

The purpose of learning about LGBT history is to raise awareness of the experiences of the LGBT community in the past and present - and to educate about the impact of prejudice.

This visual timeline provides some key moments from LGBT history, beginning over 400 years ago.

For decades, LGBT people have fought for the right to be who they are and to be treated equally.

The most important thing you can be is yourself.

If you need help: speak to an adult you trust.

You can call Childline on 0800 11 11 for advice and support.

If you are LGBT and need support, you can call Switchboard on 0300 330 0630.



Scotland's LGBT Inclusive Education charity
SCIO: SC048713 | Visit tie.scot for more



1570

The first suspected recorded execution of two men for homosexuality in Scotland occurred on the 1st September 1570 (10 years after the Scottish Reformation) when John Swan and John Litster were convicted in Edinburgh.





1586

Poem 49 of the Maitland Quarto Manuscript is written in the Scots language. The author, believed to be Marie Maitland, expresses her frustration at being unable to marry her female lover. The poem (over 400 years old) is one of the oldest surviving same-sex love poems of Early Modern Europe.





1625

The only surviving record of a conviction for female homosexuality in the UK is from Glasgow.

The women, Elspeth Faulds and Margaret Armour, were convicted by the Glasgow Presbytery and forced to separate from each other under threat of excommunication.



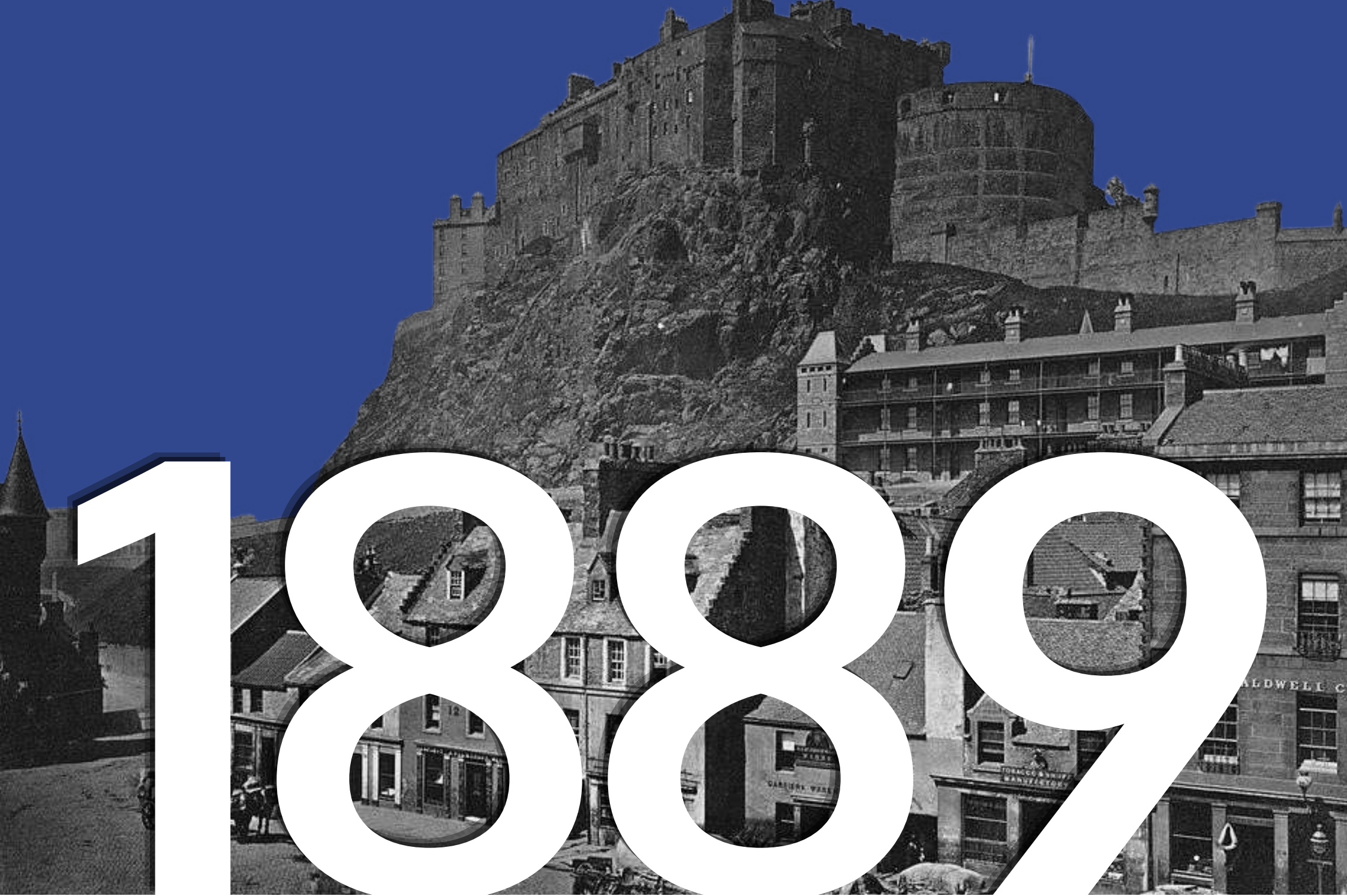


1806

English diarist Anne Lister begins recording coded same-sex love letters on scraps of paper.

The records would become a 5 million word diary describing her lesbian identity and relationships. They were decoded in the 1980s and published. Anne's life is the inspiration for the show Gentleman Jack.





The death penalty as a punishment for homosexuality is abolished in Scotland, making the country the last jurisdiction in Europe to do so.

The new penalty for those convicted becomes life imprisonment in a penitentiary.





Celebrated Irish poet and playwright Oscar Wilde is tried for gross indecency at the Old Bailey in London, after he is accused of having a same-sex relationship with Lord Alfred Douglas.

He was sentenced to 2 years of hard labour, and later died in exile in Paris.





German physician Magnus Hirschfeld's institute, which hosted archives about the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, is raided and destroyed by Nazis.

The institute's books were burned as part of a censorship campaign. Clubs and groups for LGBT people in Germany were also banned by the Nazis.





1934

The use of concentration camp detention for gay and bisexual men begins in Nazi Germany during the Second World War.

Thousands of people convicted of homosexuality would be sent to their deaths at various concentration camps. They were required to wear a pink triangle on their uniforms.





1936

British athlete Mark Weston transitions, and begins living life as a male. His story appears in national newspapers, and he briefly becomes a figure of public interest.

Mark is one of the earliest examples of a transgender person speaking openly about their experience in Britain. At the time, he expressed his desire to live at peace with his wife.





1943

Hans Scholl, a founder of the White Rose group which resisted the Nazi party in Germany, is executed alongside his sister Sophie.

With others, Hans and Sophie tried desperately to warn the German public about the dangers of the Nazis. He had previously been on trial for having a same-sex relationship.





Allied soldiers begin liberating concentration camps and freeing surviving prisoners, including those wearing the pink triangle.

However, homosexuality remained illegal in Germany, which meant that many survivors were forced to continue serving prison sentences after the war ended.





British mathematician and computer scientist Alan Turing is prosecuted for homosexuality and dies 2 years later.

During WWII, his code breaking work helped the Allied forces to victory.

In 2009, the UK Government issued an official apology for his treatment, and he was granted a posthumous pardon in 2013.





1957

The Wolfenden Report is made public, recommending to the UK Government that same-sex relationships between 2 consenting adults should no longer be a criminal offence.

By 1954, the number of men imprisoned for homosexuality in Britain had risen to more than 1,000 per year.





1963

The Minorities Research Group (MRG) is founded by 4 women, including writer Esme Langley, and becomes the first organisation to work specifically for lesbian rights in the UK.

The group provided education, support, and worked within the national media to raise awareness of the experiences of lesbians.





1969

An uprising takes place at the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Manhattan, New York.

The New York Police Department had raided the establishment and arrested a number of people. Crowds outside resisted the police, sparking riots, and the event is now considered a significant turning point for the LGBT rights movement.





1970

The Gay Liberation Front (GLF) is formed in London, to campaign for the rights and equality of gay and lesbian people in the UK.

They were influenced by the formation of similar groups in the United States following the Stonewall Uprising the previous year.





The first Pride march is held in London, with roughly 700 people attending.

This was the first Pride march to take place in any UK city. It was held on the nearest Saturday to the date of 28th June, which was the anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising in New York City.



A black and white portrait of Maureen Colquhoun, a Labour MP, smiling. The image is set against a purple background. Large white numbers '1974' are overlaid on the bottom half of the portrait.

1974

Labour MP Maureen Colquhoun becomes the first known gay or lesbian Member of Parliament, after being outed.

She experienced discrimination and was deselected by her constituency party due to her sexual orientation and feminism. This was later overruled, but Maureen lost her seat at the next election.





Harvey Milk is elected City-County Supervisor in San Francisco and becomes the first American person to be elected to public office while already out as gay.

He helped to introduce a law banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the county.



IN MEMORIAM
GEORGE MOSCONE
HARVEY MILK

1978

San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone are assassinated by a colleague.

The lenient sentencing of the murderer infuriated the city's gay community and sparked a series of riots, known as the 'White Night Riots' in 1979.





The Criminal Justice Scotland Act is introduced. It comes into effect in 1981 and partially decriminalises homosexuality in Scotland.

Private same-sex relationships between two consenting men over the age of 21 becomes legal for the first time in the country. This happened 14 years after England and Wales did the same.





The AIDS epidemic officially begins in June 1981, and the first reported cases appear in the USA and UK.

Cases predominantly appear in gay and bisexual men to begin with, and stigma emerges. Harmful terms like "gay plague" and "gay cancer" are used, and homophobia increases.





1983

Astronaut Dr Sally Ride becomes the first American woman, and the first known gay or lesbian person, to travel to space.

In later life, she co-authored children's books with her partner Tam O'Shaughnessy, and worked to encourage more girls and women to choose careers in the sciences.





Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners is founded to support the National Union of Mineworkers during the strike of 1984-85.

The group fundraised to support the striking miners, and their efforts forged a lasting alliance between the LGBT rights movement and trade unions in the UK. There was a similar group based in Glasgow.



A black and white photograph of a person wearing a t-shirt with the text 'ACT UP' printed on it. The t-shirt is slightly tilted. The background is a solid red color.

1987

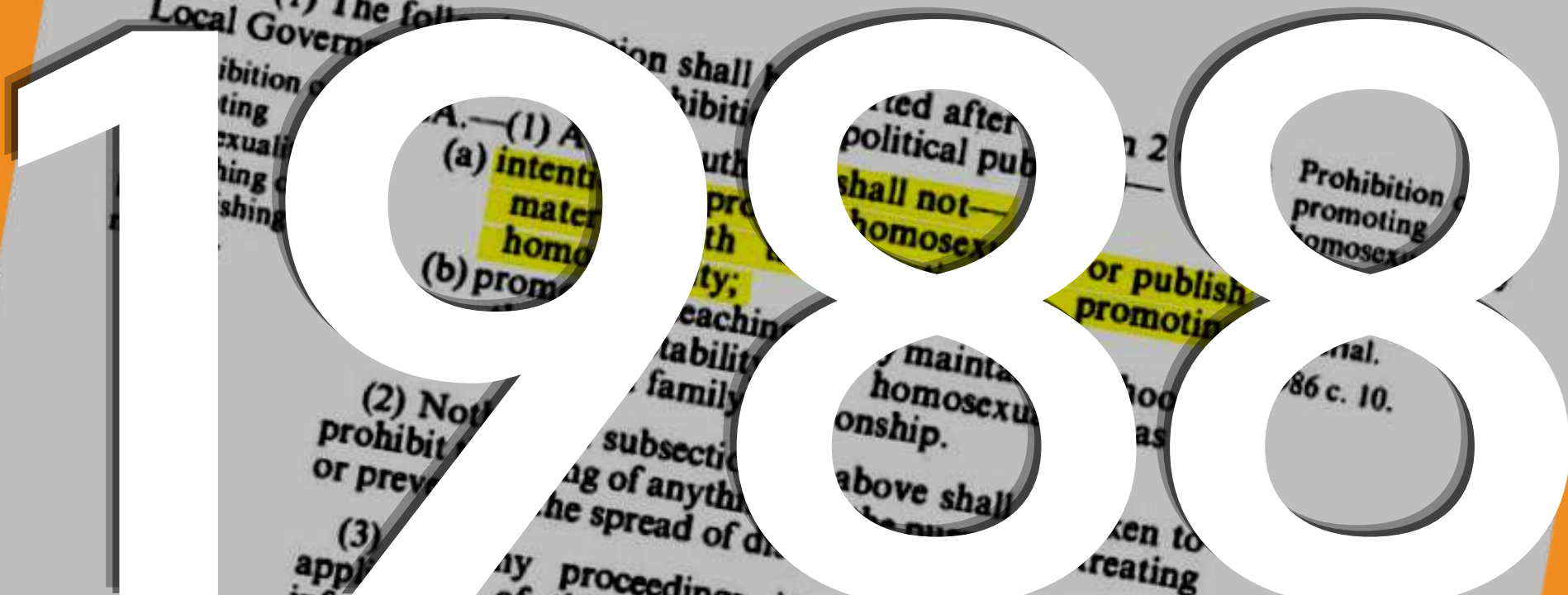
AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) is founded in New York City as a direct action community group, to raise awareness of the epidemic, push for medical research, and fight for healthcare and rights for those affected.

Many of the campaigners were living with AIDS and had lost loved ones. There was also an ACT UP group in Edinburgh.





Local Government Act 1988



Section 28 of the Local Government Act (1988) is introduced in the UK, prohibiting local authorities from "intentionally promoting homosexuality" in schools.

This would impact generations of LGBT pupils, with many reporting that their experiences of homophobic bullying at school got worse or were not addressed.





On the night that Section 28 was introduced, a group of lesbian campaigners, including Booan Temple, stormed into the BBC News studios.

They interrupted the live 6 o'clock news, broadcast to homes across the UK, to protest against the law. The women were arrested, and later released.





'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' is introduced in the United States. The policy prohibited lesbian, gay, and bisexual people from serving openly in the military: preventing them from disclosing their sexual orientation or speaking about their relationships.

Those who did were discharged from the military.





The first major Pride event in Scotland takes place on the 17th June 1995 in Edinburgh.

Over 3000 people marched from Broughton Street to the Meadows. The event organisers had received serious threats but continued regardless, and made history by doing so.





A landmark case at the European Court of Justice - 'P v S and Cornwall County Council' - rules in favour of a transgender woman who had been fired in the UK.

It was the first case law in the world that prevented discrimination in employment or vocational education because someone is transgender.





Waheed Alli becomes the youngest and first known gay Member of the House of Lords in the UK.

As a prominent Muslim in public life, he used his political position to strongly advocate for gay rights and participated in the campaign to repeal Section 28.





The Admiral Duncan, a gay pub in Soho, London, is the target of a homophobic terrorist attack.

A nail bomb is set off, killing 3 people and wounding at least 70. The terrorist had also detonated bombs in Brixton Market and Brick Lane, targeting black and Bengali communities.





After a heated and prejudicial campaign in opposition, the Scottish Parliament repeals Section 28.

Campaigners had been fighting for the repeal for a number of years and were victorious, overcoming widespread disinformation and a homophobic moral panic on the issue.





2004

The Gender Recognition Act is passed by the UK Parliament.


Following lengthy campaigning by advocacy groups like Press for Change, transgender people living in the UK were granted the right to receive a new birth certificate reflecting their gender for the first time.





The Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act
is passed by the Scottish Parliament,
granting same-sex couples equal adoption
and fostering rights.





2010

The Equality Act is passed, bringing together all previous equalities legislation, and sets out 9 characteristics protected from discrimination, including 'sexual orientation' and 'gender reassignment'.

The Act protects LGBT people from unfair treatment and discrimination, such as in employment.

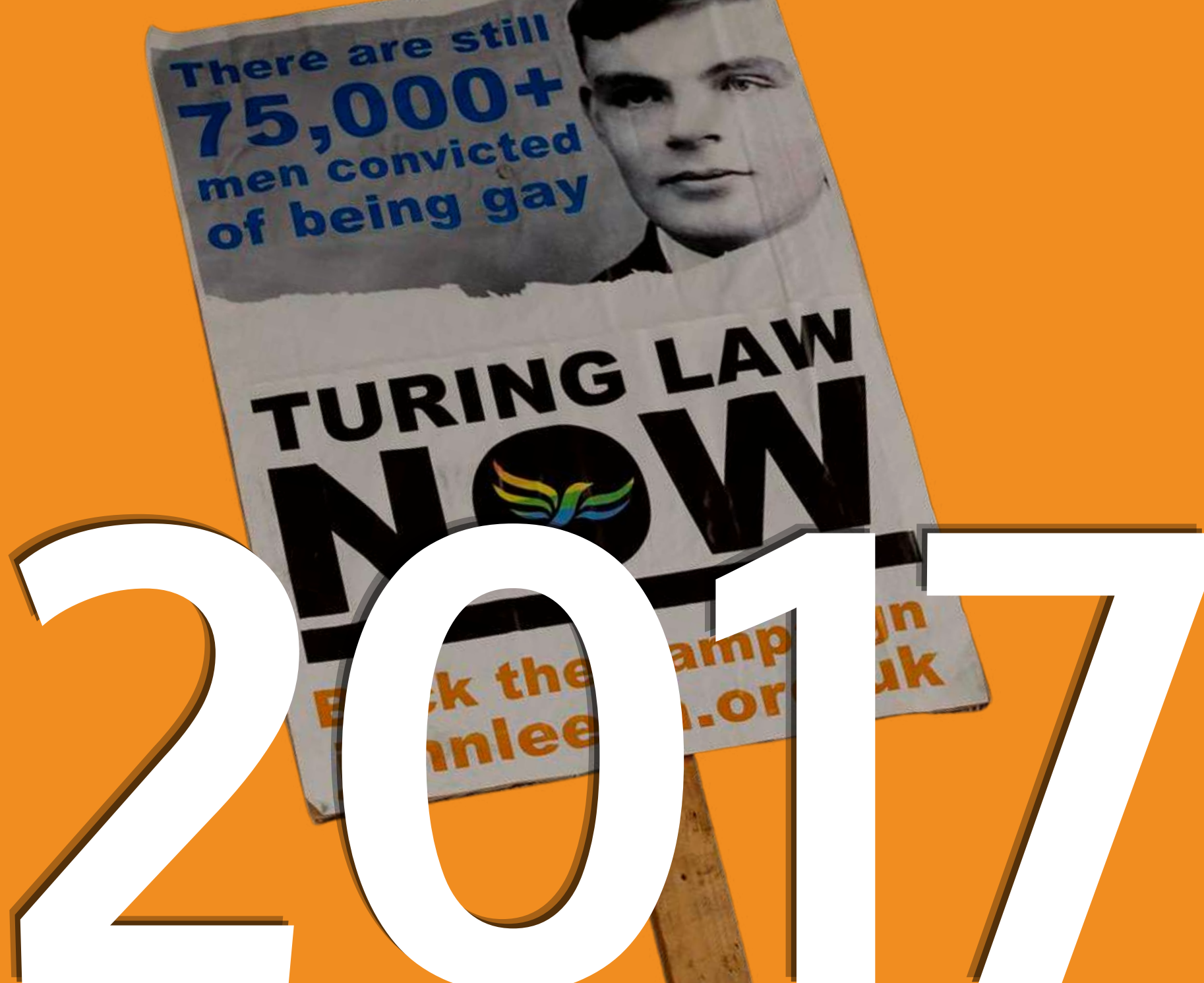




The Marriage and Civil Partnerships Act (Scotland) is passed by The Scottish Parliament, legalising same-sex marriage.

The first legal same-sex marriages occurred on 31st December 2014.





The Policing and Crime Act is passed by the UK Parliament, pardoning men who have historical cautions or convictions for homosexuality.

This would become known as the 'Turing Law' and the Scottish Parliament passed it's own version in 2018.





Scotland becomes the first country in the world to agree to implement LGBT Inclusive Education in all local authority run schools, following a campaign from Time for Inclusive Education.

Earlier in the year, MSPs from all parties wore rainbow school ties in the Scottish Parliament to support the cause.





Then President Donald Trump introduces a ban on transgender people from enlisting or serving in the military.

This was widely opposed by human rights and advocacy organisations, and would later be overturned by subsequent President Joe Biden in 2021.





Sarah McBride becomes the first known transgender person to be elected as a State Senator in the USA, after winning a seat in the Delaware State Senate.

In her speech, she thanked voters for electing candidates "based on their ideas and their experience, not on their identities."



The image shows the cover of TIME magazine from March 29 / April 5, 2021. The cover features a photograph of actor Elliot Page. The magazine title 'TIME' is at the top. Below it, the headline reads 'I'm fully who I am' followed by 'Actor Elliot Page and...'. The year '2021' is overlaid in large white numbers with a purple shadow on the left side of the cover.

2021

American actor Elliott Page becomes the first known transgender man to appear on the cover of TIME magazine.

He shared his intention to use his voice to raise awareness of trans equality: "If we could just celebrate all the wonderful complexities of people, the world would be such a better place."





Zander Murray becomes the only Scottish senior level male football player to come out as gay.

Clubs and fellow players across Scotland expressed their support, with Zander stating that he hoped to inspire others to be themselves.



What
history
will you
make?

