

## Our Pride Feedback for 2023

### If at all, why was 'Our Pride Festival' important to you?

- It offered an alternative place to celebrate pride and personally, I felt such a lovely sense of community.
- It felt so warm and inclusive. I felt much more represented than at “official” Pride, and the events were much more up my street too
- It was nice to go to a smaller pride with a more inclusive pride that wasn't focused on mens version of pride so much. It was more everyones pride.
- It's so important to have free or low fee events for pride that are actually inclusive and accessible. Our Pride was so much more about community and the original meaning of Pride, and supporting local artists.
- The Our Pride Festival is important as it supports neurodiversity and accounts for people who like to celebrate Pride in a smaller, quieter and fully accessible space.
- 'Our Pride Festival' has been pivotal to my queer joy, to have a chance to understand my own identity in a safe, welcoming environment, and crucially - to celebrate this! 'Our Pride Festival' is intersectional and inclusive, carefully considered spaces that are accessible, panels that hold balanced views, educate and promote activism.
- Sadly I no longer feel that Northern Pride is an authentic or safe place as an LGBTQIA+ person (with the exception of the Curious stage). Our Pride Festival is exactly how Pride should feel and what it's all about.
- It was inclusive!
- Diversity and inclusivity
- Shows that Newcastle is working to create more inclusive spaces and opportunities
- I felt safe and welcomed
- It provided a safe and fun space to explore different activities, spend time with the queer community and try new things. It was inclusive and celebratory.
- It is true acceptance of all my intersecting identities and a safe way to celebrate pride
- It was a safe space where I could enjoy Pride with my family and not worry about over consumption of alcohol, or over commercialisation. I'm autistic and find big Pride extremely overwhelming. Our Pride was designed with people like me in mind.
- An alternative space and events aimed at queer and marginalised groups is so important so that more people in our community have a safe space to celebrate pride and have their voices heard.
- Northern Pride is too big, too loud and overstimulating, and too commercialised. It's also now too expensive. Our Pride is the opposite of this, giving space for the queer community to breathe and celebrate together.
- To enjoy Pride in a safe and accessible place surrounded by my friends and community
- It provided a safe space for queer people of colour and seemed more inclusive than other pride events
- Because it is a grassroots event unlike the corporate pride
- Representative, inclusive, authentic, community
- I loved bringing together all sorts of people from the queer community

- It gives me a sense of belonging within a community I've never experienced but needed all my life. It's empowers me, It lifts my spirits wildly. It reminds that I'm not actually alone in the fight. I have friends for the first time in years. The first Our Pride Festival is actually an anniversary for me and my partner as we declared our feelings for another there. It's enriched my life in so many ways. It's not changed my life, It's given me a life.

### **What was your favourite part of 'Our Pride Festival'?**

- The market and panel talk.
- Dancing in the rain to the drumming!
- How safe and inclusive it was and calmer. It was a calmer place to bring my autistic kid.
- Being around my community.
- The fact it is alternative
- Feeling safe enough to be myself.
- Feeling safe and validated
- Meeting people
- Bend and shake
- Range of events in different venues and different types
- The panels of different topic regarding importantatters within the lgbtq+ community
- The range of activities was lovely, but the Saturday event with market, panel discussion and dancing in the evening was my favourite. Seeing all that queer joy from so many different people.
- The sound healing with Becky Owen
- The venue being in walking distance, safe, not too loud, benches where we could sit, and kids crafts.
- The community spirit and championing the local community
- Bend and Shake
- The party but also the choice of activities it was centred around drinking and nightlife
- Everything. The vibe, the people, the venue, the panel, the atmosphere, the opportunity to be with people I feel a sense of community thing
- Making friends and meeting new people
- All of it. I know that's vague but it's true.

### **If 'Our Pride Festival' was not on this year, would you mind? Please explain if so.**

- I'd be gutted and disheartened - Northern Pride (not the majority) has some aggro & homo/transphobia (which myself and my partner witnessed last year with the security not stepping in)
- Yes, it is such a safe space and there just aren't enough of those!
- I understand that org siding is stressful
- It would be a great loss, there is nothing else that feels so safe and inclusive.
- Yes, I do not like Northern Pride as it is too big
- Yes, I would be sad

- Yes - I wouldn't feel safe to access the traditional pride in Newcastle
- I'd be very sad if this wasn't available for the people who need it as an alternative to the Newcastle queer scene.
- I miss the opportunity to celebrate pride alongside other queer people but on a smaller, more personable scale.
- Yeah. I'd be gutted. It is the nicest pride event I've been to
- We need to continue the work to keep more awareness and festivals play a big part in it
- I'd mind a lot! The events you run are the social glue that holds out community together. We're all so different but we gather together at events like Our Pride and feel belonging.
- Yes definitely! It is really important to provide visibility to an inclusive approach
- I would be disappointed, but I know it's not always possible to run such a big event with a small team. But without it I wouldn't celebrate Pride as I don't go to the big city pride.
- Northern Pride is very commercialised and it doesn't give opportunities to local, small queer businesses. Our Pride was the perfect event to give space to the queer organisations within the local community who truly make a huge difference to the lives of the local community
- I'd be disappointed. I liked marking Pride month but mainstream Pride events don't appeal
- I would mind - I love celebrating my queer trans identity and feeling safe in a space to do so
- I would be disappointed but understand funding isn't always possible for these events, which is a shame because it's a much needed space that changes lives.
- Yes, I would be disappointed as for the last 2 years I have very much enjoyed this event. I know everyone who attends shares the same feeling. It represents something important to people
- Yes, I would mind. It would upset me that queer stall holders wouldn't have a market, that panels wouldn't be there to educate and validate, that Newcastle's Queers who have access requirements wouldn't have a pride to go to, that there wouldn't be an alternative pride with accessible space that considers neurodiversity, that creatives (like DJs and musicians) wouldn't be employed. If 'Our Pride Festival' doesn't happen, it would mean that for a lot of people of the North East - THERE WOULD BE NO PRIDE.
- Yes. I don't feel comfortable at Northern Pride anymore and there is not another Pride event in the area I can think of that prioritises our community first.

### **Did you feel safe at 'Our Pride Festival'**

- Yes, much safer than other Pride events
- Mostly yes, except that I had a run-in with a straight guy at the Cumberland Arms. He wasn't an attendee of Our Pride, just happened to be there, but it definitely put a damper on the night

- Yes very. It was the thing i noticed the most
- Yes, much safer than other Pride events
- Yes, so much more so than Northern Pride
- Yes, I wouldn't go to any other Pride event as they are not accessible for me.
- Yes, very safe
- Yes! Because it's mostly queers. Not many cis straight white women who are super overwhelming at big Pride. I can be my whole confusing trans dyke self and not worry about how others will react. And I can bring my kids knowing they're not around drugs or loads of alcohol
- Yes, as a super fat disabled ND black trans person. I felt safe and was safe at Our Pride Festival. Newcastle pride event for me is unwelcoming, unsafe and unaccessible. Our Pride Festival is the only pride event I've felt safe and been safe.
- Absolutely
- Yes yes yes!!!
- 100%

### **Why do you think something like 'Our Pride Festival' is needed?**

- Because there aren't enough safe spaces for minorities.
- Provides an inclusive safe space and offers alternatives for people who don't enjoy night life/drinkinf
- Newcastle Pride clearly works for lots of people, and does a good job of raising the profile of the queer community for a weekend, but Our Pride Festival provides something special that can't be found elsewhere. It is the embodiment of inclusivity, thanks to the hard work of the organisers.
- Many people are neurodivergent, have trauma experiences, are alternative and don't relate to large stereotypical Pride events
- Because we need more queer to queer events organised by ppl who really care about the community and not corporations
- Not all of us fit the mould of "white able bodied gay man who loves drag and drinking" and we deserve somewhere that lets us celebrate! Plus the varied programme means there's something for everyone and the community was actually brought together joyfully.
- To offer an alternative to mainstream pride events where many marginalised members of our community don't feel seen or safe.
- I know that the big 'official' pride gatherings are great for LGBTQ+ visibility but I think something led by somebody in the local community is super valuable. It's also nice to celebrate pride with events that aren't just the parade, especially as that's not accessible for everyone.
- Brings new people that are just starting to feel more comfortable within their sexuality and themselves to a community that will welcome them with no bias. The support network that they may not get from family and friends.
- I made the mistake of heading to the main pride half way through the day to just check it out and instantly regretted it.
- Diversity and inclusivity

- It's an alternative to the booze soaked over commercialisation of Big Pride. And you don't invite the home office or police to Our Pride! It's an event that's for us, to feel community.
- There is still racialisation and bothering of people according to genders or sexuality as well as other characteristics. We must protect diversity which brings strength and creativity
- People need a quieter, accessible place to celebrate their queerness and find community. Not all queer folks like pop music or big crowds or alcohol.
- Our Pride Festival creates a safe, intersectional and welcoming space for all people
- I think official Pride events feel corporate and apolitical. They don't represent or attract me. It's good to have an alternative
- To celebrate queerness in an increasingly hostile environment is an act of resistance. As such, it is important that our Pride Festival continues so we can keep celebrating and enjoying queer community
- It provides a safe accessible inclusive space. Which is true to it's values and not performative. It brings people together who have might not otherwise of had the opportunity to be in a queer safe space. It empowers and brings genuine joy. It's needed because an event like our pride festival is not only a rare space but a very vital space for a lot of people.
- Definitely. Queer culture is beautiful and diverse, and the our pride event encapsulates that.
- Our Pride Festival carefully considers how to make the space accessible for all, this is truly vital, or else, what is the point? The community that has been to 'Our Pride Festival' before has slowly grown and for many it is the only place they have celebrated Pride. At its root, Pride is a protest to the injustices against our community - holding a shared space for panels, flag making, creativity, talks, buying books that reflect ourselves - this is what is needed. And dancing is always needed.
- It acts as an alternative and inclusive space to mainstream Pride festivals which are becoming very commercialised and are often times inaccessible and unsafe.

### Anything else to add?

- Thank you for doing what you do ❤️
- YOU ARE LOVED AND APPRECIATED THANK YOU FOR BEING YOU TEL
- You guys are great.
- I love bend&shake, thank you for all that you do
- Last year was great, thank you for running it :)
- This pride was a beautiful experience
- I've never been but would love to bring my queer kids and their girlfriends. These kinds of events are so important.
- I really hope it goes ahead. And the kids crafts were brilliant. Do you need volunteers? If so, please let me know (this is Jay by the way) - I'd be happy to help how I can x
- This is a really important event. I would definitely take part
- Thank you for creating an amazing community in Newcastle 💜
- Free Palestine 🙌

- Thank you for all the incredible safe spaces you loving create for people to truly be themselves.
- Thank you for organising this wonderful event and making it what it is. It's very special and is cherished by people. I hope it is something that can continue!
- I've spent a lot of my life erased. 'Our Pride Festival' has been a place of healing, a place of joy. I am one of many stories in the north east community who attend Tel's events. This is where funding should go, 'our pride festival' is exactly why the funding exists.