# Wortley Pride surges in attendance as community spirit outshines protests



Over the weekend, Wortley Pride successfully celebrated the enduring strength of London’s 2SLGBTQIA+ community, drawing an enthusiastic crowd and an array of vendors to the heart of Wortley Village. This year’s event marked a significant improvement in both attendance and participation, with volunteers highlighting the sense of community that permeated the festivities. Owen, who has volunteered at Wortley Pride for three years, noted, “There are more vendors and more people. I’m glad to make new friends, and I love seeing all the kids running around on the grass.”

President Kathey Bell emphasised that Wortley Pride is designed to be a family-friendly gathering that truly represents all community members. The welcoming atmosphere was palpable, illustrated by vendor Suki’s observation: “It was a beautiful day for everyone to come together. The weather was perfect.” With more than 30 vendors showcasing their offerings, the event highlighted not only local businesses but also the communal spirit that characterises the celebration.

Kristia Duvall, co-lead of PFLAG London and Trans London, pointed out the critical role of donations in sustaining various support programmes. “It’s been a steady day with gorgeous weather. Everyone is happy and excited to be here,” Duvall remarked, noting that this year saw very few protests, a significant relief compared to previous events. Duvall's organisation is known for its essential community initiatives, including a Queer Food Bank that provides monthly hampers to those in need, as well as educational and advocacy efforts.

The festivities also welcomed new participants, such as Scott from Odessa Theatre, who showcased their upcoming production of "Shakespeare’s Oz," intertwining themes of diversity and inclusion inherent within both the original tale and today's celebration. He stated, “Celebrating diversity is vital. Everyone’s lived experiences matter, and it’s important to come together to respect and celebrate who we are. That’s what Canada is all about.”

Reflecting on the community's resilience, Mystique, an attendee, noted that although there was a small protest earlier in the day, counter-protesters helped ensure a peaceful atmosphere. “I’ve been to Pride for years, and this event really means a lot, especially after last year’s challenges,” she said. The contrast to last year's event, which faced significant disruptions, underscores how far the community has come in fostering acceptance and joy.

Saidat Vandenberg, a board member of Wortley Pride, detailed the months of hard work that went into planning the event. “We all bring something unique to the table to make this happen,” she remarked, underscoring the dedication of volunteers and community members. Vandenberg also shared an inspiring sentiment amidst societal challenges: “There’s a lot of hate out there, but love always wins. This year’s theme is about being together and building community. We’re stronger when we work together.”

As Wortley Pride continues to evolve, it stands as a testament to the reclaiming of space and identity, highlighting the importance of unity and resilience in the face of adversity. The sense of togetherness displayed at this event affirms that, even amidst challenges, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community remains steadfast in celebrating their identities and advocating for inclusion.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.1069thex.com/2025/06/15/wortley-pride-celebrates-community-and-resilience/), [[2]](https://wortleypride.com/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.1069thex.com/2025/06/15/wortley-pride-celebrates-community-and-resilience/), [[4]](https://london.ctvnews.ca/protestors-target-wortley-pride-event-police-step-in-as-tensions-rise-1.6435951), [[5]](https://www.londonenvironment.net/wortley_pride_june_2023)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.1069thex.com/2025/06/15/wortley-pride-celebrates-community-and-resilience/), [[6]](https://wortleypride.com/getinvolved/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://wortleypride.com/queer-holiday-bazaar/), [[6]](https://wortleypride.com/getinvolved/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://london.ctvnews.ca/protestors-target-wortley-pride-event-police-step-in-as-tensions-rise-1.6435951), [[5]](https://www.londonenvironment.net/wortley_pride_june_2023)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.1069thex.com/2025/06/15/wortley-pride-celebrates-community-and-resilience/), [[4]](https://london.ctvnews.ca/protestors-target-wortley-pride-event-police-step-in-as-tensions-rise-1.6435951)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.1069thex.com/2025/06/15/wortley-pride-celebrates-community-and-resilience/), [[6]](https://wortleypride.com/getinvolved/)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.1069thex.com/2025/06/15/wortley-pride-celebrates-community-and-resilience/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://wortleypride.com/> - Wortley Pride is a volunteer-run, family-focused celebration for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and their allies in the heart of Wortley Village, London, Ontario. The event aims to represent all members of the community, offering a safe and inclusive space for individuals to come together and celebrate their identities. The organisers emphasise the importance of community involvement and support, highlighting the positive impact of such events on fostering unity and resilience within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
3. <https://wortleypride.com/queer-holiday-bazaar/> - The All Queer Holiday Bazaar is an annual event hosted by Wortley Pride, bringing together over 40 2SLGBTQIA+ businesses to showcase handmade goods, unique art, and beautiful crafts. This event provides a platform for queer-owned businesses to connect with the community, offering a diverse range of products and fostering a sense of unity and support among attendees. The bazaar serves as a celebration of the community's creativity and talent, reinforcing the resilience and strength of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
4. <https://london.ctvnews.ca/protestors-target-wortley-pride-event-police-step-in-as-tensions-rise-1.6435951> - The second annual Wortley Pride festival faced protests targeting the Drag Queen Storytime segment, with demonstrators claiming it was inappropriate for children. Counter-protesters and police intervened to ensure the safety and inclusivity of the event. Despite the disruptions, the festival continued, highlighting the community's resilience and commitment to celebrating diversity and acceptance. The incident underscores the challenges faced by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in promoting inclusive events and the importance of support from allies and authorities.
5. <https://www.londonenvironment.net/wortley_pride_june_2023> - Wortley Pride is a volunteer-run, family-focused celebration for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and their allies in the heart of Wortley Village, London, Ontario. The event aims to represent all members of the community, offering a safe and inclusive space for individuals to come together and celebrate their identities. The organisers emphasise the importance of community involvement and support, highlighting the positive impact of such events on fostering unity and resilience within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
6. <https://wortleypride.com/getinvolved/> - Wortley Pride is a volunteer-run organisation that relies on the support of sponsors, community partners, and volunteers to deliver its programming. The organisation offers various sponsorship levels, including Gold, Silver, and Bronze, each providing different benefits such as logo placement on the website, event flyers, and social media posts. Additionally, Wortley Pride actively seeks volunteers to assist with various roles during events, encouraging community members to get involved and contribute to the success of their initiatives.
7. <https://www.queerevents.ca/events/london/community/wortley-pride-green> - Wortley Pride is a volunteer-run, family-focused celebration for the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and allies in the heart of Wortley Village. The event features live performances from local artists, vendors, games, drag performances, and more, ensuring there is something for everyone. The organisers aim to create an inclusive and welcoming environment, fostering a sense of community and resilience among attendees. The event serves as a platform to celebrate diversity and promote acceptance within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.