

It's official: you have a legal right to access premises (homes or businesses) during Manchester Pride 2015. Without a wristband, accreditation or a resident and visitor pass

On 22 April 2015, the Local Government Ombudsman ruled that Manchester City Council's wording of its Traffic Regulation Order for Manchester Pride 2014 was "unlawful."

8. The Order said that pedestrians could access premises by displaying a valid wristband, accreditation, or a resident and visitor pass. This was fault, because the Council has no legal basis in which to restrict pedestrians from accessing premises. Therefore if someone wished to access a particular premise the organisers should have allowed access even if the person did not have a wristband, accreditation, or a resident and visitor pass.

The full ruling can be read here: www.factsmcr.com/go/010

The Ombudsman's ruling confirmed what the Department For Transport (DFT) had said to us in writing on 21 August 2014:

"This legislative requirement is not ambiguous. It means pedestrians wishing to access premises that can only be accessed from the restricted roads, must be granted entry to those roads."

See that letter here:
www.factsmcr.com/go/006



This year the City Council has been forced to write a new Traffic Regulation Order for the event, removing the unlawful parts that related to pedestrians.

The Council has failed to send us a copy of the Order and doesn't seem to have made it public. But we have obtained the pre-consent version the Council sent to the DFT and you can see it here:

www.factsmcr.com/go/012

The DFT has confirmed for us that the only changes in the final version of the Order relate to times.

Can Manchester Pride's security guards ask where I am going or escort me to premises?

The Ombudsman suggests that Pride escorting people to premises would have been "lawful" in 2014.

However many things are lawful. That doesn't mean as members of the public we must agree to them being done to us.

We have seen no evidence that a private security guard employed by a limited company (Manchester Pride) has any legal power to ask people where they are going, escort them to premises, or control them in any way on a public street.

There is nothing about this in the Traffic Regulation Order which is only about vehicles.

On 7 August we wrote to the Head of Events at Manchester City Council with these questions and others. He acknowledged receipt on 13 August. We asked which legislation allows Pride to ask and escort people on a public street? But at the time of writing this factsheet (27 August) we have heard no more from him and we think that fact speaks for itself...

Manchester Pride's terms and conditions don't apply as you haven't bought a ticket.

If there is a health and safety concern, over crowding for example, the DFT says ticketholders and those without must be treated equally at the gates. A "two-tier" system that prioritises payers is forbidden.

Gathering evidence this year

The written accounts of what happened and the video evidence that some of you gave us last year was very helpful. We showed it to the Department For Transport and others.

If you can, please do the same again this year. We would like to hear about and see your experiences as you make your way to various destinations such as bars and clubs, takeaways and charity premises.

Please be polite and calm. Don't give security guards or the police any excuse to try and restrict you.

Live blog and contact

Once again we'll be running a live blog with updates throughout the weekend:
www.factsmcr.com/pride2015/

There will be a contact form. Or email us:

pride2015@factsmcr.com

What happened at the gates in 2014?

It was a shameful weekend for civil rights and "pride" in Manchester. We've assembled video evidence with some notes at this link:

www.factsmcrcr.com/go/013

Although a few people who didn't have a ticket or pass were allowed in to access premises over the weekend, many were not.

At around 5pm on the Saturday, a small group of LGBT campaigners attempted to walk to premises via the Sackville Street/Whitworth Street gate.

Officers of Greater Manchester Police (GMP) stood, watched and even laughed while Manchester Pride's private security acted unlawfully and refused entry.

Police officers ignored requests for



assistance even as they walked out of the gate.

A tenant who had a letter was refused entry for several minutes and the video shows a "two-tier" system being operated, with ticket holders being allowed in while campaigners weren't.

We would have preferred that rights were respected. However, the guards and police gave us all the evidence of unlawful wrongdoing we could have wished for and with icing

on top.

Police payment

Greater Manchester Police is paid around £50,000 by Manchester Pride which is made up of two limited companies.

We think the actions of officers at the gates brought the force into disrepute last year and due to the payment it was a compromising situation for Greater Manchester Police.

At Manchester Pride's Listening Group in December, someone who represented "GMP and Police with Pride (PWP)" seemed to confirm the bias. They dismissed the legal right to access premises along public streets as "hype" from a "small group."

Frooti La Ruin's Fabulous Facts



* **In year ending** 2013 Manchester Pride's income was £1,040,705. But in 2014, it was £1,336,314 - an increase of almost £300,000. But over the same period the charity amount only rose from £34,000 to £54,021.

* **Despite us all** having a right to walk to premises, in July the LGBT Foundation (LGF) posted on Facebook to say that a wristband would be required to access its NHS-funded building this coming Manchester Pride. In 2010 the Department of Health gave the LGF a grant of £140,000 to cover its premises move. The LGF chose to move from Princess Street, outside the Pride fenced area, to Richmond Street within it. Despite knowing this would cut off service users for the whole of Pride weekend unless they paid up for an expensive wristband.

* **Manchester Pride** still hasn't told us where £11,132 of charity money went. It was set aside to pay for decorative arches on Canal Street and was never given. The

amount appears at the bottom of page 23 of the year ending 2012 accounts but then seems to disappear in the accounts for subsequent years.

* **Bloom Street** has been named as the joint 15th most crime ridden street in England and Wales. The crime is used as a justification for fencing the gay village during Pride and charging for entry. Yet events such as Sparkle are a success without.

* **Almost no bars** and clubs have a float in the Manchester Pride parade anymore. They say can't justify the huge cost.

* **Manchester Pride** has received another telling-off from the Advertising Standards Authority. This time for its ridiculous claim that 2015 was the "25th anniversary of LGBT celebrations in Manchester" (see history below). They just can't stop lying...

* **A news item** in Boyz, 14 Dec 1996 issue, mentions that £55,000 was still outstanding from bars and clubs. That being their contribution towards Mardi Gras run-

ning costs that year. Seventeen years later the Deputy Chair of the Village Business Association confirmed that the businesses still gave much the same figure of around £55,000 towards the running costs of Manchester Pride. And despite there being many more businesses now...

* **In February 2012**, John Stewart, the then CEO of Manchester Pride, made a presentation to Manchester City Council's Citizenship and Inclusion Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He told them that it would be "easier and less costly to run a festival outside of the city centre as capacity could be increased and there would be fewer constraints." Before granting a road closure the City Council must be satisfied that "it is not reasonably practicable for the event to be held otherwise than on a road."

* **Total expenditure** for the Sparkle event in 2014 was £27,860.81. Manchester Pride spent £1,336,136 that year. Forty-seven times as much.

OUR HISTORY

Pride events grew from the fight for rights. Here in the UK there was the Campaign for Homosexual Equality. While in the US there were similar groups and then that day when drag queens and trans women decided they'd had enough of police harassment at New York's Stonewall Inn and threw the first brick.

Recent research by (unfunded) cam-

paginers shows that the "gay pub and club olympics" and a Gay Centre "fun day" happened in Manchester on August Bank Holiday Monday 1985. And by the late 1980s a jumble sale on Canal Street was raising funds for HIV/AIDS.

At around Christmas 1990 the Village Charity was set up and a year later it was registered. The booklet published by the Charity in 1994 makes clear that its August weekend was not a Pride event. It wasn't

until 2003 that Marketing Manchester introduced that word. Firstly as Europride and then Manchester Pride in 2004.

Now the fundraising has dwindled to a fraction of the £105,716 that was raised from the free GayFest weekend in 2000.

Last year these two limited companies that call themselves "pride" acted unlawfully. With the help of paid police officers, they stamped on civil rights and shut out LGBT people, while raising just £54,021.

Political Pride - alternative free events are happening around Oxford Road. Website: <http://politicalpride.weebly.com/>