

# Terry Sanderson

*I would like us to position ourselves as a purely secularist organisation with a focused objective, that will not only champion human rights above religious demands, but will also accept that religion has a place in society for those who want it, but on terms of equality, not privilege.*

## **Terry Sanderson** (NSS President)

Terry Sanderson served as NSS president from 2006 to 2017 and has put his efforts into a new focus for the National Secular Society in the 21st century.

In 1946, Sanderson was born to a mining family in a South Yorkshire village. He came out as gay after starting work in Rotherham at the age of seventeen. His parents found out after reading an interview with Sanderson in a local newspaper, concerning his booking a venue for a meeting of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality. Moving to London in the early 1970s, Sanderson worked as a counsellor and psychiatric nurse, and on the problem page of *Woman's Own*.

Sanderson began campaigning for equality for gay people in 1969. His MediaWatch columns for *Gay Times* have been a feature since 1982, and were described as "probably the most informative record of the extent of press homophobia in the UK in the 1980s". In 1986, after experiencing problems with a Christian-owned publisher, Sanderson established The Other Way Press as a specifically gay-themed publishing house.

Terry is the author of many books including his autobiography [\*The Adventures of a Happy Homosexual\*](#) which tells the story of how he became an unlikely activist.

[I have thoroughly enjoyed my 17 years on the NSS Council – eleven of which have been as President. But now the time has come to step down and make way for someone else to carry the increasingly important flag of secularism.](#)

## **Terry Sanderson** (message on standing down as president)