise your relationship, regardless of whether you’re married or whatever. Tell them you are your partner’s ‘next-of-kin’. This doesn’t mean you can demand what sort of treatment they give your partner but they may ask for your advice.
Now that you’ve read this booklet, we hope that’s cleared up a few things. But if you’re still not sure what your rights are, or you find yourself in a tricky situation and don’t know what to do, you can contact Stonewall for advice.

Just call us on 08000 502020 (Mon-Fri 9:30am to 5:30pm) or drop us an email at info@stonewall.org.uk