# I'm A Celebrity 2024... Gayer than ever, it's official!



Long-running reality television series I'm A Celebrity… Get Me Out of Here! has prominently featured LGBTQ+ representation, setting a new precedent for the show's inclusivity. Historically perceived as non-inclusive, the programme's current lineup includes three openly LGBTQ+ contestants: GK Barry, Reverend Richard Coles, and Dean McCullough. Their participation marks the most recognisable embrace of LGBTQ+ identities since 2012, when a couple of other LGBTQ+ figures, including Sam Fox, entered the jungle.

The show's history reveals a stark contrast regarding LGBTQ+ representation. Over its 22-year tenure and 24 seasons, only two contestants have won the crown as openly LGBTQ+: Christopher Biggins in 2007 and Jill Scott in 2022. Of the 281 contestants who have taken on the challenges of the jungle, a mere 20 have publicly identified as LGBTQ+. The landscape of reality television, where representation is often more vibrant and inclusive, has seen "I'm A Celebrity" lagging behind in this respect.

This season, viewers have witnessed GK Barry, whose real name is Grace Eleanor Keeling, openly discussing her recent coming out experience while developing a romantic relationship with girlfriend Ella Rutherford. In heartfelt conversations around the campfire, Barry disclosed her journey of self-discovery, leading to candid discussions about her sexuality. During a poignant exchange with Reverend Coles, Barry articulated realisations that she now firmly identifies with her attraction to women, sparking meaningful dialogue that resonated with LGBTQ+ viewers.

The discussions are not limited to Barry; Reverend Coles has also contributed to the exploration of sexuality within the context of faith. He expressed a sense of comfort and acceptance regarding his identity, highlighting that he has never felt guilt about being gay. This cross-generational friendship and openness among campmates have allowed both young and older LGBTQ+ viewers to witness their shared struggles and experiences, affirming that despite seemingly distinct journeys, fundamental truths remain universal.

Moreover, other contestants have contributed to the LGBTQ+ discourse. Tulisa, a singer and television personality, shared her thoughts on being potentially demisexual, expanding viewers' understanding of the diverse spectrum of sexual orientations. This revelation introduced terms and concepts that many might not have encountered before, fostering a broader discussion around sexuality that appeals to a diverse audience.

Outside the immediate discussions surrounding sexuality, other campmates have contributed to the show's entertainment value. Contestant Maura Higgins, with her dynamic personality, captures the essence of charisma and camp, while other interactions raise the entertainment stakes, keeping audience engagement high. The show's blend of humour and relatable moments has proved appealing, particularly when gay culture is interwoven into the narrative.

Despite its historical shortcomings, this season of "I'm A Celebrity" appears to resonate with a broader audience, including members of the LGBTQ+ community. The inclusion of these diverse narratives reflects a shift in the show’s ethos, inadvertently appealing to viewers who may have previously felt overlooked in mainstream reality TV. The scenery of the jungle now serves as an unexpected platform for LGBTQ+ dialogue, reaching over 10 million viewers each evening.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.radiotimes.com/tv/entertainment/reality-tv/im-a-celebrity-2024-lineup-contestants/> - Confirms the 2024 lineup of I'm a Celebrity, including LGBTQ+ contestants GK Barry, Reverend Richard Coles, and Dean McCullough.
* <https://heatworld.com/entertainment/tv-movies/im-a-celeb-2024/> - Provides details on the contestants, including their backgrounds and reasons for participating, highlighting GK Barry and Reverend Richard Coles.
* <https://gcn.ie/richard-coles-gay-priest-im-a-celeb/> - Discusses Reverend Richard Coles' and GK Barry's conversations about being gay and religious, and their experiences in the jungle.
* <https://gcn.ie/richard-coles-gay-priest-im-a-celeb/> - Details GK Barry's coming out story and her relationship with girlfriend Ella Rutherford, as well as her discussions with Reverend Coles.
* <https://thetab.com/2024/11/26/im-a-celebs-unlikiest-friendship-is-giving-me-hope-for-the-next-generation> - Highlights the unlikely friendship between Reverend Richard Coles and GK Barry, showcasing their bond and contributions to LGBTQ+ dialogue.
* <https://www.radiotimes.com/tv/entertainment/reality-tv/im-a-celebrity-2024-lineup-contestants/> - Mentions Tulisa's discussion on potentially being demisexual, expanding the show's exploration of diverse sexual orientations.
* <https://heatworld.com/entertainment/tv-movies/im-a-celeb-2024/> - Describes Maura Higgins' dynamic personality and her contribution to the show's entertainment value.
* <https://gcn.ie/richard-coles-gay-priest-im-a-celeb/> - Explains how the show's current season is resonating with a broader audience, including the LGBTQ+ community, due to increased representation.
* <https://www.radiotimes.com/tv/entertainment/reality-tv/im-a-celebrity-2024-lineup-contestants/> - Provides historical context on the show's past winners and contestants, highlighting the rarity of openly LGBTQ+ winners.
* <https://heatworld.com/entertainment/tv-movies/im-a-celeb-2024/> - Discusses the show's historical shortcomings in LGBTQ+ representation and how the current season marks a significant shift.