

Our Manchester

Celebrating Our Diversity: The Last 12 Months

**A presentation of the Equality Team and Events
Team**

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee:

1 March 2018

Equality Objective 3 - Celebrating Our Diversity

Manchester's great strength is its diversity; we've achieved a lot for our different communities. We will maintain and build on with what we've achieved so far, going even further to celebrate Manchester's diversity, telling people how this makes the city better for everyone.

The last 12 months have seen...

- ❖ Manchester continue to celebrate its diversity and showcase the many identities, communities and initiatives that the city has to offer
- ❖ Pride in our city and our people, with events being held city-wide and locally in communities
- ❖ Large scale events supported by the Council Events Team (e.g. City Co events focused on an offer for all residents and visitors) alongside smaller, grass roots events organised by and for Manchester communities of place and identity
- ❖ Manchester come together in the face of tragedy and show our resilience, tolerance and unity

March 2017

March saw the Council continue its annual focus on **International Women's Day** (IWD), celebrating the progress and achievements of women in Manchester with a bold and engaging 'Strong Manchester Women' promotion campaign.

As ever, the Council managed a grant funding programme in support of IWD, enabling 26 community-run events to celebrate inspiring women internationally, nationally and locally. The Strong Manchester Women campaign was so well received it has continued into the 2018 celebrations.

Wonder Women also kicked off in 2017, as Manchester's feminist festival counting down to the centenary of the Representation of the People Act 1918. The programme of talks, exhibitions, performances and more drew great numbers to Manchester's many cultural venues.



April 2017



May 2017

Manchester recognised **International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBT)** in May, with a team of intrepid adventurers taking on the Lake District's famous 10 Peak Challenge, raising over £5,000 for the Manchester Pride Fund in the process.



Other walks in the month included annual faith-based processions such as **Whit Walks**, the annual Christian parade and **Rathayatra**, the annual Sikh procession and event.



May welcomed Manchester's first ever **Góbéfest** took place in the City Centre. A vibrant celebration of Hungarian and Transylvanian culture, the festival promoted an awareness and appreciation of other traditions and perspectives to more than 10,000 attendees.

June 2017



June 2017

Also in June, **Manchester Refugee Cultural Festival** and **Didsbury Festival** celebrated the rich diversity of Manchester's many communities and the tapestry of cultures and traditions that they bring to the city through arts, dance, performance and food. The **Madonna Del Pressario Procession** brought a taste of Italy to Manchester as it made its way through the City Centre.



The sights, sounds and vibrant celebration of the city that we've come to associate with the **Manchester Day Parade** were evident again in 2017, with a broad range of communities coming together to celebrate their pride in the city and their place in it.

July – August 2017

A hot summer brought an equally enjoyable range of dazzling cultural festivals to Manchester. Throughout the year there are community events in parks and local areas focused on bringing communities together, with examples below.

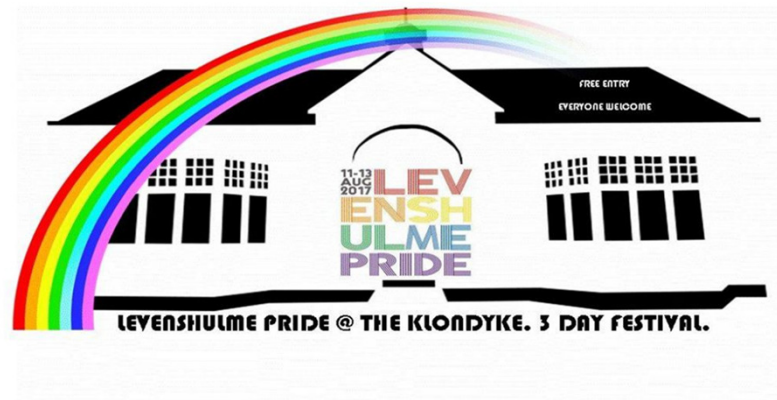
As ever, Manchester's annual lively **Mega Mela** drew huge crowds of over 70,00 people to celebrate the city's South Asian communities and culture in Platt Fields Park. This ever-popular 2 day event regularly attracts a diverse range of attendees from a real cross-section of Manchester's population, and is a flagship for celebrating diversity in the city.



Similarly, the **Caribbean Carnival** at Alexandra Park brought Caribbean culture to the forefront through dance, music, theatre and costume.

July - August 2017

Another annual celebratory event of not just local international significance is the hugely popular **Manchester Pride**. 2017 saw tens of thousands of attendees from diverse backgrounds come together in celebration and to stand in solidarity with the City's LGBT community.



Whilst the city-wide celebration is well established, 2017 also saw the inaugural **Levenshulme Pride**. The grassroots-organised event was enjoyed by hundreds of residents and looks set to be joined in 2018 by **Gorton Pride**, in a growing display of support for LGBT communities in Manchester.

September 2017

Festival season drew to a close in September, with local cultural festivals such as **Cheetham Cultural Festival**, **Openshaw Festival** and **Gorton & Debdale Carnival** taking the chance to highlight the spirit of community and togetherness through family fun and entertainment.



Communities of identity as well as place were celebrated too, with the **Sparkle Weekend** – the world's largest trans celebration – bringing trans and non-trans people together for fun, laughter and above all, solidarity.



September 2017

Central Library was host to a number of events celebrating our diverse communities, including 'Swing Time' for **Older People's Day** and **Deities at the Bottom of the Garden**, an exhibition exploring the customs and icons of major world religions and belief systems.

September also saw the launch of 5 exhibitions by South Asian and British Asian artists in Manchester. To mark the 70th anniversary of Indian and Pakistani independence, Manchester brought some of the best of contemporary South Asian art practice to wide and diverse audiences in the city, including newly commissioned film, painting, sculpture, drawing and more. The programme has diversified visitors to the gallery and engaged more BAME people in the city's gallery offer than ever.



October 2017

Journeys Festival returned to Manchester, showcasing the creative talent of exceptional refugee and asylum seeker artists across a number of exhibitions and events. This was complemented by **Manchester Literature Festival's** 'The Things I Would Tell You', an anthology that featured 22 British Muslim Women Writers whose stories and poems transcend time, place and stereotypes to provide a modern voice for Muslim women.

The Multilingual Manchester and Libraries teams brought local communities together for **Levenshulme Language Day** at Arcadia Library in October, using language diversity as a way to show that what makes us different makes us more vibrant.

The spectacular **Dashehra Diwali Mela** celebrated the contemporary Hindu festivals by delivering a packed programme of dance, music, and events for all ages in Albert Square.



And a buzzing and lively female-only flash mob took to the steps of Central Library to promote the launch of the **International Women's Day 2018 Grants Programme**.

November 2017

'Disability and Art' was the theme of **Disability History Month**, which saw a number of compelling events in the city examining how disability is portrayed in the arts, including an event at Central Library coordinated by the Council's Disabled Employee Network Group.



The solemn and moving **Trans Day of Remembrance** vigil saw members of many communities come together to remember those across the world who lost their lives due to transphobia.

December 2017

2017 ended with solemnity as the city marked World AIDS Day with its annual vigil to remember those lost to or affected by HIV and AIDS, but also with celebration in the form of the Be Proud Awards. With a wonderfully diverse cohort of candidates, the Be Proud Awards celebrates the spirit of Our Manchester and Celebrating Our Diversity, and shows that all Manchester have lots to be proud of!



As ever, thousands of people flooded to Manchester to experience the festive eclecticism of the Christmas Markets. With something for everyone, the markets really evoke Manchester's diverse offer in celebratory style.

January - February 2018

2018's celebration of Manchester's diversity has kicked off in typically busy fashion, with the city's annual recognition of Holocaust Memorial Day, Chinese New Year Celebrations, LGBT Question Time and Queer Contact Festival having all taken place already.



Forthcoming Events

Manchester is looking forward to a busy schedule of celebrations and festivals throughout 2018, to bring communities together, share what makes us different and enjoy the rich diversity that life in Manchester has to offer. There is lots going on, including:

- The International Women's Day Walk for Women
- A range of events to celebrate the centenary of the Representation of the People Act 1918, including the erection of a statue of Emmeline Pankhurst in St Peter's Square in December
- Bee In the City public arts project
- Manchester People's Festival, developed by and for Manchester communities in Platt Fields park to bring people together in unity and cohesion

Impact

Manchester is proud of its diverse population and the Council is committed to providing opportunities to connect people from different backgrounds and help people learn about each other through a range of community focused events that celebrate an individual community's distinctive cultural identity and promotes civic pride in where you live.

Last year the Council, through the Events Team's Community Events programme, provided **£300,000 of funding across 19 community events and festivals**. These events provide the opportunity for locally based organisations to create activities that allow people to participate, to volunteer or to simply attend. The Events Team estimate that the Council's investment and support leveraged over **£750,000** of partner funding to support these community events and festivals and it is estimated that last year's programme was **attended by over 280,000** people and provided the opportunity for around **14,000 people to participate** in creating the activities.

The Events Team is developing a revised Events Strategy which will place greater emphasis on building the capacity of community event organisers and strengthening governance arrangements and accountability. This should enable the Council to achieve greater resource leverage and strengthen outcomes for communities. This will also assist in potentially investing in a wider number of events and help with funding decisions.

In Summary

The presentation has provided an overview of some of the events that have taken place over the last 12 months which celebrate equality and diversity and promote unity and cohesion across the city.

These events have become highly regarded features of the city's cultural calendar, and reflect the spirit of Our Manchester equality objective of Celebrating Our Diversity.

We welcome Members' questions.