

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)