Banned Books Campaign Background

Amnesty Queer Rights Networks create campaigns, resources, and actions that support people across the Amnesty movement and beyond to stand up for equality and the human rights of everyone, regardless of sexuality or gender identity

Libraries all over the country are being forced or feeling pressured to remove or censor books, especially those with LGBTQI+ themes Research from Index on Censorship found that 1 in 3 UK librarians had been asked to remove, or censor, books, and 82% were concerned about rising censorship pressure. The chilling effect of rising anti-rights violence and pressure is also causing libraries to self-censor, desperate not to attract attention and attacks.

Reading for Resistance

The attempt to erase our experiences, voices, and lives from bookshelves and from public life must be met and challenges.
Our Campaign Reading for Resistance champions libraries and bookshops as defenders of freedom of expression, culture and education and supporting them to continue to be spaces of connection and safety for LGBTQI+ communities.
Ask your local library or bookshop to sign our national Queer Stories Covenant as part of this campaign. We must stand in solidarity together against those trying to divide and silence us.

Sign the Queer Stories Covenant

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Bg8JJbLiAkiGAdaHLZWu7T9PJcfs3EFGqA2sJBjQRilUNEhST1QyWkVMSTRXTzlCRUJZUzZRREdROS4u

Index on Censorship

https://www.indexoncensorship.org/bannedbooksweek/

Banned Books Week UK is an annual celebration of the right to read freely in the UK and beyond. At a time where books are being increasingly challenged, taken off shelves or targeted due to the ideas they hold, Banned Books Week UK brings literature lovers together to celebrate the freedom to read. The annual event encourages everyone to take part – from readers and writers to libraries, schools and bookshops.

Banned Books Week UK will be held 4-10 October 2026.
Want to get involved?

- Host an event.
- Create a display.
- Read a banned book with your book club.
- Share a reading list.
- Start a conversation.
- Or simply read a book that has been challenged or banned.

Explore our resources:

- Top 10 Things to Do During Banned Books Week UK
- Librarians: take part in our Banned Books Week UK Relay!
- Other ideas for Libraries and Bookshops
- Index on Censorship's Banned Books Week UK reading list
- Download our social media pack
- Download a Banned Books Week UK poster!
  A4 options here and here. A3 options here and here.

Have a question? Contact us here.

About Banned Books Week UK
Index on Censorship is the UK partner for the USA Coalition, which runs Banned Books Week. The celebration was launched in 1982 in response to a sudden surge in the number of challenges to books in libraries, bookstores and schools. You can read more about Banned Books Week here. Banned Books Week UK is led by Index on Censorship as a parallel campaign to Banned Books Week in the USA. After taking a hiatus, Banned Books Week UK relaunched in 2025, following increasing reports of book censorship in the country. Thirteen prominent writers including Juno Dawson, Ariel Dorfman and Simon James Green participated in the campaign and fifteen bookshops and libraries took part from all over the UK – from Derry to Newcastle, Bristol to Edinburgh. This year, we want to go even bigger.
The Banned Books Week UK coalition includes Index on Censorship, Hay Festival Global, The Bookseller, CILIP School Libraries Group, the International Publishers Association and Firefinch Publishers.

BBC I-player – Storyville: The Librarians

Focus on USA. Mainly school librarians

Key issue is librarians being pressured / threatened by parents, school boards and political activists to remove books from schools. Also instances of direct action taken to remove books from shelves

Major focus on LGBTQ issues, but also wider right wing ‘anti-woke’ agendas – environment, politics, non-traditional family units, etc.

Has resulted in some librarians being sacked; resigning; being taken to court, etc.

Spectre of book burnings.

Also includes issues such as subjects of crime, violence, etc being deemed unsuitable for school age children.

Glasgow Women’s Library

Glasgow **Women’s Library** is celebrating its 35th anniversary with a special exhibition that brings together 35 objects that tell the story of the organisation.