# Holmfirth Pride 2025 rises from homophobic attack to showcase community solidarity



A small town in West Yorkshire is making waves following a recent homophobic attack that served as the catalyst for its inaugural Pride event. Holmfirth Pride 2025 unfolded over the weekend as a vibrant answer to violence, featuring activities like a rainbow scavenger hunt, drag bingo, and a showcase of local queer art. Organised by local residents Hilary Bowyer and Isobel Heely, the festival drew inspiration from an incident on 12 April, when a man in his twenties was assaulted outside The Old Bridge pub by a group of at least five attackers, provoking outrage and solidarity within the community.

Heely, a local business owner, expressed her dismay over the initial attack, stating, “As a close-knit community, we were all horrified when we heard about the incident and did not want anybody to feel like we were not supportive.” The attack, described by local police as “thuggish and cowardly,” left the victim with facial injuries and was classified as a hate crime by West Yorkshire Police. This incident has necessitated a call for action, prompting the local council to encourage witnesses to come forward.

The Pride event resonated strongly with the residents and local businesses, with a remarkable 65 establishments displaying bunting in support. Heely noted, “All the businesses in the town have got bunting up and people are leaving their mark in the streets with chalk to show acceptance." This communal display of solidarity is particularly poignant in light of Holmfirth’s history with LGBTQ+ events; the town previously hosted the Pink Picnic, a pioneering LGBTQ+ festival in the North of England, which began in 1986 but ceased operations in 2013 due to organisational challenges.

The positive response to Holmfirth Pride has been overwhelming, with Heely revealing that it has brought her to tears. “It has been heartwarming to see such a positive response to something negative,” she said. The event was organised in a remarkably short timeframe of six weeks, receiving crucial funding from the parish council and Kirklees Council. Plans are already underway to make this an annual event, sending a clear message of inclusivity: “We just want to send a message that everybody belongs and we will not tolerate hate.”

As Holmfirth embarks on this new chapter, the local government is keenly observing the community's momentum. Kirklees Pride 2025 is set for 7 June and will feature a diverse range of performances, including notable indie pop band The Hoosiers and various drag acts. The concatenation of these events serves not only as a celebration of LGBTQ+ identity but also as a testament to the resilience of a community determined not to let hate define them.

While the ambivalence surrounding the original attack casts a shadow, Holmfirth's response marks a significant moment in its cultural evolution, demonstrating how adversity can galvanise a community into action.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8rene6261ro), [[2]](https://www.thepinknews.com/2025/04/15/old-bridge-inn-norridge-bottom-yorkshire-homophobic-hate-crime/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.thepinknews.com/2025/04/15/old-bridge-inn-norridge-bottom-yorkshire-homophobic-hate-crime/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8rene6261ro), [[4]](https://www.examinerlive.co.uk/whats-on/food-drink-news/sneak-peek-huge-new-holmfirth-28829914), [[3]](https://www.examinerlive.co.uk/news/history/gallery/unlikely-story-how-yorkshires-first-20949029)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8rene6261ro), [[5]](https://kirkleestogether.co.uk/2025/04/28/full-line-up-for-kirklees-pride-2025-revealed/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8rene6261ro), [[6]](https://outinthecity.org/2022/06/09/holmfirth-out-of-isolation-the-rainbow-flag/)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8rene6261ro> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.thepinknews.com/2025/04/15/old-bridge-inn-norridge-bottom-yorkshire-homophobic-hate-crime/> - A man in his mid-twenties sustained severe facial injuries after being assaulted by a group of at least five men outside the Old Bridge Pub in Norridge Bottom, Holmfirth, on 12 April 2025. The attackers, aged between 18 and 20, had previously made homophobic remarks towards the victim and his partner. Sergeant Toni Ramsden of the Kirklees Rural Neighbourhood Policing Team described the incident as a 'thuggish and cowardly attack' and confirmed it was being investigated as a hate crime. Police are seeking witnesses or anyone with video footage to come forward.
3. <https://www.examinerlive.co.uk/news/history/gallery/unlikely-story-how-yorkshires-first-20949029> - In 1986, Holmfirth hosted the inaugural Pink Picnic, a pioneering LGBTQ+ event in the North of England. Initially a small gathering in a wood near Holmfirth, the picnic grew into a significant fixture on the LGBTQ+ calendar, moving to a field below Huddersfield's Castle Hill in 1998. The event, traditionally held on the last Sunday in July, attracted attendees from across the North and the UK. However, after its last run in Greenhead Park in 2012, the Pink Picnic was cancelled in 2013 due to the collapse of its organising committee.
4. <https://www.examinerlive.co.uk/whats-on/food-drink-news/sneak-peek-huge-new-holmfirth-28829914> - A new food and drink venue has opened in Holmfirth, featuring an outdoor area ideal for sunny days. The venue underwent significant restoration, including roof replacement, and aims to host monthly night markets and motorbike meets. The venue's walls showcase stories from former workers of the building, which once produced hundreds of pork pies. The owner expressed excitement about the space's potential and the community's positive response.
5. <https://kirkleestogether.co.uk/2025/04/28/full-line-up-for-kirklees-pride-2025-revealed/> - Kirklees Pride 2025 is scheduled for Saturday, 7 June, in Huddersfield Town Centre. The event will feature award-winning indie pop band The Hoosiers as headliners, along with performances by Luhzanne from 90s dance music band Livin’ Joy, an Olivia Rodrigo tribute act, local artists Eva Kiss and Isaac Malibu, and drag queens Kiki Horsefield and Mazikeen. The event will be compered by Charra Tea from RuPaul’s Drag Race Season 6 and will include comedy, celebration, and music.
6. <https://outinthecity.org/2022/06/09/holmfirth-out-of-isolation-the-rainbow-flag/> - Holmfirth, a town in West Yorkshire, is known for its picturesque stone-built cottages nestled in the Pennine hills. Between 1973 and 2010, it served as the filming location for the BBC’s sitcom 'Last of the Summer Wine,' which recorded 295 episodes, making it the longest-running TV comedy in history. The town attracts thousands of tourists annually who visit to enjoy the scenery and locations familiar from the series, and it boasts numerous independent cafes.
7. <https://www.yorkshire.com/news/holmfirth-arts-festival-2025-whats-on/> - The Holmfirth Arts Festival 2025 is set to run from 25 May to 20 September, celebrating the Holme Valley landscape, its rich history, and environmental sustainability. The festival will feature a variety of events, including the Big Free Weekend on 14–15 June, offering world-class street theatre, live music, Bollywood dancing workshops, pop-up opera, and outdoor performances by various theatre companies. Additional events throughout the summer include guided walks, contemporary folk music performances, and a comedy night with Marcus Brigstocke.