# Controversy erupts over relocation of St James' Street Pride Party in Brighton



The Argus is reporting on the recent controversy surrounding changes to the St James' Street Pride Party event in Brighton, which have drawn criticism from local business owners and political figures. The Labour-led council has decided to relocate the event to Marine Parade, a move that many believe undermines the traditional location’s economic vitality and the experience of the LGBTQ+ community.

Historically, the St James' Street Pride event has been a vibrant part of Brighton's identity, a city renowned for its inclusivity and as a haven for LGBTQ+ individuals. However, some stakeholders argue that the Labour administration's abrupt decision has been made without adequate consultation or consideration for the businesses affected in the St James's area. Steve Davis, Green Group Convenor and Leader of the Opposition, expressed his dismay at the council’s approach, stating that "the wholesale relocation away from the businesses that rely on this event without any meaningful consultation is a mistake that I hope Labour will rethink."

The timing of this decision has not gone unnoticed, as many in the hospitality sector are grappling with the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, which has significantly impacted patronage and operational costs. Davis emphasised, “The cost-of-living crisis has hit the hospitality trade on so many levels, from a drop in custom to the spiralling prices of utilities." He also raised concerns about safety, particularly in relation to the council's plan to allow vehicular traffic, including buses, on St James' Street during the Pride weekend, which he characterised as "a recipe for disaster."

In the wake of the announcement, members of the council have been actively engaging with local businesses, many of whom reportedly feel sidelined in the decision-making process. "What is clear is that they felt they had not been included in the decision – despite the council saying they had consulted on the changes," Davis noted, adding that licensing colleagues are seeking clarity regarding the level of risk assessments conducted.

The developments have sparked broader concerns within the LGBTQ+ community about the Labour government’s commitment to supporting their rights, especially considering the closure of several prominent LGBTQ+ venues in Brighton. This comes in the wake of the Labour party's manifesto pledge to protect these venues if they regained control in the local elections of May 2023, a promise that appears increasingly difficult to reconcile with recent losses, such as the closing of Arcobaleno in Kemptown.

Local sentiment reflects anxiety regarding the shifting political landscape and its impact on LGBTQ+ rights nationwide. The article notes that the Labour administration’s recent policies, particularly those directed towards trans individuals, have raised alarm among community members, who worry about the implications of these actions.

As the Pride weekend approaches, its significance as a major economic boost for local businesses cannot be overstated, especially for those in Kemptown, who rely on the event to sustain their operations throughout the year. With rising rents and increased business rates compounding the challenges faced by local shops, stakeholders are calling for changes in policy and greater inclusivity in decision-making processes.

In summary, the relocation of the St James’ Street Pride Party event has provoked a complex and multi-faceted debate in Brighton, addressing not only LGBTQ+ rights and community safety but also the economic pressures faced by local businesses in an increasingly challenging climate.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.brightonandhovenews.org/2025/04/04/moving-pride-village-party-angers-residents-and-venues/> - This article confirms the controversy and opposition from local businesses and residents regarding the relocation of the Pride Village Party from St James's Street to Marine Parade. It highlights concerns about crowd control, safety, and the economic impact on Kemptown venues.
* <https://www.gscene.com/news/community-news/objections-spanning-breadth-of-lgbtq-communities-raised-after-brighton-hove-city-council-announces-no-pride-for-gay-village-st-james-street/> - This piece corroborates the announcement by Brighton & Hove City Council to move the Pride Village Party and the objections raised by various LGBTQ+ community members. It also provides insights into the council's rationale for the changes, including improvements to accessibility and safety.
* <https://thelatest.co.uk/brighton/2019/01/15/the-fight-to-keep-pride-party-on-st-james-street/> - This older article highlights historical debates about the Pride Party location on St James' Street, with some groups advocating for a move to the seafront. It underscores the long-standing importance of the event to the community.
* <https://www.brightonandhovenews.org/> - This news outlet is mentioned in the article as a source of information on Brighton events, including Pride updates and discussions on the impact of local policies.
* <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/> - The official Brighton & Hove City Council website would provide updates on council decisions, including changes to events like the Pride Village Party. It's relevant for understanding the council's policies and announcements.