# Oxford Pride moves to South Park as political ban signals new direction



As Oxford prepares for its 22nd annual Pride festival on June 7, 2025, the event is undergoing significant changes to accommodate its growing popularity. This year, organisers have moved the festival from the Oxford Castle Quarter to South Park, a decision driven by the need for more space. With the theme "The Greatest Show," the festival anticipates thousands of attendees, reflecting not just local engagement but the event's increasing resonance within the LGBTQIA+ community.

In a statement shared on social media, the organisers explained that the Castle Quarter had become untenable, citing cramped conditions that limited the event's potential. "We’ve simply outgrown the Castle Quarter," they noted, underlining that the venue could not provide the necessary space due to new retailers and dining establishments occupying key areas traditionally used for the event. The move to South Park aims to create a more inclusive environment where attendees can spread out and enjoy a full Pride experience in a single, accessible location.

The festival will commence with a parade at Paradise Square, starting at 10.30 am, before transitioning to South Park at noon for the festivities. The Jolly Farmers pub, a well-known LGBTQ+ venue, has confirmed that the parade will assemble at their location, emphasizing the celebratory spirit leading up to the festival. The parade's route through the city will pass key landmarks, culminating in a vibrant celebration at South Park.

Adding to the festival's context, the Oxford Pride organisers recently announced a ban on political parties from participating this year. This decision follows the UK Supreme Court's ruling that excluded trans women from the legal definition of 'woman', a move that has drawn widespread criticism and concern within the community. Organisers articulated their commitment to maintaining Pride as a space for solidarity and protest rather than political opportunities, echoing similar sentiments expressed at other major Pride events across the UK in cities like London and Brighton. Councillor Alex Powell has publicly supported this stance, highlighting the political establishment's ongoing neglect of LGBTIQA+ rights.

The growth of Oxford Pride reflects broader trends within LGBTQIA+ events in the UK, where attendance has also surged. Last year, the event attracted over 12,000 participants, and organisers are keen to expand community involvement further. Alongside the main festival, efforts to engage the public through partnerships and volunteer opportunities have been emphasized, aiming to foster an atmosphere of inclusivity that empowers all community members.

As anticipation builds for the 2025 festival, which will feature a diverse array of performances and activities, the move to South Park is seen as a positive step towards crafting a uniquely celebratory environment. Indeed, the organisers are optimistic that this new venue will become a permanent fixture for future events, pending possible returns to the city centre as redevelopment allows.

In a wider context, the decision to hold Pride within a more spacious venue highlights the necessity of adaptability within the community. Inclusivity and accessibility remain at the forefront of Oxford Pride’s mission, paving the way for continued growth and resilience in the face of political and societal challenges that the LGBTQIA+ community continues to navigate.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25220434.oxford-pride-moving-south-park-first-time/?ref=rss), [[5]](https://oxfordpride.uk/step-into-the-spotlight-at-oxford-pride-2025/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25220434.oxford-pride-moving-south-park-first-time/?ref=rss), [[4]](https://oxfordpride.uk/interview-of-our-chair-to-bbc-radio-oxford/), [[2]](https://oxfordpride.uk/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25220434.oxford-pride-moving-south-park-first-time/?ref=rss), [[3]](https://oxfordpride.uk/hosting-the-winner-of-rpdr-uk-s6/), [[6]](https://oxfordpride.uk/get-involved/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25220434.oxford-pride-moving-south-park-first-time/?ref=rss), [[5]](https://oxfordpride.uk/step-into-the-spotlight-at-oxford-pride-2025/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[2]](https://oxfordpride.uk/), [[5]](https://oxfordpride.uk/step-into-the-spotlight-at-oxford-pride-2025/), [[7]](https://oxfordpride.uk/pride-events/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25220434.oxford-pride-moving-south-park-first-time/?ref=rss), [[3]](https://oxfordpride.uk/hosting-the-winner-of-rpdr-uk-s6/), [[4]](https://oxfordpride.uk/interview-of-our-chair-to-bbc-radio-oxford/)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25220434.oxford-pride-moving-south-park-first-time/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://oxfordpride.uk/> - Oxford Pride is a UK-based organisation dedicated to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion for the LGBTQIA+ community. Their website provides information on upcoming events, including the 2025 Pride festival scheduled for Saturday, 7 June 2025, at South Park. The event, themed 'The Greatest Show', aims to offer a vibrant celebration of love and diversity, featuring various activities and performances. The website also offers details on how to get involved, including partnership opportunities, volunteering, and market stalls, encouraging community participation and support.
3. <https://oxfordpride.uk/hosting-the-winner-of-rpdr-uk-s6/> - Oxford Pride hosted an event at The Jolly Farmers pub, featuring Kyran Thrax, the winner of RuPaul's Drag Race UK Season 6. The evening was a fundraiser for the 2025 Pride event in South Park. Kyran Thrax delivered a performance characterised by high fashion and unique style, engaging the audience with her charisma. The event also included Sophia Stardust, adding to the night's entertainment. The organisers expressed gratitude for the community's support, which contributed to making Oxford Pride 2025 a more inclusive and expansive event.
4. <https://oxfordpride.uk/interview-of-our-chair-to-bbc-radio-oxford/> - In an interview with BBC Radio Oxford, Oxford Pride's Chair, Rob Jordan, paid tribute to The Vivienne, a star from RuPaul's Drag Race UK who had been scheduled to appear at an Oxford Pride event in February before her untimely passing. Rob Jordan highlighted The Vivienne's talent and kindness, noting her potential to become a mainstream entertainer. The interview also discussed plans for the upcoming Oxford Pride event on 7 June, which will take place in South Park, aiming to accommodate the event's growing popularity with the theme 'The Greatest Show'.
5. <https://oxfordpride.uk/step-into-the-spotlight-at-oxford-pride-2025/> - Oxford Pride announced its 22nd annual event, themed 'The Greatest Show', scheduled for Saturday, 7 June 2025, at South Park. The move to South Park aims to provide a more inclusive and expansive venue for the growing event. The announcement highlighted the success of previous events, with over 12,000 attendees in the previous year, and emphasised the importance of community involvement. The organisers encouraged businesses and individuals to participate through various partnership packages, volunteering opportunities, and market stalls, aiming to create an extraordinary celebration of love and diversity.
6. <https://oxfordpride.uk/get-involved/> - Oxford Pride offers various ways for individuals and businesses to get involved in their 2025 event. Opportunities include becoming a partner, volunteering, and participating in market stalls. The event, themed 'The Greatest Show', is scheduled for Saturday, 7 June 2025, at South Park. The organisers emphasise the importance of community support to make the event successful and accessible to all. The website provides details on different partnership packages, from Headline Partner to Rainbow Champion, and encourages local businesses to showcase their commitment to diversity and inclusion.
7. <https://oxfordpride.uk/pride-events/> - Oxford Pride's 'Pride Events' page provides information on the 2025 Pride festival, themed 'The Greatest Show', scheduled for Saturday, 7 June 2025, at South Park. The page highlights the event's growth over the years, with over 12,000 attendees in the previous year, and outlines the organisers' commitment to creating an inclusive and vibrant celebration of love and diversity. The page also features highlights from previous events, including Oxford Pride 2024 and 2023, and details on other events hosted throughout the year, encouraging community participation and support.