



Peter Tatchell  
Director  
Peter Tatchell Foundation

SK/HJF

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Dear Peter

I am writing this letter in response to your Apologise Now Campaign and to acknowledge your request for UK Police Forces to apologise for their role in the historic over policing of the LGBTQ+ people and communities.

As Chief Constable of Merseyside Police, I offer my sincere apology and deepest regret for the ill treatment and historical prejudice that caused harm to the LGBTQ+ communities affected, their friends and families, here in Merseyside. I am sorry also for the extreme mistrust we generated, compounding LGBTQ+ vulnerability, as a result.

I recognise the importance of an apology and acknowledge the discriminatory way in which Merseyside Police enforced the law at the time and the disproportionate impact it had upon many within the LGBTQ+ community. The injustices that followed are deeply upsetting to me.

Many of those affected at that time will now belong to the older generation within our LGBTQ+ community. With this apology I acknowledge the harm, unique impact, and the erosion of trust and confidence that resulted for them. Our mistreatment had the ripple effect across the whole LGBTQ+ community and the impact on their relationship with Merseyside Police.

It is vital we take responsibility for our actions as we hope to continue to move forward with our LGBTQ+ communities. I cannot undo what happened in the past. What I can do is provide reassurance of the genuine commitment from myself and Merseyside Police, to learn and understand the lessons of the past to ensure our LGBTQ+ communities are always treated with respect, understanding and we are responsive to their needs.

Following your initial request I have consulted closely with our LGBT+ staff network, which has been active within the force for 20 years. During that time, the network has helped the force connect with our LGBTQ+ colleagues and the local community. Having listened to our LGBTQ+ community, I wanted to give the apology to them at an event, so the authenticity of my apology could be not only heard, but felt also.

One of my priorities for Merseyside Police is Inclusion and I am determined that all our communities are treated with equity, understanding and compassion. It is up to us within Merseyside Police to create a culture where everyone can feel confident to be themselves. We cannot be passive and are striving to ensure we are a diverse organisation and reflective of the communities we serve.

**Serena Kennedy KPM BSc (Hons) MSt (Cantab)**

Chief Constable

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As a result of our ongoing work both internally and externally we hope to build upon the existing connections and relationships we have with the LGBTQ+ community and form new ones. Merseyside Police is welcomed every year to participate and march in Liverpool Pride and this is something we are incredibly proud of. This is because of the continued hard work and determination of our staff, to engage, support and work with the LGBTQ+ community.

In recent years we have undertaken extensive activity to ensure we are not only an inclusive organisation but are truly representative of our communities and striving to ensure we are delivering the best possible service to our LGBTQ+ communities.

Below is a snapshot of our current commitment to the LGBTQ+ communities of Merseyside, which we will seek to continually build upon, to improve trust and confidence:

- **Positive Action** Supports the onboarding of hundreds of police officers and police staff who are currently under-represented in our force, through –bespoke initiatives such as online assessment centre webinars and help with interviews to assist those applying from under-represented groups.
- **Outreach Team** – Engaging with our local LGBTQ+ communities, understanding the barriers to recruitment and encouraging people to join. Their work has including visiting educational establishments, community events and jobs fairs and they have a 12-month rolling programme of planned outreach at LGBTQ+ events.
- **Collaborative initiatives:** We are currently engaged in numerous LGBTQ+ initiatives with our partners and City Council, including ‘Rainbow taxi ranks’ to promote night time economy safety, ‘Street Angels’, supporting safety in our Pride Quarter and ‘You’re Safe Here’ Initiative, supported by our Police and Crime Commissioner, to provide training and awareness in businesses, creating safe spaces for our LGBTQ+ communities. We are also striving to provide varied ways to engage with the community and provide support.
- **LGBTQ+ Action Plan** - We have supported our LGBTQ+ network to work towards organisation accreditations in support of their work.
- **Diversity Equality Inclusion Volunteers** - We have successfully secured and manage DEI volunteers. They have completed several pieces of work around LGBTQ+ inclusion.
- **LGBTQ+ Liaison Officers** – We are currently developing an initiative whereby numerous Officers across our organisation will receive specialist training to provide unique support to the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Equality Impact Assessments** - DEI continue to be responsible for the monitoring of the completion of Equality Impact Assessments. We have undertaken extensive work this year with our News and Communications team to promote this area of work which is integral in designing out adverse impact in new initiatives.
- **National LGBTQ+ Strategy Working Group** - The force is represented to ensure we work closely with the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) lead for DEI and work towards objectives in the 2018 - 2025 NPCC Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Strategy.

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- **Hate Crime Coordinators -**

We have dedicated hate crime coordinators within our investigation teams who work closely with victims of LGBTQ+ hate crime and ensure support is provided at the earliest opportunity whilst the investigation is ongoing and throughout the judicial process.

I recognise, for this apology to be truly meaningful, it is essential Merseyside Police continues to effectively engage with our LGBTQ+ community and consistently demonstrate our commitment to them. You have my assurance that we will continually put our community first in everything we do and will seek to continually improve trust and confidence.

Yours sincerely

**Serena Kennedy KPM**  
**Chief Constable**

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