

beaumont



Supporting the trans community since 1966

# A BEAUMONT SOCIETY GUIDE TO TRANS LIFE

---

*embracing all strands of gender diversity*

---



[www.beaumontsociety.org.uk](http://www.beaumontsociety.org.uk)

***The Beaumont Society  
27 Old Gloucester Street  
London  
WC1N 3XX***

**Information Line 01582 412220**

*Registered Charity No. 1135548*

# The Beaumont Society

The Beaumont Society was founded in 1966 as a self-help and social organisation for trans people. We are still here, more than fifty years later, in a very different social climate, with a broader membership but with the same aims. The name comes from the Chevalier d'Eon de Beaumont, a celebrated French dual-gender diplomat and spy of the 18th Century.

The Society is run for, and by, people who are trans covering the full spectrum from those who occasionally wear clothing that does not conform with their birth assigned sex, to those who have completed gender reassignment surgery. We include trans men and women as well as non-binary and gender-fluid people. We are a national organisation run on a regional basis with members throughout the UK and with groups in many areas. We also have members overseas.

The Beaumont Society is run by an Executive Committee of elected and co-opted members that meets several times each year and operates in accordance with the constitution. This can be downloaded from the society's website.

## Membership of the Society

There are two types of membership, Digital Only and Postal Plus.

Digital Only members have access to the members' area of the society's website, and they can download the current and back issues of the magazine electronically in pdf format, as well as participating in several interesting online forums.

Postal Plus members get all the benefits of the Digital Only members with the addition of a high-quality paper edition of the society's quarterly magazine delivered in a plain envelope through the post.

## Personal Security

The Beaumont Society operates a strict code of confidentiality and guarantees that all information given on your application form will only be seen by those officers responsible for considering and administering your membership. No personal information is passed to other members and the society never supplies names and addresses to anyone inside or outside the society without the member's express permission. It is not even necessary to give your real address on your application form, as long as you provide some means for the society to communicate with you.

## Contacting Other Members

The society's website enables members to contact one another easily and safely. It also has a secure internal messaging system and a social media component.

## Magazines

The Beaumont Magazine is published quarterly and is available, along with back copies, to all members of the society in PDF form from the society's website. The printed version comes free with Postal Plus membership as part of the subscription and is delivered in a plain envelope. The magazine is a colourful, high quality, attractive and tasteful publication with interesting features, photographs, contributions by members and many articles on social events, current trans issues and helpful tips. It provides a lifeline to those members who, for whatever reason, are unable to participate in many of the social activities. For those who do, the magazine also provides news and information on social activities of interest to members, including relevant and local events not organised by the Beaumont Society itself.

## Social Events

The society is closely associated with several hotel weekends at various venues. There are also many other popular events such as weekend social meet-ups organised by local or regional groups and supported by the society, for example visits to Oxford, Edinburgh and Liverpool, as well as trips to museums and other places of interest. In addition, we try to inform members of trans events organised by others.

There are many local events held throughout the year by local groups and individuals either as part of the society or separate to it. These are held in suitable venues such as community centres, pubs and restaurants. These meetings are usually quite informal, though sometimes something special may be arranged, such as clothes sales and wig or make-up demonstrations. Usually, they are simply somewhere where you can be yourself in a safe, relaxed and friendly atmosphere, chat with other members, make friends and discuss problems. Partners, friends, families and allies are always very welcome.

## Help and Information

Many members find support, advice and information from other society members both in person and online; however, neither the society nor its members are qualified to undertake counselling. We do, however, maintain and provide lists of resources that do offer such services.

## Beaumont Partners

This is a volunteer resource run by the partners of trans people who provide confidential support and extend the hand of friendship to others who have discovered that their partners are trans. When someone is emotionally close to the trans person it may well seem very threatening at first. The objectives of Beaumont Partners are:

- To further improve the quality of support offered to individuals after the discovery that their partner is trans.
- To support partners of trans people so that they do not feel alone with their issues
- To listen with empathy based on their own experiences of living with a trans person.

Currently we can only offer this service to partners of male to female trans people.

## Beaumont Parents

This is a voluntary resource run by a parent whose daughter transitioned to provide confidential support to parents with young adults who have shared their wish to transition

- To provide support to parents of young trans adults who are struggling to find useful information
- To support parents of young trans adults during a very stressful and lonely journey
- To provide phone support if required to share experiences of living with a trans young adult

It can be hard to come to terms with a young-adult child transitioning and this service provides friendly support, conversation and understanding that you are not alone.

## Family Support

The society also has a link to the family support group Family Trans-formations which can be obtained from the society's website. This group offers peer-support to people with a trans parent.

## Support Within the Wider Community

The Beaumont Society, through its experienced members, offers talks and information on trans matters to interested parties. We can and do provide representatives at meetings of community support bodies, such as the Samaritans, university LGB&T groups, Victim Support, Police Force diversity staff, as well as many others. These usually include talks or presentations on trans matters, in which our personal backgrounds provide the basis for a greater understanding of the issues we face.

Our social gatherings are usually open to those who have contact with trans people but are not themselves trans. This can include the Police, Fire Service, Ambulance Service, and traders such as beauticians, hairdressers, wig suppliers, shoe shops and clothing stores.

We can also provide support for surveys by recognised students on college and university courses involving research into 'transgender' related subjects, mainly through the magazine and website. We are also happy for research students to attend some of our social meetings to learn from trans people. We appreciate summary feedback from such research with a view to publishing it in our magazine.

## Some Useful Definitions

Descriptive terms relating to gender have a useful purpose, but they can be misleading if applied too rigidly. It should be borne in mind that there is a spread of different characteristics that tend to merge into each other at the edges. Usage of these terms may change over time.

- **Transgender** is an umbrella term and generally describes the case of a person adopting clothing, appearance or lifestyle of a gender different from that assigned to them at birth. The term embraces all aspects of gender variation.
- **Biological sex** is the physical condition of being male or female, as determined by chromosomes and body chemistry. In puberty it is marked by the development of secondary sexual characteristics, e.g., facial hair in males, breast development in females.
- **Gender** is often expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity. It is how people perceive themselves and how they expect others to behave towards them. It is an immutable sense of self, an enduring psychological construct, it could be considered in the same way as left-handedness. It may be partly culturally determined but may also be partly determined by brain development in the foetal stage of pregnancy. However, the term is too often used as a synonym for biological sex and the boundaries between the terms have become blurred, which is why the term Gender Identity is preferred.
- **Non-binary** refers to a class of people who do not identify with a gender consistent with the binary identities of male and female and may or may not regard themselves as being within the trans umbrella. There are many variations that fall within this definition, far too many to list here and include **agender** – being genderless; **androgynous** – somewhere between a man and a woman; **pangender** – having many or all genders; **transfeminine** or **transmasculine** – a person assigned male or female at birth who identifies as feminine or masculine but not as a woman or a man respectively.

- **Gender fluid** is a form of non-binary identity and is usually but not always someone who identifies as two or more gender identities at different times and/or in different circumstances.
- **Cisgender** is a person whose gender identity, gender expression and biological sex are all congruent (e.g., man—masculine and male; woman—feminine and female). This is a descriptive term and should not be seen as being derogatory in any way.
- **Gender Dysphoria** is the persistent sense of personal unease and/or distress experienced by trans people through conforming to society's cultural expectations. It may continue when individuals seek to overcome that anxiety by living in a role more congruent with their gender identity because of the adverse reaction of others. Dysphoria in many trans people can include disgust with their sex characteristics, as these conflict with their gender identity. This is one of the mental health conditions most commonly experienced by trans people and explains the high suicide rate amongst this group.
- **Transsexual** is a term that is most likely to be seen in legal and medical documents. In law a transsexual person is one who 'proposes to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment' (Equality Act, 2010) although subsequent legal rulings have expanded the term to include anyone who has started a social transition whether or not their intention is to continue to a medical transition. The term 'transsexual' is specific and does not include nonbinary or other gender incongruent identities which are included within the term trans. Apart from in specific legal and medical situations, this is a term that is today only used within the trans community and is derogatory if used by others.
- There are many **Different Sex Development (DSD)**, (formerly known as intersex) conditions. In some the appearance at birth is neither clearly male nor female; in others the condition may not appear until many years later such as with Androgen Deficiency Syndrome. The situation may or may not be accompanied by gender dysphoria. Variations in development may be associated with atypical sex chromosomes such as Klinefelter syndrome (XXY) or Jacob's syndrome (XYY) amongst many others. There may also be effects from pre-natal hormonal balance at different stages of pregnancy. It is important to realise that all of these conditions are variations in human biology, not abnormalities or defects.
- There is no direct correlation between gender identity and sexual orientation. However, everyone is different and the Beaumont Society embraces all strands of gender diversity and sexual orientation.

## Gender Identity

Gender identity refers to a person's innate sense of where they belong on the gender spectrum. There is a presumption in society that this sense of identity will be consistent with the sex assigned at birth and people are expected to conform to the stereotypical behaviour expected of these sexes. The cause of Gender Dysphoria is almost certainly due to the psychological problems of trying to reconcile a gender identity with a biological sex that does not match and there is no evidence that it is an inherited condition and may need specialist counselling. This condition is not amenable to "cure" any more than left-handedness is. Wherever you are on the gender spectrum it is important to know that you are not alone, nor do you have a mental illness. There are many gender identities and people can exist anywhere on the continuum. The society strongly rejects the notion that conversion therapy can somehow cure gender incongruence, a position in agreement with the governments of most developed countries.

## Trans

Transgender, or trans for short, may be misunderstood, though work in recent years to change public attitudes means that it is, perhaps, no longer a subject of fear and is much more acceptable, particularly amongst the younger generation. It is a subject commonly treated in the press in a way that exploits it for sensationalist purposes.

Understanding is sometimes not as good as it should be among people in the caring professions; the clergy, doctors, police, social and mental health workers who may be called upon to provide help. It is becoming increasingly accepted within this group that initial "cross-dressing" may indicate some underlying degree of gender variance and it is this that provides the subconscious pressure. The gender variance may be at a different level than that experienced by those seeking gender reassignment or it may well be that the individual does not yet understand the full extent of their dysphoria.

The unhappiness often experienced by many who experience gender variance comes from loneliness and anxiety about their situation and considerable confusion about their feelings. In a very real sense they are a minority group who fail to conform to what is regarded as gender-normal but perfectly natural behaviour and may, therefore, fear the consequences should the activity be discovered. It is often the case that if or when they eventually do "come out" the responses that they receive are much more positive than they expected. However, this cannot be certain and everyone needs to make their own decisions about when, or if, they "come out". Under no circumstance is it ever acceptable for someone else to "out" a trans person.

## Trans Population

It is estimated that approximately one percent of the population is trans in some form. The incidence of those who wish to undertake gender reassignment surgery is considerably lower, estimated at between one in five thousand and one in ten thousand of the population ([www.gires.org.uk](http://www.gires.org.uk)). As many trans people remain in utmost secrecy for fear of censure or ridicule the actual figure may be considerably higher, while those who have overcome this fear can be said to have 'come out of the closet'. Many feel a sense of completeness for the first time in their adult lives.

## Aspects of Being Trans

The desire to experiment with gender identity often begins at an early age when the only available clothes are those belonging to other members of the family. Consequently, a child feeling such pressures may suffer feelings of isolation, guilt and shame. This may sometimes manifest itself with erotic overtones, particularly in the years during and following puberty and, in many cases, this may develop into a more fundamental part of their being, lacking erotic overtones.

Gender incongruence is a form of behaviour not a disease and, therefore, the term "cure" does not apply. In some cultures, it may be perceived as a harmless quirk. It may, however, be regarded as threatening in a relationship. Often the trans person has avoided telling their partner, believing it may pass once they are in a stable relationship, only to be rediscovered accidentally at a later stage when it re-emerges. The partner may feel let down, confused or angry at not being told, and wonder what other secrets may be hidden away. A partner may react with complete revulsion, leading to separation and divorce. However, it is also true that the partner may find the behaviour intriguing, perhaps even stimulating. Most relationships probably fall between these two scenarios and reach some sort of compromise and tolerance, but not necessarily full approval. Many partnerships do survive to a greater or lesser extent.

If the couple can work together in mutual acceptance of their feelings and to support their partnership, there is a real possibility that the relationship may be strengthened and enhanced. Such people may well develop a better understanding of the complexity of gender issues.

Many partners, through lack of knowledge, mistakenly assume a link between gender identity and sexual orientation. More commonly, partners may feel inadequate and believe that, somehow, they have failed their spouse. Often the most damaging reaction is the feeling of having been deceived and that the secret has gone unshared despite the intimate life they may otherwise have had. Like the trans person themselves, partners may fear adverse reactions from parents, relatives, friends and particularly children of the marriage.



It is important to remember that people who cross-dress are primarily individuals and that labelling can do considerable damage. Individuals should not be categorised and each person should be treated as an individual in their own right.

It takes great courage to admit that one is trans. It is quite likely that individuals may initially contact a helping organisation such as the Beaumont Society, a gay helpline or the Samaritans, all well known for their confidentiality.

## Gender Reassignment

Some trans individuals, whether male-to-female or female-to-male, may feel certain from an early age that their true gender identity is at odds with their biological sex.

The **UK Gender Recognition Act of 2004** provides for formal recognition by means of a **Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC)** if a person can provide relevant evidence to show they have been living in their chosen gender for at least two years. This also allows for a change of birth certificate. As a result of the **Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013** and **The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014**, couples can remain married after a GRC has been issued—if the spouse approves. Thus, a trans person in effect becomes subject to the standard rules and regulations that govern their acquired gender. There have been moves in recent years to simplify the process and some of the devolved UK governments have made plans that greatly improve this situation.

The **Equality Act (2010)** gathers together and supersedes a number of previous acts of Parliament and sets out a wide range of anti-discrimination measures (e.g., employment, education, provision of services etc.) for people with '*protected characteristics*', which includes gender reassignment.

The act states, '*A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex*'. The Commons Women and Equalities Select Committee report on Transgender Equality (2015) recommended changing the protected characteristic to 'gender identity' which would have protected all trans people; unfortunately, this was not carried through.

On the face of it, gender reassignment (as defined by the two acts of Parliament) can be achieved without a trans person having to undergo gender reassignment surgery—or any other medical intervention for that matter—so long as they can demonstrate having lived in their acquired gender for the necessary period. Subsequent judicial rulings have expanded the definition to explicitly include social transitioning.

Appearance is an area of particular concern for trans people. Unfortunately, medical intervention for gender reassignment (whether by hormone treatment or surgery) can only have a limited effect on the appearance of adults. Hair removal by laser or electrolysis and breast implants are generally successful, though vocal cord surgery can be more problematical.

Facial reconstruction—albeit very expensive—can have a significant effect. For transmen the effect of testosterone therapy can have a transforming effect on secondary sexual characteristics such as facial hair and voice pitch and timbre. Surgeons are becoming more successful in phalloplasty operations.

Gender Reassignment Surgery is subject to regret in the same way as any other form of surgery. However, the incidence of regret is much lower than with most other surgeries and is shown from studies to be around 2%. Approximately 1% of those who have had this surgery do proceed to reverse the procedure. However, this has been shown to be largely due to external pressure from family and religious groups rather than from a personal conviction and, further, that roughly half of these will re-transition later.

It should be emphasised that favouring a gender-variant appearance is not in itself a crime. However, the Beaumont Society would advise trans people that, when in public, they should avoid drawing attention to themselves by inappropriate behaviour. This is particularly true when dealing with highly sensitive issues such as the use of public conveniences.

Provision of Goods and Services. The **Goods and Services Act (2007)** (largely superseded as far as trans issues are concerned by the **Equality Act of 2010**) deals with trans discrimination in the provision of 'goods and services' against transsexual people only. However, in the experience of Beaumont Society members, nearly all shops and services have adopted a positive attitude towards all trans people.

Many service providers such as beauticians and hairdressers, clothing and shoe shops, holiday rentals and hotel accommodation advertise their goods and services in trans magazines such as the Beaumont Magazine.

Other problems are caused not so much by how a person is dressed, but rather how they behave and act. Many companies and shops, of all sizes, have a positive diversity policy towards both staff and customers. A business cannot discriminate against someone on the grounds of their gender identity any more than they can due to their religious beliefs or race.

## Outdated and Current Terminologies

The language used concerning trans issues is dynamic and continually developing, the following is a brief guide to the terms to use and those to avoid so as not to cause offence.

Term to Use	Example	Terms to avoid
<b>Trans or transgender (adj.)</b>	“trans person”, “trans advocate”, “transgender inclusion”	“transgendered”, “a transgender”, “transgenders”, “transvestite”, “tranny”
<p>Transgender is an adjective, not a noun. Be careful not to call someone “a transgender”. Do not add an unnecessary “-ed” to the term (“transgendered”), which denotes a condition of some kind. Never use the term “transvestite” to describe a trans person. Always use a trans person’s chosen name. A person who identifies as a certain gender should be referred to using pronouns consistent with that gender, but, if possible, ask first. When it isn’t possible to ask what pronoun a person would prefer, use the pronoun that is consistent with the person’s appearance and gender expression. Non-binary and gender fluid people can be confusing at first as they may not present consistently in one gender or as any gender; it is always best to ask them how they wish to be addressed.</p>		
<b>gender identity, gender expression</b>	“Everyone should be treated fairly, regardless of gender identity or expression.”	“sexual identity”, “transgender identity”
<p>Not everyone who is trans identifies that way; many trans people simply identify as male or female. Also, note that gender identity (one’s internal sense of gender) and gender expression (how a person outwardly expresses their gender) are not interchangeable terms.</p>		
<b>transition</b>	“She began transitioning last year.”	“sex change”, “sex-change operation”, “pre-operative” / “post-operative”, “pre-op” / “post-op”
<p>Transition is the accurate term that does not fixate on surgeries, which many trans people do not or cannot undergo. Terms like “pre-op” or “post-op” unnecessarily fixate on a person’s anatomy and should be avoided.</p>		
<p><b>“queen”, “she-male”, “he-she”, “it”, and similar terms.</b></p>		
<p>The criteria for using these derogatory terms should be the same as those applied to hate words for other groups. They should not be used except in a direct quote which reveals the bias or insensitivity of the person quoted and, therefore, such words are not given credibility and are deemed totally unacceptable and offensive.</p>		
<p><b>“deviant”, “disordered”, “dysfunctional”, “diseased”, “perverted”, “destructive” and similar descriptions.</b></p>		
<p>The notion that being trans is a psychological disorder is unacceptable and today such words are often used to portray trans people as less than human, mentally ill, or as a danger to society. Words such as these should be avoided in stories about the community. If they must be used, they should be quoted directly in a way that reveals the bias or insensitivity of the person being quoted.</p>		

# USEFUL WEBSITES

Websites of general trans interest and advice, these and many others can be found on the society's website

---

[www.beaumontsociety.org.uk](http://www.beaumontsociety.org.uk)

---

The Beaumont Society supporting the trans community since 1966.

---

[www.gires.org.uk](http://www.gires.org.uk)

---

The Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIREs) sets out to improve the lives of trans and gender non-conforming people, including those who are non-binary and nongender through research and education.

---

[www.pfc.org.uk](http://www.pfc.org.uk)

---

Press For Change (PFC) is a key lobbying and legal support organisation for trans people.  
[www.gendertrust.org.uk](http://www.gendertrust.org.uk)

The Gender Trust is a charity helping trans people and those affected by gender identity issues.

---

[www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

---

Stonewall is the leading LGBTQ+ campaigning and support organisation in the UK

---

[www.mermaidsuk.org.uk](http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk)

---

Mermaids is a support group for children and young people up to 19 years old and suffering with issues with their gender identity; and their families, friends, and wider networks such as schools, youth groups, or medical professionals.

---

*Local Support Groups*

---

There are also many local support groups that may or may not be associated with the society but can often be found with a simple Google search. Members can find this information within the society's members' area of the website and in the magazine.

# JOINING THE BEAUMONT SOCIETY

To join the Beaumont Society, the easiest way is to use the online form at [www.beaumontsociety.org.uk](http://www.beaumontsociety.org.uk) or you may fill in the application form below and post it with the appropriate annual subscription to:

*The Beaumont Society*  
*27 Old Gloucester Street*  
*London*  
*WC1N 3XX*

You can pay by standing order, electronic bank transfer or PayPal and, as the society is a registered charity, your subscription can be Gift Aided which increases the value of your payment to the society at no extra cost to you.

## **Payment by Standing Order**

If you wish to pay your annual subscriptions by standing order, please fill in the box at the end of this document and we will forward it to your bank.

## **Option for donating by Gift Aid**

Signing the Gift Aid declaration will enable the Beaumont Society to reclaim the tax you pay on your subscription/donations. This will increase the value of your subscription/donation by 25% and will cost you nothing personally. It does however help the Society to increase the level of help and support we can offer to our members.



The Beaumont Society, 27 Old Gloucester Street, London WC1N 3XX

**Application Form**

ALL INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE

Name you wish to be known by within the society: .....

Are you over 18? YES/NO (Delete as appropriate)

Tick which membership you would like? POSTAL PLUS

DIGITAL ONLY

POSTAL ADDRESS - *for use only on mail to you. Block capitals please.*

Mail to be marked 'Private and Confidential' YES/NO (Delete as appropriate)

NAME: .....

ADDRESS: .....

.....

POST CODE: .....

EMAIL (for renewal reminder): .....

*The annual subscription can be found on the website*

Please tick box to indicate your preferred payment method:

Standing Order: Complete the 'Optional Standing Order' section overleaf

Cheque/Postal Order: Payable to 'Beaumont Society' Send with Form.

Paypal: Payable to: email@beaumontsociety.org.uk \*

Electronic Bank Transfer: Use bank details as for Standing Order overleaf\*

*\* Please provide Payment Transaction Date and Reference Number*

I wish to join the Beaumont Society and agree to treat in strict confidence any information about other members of the Society. I agree to abide by the rules and accept the constitution of the Beaumont Society. I understand that any guidance or information given to me constitutes only personal opinions and does not necessarily reflect that of the society.

Signed (legal name).....

Date \_\_/\_\_/20\_\_

To the Manager (Bank Name): .....  
Bank Address: .....  
.....  
..... Postcode: .....

please pay: Lloyds Bank, 60 George Street, Luton LU1 2AZ for the credit of "The Beaumont Society" Sort Code 30-95-28 account no. 04366060 the sum of £..... annually on the \_\_/\_\_/20\_\_ (leave the date of the first payment blank in case of postal delays) quoting reference BS Number ..... (office use only).

Please debit my account number ..... Sort code .....

Account name ..... Date: \_\_/\_\_/20\_\_

Signed .....  
Beaumont Society - established 1966. Registered Charity No. 1135548

**OPTIONAL GIFT AID**

Signing the following declaration will enable the Beaumont Society to reclaim the tax you pay on your subscription/donations. This will increase the value of your subscription/donation by 25% and will cost you nothing personally.

I confirm that I am a UK taxpayer and would like the Beaumont Society to treat all subscriptions/donations that I have made for the six years prior to this year and all subscriptions/donations I make hereafter, as gift aid donations until I notify you otherwise.

Full name: .....

Address: .....

.....

..... Post code: .....

Signed: ..... Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/20\_\_

NB. The above name and address must be recognised by HMRC and you must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at /east equal to the tax that the Beaumont Society reclaims on your subscription/donations in the tax year (currently 25 % of your subscription/donations). If in the future you tax circumstances change, please notify the Beaumont Society to cancel your declaration. Please also notify the Beaumont Society if you change your name or address.

Beaumont Society - established 1966. Registered Charity No. 1135548