

Facts About Manchester Pride FACTSHEET 2021

Visit our Live Blog all Pride weekend at: FactsMCR.com and email us there. We have a Facebook group: "Facts About Manchester Pride 2021 - Pop-up Group." Tell us your experience — good or bad.



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 and clubs, 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 the Monday night.

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 here: factsmcr.com/go/o10

City Council contact

Just to liven up things this year the Council has provided eight different phone numbers for support. The number to call if you have an issue with access to the pavements of the Village depends on the day and time.

Sat 28 August 2021

12pm-5pm 07507 565738

5pm-10pm 07943 190071 / 07940 750114

Sun 29 August 2021

12pm-5pm 07507 565738 / 07983 430588

5pm-10pm 07976 582391 / 07814 132590

Mon 30 August 2021

12pm-4pm 07811 846271

4pm-8pm 07976 582391 / 07766 777301

These phone numbers should be used only for access issues. The staff have no involvement other than during the shift worked.

You could also speak to a police officer if you see one on the street.

The DFT says...

In a recent email to us, the Department For Transport writes that permission for the road traffic order for this year's event has been granted based on an assurance from Manchester City Council. That "there should not be any issues this year with people being stopped from walking through the streets."

Are the City Council and Manchester Pride drinking in the last chance saloon?



Use your camera

If you see someone being hassled at the gates to the Gay Village, consider recording a video on your phone. Also you could record as you walk in through the gates yourself. Video has played a major role in bringing change over the years.

Covid

You can only be asked for a COVID certificate when collecting tickets.

You don't need one to enjoy your right of way into and around the streets of the Gay Village.

Website

Visit the website for videos, articles and a short history of the situation. Past annual factsheets are still worth a look. Particularly the one for 2019 which has a feature about the police.



Ten years of Facts

Facts About Manchester Pride was founded in spring 2011 by Wynn and Geoff. By then some of us had been campaigning for seven years and had found that asking nicely didn't work.

We've done our best to report the facts honestly and truthfully, including much that the mainstream and LGBT media prefer to censor.



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

Facts About Manchester Pride VILLAGE GOSSIP

Hello my lovelies. I'm back with a bumper crop of dirt for Manchester Pride 2021. I'm going to need some extra Shake 'n' Vac after this...

Unexpectedly groped in the Canal Street area

Some years ago one of the Facts campaigners who, frankly, was no spring chicken, arranged to meet a man who had connections with Manchester Pride. After an interesting discussion they wandered along to the Gay Village.

As they turned onto Canal Street the campaigner was astonished to feel an unwelcome hand on his bottom. What a charmer.

And they wonder why people don't want to "engage" with them.

If I had a photo...



1999 — the year Mardi Gras was run from the town hall, Councillor Karney was the chair and nothing was raised for good causes.

Questions were asked about spending. The BBC focused on the £21,000 cost of a big video screen and £25,000 spent on performers.

The Council must have thought the financial documents were safely shredded. But one of the Facts campaigners discovered copies in a box in the library, 17 years later.

I couldn't help but notice one item in the accounts — an invoice from the Manchester Evening News. Charging Mardi Gras £75 for a "photo Cllr P Karney."

Other Hire and Contracted Services	
99001	MM Print
83132650	Cover Zone
831324787	Manchester Evening News
831324787	CEA Personnel
	Design & Printing of 3 Banners
	Marquee Hire
	Photo: Cllr P Karney
	Payments to Staff / Charity Office

Hard to believe the City Council couldn't give Mardi Gras a free picture of one of its own most-popular councillors?

Councillor court case

Which Manchester councillor was taken to court for copyright infringement in 2015?

The case was heard in the High Court, Chancery Division, Intellectual Property Enterprise Court. Where he was found personally jointly and severally liable alongside his fellow director and their dissolved limited company.

Total damages of £2,716 were awarded to the photographer who had spent £1,800 chartering a helicopter to shoot the aerial photos that were stolen.

And for bonus points why hasn't this been reported anywhere, despite this charity trustee never being out of the news?

Criminal Manchester

Back in the 1870s the Manchester Evening News wrote a ten-part series on criminality. It saved the worst city centre area until last and, you've guessed it, the final part features Canal Street.

CHAPTER X.
CANAL-STREET: GINGER LIZ AND
COCKNEY JIM.

"Very few grades of life are lower," the article tells the reader. As well as Ginger Liz and Cockney Jim it mentions a man known as Dirty Alf.

Despite his name, Alf has a "gorgeous" front room filled with mirrors, mahogany, a gilded chandelier and "fanciful china ornaments." Rich curtains are "festooned" and there is a "soft yielding carpet."

"Vice reigns triumphant here," writes the journalist. "Criminality that can scarcely be touched upon."

You know what that might mean...

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From gas holder to VIP wristband holder

Pride continues its tour of Manchester's most derelict city centre spots. This year it's the site of a dirty old gas works on Medlock Street, where giant "gasometers" would store noxious town gas that was produced by burning coal.

The City Council wanted the BBC to relocate there but the Beeb chose Media City instead. Gradually the land is being developed and the arts centre Home occupies a small corner.

Even the greediest Victorian capitalists didn't hit on the idea of charging people a small fortune to stand on a toxic wasteland in the pretence of it being a "VIP" experience.

But it'll feel familiar to any older queens who attend. When it was derelict in the 90s the Dunlop rubber works (insert your own joke here) was a notorious cruising



site. Now the gentrified area is known as Macintosh Village.

Residents have just launched a legal challenge over a 55-storey student skyscraper nearer Oxford Road, that City Council planners have approved. 750 letters of objection were received.

It looks like thousands of apartment windows will be in direct line of fire from the two-day Pride pop concert. Some just yards from the stage. Which can't be a lot of fun?

I suspect this will be another one-off location for Pride Live.

Pride parade puzzle



People can't understand why the usual Saturday parade has been cancelled due to Covid "safety concerns." Could the answer be that Pride's habit of grossly exaggerating attendance figures has finally bitten it in the bum?

Any rational analysis of the parade route must conclude that the crowd on the pavements is just a few tens of thousands strong. But, even in response to the cancellation, Pride suggests that the parade brings "hundreds

of thousands of people together."

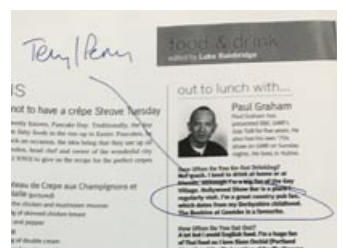
After the bankrupt Mardi Gras 1999 the organisers claimed that a "staggering 600,000 plus" people had been "on the city's streets" for the "biggest-ever" parade. Which would have been more than one quarter of the population of Greater Manchester.

Never mind staggering, they would have been swaying like acrobats — standing on shoulders three persons high across the entire road and parade route.

Monitoring Julia Grant?

In the box of Council documents that were found by Facts is a page torn from a magazine. It dates from around 2000 — the year when Julia Grant and her team organised GayFest, much to the annoyance of the City Council. In the article, a local gay journalist who was also a BBC presenter talks about which pubs he likes to go to. "Hollywood Showbar is a place I regularly visit," he says.

That paragraph has been circled for the attention of two people within the Council who were closely involved with Manchester Mardi Gras the previous year. One of them in the Chief Execu-



tives department.

It suggests that people who went to Julia's premises were being monitored at a high level within the Council. Something one might have expected in Communist East Germany rather than Manchester.

PAULA PICKS APART POSSIBLE PRIDE PROFLIGACY

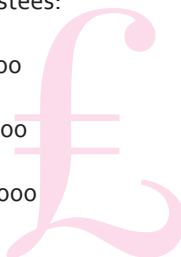
Charity money withheld for years

We identified a discrepancy between charity money shown as paid in Pride's accounts and the annual figures announced. Manchester Pride now says what it'll "distribute" each year rather than what was "raised" in a particular year.

It holds on to some money announced for good causes, calling it "unclaimed grants." Are we meant to believe Fletch & his team can't think of a good cause to give the money to?

Pride supplied these figures to us in 2017, signed off by the trustees:

2012/13 Announced £34,000
Distributed £19,911
2013/14 Announced £54,000
Distributed £47,200
2014/15 Announced £146,000
Distributed £128,276



Rolling forward this "unclaimed" money means they can make it look as if they raised more the following year.

We don't yet know if this carried on after 2015. But it begs the question: how much have good causes actually received from the lucrative 2019 event?

Separating business from charity

In recent years, Pride has referred to money for good causes as a separate "community fund."

When buying a wristband, Ticketmaster warns this only funds the event and invites buyers to make a separate donation to charity. How much from the Big Weekend itself goes to good causes?

Since early 2020, Pride's "grant" page simply states "Manchester Pride Grants are temporarily closed as we assess the developing situation and hope to have an update soon."

The "community fund" is separate when it suits them; so why hold onto it because of potential restrictions on the 2020 event? The pandemic left some LGBT people needing more support than ever.

The most recent Annual Review is for the 2018 event, announcing £168,000 to be "distributed in 2019." The £121,135 announced in their accounts ending 31/12/2019 may be entirely from 2018.

What have they actually distributed from the 2019 event? Probably not the 3% widely shared on social media. Good causes might not have seen a single penny from 2019's £3.94m event.

MANCHESTER PRIDE IN 1985?

More rewriting of LGBT history by the M.E.N.

Recently the Manchester Evening News told readers that an event on August Bank Holiday Monday 1985 was "the first Manchester Pride." It wasn't...

Just because gay people got together that weekend doesn't mean it was either a "pride" or "Manchester Pride."

This is a lazy narrative used by journalists and marketing people. Would they describe every event organised by the Black community as a "Carnival?" No they wouldn't dare.

The September 1985 issue of Mancunian Gay magazine described it as the "Manchester Gay Pub and Club Olympics" and the "Gay Centre Fun Day." The word "pride" doesn't appear.

In the past, pride events happened at the end of June because that was the anniversary of the riots at the Stonewall Inn in New York (28 June-3 July 1969).

In June 1986 there was a "Northern Pride" in Manchester (see below) with a launch in The Rembrandt. Was there a jumble sale in August 1986? We don't know. There certainly was one in 1989 and probably in 1988. The August jumble sale was all about fundraising for HIV and AIDS.

In 1990 there was both a pride in June in Manchester and a jumble sale in August. So how could the jumble sale be a "pride"?

We think the August weekend was called the Carnival of Fun in 1991, Tickled Pink in 1992, AbFab in 1993 and

then Mardi Gras until 1999. In 2000 and 2001 it was GayFest and then Mardi Gras again in 2002.

In the box you can see a quote from the booklet of the 1994 Annual General Meeting of The Village Charity which ran the August event and distributed the money. You can see that the Charity itself states that the weekend is "not and never has been" a pride.

4. What's it all for?

Many volunteers of the charity get upset when the press call our weekend the "Northern Pride". It's not and never has been. It's something unique which other cities are now trying to copy.

From our point of view it's about fun, but it's not exclusively gay or lesbian it's serious, but it's not morbid it's important, but it's not political it's not sorrowful memories, but it is a celebration of life and past lives it's about looking towards the future, being aware of the sexual pitfalls, giving support and friendship to those living with a frightening disease without stigma or recourse.

It is about caring and giving - and having a great time in the process. Enjoy yourselves.

In 2003 Europride came to Manchester. The first time the word "pride" had ever featured in the event name.

The following year Marketing Manchester (the tourist board) renamed the weekend Manchester Pride without any discussion with the community.

The false narrative that the August Bank Holiday event was always a pride is now being used to sideline the fundraising.

The main reason it began...

HOME PRIDE

▽

This month sees the start of **Pride North '86**, three weeks of fund-raising events for gay men in the major towns and cities across the North of England. It will be the first major regional event since the national Gay Pride march was held in Huddersfield in 1981, and is expected to raise over £20,000 for gay charities and organisations.

Pride North also aims to counteract press and media hostility toward gay men, to promote the North and encourage its participation in 'Gay Pride', and to show the public that we are still 'glad to be gay' and can have fun doing it. The Manchester Magazine, distributed to over 200,000 homes, has promised to cover the event in addition to the local and national gay press. For further details contact: **Collin Avery** Co-ordinator **Pride North '86** c/o Manchester Gay Centre P.O. Box 153 Manchester M60 1LP

EVENTS IN JUNE

TUESDAY 10
MANCHESTER Gay Pride Benefit, Dickens Club, 74a Oldham St

SATURDAY 21
MANCHESTER Pride North launch buffet, Rembrandt, Sackville St., evening.

MONDAY 23
MANCHESTER Gong Show with Avril A. High Society, 48 Princess St.

WEDNESDAY 25
LIVERPOOL Carmen Miranda Party, Jody's, 27 Stanley St.

MANCHESTER Mid season Christmas Party, New York, 98 Bloom St.

THURSDAY 26
LEEDS Pride North Benefit, Rockshots II, Call Lane

MANCHESTER Pat Mills in Cabaret, High Society, 48 Princess St.

SATURDAY 28
MANCHESTER Gay Fun Day, Sparrow Park, Sackville St.

Snax, all night party — details from Snax

SUNDAY 29
LIVERPOOL Picnic Sefton Park, meet 2pm, Palm House St.

Merseyside Friend.

MONDAY 30
NEWCASTLE Pride North Benefit, Rockshots I, Waterloo St.

LIVERPOOL Pride North Benefit, State, Dale Street

EVENTS IN JULY

TUESDAY 1
LIVERPOOL Cehese and wine party. Details Merseyside Friend.

WEDNESDAY 2
HUDDERSFIELD Pride North Benefit, 42nd Street, Southgate

MANCHESTER Archway, 66 Whitworth St, Miquel Brown in cabaret

THURSDAY 3
CHESTER Pride North Benefit, Olivers, Forest St

FRIDAY 4
LIVERPOOL Pride North Benefit, Scarletts, Hackin's Hey, off Dale St.

BLACKPOOL Pride North Benefit, Flamingos 2000, 176 Talbot Rd, Clone Zone fashion show.

SATURDAY 5
LONDON Gay Pride March. Details transport phone local switchboards.

MANCHESTER All nighter, Archway, 66 Whitworth St West, Clone Zone fashion show.

MONDAY 7
BOLTON Pride North Benefit, City Lites, Chapel St., Farnworth, Clone Zone fashion show, Body Rox 86

THURSDAY 10
MANCHESTER Pride North Benefit, Stuffed Olives, South King St, beachwear party.

New protests, groups and campaigns. What's happening and will anything change?

We've been campaigning as Facts About Manchester Pride for ten years. Some of us go back much further.

We have a small core of campaigners and few if any have a financial interest in Pride, its sponsors, the charities or Village businesses. We don't receive grants, business income or wages. The group isn't aligned with any political party. The same can't be said of some others.

The fact that someone has an interest of some sort doesn't mean they're a bad person. But often we see individuals who only want to change certain bits of this event to benefit themselves. While leaving their own particular patch untouched.

So always take a hard look at who's behind anything new. Who do they know? Where do they work? Which issues do they choose not to talk about?

Over the years often we've seen protests and petitions in the weeks before Pride and then everything goes dead in September for another 11 months.

It's even possible that some of these are created to distract, manage public dissatisfaction and neutralise it.

POLITICIANS

When there's a problem a politician pops up and sometimes promises meetings. But often little or nothing is heard once the drama drops out of the news.

An example is after the reported chaos at Mayfield in 2019. Recently we put in a Freedom of Information request to the City Council. We asked for documents that would show what was discussed and decided.

But the Council says no documents are available because meetings took place at Manchester Pride. It has no documents about what seemed to be a serious health and safety situation...

The aim is a few small changes along with platitudes to satisfy the public. But then business much the same as usual.

THE MEDIA

In all the coverage of Manchester Pride in recent weeks did you notice any mention of the ten-year-long unlawful situation with wristbands and the continuing issues in 2019?

Were readers, listeners or viewers told they could walk into the Gay Village without paying?

The BBC, Manchester Evening News and others seem to self-censor. Whose interests do they represent?

THE MAIN CHARITIES AREN'T INNOCENT PARTIES

In recent weeks the media narrative has tended to be a simplistic one of bad Pride versus wonderful charities.

But the LGBT Foundation (previously known as the LGF) was at the meeting in November 2002 at which all present were told they couldn't charge people to enter streets that were closed. George House Trust was there too.

From 2003 the streets were unlawfully closed, people were charged, and both organisations ran the wristband scheme which was known as "Operation Fundraiser."

Despite initial promises of "transparency" (sound familiar?) soon questions were being asked about leaflets that seemed somewhat misleading.

In 2004, the charge made by Operation Fundraiser for running the wristband scheme increased by 30%. Yet only 36,000 bands were sold in 2004 — probably the lowest figure ever. There was no explanation for how this situation could lead to such a rise in costs.

The sum raised for charity didn't seem to change much from year to year and people began to notice.

Operation Fundraiser was scrapped in 2006 because HM Customs and Excise decided the weekend hadn't

been a charity event since 2002. It was billed for three years of VAT. This didn't receive much publicity.

Yet on the BBC Radio Manchester breakfast show recently someone who was involved was allowed to pretend that the Operation Fundraiser years were some kind of golden age.

The financial accounts show the LGBT Foundation spent £40,500 on photocopier rental for its 35 staff in 2013. A further £72,750 was due within 2-5 years.



Years ago, as Healthy Gay Manchester it was all about condoms. Now, with an annual income of £2.25m and 59 employees (up from 45 staff in 2019) does it really need a grant from Pride to run the free condom scheme? Or are there more deserving causes?

VILLAGE BUSINESSES

When we drew up a business plan for a replacement event with Julia Grant in 2013, a few of the business people were onboard. A major bank wanted to fund a new community centre in the Village. In the end there wasn't enough support.

Some business people knew about the illegality surrounding wristbands many years ago but let it happen.

Some were on the board of Manchester Pride in the past and helped to create and continue what we see today.



THE PRIDE CEO

Are the knives out for Mark Fletcher? Will he be a convenient scapegoat, while nothing else changes much? We saw a similar situation in 2013.

Considering all the powerful interests that have a finger in this pie, any CEO is limited in what he or she can do.

By 2013, before Fletcher took over, we had noticed moves that seemed designed to sideline the fundraising.

That slogan was being replaced with "celebrating" and other woolly objectives that might only require a bit of year-round tweeting from the office.

THE BOTTOM LINE

How many more times will the public allow the people who control this weekend to come up with another slight variation on the same theme?

The low fundraising and disrespectful attitude towards our rights, the family and friends we lost and those who started this weekend are no accident.