



**FESTIVAL
2023**

**GAY
VILLAGE
PARTY**

SAFETY & WELLNESS POLICY

INTRODUCTION

In 2022, responding to feedback in the Pride in our Future report, Manchester Pride committed to our communities that we would refocus our efforts back to the Gay Village Party where the roots of the Festival began. Part of that commitment included addressing the safety concerns relating to the Gay Village Party and so we created the 2022 Safety and Wellness Policy.

Key points of the 2022 Safety and Wellness Policy included:

- Introduction of a 'Community Safety Task Force'
- Improving Communications
- Changing the 'Welcome' at the Gates
- Improving safety on the street

A full review of these initiatives can be found [here](#).

The safety of our communities is paramount. We have looked at many different areas and considered the current climate as well as changes to legislation and what we feel are appropriate measures and responses.

The Safety Policy was created in collaboration with not just the Gay Village venues, but also Manchester City Council, Greater Manchester Police and other responsible authorities and this will form part of the Safety Advisory Group process.

The Safety Advisory Group comprises representatives across all of the responsible authorities and they have oversight across all major events that are held in the city. There is a significant level of collaboration and scrutiny of all of our planning and we have worked successfully with this group for many years as we plan the Manchester Pride Festival over many months.

Promoting a safe event is not just the responsibility of Manchester Pride but it is the responsibility and duty of all stakeholders and partners who we work alongside to create the Festival.

Since our 2022 celebrations, the first draft of the Protect Duty bill was published on 2 May 2023, which identifies the qualifying premises, what parts of these premises, and types of events which will fall under scope – those with capacity for more than 100 individuals. Enhanced duties will be required from those which have a public capacity of 800 individuals or more, called 'enhanced premises'. Although final wording of the Duty is yet to be confirmed, organisations should start to consider their role in protecting the public from terror threats as soon as possible.

WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR THE POLICY

- **Attendee Safety:** The primary reason for implementing a safety policy is to ensure the well-being and security of event attendees. This helps to identify and mitigate potential risks, prevent accidents, injuries and harm to others.
- **To remain up to date with Protect Duty:** Preparing for Protect Duty is crucial and we should be considering our role in protecting the public from terror threats as soon as possible.
- **We want to co-design and consult:** The Safety Policy was created in collaboration with not just the Gay Village venues, but also Manchester City Council, Greater Manchester Police and other responsible authorities and this will form part of the Safety Advisory Group process.

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING TO CREATE THIS POLICY?

- **Co-design with Gay Village venues:** We have been regularly meeting with the Gay Village venues as we have been developing this to ensure they are invested in the policy and understand their role within it. We are still working through some of the more operational elements of how the policy will be delivered on the ground but we are working closely with the Gay Village venues every step of the way;
- **Co-design with responsible authorities:** We have been in regular contact and meeting with representatives from Manchester City Council including those from the Events Unit, Licensing and Highways to ensure that all departments are fully involved in the process and they have been giving feedback along the way;
- **Consult with Gay Village residents:** Residents who live and work in the Gay Village as well as anyone who may be impacted have been consulted and given the chance to feedback via Zoom sessions and in-person drop-in sessions;
- **LGBTQ+ community feedback:** We have been discussing plans with representatives from our communities to ensure that the policy is fit for purpose;
- **Expert legal advice:** Whilst we have gotten to grips with how we want to achieve our new Safety Policy, there are some legal considerations that must be taken into account and so we have also been guided by our solicitors to ensure that our policy is in line with current legislation;
- **Expert crowd management advice:** The Festival takes place within a busy city centre site and a lot of planning goes into ensuring the crowds are moving around the site safely. We are taking specialist advice from leading crowd science experts to formulate the crowd management plans;
- **Assessing the Gay Village site plan:** The Gay Village site changes every year with new venues, residencies, apartment buildings, hotels and bars as well as building works all taking place within the site footprint. We have modelled the event site and taken all these factors into consideration when formatting the new plan.

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING TO CREATE THIS POLICY?

- **Previous Festival data analysis:** Manchester Pride has been successfully producing the Gay Village Party for many years and every year we undertake an extensive and significant debrief and analysis project after the event with a view to improving the event year on year. We have used our years of experience and data taken from this analysis as the basis of the model.
- **Up-to-date legislation and industry insight:** Some of the team that work on the event are industry leaders in their field and so we should not underestimate the level of expertise and knowledge that is held internally. In addition to this, the team are abreast of new legislation, new industry trends and up to date guidance from sources such as the Events Industry's The Purple Guide.

WHAT ARE THE EXTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE NEW SAFETY POLICY?

1) Protect Duty (Martyn's Law)

What will the new law require and how might it be enforced?

The legislation will introduce a legal obligation for the owners and operators of publicly accessible locations (PALs) to take suitable and proportionate measures to protect the public from terrorist attacks and increase public safety.

There is currently no legislative requirement for organisations or venues to consider or employ security measures in most public places. Yet 7 in 10 respondents in the Protect Duty consultation agreed that those responsible for publicly accessible locations should take appropriate and proportionate measures to protect the public from attacks.

It is expected that Protect Duty will require organisations to:

- Engage with freely available counter-terrorism advice and training provided by the Government and the police.
- Conduct vulnerability assessments of their operating places and spaces, considering the impact on the public.
- Mitigate the risks created by the vulnerabilities using 'reasonably practical' measures.
- Have a counter-terrorism plan.
- Plan for the threat of terrorism.

It is proposed that “compliance would be demonstrated by providing assurance that the threat and risk impacts have been considered, and appropriate measures have been considered and taken forward (implemented or plans in place for their progression)”.

If a security breach is considered serious enough, venues could face prosecution under legislation such as the Corporate Homicide or Corporate Manslaughter Act.

What can organisations do to get ahead and prepare for this now?

Although final wording of the Duty is yet to be confirmed, organisations should start to consider their role in protecting the public from terror threats as soon as possible.

Understand the Risks: Although all locations under the Protect Duty are potential targets, it's essential for owners and operators to understand the specific terror threats facing their organisation. This includes understanding that motivations, targets and attack methods vary and change over time, as well as understanding how your organisation might be affected – either by being targeted directly or indirectly.

WHAT ARE THE EXTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE NEW SAFETY POLICY?

Review risk assessments: Manchester Pride have existing risk assessments in place and Protect Duty is expected to complement these by running in parallel rather than imposing additional measures. It is therefore likely that existing risk assessments will be taken a step further, with the creation of a 'Protect Plan' developed to identify what is reasonably practicable to mitigate risks and vulnerabilities during a terrorist attack. Like standard risk assessments, the Protect Plan will need to be reviewed and updated at least annually, in line with different threat levels and changes to internal or external risk context as time goes on.

Address vulnerabilities:

When conducting our risk assessment and incident response plan there are likely to be gaps identified where new measures are required to address vulnerabilities. This could include physical security measures such as;

- Security doors
- Blast-resistant glazing
- Fences
- Bollards
- CCTV
- Electronic access control

Create incident response plans:

In order to guarantee a coordinated and time efficient response in an emergency, clear guidelines need to be drawn up and communicated to all staff, with regular refresher training provided. When creating this plan, consider how you and your staff would respond to an incident occurring inside, outside, or near to your building or site.

2) Crowd management

Manchester's world famous Gay Village has changed a lot over the last 20 years and there are many new venues and bars that are involved in creating an incredible celebration over August Bank Holiday Weekend. In addition to the venues operated by Manchester Pride (Alan Turing Stage, MancUnity Stage, Cabaret Stage, Marketplace), the existing Gay Village venues host their own events and activities including stages, bars and performances outside their venues on the streets and this adds to the amazing atmosphere of the festival. However, when it comes to crowd management, we must consider how this affects people moving around the site and so we have considered temporary measures that we can use if required to ensure safe capacities in areas.

WHAT ARE THE EXTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE NEW SAFETY POLICY?

3) Entry protocols

We hope that everyone wants to come and enjoy everything that the Festival has to offer which includes access to all the staged areas and all the venues. However, we're aware that some people wish to get from A to B and that may mean that they need to move through the Gay Village site. Whilst we do not wish to impede anyone, we would encourage all visitors to the Gay Village to follow our safety policy which includes adhering to our entry protocol on entry to the site. This protocol is supported by all our stakeholders with a view to keeping everyone at the event safe.

WHAT ARE THE KEY PILLARS OF THE SAFETY POLICY?

- **Reviewing 'Protect Plan' Risk Assessment:** We will be keeping up to date with all latest 'Protect Duty' requirements and be reviewing and updating our 'Protect Plan' risk assessment.
- **Assessing Vulnerabilities:** Protect Duty asks us to assess our vulnerabilities and the fencing and gate structure introduced in 2022, did not prove robust enough in protecting the Gay Village Party site and our attendees, when evaluating in our 'Protect Plan' risk assessment. In 2023 we will be re-introducing steel shield to the Gay Village Party site to improve the safety for our attendees.
- **Incident Response Plan:** In order to guarantee a coordinated and time efficient response in an emergency, clear guidelines need to be drawn up and communicated to all staff, with regular refresher training provided.
- **Improving safety on the streets:** There are areas within the Gay Village Party that we have identified as needing more attention when it comes to crowd management and safety. These areas are the streets that connect our staged arenas, bars and venues, which host our world famous street parties. We want our customers to feel as comfortable as possible and to be safe when enjoying the street parties and so we will be introducing the ability to implement these three controls.
 - a. Stopping access to areas in the event of an emergency.
 - b. Temporarily restricting access to relieve overcrowding.
 - c. Searching large bags and items.

What this may look like is a gate or barrier across a street and a steward directing you to a different route. We will not want to hold anyone for any longer than we have to so we ask for your patience if you're asked to take an alternative route. Whilst an area may not look immediately busy to you, there may be another area across the site that needs addressing which has a knock-on effect and we always have the wider site management in mind. We will reopen areas as soon as we are safely able to do so.

WHAT ELSE ARE WE DOING?

We believe that safety and wellness does not just happen at the event but it is weaved into everything that we do and embedded in the culture of our charity.

- **Staff Wellbeing:** Wellness at Manchester Pride starts with the welfare of our staff team. We have a culture that promotes wellbeing with initiatives such as 'thriving riders', flexible working policy, regular colleague check-ins and a staff wellbeing officer.
- **ACT Training:** Manchester Pride's Events Team have all completed Action Counters Terrorism Awareness training devised by Counter Terrorism officers and security experts.
- **Safety Advisory Group:** Manchester Pride consults regularly with the responsible authorities and multi agencies during the planning stages through the Safety Advisory Group process. Membership of the Safety Advisory Group includes Greater Manchester Police, Northwest Ambulance Service, Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service and Manchester City Council as well as appointed contractors for medical, stewarding and health and safety.
- **World's leading expert advice:** Professor Dr. GK Still is the world's leading expert in crowd science. Professor Still will act as an advisor and scrutinise the crowd management plans for our events. In addition, Manchester Pride's Operations Director has completed Level 5 accredited Crowd Science qualification to give further insight into crowd management.
- **Back of House Substance Testing:** Manchester Pride has been working with MANchester DRug Analysis & Knowledge Exchange (MANDRAKE) in the background for many years. Drugs and substances that have been submitted into amnesty bins at event entrances or confiscated by our security staff are tested by MANDRAKE for potency. If a potentially extremely harmful substance is found, we will put out a warning on our social media channels which will be amplified by our partner channels.



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