



## Essex Pride 2026 returns for 22nd year

It's the biggest LGBTQ+ celebration in Essex, and is all set to return on Saturday 20th June 2026 in Chelmsford, to welcome around 4000 people.

This is an event for the whole community, and it's more than just a huge party. Pride inspires everyone to embrace equality, and demonstrates that people from all walks of life can join together and celebrate diversity.

The celebrations begin with the City Centre Pride March starting at the new location of Chelmsford Theatre from 10am, followed by the pride festival itself taking place in Central Park, Chelmsford from 12pm midday.

### The City Centre Pride March

The pride march returns with the aim of bringing LGBTQ + visibility, reflection & celebration. The march is free to join, and this year we invite you to join us from 10am at The Marconi Plaza beside Chelmsford Theatre, building up a party atmosphere with live music and special guests, before the march which sets off from Chelmsford Theatre at 11:30am.

The march follows an accessible route, led by RuPaul's Drag Race UK star, Cheryl The Queen, it will set off from Marconi Plaza, head along Duke Street, before joining the top of Chelmsford High Street at Tindal Square. From there, it will continue through the city centre and finish at the main Pride Festival site in Central Park.



## The Central Park Pride Festival

The Pride Festival in Central Park opens at 12pm midday and closes at 10pm, with the last entry at 8:30pm. This year's pride celebrations offer a huge lineup of artists performing live, a silent disco dance tent and karaoke stage, pride merchandise & gifts, businesses and organisations offering advice & support for the LGBTQ+ community, plus great food & licensed bars.

With 2 live entertainment stages to choose from and a huge lineup of artists hosted by local legend Nina Ambrose, the multi-talented Saski and the incredible local drag artist Carrot.

Expect outrageous drag queens, and emerging local talent. Headlining will be Atomic Kitten & Rupaul Drag Race Queens Danny Beard & Cheryl The Queen, plus we will be celebrating 70 years of Eurovision with former UK winner Katrina from Katrina & The Waves. There'll also be a Whitney Houston & Britney Spears tribute, plus a celebration of KPOP as part of the entertainment lineup.



## The Silent Disco Dance Tent

Essex Pride have teamed up with POPWORLD for the ultimate pride party experience! Grab up your headphones from the dance tent entrance, and you can choose between the 2 styles of music from Club Classics and Party Tunes! The dance tent is open from 12pm midday to 10pm



## The Family Zone

Head over to the family zone for lots of fun activities throughout the day including story time readings on the pride bus, arts and crafts, costume characters, and a dance workshop, all especially in mind for families with younger children.



## **The Party Continues**

The Essex Pride festival in Central Park closes at 10pm, but for committed partygoers, the celebrations continue into the night with official afterparties at BarPlus in Mousham Street, Chelmsford and Be At One or The Slug & Lettuce in Chelmsford.

## **The History**

Essex Pride first started in 2004 at Smiths Bar in Chelmsford. The venue was the beating heart of the LGBTQ+ community, and the event has grown year on year to become the largest LGBTQ+ community pride celebration in the county.

Garry Ormes, Chair of Essex Pride, says: “Essex Pride is a safe and inclusive event for LGBTQ+ individuals, families and allies, and offers an opportunity for the whole community to join together. Essex Pride began in the now-closed Smith's bar in Chelmsford, before becoming too big for the venue and moving to Central Park.

Pride is more important than ever, and we welcome your support of this important event, which aims to encourage LGBTQ+ people to be themselves in their local communities. Pride plays a big part in encouraging acceptance of everyone regardless of gender or sexuality. We look forward to seeing you there, regardless of who you love”



## All Around the City Centre

[Chelmsford For You](#) will be decorating the city centre with Pride murals. Local artists will be designing and painting celebratory and educational murals at varied locations across the city centre.



We are proud to be announce our headline sponsor for Essex Pride 2026



“Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) is dedicated to transforming lives through innovative, inclusive, and entrepreneurial education and research. We’re proud to be at the heart of the communities we serve and with main campuses in Chelmsford and Writtle, we’re thrilled to continue our partnership with Essex Pride for this year’s festival.

We’re committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone, including our vibrant LGBTQ+ staff and student community, and we look forward to celebrating our diversity at this summer’s Essex Pride.”

For tickets and full event details for Essex Pride visit:

[www.essexpride.org](http://www.essexpride.org)



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