

# Didsbury Pride – Impact Report Nov 2025

**Celebrating Diversity, Visibility, and Community Connection**



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Founded by Michael Pollard, the inaugural Didsbury Pride in 2018 was in response to two significant recent events within the community.

The passing of Lizzie Lowe in 2014, a local teenager who made the tragic decision to take her own life, a sad consequence of her struggle with her LGBTQ+ identity and her Christian faith. Michael was also horrified to witness an incident of homophobia and the bullying of a young gay man by a group of slightly older girls in central Didsbury. Michael stepped in and dealt with the situation with a priority on ensuring the young man was comfortable and felt safe. The following day, his parents came into Home Cafe (where Michael has been the Cafe Manager since 2017) and thanked him for his support and care.

Michael established Didsbury Pride as a free event for the whole community, with some very clear messages about inclusion, expression and a safe space in which to be together. Attracting 600 people, the 2018 inaugural event was a great success, and established it as an annual event of inclusion and celebration for out LGBTQ+ community, friends and allies.

Didsbury Pride relies entirely on funding from various activities throughout the year, support from local businesses and Manchester City Council. We have been overwhelmed this year by the generosity of Dr Michael Josephson MBE, whose funding for 2025 and 2026, through donations raised at the [Dr Michael Josephson MBE Charity Ball 2024](#), has ensured that we remain financially sustainable, free to attend and open to all.

Didsbury Pride 2025 was a phenomenal success and our biggest event yet. It brought together LGBTQ+ people, allies, families, and local residents in a joyful, free celebration of pride, inclusion, and togetherness. Thanks to the support of our volunteers and donors, and specifically Dr Michael Josephson MBE, the event continues to grow in impact, accessibility, and reach.

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# Event Overview

- **Free community Pride event** open to all ages
- **Rainbow Walk** through Didsbury Village, celebrating visibility and solidarity
- **Entertainment** featuring local choirs, high profile talent, DJ's and community hosts
- **Family-friendly activities**, community stalls, and safe spaces for conversation and support
- **Food & Drink stalls and Pride merchandise stalls** providing much needed refreshment and support, and from which 10% of their take is donated towards the event
- **Headliner Sponsorship** provided exclusively by Dr Michael Josphson MBE

This year's Didsbury Pride highlighted local unity, provided vital LGBTQ+ visibility, and created a welcoming environment for people of all identities.

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## Key Achievements & Impact

### 1. Strengthened Community Cohesion

- Attracted an estimated 4252 visitors across the day and evening activities.
- Brought together local families, young people, older LGBTQ+ residents, and allies.

### 2. Enhanced LGBTQ+ Visibility and Inclusion

- The Rainbow Walk offered a vibrant and uplifting show of solidarity, with 350 participants joining the march through the village, and attracting significant youth involvement.
- Local businesses displayed Pride flags, signage, and decorations, visibly signalling commitment to inclusion.

### 3. Platform for Local Talent

- Featured 20 group or individual performers, including LGBTQ+ artists, musicians, drag performers, and community speakers.
- Provided a paid platform for emerging talent and celebrated diverse voices from the region.

### 4. Safe, Accessible, and Family-Friendly

- Designed as a free, all-ages event, ensuring no financial barriers to participation.
- Delivered accessible routes, quiet spaces, and support from trained volunteers.

- Families shared that the event helped open healthy conversations about identity and acceptance.
- Drag Time Stories were a very popular feature with our young children and LGBTQ+ families
- Provided a free kid's zone with a bouncy castle, face painting and puppeteer

## 5. Economic and Social Boost for the Village

- Increased footfall for local shops, cafés, and venues throughout the day.
- Strengthened relationships between community organisations, local businesses, and residents.

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## Community Feedback

*“Brilliant day and night....Huge thanks to everyone. My 95 year old Mum made her Pride debut and loved it; my 84 year old mum-in-law can't wait to be back next year”*

*“Absolutely Fabulous – Gets better every year”*

*“Another fantastic Didsbury Pride event”*

*“What a totally wonderful day. Thank you”*

*“Better every year. Sybil was a real coup!”*

*“Such a great event! Thank you to all involved in the planning and organising, it was a huge success”*

## Volunteer & Donor Contributions

- 25 volunteers supported event stewardship, accessibility, safety, and community outreach.
- The hugely generous donation of **£15,000** from **Dr Michael Josephson MBE Charity Ball 2024**, allowed us to showcase well known headline acts, with US Soul Sensation **SYBIL** performing our finale this year. The funds also covered essential event costs such as security and First Aid support, all of which allowed us to continue to offer this popular accessible free event.

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## Looking Forward

Building on the success of Didsbury Pride 2025, we plan to:

- Expand the Rainbow Walk with increased accessibility features
- Introduce youth and family programming throughout the year

- Provide more opportunities for local LGBTQ+ artists
- Strengthen partnerships with community groups, and local services
- Continue to ensure the event remains free, safe, and welcoming for everyone

The continued support from generous donors like Dr Michael Josephon MBE will help us grow this positive, visible celebration of LGBTQ+ pride at the heart of our community.

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## With Gratitude

Thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, donated, performed, and stood proudly with us. Together, we made Didsbury Pride a celebration of love, visibility, acceptance, and belonging.



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