



**IMPACT
REPORT**

2025

Together as ONE



Connection, visibility and community defined OUT North East's delivery in 2025, as we continued to strengthen our reach, partnerships and impact across the region.

We expanded our programme of delivery in the North East, collaborating closely with LGBTQ+ organisations, local authorities and community partners to empower people, change lives and support thriving LGBTQ+ communities, while continuing to challenge prejudice and promote inclusion.

The year brought significant highlights. Our Summer of Pride festival delivered 55 free, welcoming events across Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead, bringing people together in celebration, learning and solidarity. We proudly supported Fighting With Pride, standing alongside LGBTQ+ veterans who were forced out of the armed forces for being who they are. In partnership with ReportOUT and Pride Action North, we

welcomed 700 delegates from over 40 countries to Safer To Be Me - the UK's first global LGBTQ+ conference - and launched the Newcastle Gateshead Declaration, a landmark statement of global LGBTQ+ solidarity.

Alongside these moments were quieter successes: one-to-one conversations, support offered, friendships formed and lives changed.

Nationally, the year also brought challenges, including increased hostility towards the trans community and growing financial and political pressure on Pride events to deliver activities. In response, OUT North East became more vocal, more determined and more focused on impact.

This report highlights a selection of the projects delivered during an exceptionally busy year, reflecting the breadth of our work and the communities we reached across the region.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are entering a new and ambitious phase for the charity. We take ownership of Pride Radio, strengthening

our ability to amplify LGBTQ+ voices and reach people and communities who may feel isolated or underrepresented. As a trusted, community-led platform, Pride Radio will enable us to share stories, creativity and lived experience, extending our reach across the North East and beyond. Building on the station's wealth of experience, we will also offer training and skills development, supporting new voices, building confidence and creating pathways into media, broadcasting and digital creativity.

Alongside this, we are proud to be opening the ONE Centre – the region's dedicated LGBTQ+ community hub. More than a building, it will be a place to connect, learn, share and prosper, strengthening collaboration and extending our reach across the North East.

This marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for OUT North East, and we invite you to be part of our journey as we build spaces, platforms and communities rooted in pride, visibility and belonging - **Together as ONE.**

PRIDE! & SOLIDARITY

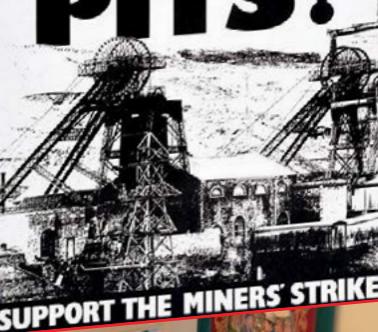
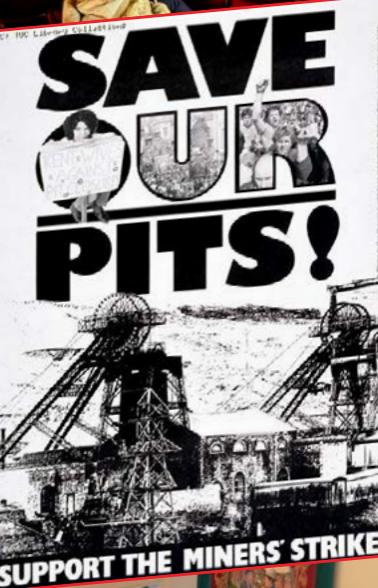
Funded by Point North Community Foundation, Pride in Solidarity was delivered in partnership with Durham Pride to mark the 40th anniversary of the end of the National Miners' Strike and to reflect on the powerful legacy of the Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM).

Across September and October, we delivered a programme of events in County Durham, including Crook, Stanley, Beamish and Durham University which attracted 400 participants. These events brought communities together through talks, performances, creative activities and free screenings of the award-winning film *Pride*. A special screening at Redhills Durham Miners' Hall featured guest speaker Mike Jackson, one of the founders of the LGSM, who shared first-hand reflections on

the movement and its lasting impact.

The project captured deeply personal stories from mining communities, many recalling the solidarity shown by LGBTQ+ activists at a time when LGBTQ+ people themselves faced widespread hostility. It highlighted how this support led the National Union of Mineworkers to back LGBTQ+ rights, influencing Labour's national policy and creating long-term change.

Pride in Solidarity connected communities through shared history, lived experience and collective memory. It reminded us that real change happens when people stand together, and that solidarity across difference can challenge injustice and create progress. One line from the film *Pride* powerfully captured



the project: "You support me, I support you, shoulder to shoulder, hand to hand."

Pride in Solidarity stands as a lasting example of what partnership, allyship and shared values can achieve.

Special thanks to Mel Metcalf, Chair of Durham Pride, and the Durham Pride team for their friendship, partnership and support in delivering Pride in Solidarity. We are also grateful to Stephen Guy, Chair of the Durham Miners' Association, whose involvement was invaluable. Stephen attended events across the programme, sharing powerful reflections on the impact of the miners' strike and bringing historic pit banners for audiences to see, adding depth, context and meaning to every discussion.

what does pride mean to me?

EMERALD
55
CELEBRATING PRIDE
IN OUR COMMUNITY



EMERALD 55

CELEBRATING PRIDE
IN OUR COMMUNITY

Emerald 55 was a vibrant community initiative marking the 55th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, inviting people to reflect on the question, "What does Pride mean to me?" This unique project encouraged personal expression, connection and conversation, celebrating Pride in its many forms. More than 300 people took part both online and in person, with 18 creative workshops delivered across Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead. These sessions brought together people from different backgrounds and generations, resulting in a powerful exhibition of stories, artwork and poetry. While many contributions explored sexuality and gender identity, others reflected pride in family, community, hobbies, the environment and local football teams - showing that Pride is something everyone can connect with.

The exhibition aimed to break down barriers and bring people together through shared experiences and values. At its heart, Emerald 55 celebrated the power of art, creativity and storytelling to connect people and inspire understanding. By sharing personal experiences and reflections, participants created space for empathy, pride and belonging - not only in who we are as individuals, but in the communities we shape together. The exhibition stands as a celebration of pride in ourselves, pride in our stories and pride in our

region, reminding us that when we create and share together, we build stronger, more connected and more hopeful communities. Emerald 55 was displayed during LGBTQ+ History Month at The Bridges in Sunderland, The Word National Centre for the Written Word in South Shields and Gateshead College, before being exhibited for three months at the Metrocentre. Based on footfall alone, the exhibition is estimated to have been experienced by over two million people, with a further 10,000 views online.

You can experience Emerald 55 by scanning the QR code or visiting outnortheast.org.uk/2025-emerald-55





OUT North East proudly partnered with Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead Councils to deliver three months of Pride celebrations through our Summer of Pride Festival. In a summer marked nationally by unrest, political tension and division, the festival offered a hopeful alternative - communities choosing connection, kindness and solidarity.

Across the region, we delivered 55 free, welcoming events that placed LGBTQ+ people at the heart of everyday public life. From film screenings, coffee mornings and craft sessions to dog shows, colour fun runs, town-centre takeovers and live concerts, there was truly something for everyone. Keeping events free ensured accessibility for all and reinforced our commitment to holding an inclusive programme of Pride celebrations.

130,000 people took part in events across public spaces, parks, shopping centres and community venues. By embedding Pride within towns and cities, the festival

strengthened community connection, supported local businesses and encouraged allyship.

Learning and listening were central, including In Conversation events with Fighting With Pride, which amplified overlooked voices and built understanding across generations. Record-breaking marches, flagship concerts and joyful community celebrations filled the region with colour and pride.

Above all, our Summer of Pride Festival demonstrated the power of community-led celebration. When people come together to share space, learn from one another and stand side by side, lasting change becomes possible.

While the festival was overwhelmingly positive, it is important to acknowledge that not everyone welcomed our presence. At events, staff and volunteers experienced a significant number of LGBTphobic comments, directed at them simply for being visible and affirming. We also saw an increase in online hate

aimed at the charity during this period. These experiences were unsettling, but they reinforced the need for safe, visible and inclusive spaces.

This hostility did not occur in isolation. It reflects a wider social and political climate in which negative narratives about LGBTQ+ people - particularly the trans community - have become increasingly normalised. Public discourse, including commentary from mainstream media and political parties such as Reform, appeared to embolden some individuals to express prejudice more openly. This context underlines the importance of OUT North East's role: providing visible, affirming services; supporting communities disproportionately affected by hostility; and ensuring Pride remains not only a celebration, but also a protective and empowering space. The resilience shown by our volunteers, partners and community members demonstrates both the urgency of this work and the impact that sustained investment and visibility make possible.



#SaferToBeMe

North East LGBTphobia Survey

While celebration was vital, we also made space to listen and respond to the realities facing our community

In response to receiving over 2,000 online hate messages during the delivery of our Pride Festival in 2024, OUT North East took decisive action to better understand the realities facing LGBTQ+ people across our region. Working in partnership with the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner, and supported by The William Leech Charity, we launched the #SaferToBeME? North East LGBTphobia Survey to give voice to lived experiences and begin a wider, evidence-led conversation about safety, inclusion and support.

The survey ran throughout our Summer of Pride Festival. It was open to anyone in the region who wished to share their experiences or views, with 312 people taking part. The findings highlighted real and growing concerns. Over half of respondents (56.4%) reported experiencing LGBTphobia in the

past year, particularly in public spaces and online environments. Many people shared that they feel less safe than in previous years and are often reluctant to report incidents, citing low confidence in outcomes and limited awareness of reporting routes.

The data, alongside powerful personal testimonies, paints a picture of a community navigating increasing hostility while still seeking connection, visibility and safety. Disabled people, ethnic minority respondents and younger LGBTQ+ people reported heightened vulnerability, while tensions around trans inclusion also emerged as an issue affecting community cohesion. Across different settings, perceptions of safety were consistently lower in the North East than national averages, particularly in public spaces and on public transport.

The report was welcomed by the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner and shared

widely with community leaders, politicians, service providers and partners across the region. By making the findings accessible to decision-makers and the wider community, the survey is already helping to inform discussion, influence practice and strengthen understanding of the challenges facing LGBTQ+ people locally.

While the findings are challenging, the #SaferToBeME? survey represents a vital step forward. By listening to lived experience and sharing evidence openly, we are helping to shape more informed, compassionate and effective responses. Funding has now been secured to undertake a more detailed study of LGBTphobia in Gateshead, with ambitions to expand this work across the region in partnership with communities, statutory bodies and service providers. This work marks the beginning of sustained action - using insight, collaboration and shared responsibility to help create a North East where LGBTQ+ people feel safer, supported and able to live openly and confidently.



You can download a copy of the report by scanning the QR code or visiting outnortheast.org.uk/reports

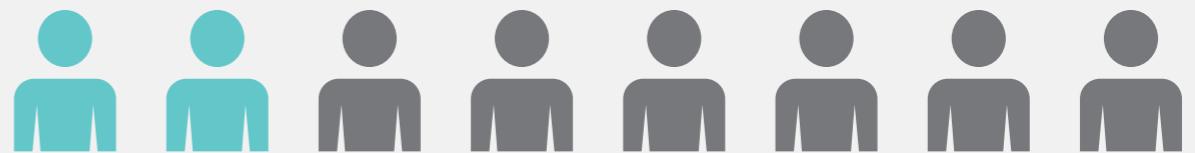
KEY FINDINGS AT A GLANCE

56.4%

Of all LGBTQ+ people surveyed in the North East **have experienced LGBTphobia in the past 12 months**

32%

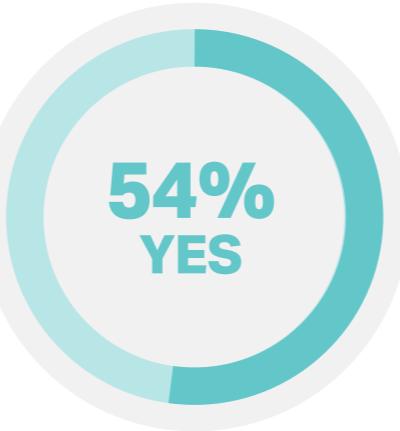
Of all LGBTQ+ people surveyed perceive that the **general climate for LGBTQ+ people is worsening** in the North East region (compared to 28% of LGBTQ+ people who think this is worsening across the rest of the UK)



Over a quarter (26%) of LGBTQ+ people in the North East felt unsafe because of who they are, compared to only 20% of LGBTQ+ people in the region who felt safe



In public spaces in the North East, over a third (31%) of LGBTQ+ people felt unsafe, versus only 18% of LGBTQ+ people in the region who felt safe overall



54% of LGBTQ+ people in the North East of England felt confident to report a hate crime



60% of LGBTQ+ people did not know how to report LGBTphobia outside of police mechanisms

59%

Of LGBTQ+ people would feel safe to report a hate crime. However, the favoured methods used to report hate crimes varies between age groups, and so mixed approaches to doing this would be recommended



A new report from OUT North East, supported by my office, highlights the real experiences of LGBTQ+ people across our region - and the findings make clear we still have work to do.

Thanks to OUT North East for producing this important report, giving a voice to our communities and driving real change.

Susan Dungworth

Northumbria Police & Crime Commissioner

#SaferToBeMe SUMMIT

The #SaferToBeME Summit marked a proud moment for the region, as OUT North East partnered with ReportOUT and Pride Action North to host the UK's first global LGBTQ+ summit. Bringing together voices from across the world, the summit created space for connection, learning and collective action to build safer, more welcoming communities for LGBTQ+ people everywhere.

Over the course of an inspiring week, more than 700 delegates from 40 countries took part in a wide-ranging programme of events across Newcastle and Gateshead. These included workshops, breakout sessions, history walks, film screenings, training sessions, talks and creative activities, with the main conference hosted at Gateshead College's Academy of Sport on the Gateshead International Stadium campus. The programme encouraged meaningful dialogue, shared learning and the exchange of ideas across cultures, experiences and perspectives.

Speakers and contributors travelled from around the world to share their stories, expertise and lived experience. Together, delegates explored global and

local challenges, celebrated progress and worked collaboratively to identify practical ways of creating safer environments for LGBTQ+ people. Throughout the week, the atmosphere was one of openness, solidarity and a shared commitment to listening and learning from one another.

A defining moment of the summit was the signing of the Newcastle Gateshead Declaration - a landmark statement of global LGBTQ+ solidarity. The declaration affirms a universal commitment to freedom, dignity and human rights for LGBTQ+ people, while rejecting persecution, discrimination and criminalisation. It also calls for the protection of LGBTQ+ human rights defenders, the right to asylum for those fleeing persecution, and the amplification of LGBTQ+ voices in policy and decision-making.

The summit was a powerful celebration of voices coming together to make real connections, shape new ideas and inspire action. As a UK first, and proudly hosted in the North East, #SaferToBeME demonstrated the region's leadership, compassion and commitment to global LGBTQ+ solidarity.



ReportOUT



If you'd like to show your solidarity and sign the Newcastle Gateshead Declaration scan the QR code or visit: reportout.org/



UNITE AGAINST GLOBAL

LGBTQ+ OPPRESSION

JOIN THE #SAFERTOBEME SUMMIT AND FIGHT BACK AGAINST THE GLOBAL ROLLBACK OF LGBTQ+ RIGHTS.

This Summit is a week-long programme of events, including a two-day conference of 500 people and 40+ countries represented.

The Summit will end with the signing of the world's first 'Newcastle Gateshead Declaration' the signing of an international LGBTQ+ solidarity statement. Get your tickets for the conference and signing, [here](#).

SUMMIT WEEK BEGINNING: 20TH OCTOBER 2025

CONFERENCE: 23RD & 24TH OCTOBER 2025





OUT North East partnered with The Drop In Centre in Dunston, Gateshead, to empower LGBTQ+ young people to find their voice, build new skills and grow in confidence. Working closely with the centre's LGBTQ+ group, we supported young people to create a podcast from the ground up – the Drop In Queer Edition.

Across six sessions,

participants explored identity, LGBTQ+ history and lived experience while learning practical skills including scripting, interviewing, recording and teamwork in a supportive, peer-led environment. In partnership with Pride Radio, the group recorded in a professional studio, seeing their ideas valued and shared widely.



You can listen to Drop In Queer Edition here:



Young people also attended the Safer To Be Conference, confidently interviewing international speakers. The project resulted in a vibrant podcast series that celebrates creativity, confidence and young voices being heard.

Healthy Choices for Local LGBTQ+ People

Community wellbeing remained central to our work throughout the year. Our Healthy Choices for Local LGBTQ+ People programme supported LGBTQ+ individuals and families to build confidence, skills and healthier habits through inclusive, practical activity.

Using food as a gateway to wellbeing, the programme explored realistic and affordable approaches to healthy eating, particularly for those experiencing



inequality or food insecurity. In partnership with Gateshead College, we produced accessible nutritional resources for families, covering eating well on a budget, reducing waste and growing food at home.

Hands-on sessions, including grow-your-own activities for young people, encouraged learning through experience

and created safe spaces for conversation. Outreach at the Pride in Gateshead Family Picnic engaged over 1,000 families, extending reach and impact.

The programme demonstrated how small, community-led interventions can deliver measurable wellbeing outcomes and lasting behaviour change.

Pelaw Community Bowling Goes TikTok

OUT North East partnered with Pelaw Community Bowling Club to deliver a fun, intergenerational project built on shared learning, confidence and connection. After the success of the Pride Bowling Tournament, delivered in partnership with the club, they approached us for support in launching their new TikTok account, creating a brilliant opportunity for generations to work side by side.

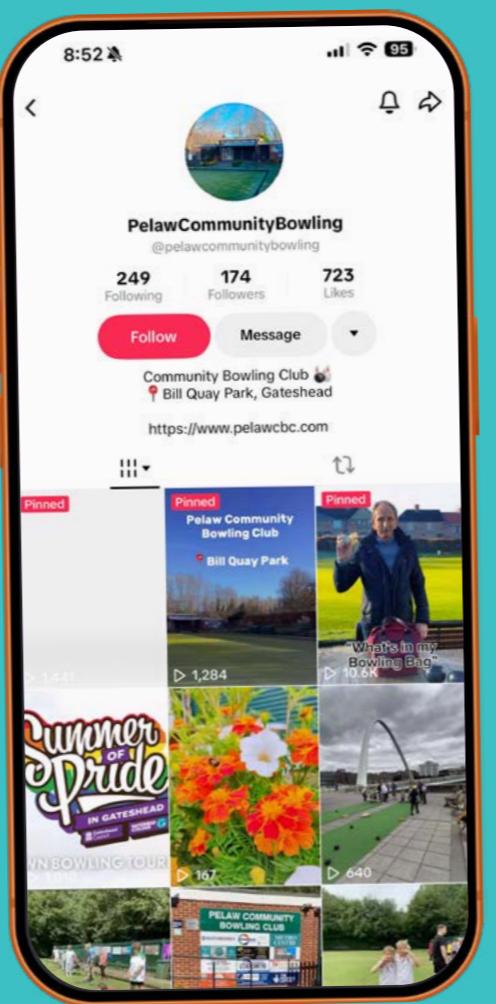
Working with Bill Quay and St Alban's Catholic Primary Schools, we delivered six creative sessions exploring teamwork, storytelling and digital skills. Young people learned to plan, film and edit content while discovering outdoor bowling

and community spaces. Club members also learned new digital skills, sharing encouragement, humour and lived experiences.

The project culminated in a celebratory cinema screening at the Pride Media Centre, showcasing how learning together can break down age barriers and strengthen community bonds.

"Thank you so much taking the time to support our pupils in making their Tik Tok videos. Our pupils thoroughly enjoyed themselves and had a fantastic experience!"

Check out PelawCommunityBowling on TikTok.



FIGHTING WITH PRIDE

Alongside our community celebrations, we focused on voices too often overlooked. We were proud to partner with Fighting With Pride, supporting LGBTQ+ veterans and serving personnel, particularly those affected by the historic ban on LGBTQ+ people serving openly in the Armed Forces.

We delivered three In Conversation events across Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead with Carl Austin-Behan OBE DL, who shared his powerful personal story of being forced out of the RAF for being gay. His honesty sparked meaningful conversations about loss,



resilience and justice.

Joined by Fighting With Pride CEO Peter Gibson, the events explained how veterans can access specialist support and claim reparations of up

to £70,000. Several veterans from the region have since begun claims, demonstrating the tangible impact of shared experience, visibility and partnership.

Scan the QR code to listen

In Conversation event with Carl Austin-Behan at HMS Calliope, Gateshead

www.prideworldmedia.com/carl-austin-behan-obe-dl/



The ONE Centre

2026 marks an exciting new chapter for OUT North East as we open the ONE Centre, the region's dedicated LGBTQ+ community hub and a powerful symbol of connection, visibility and belonging.

Bringing our vision to life, the Centre reflects a region where LGBTQ+ people are safe, visible and valued — free to live openly and authentically, supported by a trusted, inclusive space that helps create lasting social change.

From the very beginning, the ONE Centre has been shaped by our community.

Through conversations, consultations and shared ideas, we explored what an LGBTQ+ centre should offer and what would truly make a difference. Our community told us they wanted somewhere safe, affirming and inclusive — away from existing LGBTQ+ scenes, high streets and nightlife — a calm, accessible space focused on wellbeing. Not clinical or exclusive, but rooted in

connection, creativity and care. These voices have directly informed the design, purpose and programme of the ONE Centre, ensuring it reflects lived experience, real needs and the diversity of LGBTQ+ communities across the region.

The Centre will be a community-led hub where LGBTQ+ people can connect, grow and create change together. It will provide safe space, inclusive activities, opportunities to develop skills and a platform for LGBTQ+ voices to be heard. Crucially, it will also act as a physical base from which we can expand outreach across the North East, strengthening our ability to reach underserved communities.

At its heart, the ONE Centre will be a place to belong. LGBTQ+ people will feel supported, connected and less alone, with opportunities to build friendships, community and mutual support, while feeling safe and confident to be themselves.

Learning and growth will sit at the core of the Centre's offer, through volunteering,

training, creative projects and leadership development. These pathways will help build confidence, skills and routes into employment, while ensuring LGBTQ+ people continue to lead and shape what happens.

Through our work with schools, employers and services, the ONE Centre will build understanding of LGBTQ+ lives and experiences. Platforms such as Pride Radio will amplify LGBTQ+ stories and culture, while our evidence-led approach will influence policy and challenge discrimination.

More than a building, the ONE Centre will be a beacon of connection, hope and collective action for LGBTQ+ people across the North East, supporting stronger communities and wider regional impact as we build a fairer, more inclusive future, **Together as ONE.**

OUT North East brings strong organisational capacity, deep community trust and evidence-led practice. Through the ONE Centre, we will provide:

- A purpose-built LGBTQ+ community centre shaped by lived experience and evidenced need.
- Proven experience managing community spaces, grounded in trusted relationships.
- Robust project management and governance, ensuring effective delivery and accountability.
- Strong partnership and business development capability, supporting sustainability.
- Extensive local, regional and national networks enabling collaboration and influence.
- Expertise in research, consultation and advocacy, ensuring services remain responsive and community-informed.

What We'll Deliver

- Inclusive community programmes supporting wellbeing, safety and connection.
- Community leadership that enables LGBTQ+ people to shape and lead activity.
- Skills, volunteering and progression pathways
- building confidence and employability.
- Education and training with schools, employers and services to support inclusion.
- A regional hub for LGBTQ+ research, consultation and advocacy influencing policy and practice.
- Visibility and connection through platforms such as Pride Radio, amplifying LGBTQ+ voices.
- Inclusive, intersectional delivery shaped by diverse lived experience.

Our Outcomes

- Reduced isolation and stronger community connection.
- Improved wellbeing, confidence and resilience.
- Increased skills, employability and leadership.
- Stronger, more representative community voice.
- Evidence-informed advocacy influencing policy and practice.
- Greater inclusion across public and civic life.
- Increased visibility and celebration of LGBTQ+ lives.
- Sustainable, accountable delivery.

Long-Term Impact

- A trusted place to belong, bringing LGBTQ+ people and allies together.
- A place to thrive, supporting wellbeing, confidence and agency.
- A place to create change, with LGBTQ+ voices shaping systems and policy.
- A place to be safe and authentic, where people feel supported and free to be themselves.

The ONE Centre: a place to belong, feel safe and grow — shaped by community and creating real change.

Find out what the community said they wanted from an LGBTQ+ Community Centre:





OUT North East and the ONE Centre exist because communities, partners and funders choose to stand alongside LGBTQ+ people in the North East. At a time when hostility towards our communities is becoming louder and more visible, and there is more political uncertainty, we need allies more than ever who are prepared to stand up, be seen and take action.

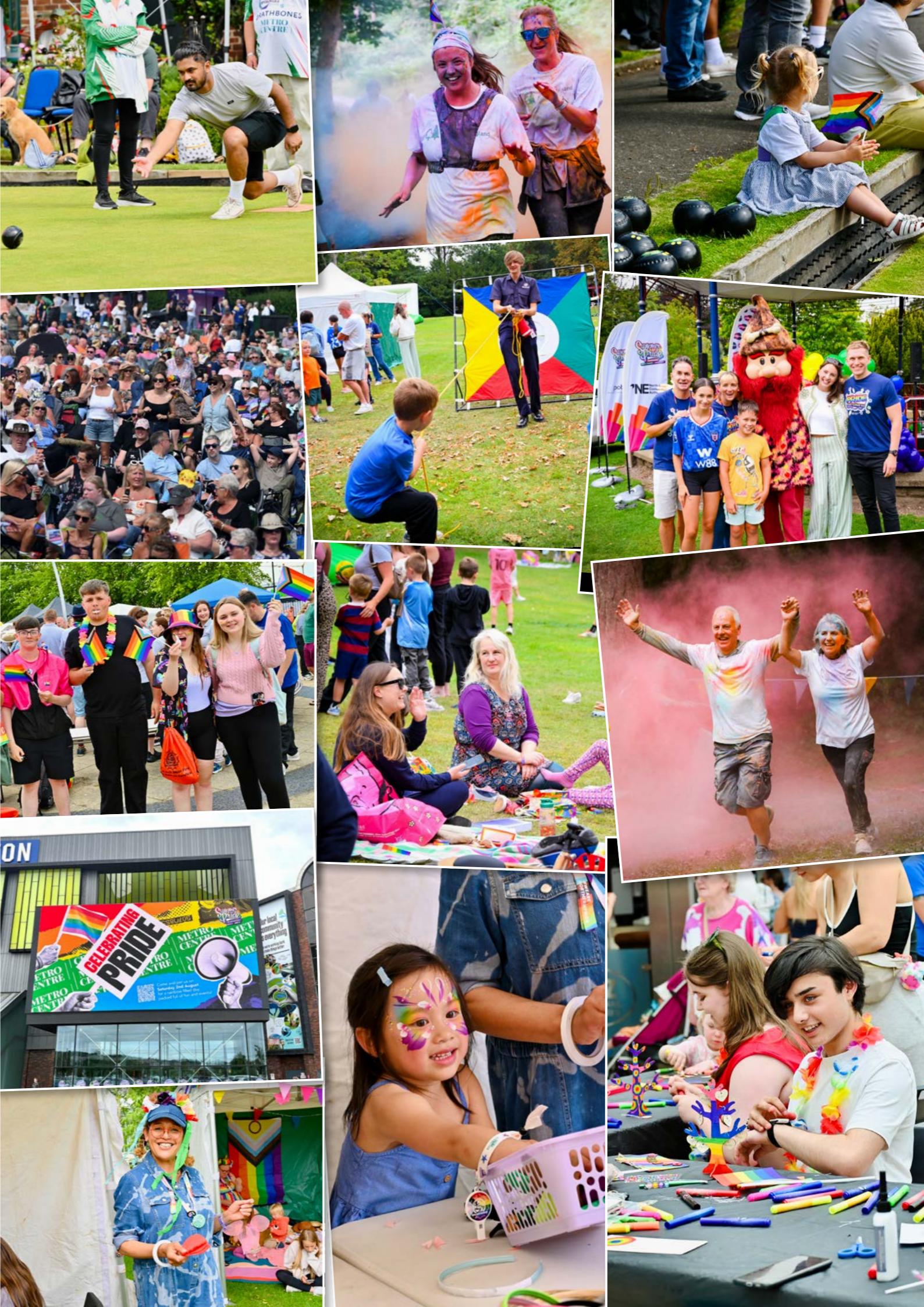
There are many meaningful ways to be part of this work.

Support can come through funding and fundraising, by offering time, skills and resources, or by sharing what we do and amplifying our impact across networks and communities. Partners also play a vital role as proud ambassadors - using their voice, influence and visibility to stand alongside LGBTQ+ people and challenge exclusion.

Visible allyship matters. When funders and partners stand openly with OUT North

East and the ONE Centre, it sends a powerful message that LGBTQ+ people belong, are valued and are not alone. This visibility strengthens confidence, builds trust and helps create safer, more inclusive environments.

By working together, we can protect vital services, sustain safe spaces and ensure the ONE Centre continues to be a place of connection, resilience and pride for our communities, now and into the future – **Together as ONE**.



Let's start a conversation.

If you believe in equality, visibility and strong communities, now is the time to act. Start a conversation with OUT North East and the ONE Centre about partnership opportunities, projects and events - and work with us to create lasting impact, strengthen inclusion and support LGBTQ+ people across the North East.

Contact Peter Darrant, CEO, OUT North East

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