

Facts About Manchester Pride Factsheet 2019

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

You can walk into the Gay Village and around the public streets without buying a wristband and without any sort of pass. It's your legal right to do this so you can visit premises (businesses and homes) that can't be reached by any other route.

Some businesses, including bars, have allowed people in without a wristband every year since at least 2012. However you have a legal right to reach them whether they admit you or not

No wristband has ever been required to get into the HIV/AIDS Vigil in Sackville Park on Monday.

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

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.factsmcrc.com/go/o10



What if I experience a problem at the gates?

Since 2014 thousands of people have walked into the Village without a wristband or problem. Be polite, make clear that you know your rights and walk on.

A member of staff from Manchester City Council will be on duty all weekend to assist and record any issue you have.

Contact: Veronica Wong on 07771 607341 between the hours of 12:00 and 22:00.

At other times you can call the Pride Control Room on 0793 9878041. But we would recommend you find a police officer instead and ask for the incident to be recorded.

And please let us know your experience too. Details below.

Visit our Live Blog all Pride weekend at: FactsMCR.com. And we have a Facebook group: "I Love My Right To Access Premises at Manchester Pride 2019." Tell us your experience — good or bad.

Which businesses will let me in without a band?



Bullying should be the last thing anyone expects at a Pride. Unfortunately some of the business people do feel bullied and intimidated by the City Council and organisers. So we don't publish a list.

But in the past even venues run by Pride trustees have served people without a band. To some you are a walking Pound sign so it breaks their hearts to see that lovely loot being turned away.

Clone Zone — which was involved in starting off the August fundraising weekend more than 30 years ago — is one business that has announced that no band will be needed to enter their shop. They've even promised to assist in the unlikely event that you have a problem at the gates. Well done them!

Our Factsheet for 2019

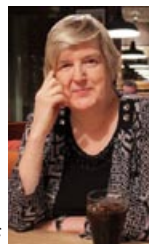
We've doubled the number of pages in our factsheet. That has allowed us to feature two special articles.

We tend to think that the Village Party will be a success. But let's see what the businesses generate for good causes and how much a Village wristband costs next year. No pressure! Mayfield we aren't so sure about and we understand Pride will have to relocate for 2020.

For the first time in more than 30 years no final charity amount has been announced for last year. A disgrace.

In January we were sad to say goodbye to Julia Grant who passed away. In 2000 Julia and her team raised £105,716 with their free GayFest. The total for causes was announced and distributed within days.

The unlawful blocking of the public from pavements has been a civil rights issue. Fighting the City Council, Police, media and others has been very much in the original spirit of Stonewall and Gay Pride. We've been proud to do it!





The Village businesses were the last to know about the loss of the car-park for the weekend

Pride had an ongoing 5-year rolling agreement with the owners of the Bloom Street car-park. That came to an end in 2018 and Pride was only offered a one-year agreement that wouldn't be confirmed until May 2019. Naturally they felt couldn't agree to that and decided to move. But Pride didn't bother to tell the businesses about it for nearly two months. The businesses found out by chance when someone at the City Council slipped up and mentioned it.

Gay Village Party infrastructure and fundraising

Infrastructure (such as fences and security) is expected to cost £300,000. The businesses don't think that Village Party wristbands sales will cover the bill. So the cost will end up being subsidised by Mayfield. If so, no money from Village wristbands will reach good causes. The venues have made a donation and say they have fought for that to go directly into the Manchester Pride charity pot.

Police refuse to relax the rules

Greater Manchester Police was asked to relax the rules about on-street drinking but said no. So there will be no drinking on the street after 23:00 hours. The concert at Mayfield finishes at 22:45. Then there is an hour of music after which the volume goes down. A club event in a separate area continues until 01:00. Some are concerned that 20,000 people may descend on the Gay Village at 23:00 just as drinking on the streets stops. Others feel that Mayfield and the Village appeal to different markets so it's unlikely to happen.

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Loose-lipped Village business sources and others tell Linda the latest...

Facts About Manchester Pride VILLAGE GOSSIP

Mayfield ticket buyers won't all see Ariana Grande face-to-face

Based on proposed ticket sales and capacity figures we believe that the actual venue to see the acts live at Mayfield holds 8,500 people and that another 12,000 will be in other areas watching big screens. They won't see a live performance. A rumour suggested there would be no entry to Mayfield after 19:00. We hear that isn't true. But people could find themselves waiting outside if there are concerns of overcrowding.

Parade protest?

Two separate sources with connections to the City Council and the Police say that a well-known environmental protest group plans to disrupt the Manchester Pride parade on Saturday. It's difficult to see why they would and we didn't think it was credible until we heard the same via a second source.

2018 charity money

Not only has Manchester Pride failed to announce a final charity total for 2018 but we understand the larger charities still haven't received any money. The Village businesses were told a figure would be announced in May and then that it would be in the run up to this year's Pride. But it didn't happen. We hear that "questions were being asked" on Wednesday. This has never happened in the history of this fundraising weekend which started in the 1980s.

London Pride fibs

Manchester Pride has a past history of massively exaggerating attendance figures. This year the mainstream media lapped up claims by London Pride that 1.5 million people had been "been on the streets" for its parade. Any analysis of the streets and route, which was only about 1,700 metres long must conclude that the 1.5m figure is both physically impossible and beyond belief. Perhaps a 25x exaggeration? Why are the organisers of Pride events so dishonest?

What they said... Quotes from Manchester City Council, Greater Manchester Police & the Department For Transport

Fiona Worrall, Director of Neighbourhoods, Manchester City Council in a letter of 14 March 2018:



"As you are aware Manchester Pride has operated for a number of years under the powers of a traffic order that restricts all vehicular traffic on certain roads. Pedestrians are allowed free and un-fettered access at all times. Wristbands are managed by the event organisers and are only to facilitate access to the bars and event spaces and are in no way related to access the public highways.

"If pedestrians wish to access any footways then they can freely do so.

"I can assure you that pedestrian access will be maintained to the public highway at all time.

"We have previously requested that if any incidents occur that individuals either contact us on the day or submit details to us and we will fully investigate what has occurred."

Gareth Parkin, Chief Inspector City Centre, Greater Manchester Police in a letter of 12 January 2016:



"With regard to the 2015 event, Inspector Spurgeon delivered a bespoke briefing to the Pride security teams who were deployed on the gates detailing what their responsibility and powers were, we certainly made it clear they could not restrict access and the approach was a simple appeal for people to purchase wristbands. However if they refused to do so access would not be restricted."

Sara Todd, Deputy Chief Executive, Manchester City Council, makes clear in a letter of 22 August 2018 that the Council informed the Police of reported incidents in 2017:



"With regards the Incident on Saturday 26th August 2017, this was received by Veronica Wong who followed this up on site and with the Pride Organisers. GMP were also notified of this and other incidents reported."

Victoria Pointer, Department For Transport, in a letter, 21 August 2014:



"I can confirm that Section (16)9 of the 1984 Road Traffic Regulation Act ('the Act') states '...no such order shall be made with respect to any road which would have the effect of preventing at any time access for pedestrians to any premises situated on or adjacent to the road, or to any other premises accessible for pedestrians from, and only from the road.'

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

Manchester Metrolink misleads



On 13 August 2018 Manchester Metrolink told its 65,000 Twitter followers wrongly that a “pledgeband” purchase was necessary to enter the Gay Village. Metrolink refused to tweet a correction.

Metrolink deleted the original tweet and then lied to the public again in another saying “we have at no point advised anyone on access to this area.” Unluckily for them we had screengrabs.

Campaigners received a letter of apology from Mayor Andy Burnham. But no public apology was made or correction tweeted by Metrolink to inform the 65,000 who were misled. With “allies” like this who needs enemies?

Who is Manchester Pride for?

This year billboards around Manchester city centre don’t mention the words gay, lesbian, bi or trans. Not even the abbreviation LGBT.

Policing Costs

A reply to a Freedom of Information request in 2018 shows that the total policing cost for Manchester Pride in 2017 was more than £193,000. Pride paid £54,658.66 + VAT. Andy Burnham the Mayor seems to pay 50% of the remaining cost each year, much of which comes from Council Tax, and Greater Manchester Police covers the rest.

A Pride staff earnings increase of 56.27% per head since 2014

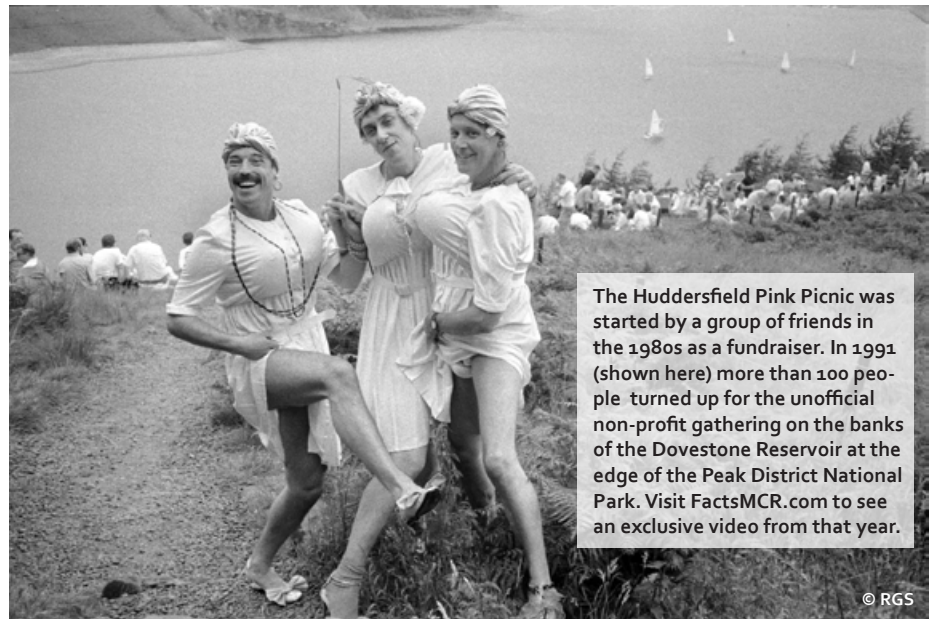
Manchester Pride is a charity and a not-for-profit events company called Manchester Pride Events Ltd. The “group” is the two together.

The earnings increase for the group since 2014 is 56.27% per head. As follows: 2014-2015 was a 32.95% increase, 2015-2016 another 12.02%, then 2016-2017 another 4.93%.

Are Brighton & Birmingham breaking the law too?

Other Prides close the streets using either Section 16a of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 or Section 21 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847. Neither allows them to restrict access to premises. This year a LGBT Muslim campaigner was assaulted by security at Birmingham Pride. Apparently on a public pavement while police watched.

In the era of the Pink Pound, “not spending” is the most effective LGBT protest and it’s liberating



The Huddersfield Pink Picnic was started by a group of friends in the 1980s as a fundraiser. In 1991 (shown here) more than 100 people turned up for the unofficial non-profit gathering on the banks of the Dovestone Reservoir at the edge of the Peak District National Park. Visit FactsMCR.com to see an exclusive video from that year.

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A special feature by Crystal

Manchester Pride is about making money. Businesses citywide benefit to the tune of up to £22m each year thanks to Pride, according to Marketing Manchester. Lucrative “events” careers have been built on the back of it.

Pride is a not-for-profit limited company and registered charity but we have no idea exactly how and where most of the income is spent. Experience suggests that some will go to business pals and they certainly will make a profit.

The Gay Village is about making money too and Manchester Pride has become a sort of annual publicly-funded benefits scheme for Village businesses that aren’t viable for the other 361 days of the year. This means no major change can ever happen or be tolerated.

Having allowed themselves to be herded into a ghetto 25 years ago the Village businesses are themselves victims of the City Council and landlords. Unable to relocate because gays now expect everything in one place.

Their plight is used to guilt-trip us into continuing to support what is now one of the most dangerous crime-ridden areas in England.

While there are good-hearted business people, over the years others have played an active part in deceiving the public about wristbands, sidelining the charity fundraising and turning Pride into the monster it is today.

Despite the marketing hype it’s now a long way from the founding ideals of our Manchester HIV/AIDS fundraiser and the original goals of pride from 1969. In some ways Manchester Pride became

the complete opposite: exclusionary, unkind, exploitative, manipulative, unlawfully denying basic civil rights and paying the police to assist in doing that.

The charity fundraising is a tiny amount in the overall scheme of things and is designed to keep us hooked and spending, despite concerns we might have. Manchester Pride is a terribly ineffective way to raise money for good causes. It’s far better to donate to those causes directly.

It’s for each of us to decide who we’ll support with our cash and who deserves punishment by having money withheld.

Perhaps we’ll avoid Mayfield but buy a Village wristband? Maybe we’ll walk in free, won’t bother with the wristband-only park and car-park, just enjoy being on the streets and spend some money in those businesses that allow us in without a band? Our regular haunts...

Some of us may decide to avoid the whole thing entirely, enjoy a trip away, or have a get-together with friends in the park or garden — free from commercial exploitation. Not spending can be liberating! Try it...

Check out the businesses that sponsor Manchester Pride — incredibly even the “ethical” Co-op this year — and decide whether they deserve your support under the current circumstances. Do they know all the facts?

Nicer, more ethical community-based Pride events happen around the UK. Including in Salford. Even Levenshulme had its own free-to-attend Pride recently.

The choice is yours. As consumers we have power. And if you aren’t spending be sure to let them know and why! ●

Greater Manchester Police has questions to answer

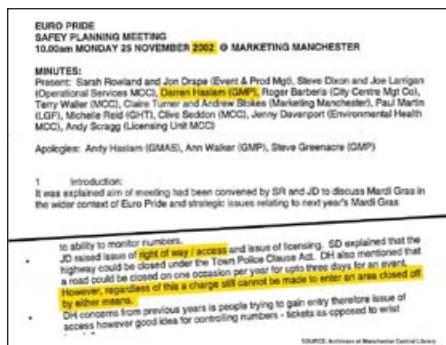
A special feature by
Graham



One of the most disturbing aspects of the decade-long Manchester Pride wristband scam is the involvement of local Police.

Some campaigners believe that from 2003-2014 the wristbands were an organised conspiracy at a high level to obtain money from the public by deception. And that this was only possible because Greater Manchester Police (GMP) turned a blind eye to something that the force knew was unlawful all along.

It's a shocking claim, but let's look at the evidence... The minutes of a meeting that was held at Marketing Manchester in November 2002 were discovered by campaigners in the Library Archives in 2016. GMP was there and the meeting was told that two methods could be used to close the streets but that either way a charge couldn't be made to enter.



It may even have been the police representative that told the meeting this. It isn't clear from the minutes.

However, the following August, Manchester Europride, as it was known that year, went ahead and refused to allow entry to the gay village without a payment. Over the years this was enforced with an iron fist. Letters were sent to residents by Pride claiming (illegally) that it had the right to "grant" or refuse entry to their homes.

Just before Pride in 2014, in letters to campaigners, the Department For Transport (DFT) issued written advice, saying that "nothing in the [Traffic] Order can at any time prevent access for pedestrians to any premises situated on or adjacent to the road, or any other premises accessible for pedestrians from, and only from, the roads."

And in April 2015 the Local Government Ombudsman ruled that Manchester City Council had exceeded its powers when it stated in a road traffic order that

a wristband or resident's permit was required to access premises. This was "unlawful" wrote the Ombudsman.

Since then, campaigners have seen nothing to explain why Pride went ahead and charged for entry in 2003. Why didn't the police defend our rights?

On the Saturday of Manchester Pride in 2014 campaigners attempted to enter but were blocked by Pride's guards. Police officers stood behind. Campaigners noted that some of the officers were smirking and grinning and this unprofessional and rather peculiar behaviour was recorded.

The protesters didn't mind whether they got in or not. It was a win/win situation: either they gained entry and their rights were respected or the law was broken by the organisers. By the time Pride happened, the Police were well aware of the advice from the DFT.

Police With No Pride

The transcript of a Manchester Pride "Listening Group," more than three months later, in December 2014 shows this question from GMP and Police with Pride (PWP): "Regarding all the hype of the Temporary Traffic Order and Rights of Access, we know that we only had to deal with a small group of people. Do you anticipate the same issue again from this group?"

Here was someone from the Police describing our basic civil rights as "hype" and those who were campaigning for those rights as people "we" had to "deal with." Who is "we" exactly? They were taking the side of an organisation (Manchester Pride) that had acted unlawfully for ten years. This at a "pride" meeting. Pride being a political movement about civil rights, which grew out of a riot against the police outside the Stonewall Inn in New York in 1969. You couldn't make it up...

Were the grinning officers at the gates in 2014 also members of the biased "Police With Pride" staff organisation?

At the same Listening Group, the then Chair of Manchester Pride suggested that "having GMP in the Parade is a large political statement in itself" and CEO Mark Fletcher told the meeting, incorrectly "We have a Temporary

Traffic Order which is issued by the Department of Transport in consultation with Manchester City Council and this restricts both vehicle and pedestrian access whilst allowing access to accredited people for those who require it."

The Missing Traffic Order in 2018

Manchester City Council has admitted in writing that the road Traffic Order for Manchester Pride in 2018 wasn't approved by the Secretary of State. The Council didn't send in the Order until the day Pride started. After the weekend the Secretary of State declined to approve the Order retrospectively.

No Traffic Order was in place for at least part of Manchester Pride 2018 and roads were closed to traffic illegally. A situation that we're told is "unprecedented" for an event on this scale.

We asked Greater Manchester Police whether, during the Pride weekend, it was aware that there was no valid Traffic Order. But GMP has refused to tell us.

In October 2018 campaigners wrote to the Chief Constable and asked him to investigate whether the wristbands had been an organised conspiracy at a high level to obtain money from the public by deception. We received no reply.

GMP told us the letter wasn't received. However it was sent by signed for delivery and Royal Mail records show a signature for receipt at GMP's HQ.

When finally we did receive a reply it was unsatisfactory. GMP claimed that there had been no complaints "of people being denied access" in the previous three years. However in August 2018, in relation to an incident the previous year, the City Council wrote that "GMP were also notified of this and other incidents."

We're determined that GMP will issue a public apology for its role in the wristband scandal. However long it takes.

According to the Code of Ethics issued by the College of Policing, police officers should avoid politics. They should act with fairness and impartiality and "behave in a manner, whether on or off duty, which does not bring discredit on the police service or undermine public confidence in policing."

In 2015 a former Police Federation expert told the BBC that the professional standards department of Greater Manchester Police was "corrupt." He said he became dismayed at practices which he considered to be "corrupt, criminal, underhand and contrary to the police regulations."●

