



# LGBTQ+ Cultural Infrastructure in London: Night Venues, 2006–present

## Appendices

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## Appendix 1: LGBTQ+ Communities Survey – NVIVO Coding

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The LGBTQ+ community survey collects the answers of 239 respondents via a web platform. The survey included 5 demographic questions; and 6 questions on the value of LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces:

- Have LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces been important to you? If so, why? If not, why not.
  - Which currently operating LGBTQ+ nightlife events or venues in London are most valuable to you and why?
  - Which closed LGBTQ+ events or venues have been most valuable to you and why?
  - Does the closure of LGBTQ+ venues in London concern you? If so, why? If not, why not?
  - Do you consider any LGBTQ+ nightlife venues or events in London to have heritage value? If so, please specify and explain why: Social heritage, Cultural heritage, Architectural heritage, Civic heritage, Other.
  - Other than LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces, what nightlife venues or events have been important you, if any?
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- What is your gender identity?
  - What is your sexual orientation?
  - What is your ethnicity?
  - How old are you?
  - Are there other aspects of your identity that you would like to highlight?

The NVive file contains the coding process of the LGBTQ+ communities survey. The following document contains an explanation of the Code Tree, and the possible features that can be used on NVIVO for further analysis.

## Node Tree

The coding references are grouped in the following mother nodes:

### **Mother nodes: Closures of nightlife spaces**

**Closures – consequences and effects:** references regarding the possible consequences and effects that the closure of nightlife spaces may have. Includes impacts on LGBTQ+ communities, on London, among others.

**Closures – critical views:** references include critical and negative opinions from the respondents regarding the closure of LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces.

**Closures – non-critical views:** references include non-critical and neutral/positive opinions from the respondents regarding the closure of LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces.

### **Mother nodes: Relevance of nightlife spaces**

**Community relevance:** references with specific mention to the importance of “community/communities”, and some community-related ideas such as feeling of belonging, feeling of home.

**Personal identity/ personal wellbeing relevance:** references regarding the relevance of nightlife spaces on the respondents’ personal identity, wellbeing, fun and personal history.

**Political and educational relevance:** references regarding the importance of educational, historical, political and activist qualities of nightlife spaces.

**Relevance for social ties:** references regarding the relevance of creating and maintaining social ties with different people in nightlife spaces.

**Safe space relevance:** references regarding the relevance of nightlife as a “safe space”, as a space which protects people of the community from various forms of violence and exclusion and allows freedom; as a places escape heteronormative contexts.

#### **Other mother nodes**

**Criticisms of London’s LGBTQ+ nightlife:** references regarding different aspects of nightlife spaces which respondents were critical about.

**Temporal changes:** references regarding changes and transformations in London’s nightlife.

#### **Mother nodes: Venues**

**Venue/event mentions (current):** textual mentions of existing venues and events. When an event AND a venue are mentioned, they are both coded individually.

**Venue/event mentions (past):** textual mentions of past venues and events. When an event AND a venue are mentioned, they are both coded individually.

**Venue/events reasons:** mentions of characteristics and qualities that respondents find positive and desirable of nightlife venues and events.

# Appendix 2: Open Barbers survey

Analysis by Tim Crocker-Buqué

## Introduction

Open Barbers is a social enterprise hairdressers in London that has been running since 2011. It offers a *“personalised and warm haircutting experience with a queer and trans friendly attitude... [and] celebrates the diversity of human beings by offering haircuts that are free of gendered language, that promote people to be in control of their appearance, and that give people the chance to have a haircut that is more in line with their identity or preferred style.”*

In 2016, Open Barbers undertook a survey of their clients for business development purposes. The survey consisted of 18 questions relating to personal and demographic information, experiences at other hairdressers, reasons for using Open Barbers, their experience at Open Barbers, and asking about other facilities or services Open Barbers could offer. In total 235 people from the mailing list responded to the survey. Many of the questions had the option to leave a free text response and a further 692 individual comments were made in these sections about a range of issues relating to their clients experience of hairdressing, both at Open Barbers and at other locations. These responses provide a wealth of information and insight into the experiences of people who identify as queer, transgender, lesbian, gay, bisexual or other minority gender or sexual identities when having their hair cut. To learn from these experiences without compromising the anonymity of the respondents the free text responses were

analysed using qualitative methods to identify common experiences, without the individual responses being made public.

## Methods

A PDF of the survey responses was uploaded into NVIVO v11 and coded by an experienced qualitative researcher, using methods based in grounded theory. Inductive codes were applied to the entire text, which were then aggregated into thematic categories for reporting.

## Findings

Of those who responded, the majority were in the 17-34 age group, however there was a wide range, including children (and parents of children) and people aged over 65.

Many respondents expressed plural identities relating to their gender identity and sexuality, including combinations of lesbian, gay, transgender, non-binary, queer, agender, pansexual and many others. Several reported rejecting these kinds of labels all together.

Many clients reported experiencing mental health problems, with anxiety and depression being the most common. Several reported having disabilities that affected getting a haircut.

## Experience of other hairdressers

The overwhelming experience of those that responded to the survey was that getting a haircut was an extremely stressful or distressing experience, with 91 different examples of negative experiences reported in the free text responses. The most common reasons for a negative experience at other hairdressers included the following:

- **Gender policing/norming:** this particularly manifested as hairdressers insisting on cutting clients hair in a specific way, either to make the haircut more masculine or feminine, often against the wishes of the client. Many respondents reported experience of asking for a specific kind of hairstyle, but it being cut in a different way (more feminine or masculine, based on perceived gender). Several respondents reported having to argue with their hairdresser about the kind of haircut they wanted, with hairdressers concerned about, for example, cutting someone's hair in a masculine style, if they were perceived to be female.
- **Gender assumptions/misgendering:** many people also reported being misgendered by hairdressers, or that hairdressers made assumptions about the way they would want or should have their hair based on an erroneous conclusion about their perceived gender.
- **Not being listened to:** many of the scenarios described above were attributed to hairdressers not listening to and respecting the client's wishes, and instead cutting their hair based on the hairdresser's own conventions or gender normative assumptions. This was often reported as having happened at multiple different hairdressers, causing much frustration.
- **Refusal of services:** a surprisingly large number of respondents reported being refused services all together, with several examples of people being made to leave a hairdresser's by the staff. This was often a person perceived to be female by a hairdresser being refused a haircut in a barbers that usually catered to men, or by a hairdresser usually catering to women refusing to do a masculine (short/cropped) haircut on someone they perceived to be female. There were several reports of this happening to the same person in neighbouring businesses, meaning they were unable to get a haircut at all.
- **Expense/differential pricing:** several people reported having to pay more for a haircut because they

were perceived as female, even if they had had what would usually be considered a male style (e.g. short back & sides), or that they had been refused a cut in an affordable barbers and had to go to a more expensive hairdressers for the same thing.

- **Homophobia/transphobia:** several examples were given of people experiencing explicit homophobic or transphobic behaviour or comments by hairdressers, either before a cut, or often during a cut which people found extremely distressing. This often resulted in people being anxious about making small-talk in case they were outed or had a negative response to talking about a same-sex partner.

- **Racism:** several respondents reported racist incidents while getting their hair cut, both making incorrect assumptions about their racial identity, but also inappropriate comments about their hair or refusal of service.

Other common adjectives used to describe the experience of getting a haircut included the experience being embarrassing, intimidating or shaming, resulting from comments or behaviour from both hairdressers and other clients. One aspect that was often raised as particularly stressful was having to make small-talk with a hairdresser, not knowing whether they would be sensitive to issues around gender identity or sexuality, with respondents preferring to avoid talking in many cases. Because of these experiences many respondents reported avoiding having haircuts at all for prolonged periods of time.

## The experience at Open Barbers

By contrast, almost every respondent reported a positive experience of using Open Barbers, with many explaining what a significant effect it had had on their life. The characteristics of Open Barbers that were particularly valued by respondents included:

- **Safety:** the most frequent description was that Open Barbers was a place where people felt safe. This was often described in terms of not being at risk of misgendering, or homophobia, transphobia or racism. Many people who also reported experiencing anxiety stated that knowing Open Barbers was a safe space significantly reduced their symptoms when coming for a haircut.
- **Welcoming, friendly, open, inclusive:** many people reported an extremely positive attitude from both the staff and other clients at Open Barbers, where previously they may have experienced negative attitudes at other hairdressers.
- **Being listened to and communicated with:** in comparison with experiences at other hairdressers described above, one of the most highly valued qualities of the Open Barbers staff was their careful listening of clients' wishes and delivering a haircut in line with these, rather than doing something else. Many people also reported appreciating good communication throughout the haircutting experience, with the barbers requesting regular feedback and explaining what they were going to do next, to ensure clients were comfortable throughout the process.
- **Non-judgemental, respectful, accepted:** many people reported feeling able to be themselves, without fear of being judged or shamed, in what is otherwise usually a public environment. Respondents reported experiences of being respected and accepted, no matter what type of haircut they wanted, and avoiding any preconceptions or prejudices relating to the gender identity or sexuality.
- **Calm, relaxed:** many people also reported that the space itself had a calming and relaxed environment, which reduced their experience of stress as other hairdressers can be busy and loud. This was often described in terms of both the environment, but also the relaxed attitude of the staff as well. People who reported experiencing anxiety valued this especially.

- **Community space:** several people also described the importance of it being a community space, with areas to sit and drink tea, as well as being able to interact with other members of the queer community. This made many respondents feel more at home in a public space and others more likely to give repeated visits.

Respondents reported that the environment created at Open Barbers enabled them to be themselves, to express their gender or sexual identities freely, without fear of negative reactions from staff or other clients. As a result several people reported travelling a significant distance to come to Open Barbers, as this kind of service is rare or not available in other parts of the UK, or in other countries.

## Conclusions

For many people within the queer community having a haircut can be an extremely stressful experience, with a risk of being misgendered, suffering gender normative behaviour or experiencing discrimination from both staff and clients at regular hairdressers or barbers. This can be particularly distressing for people suffering from mental health problems, and can result in people choosing not to have a haircut for prolonged periods of time. Open Barbers counteracts these problems by providing a safe and relaxing community space, which allows queer people to express themselves freely. By listening and communicating effectively with clients in a non-judgemental way, many people report an extremely positive experience from using the services offered by Open Barbers.

# Appendix 3: Open Barbers survey 2016 - space/ groups mentions

Spaces/groups listed in order of descending frequency in response to the following questions.

**Do you make use of any other face-to-face LGBTQ spaces/ services/ projects (not including online ones)?**

- ◆ Uni LGBT
- ◆ CliniQ
- ◆ London friend
- ◆ Queer Cafe
- ◆ ELOP
- ◆ Irreverent Dance
- ◆ Counselling
- ◆ Support group
- ◆ Gendered Intelligence
- ◆ TMSA
- ◆ DIY Space for London
- ◆ Employer group
- ◆ Gay's the word
- ◆ Bar Wotever
- ◆ Fringe
- ◆ LGBT Choir
- ◆ Poetry & Performance night
- ◆ LGBT Centre Birmingham
- ◆ Transpose London
- ◆ Quiltbag Cabaret
- ◆ Barberette
- ◆ Transgender Shakespeare Company
- ◆ LGBT Parenting Group
- ◆ TAGS
- ◆ Trans, queer groups
- ◆ Queer concerts
- ◆ Queer massage
- ◆ Queer yoga
- ◆ Allsorts Brighton
- ◆ BFI Flare
- ◆ Dalston Superstore
- ◆ Sink the Pink
- ◆ Queer discussion groups
- ◆ FtM London
- ◆ Bis of Colour Group
- ◆ Galop

**Have you ever used or wanted to use an LGBTQ space/service/project that no longer exists?**

- ◆ First Out (mentioned more frequently than anything else)
- ◆ PACE (very frequently mentioned).
- ◆ Black Cap
- ◆ Joiners Arms
- ◆ Lesbian & Gay Centre
- ◆ Ghetto
- ◆ Irreverent Dance
- ◆ LGBTQ Massage
- ◆ Uni LGBT Soc
- ◆ Lesbian Bar
- ◆ Centered (BSL Course)
- ◆ All Out Cafe
- ◆ Queer Caf Bristol
- ◆ Fag Club Bristol
- ◆ Candy Bar Brighton
- ◆ Self defence class
- ◆ Trash Palace
- ◆ Candy Bar
- ◆ Star at Night
- ◆ Broken Rainbow charity
- ◆ Orange Clinic

# Appendix 4: Queer Spaces in London - Policy Briefing

January 2017

*This vision has been developed by the Queer Spaces Network – an informal group of people from a wide range of backgrounds committed to supporting and developing LGBTQI+ spaces in London.*

## The situation:

- London is one of the great global cities and it **should also be** a world-class queer city.
- However, in recent years, several factors have come together that **threaten London's vibrant LGBTQI+ (queer) community** creating an urgent need for an effective policy response to maintain its integrity as a safe, respectful and supportive home for a community that remains acutely vulnerable to social exclusion.
- The queer community is inclusive of many different people who often express complex sexuality, sex and/or gender identities, but are united by the experience of **social 'othering'**, where expression of these identities at home, at work, or in public can result in shaming, bullying, physical exclusion or harassment and violence.
- In response to these experiences, the queer community has developed **a unique culture**, expressed and nurtured in specific spaces which often act as sanctuaries, allowing freer expression of individuality and the sharing of common experience.

- The dynamic and fruitful experience of queer spaces is often **difficult to replicate in other venues** not designated for the purpose: it depends on an organic and fragile combination of social, cultural and urban factors.
- London falls behind many of its global peers when protecting and supporting the queer community, including **in failing to provide a dedicated community space**, unlike New York, Berlin, Los Angeles and San Francisco.
- Thus, queer spaces are important for the **welfare and wellbeing of queer people** in London and act as essential community spaces, especially as queer people have **significantly worse mental health** than the general population, which is likely exacerbated by the chronic experience of social othering.
- This includes high rates of **anxiety and depression, self-harm and suicide**. Young LGBT people are also significantly more likely to have attempted self-harm and considered suicide. Older queer people are more likely to be **socially isolated**. Without the right support, many queer people turn to alcohol or drugs to combat loneliness and the experience of shame, resulting in higher levels of harmful substance use.
- In recent years, the substantial rise in property prices and costs of private rental has resulted in **speculative developers** buying up queer spaces and attempting to convert them into more lucrative residential or retail units.
- Research conducted by UCL Urban Lab with the Queer Spaces Network and The Raze Collective, highlighted a **recent intensity in closures** of longstanding queer nightlife spaces, especially those for women and black and minority ethnic communities.

- **Examples include** The Black Cap in Camden, Madame JoJo's in Soho and the Joiners Arms in Tower Hamlets (which have been closed) and The Royal Vauxhall Tavern (which has been bought by property developers whose plans remain unclear).
- High rental costs have exacerbated the significant problem of **homelessness amongst queer young people** (who make up 24% of young homeless people and associated closure of queer spaces means less community support is available).

## The vision:

- Support for queer spaces is an issue that straddles the **night-time economy, protecting vulnerable minority groups, and promoting social integration.**
- London should be a city with a thriving queer cultural scene, with **spaces protected for queer culture** through a supportive legislative and planning environment.
- All queer people should feel **safe and secure**, both in public and in dedicated spaces, with the ability to express their individuality without fear of negative discrimination.
- All queer people must be able to access relevant **community support** through equal access to queer spaces, and to achieve this **the GLA must make queer culture a priority for the city**, to support and promote a vibrant queer culture, and the empowerment of all queer people, with all the social and economic benefits this brings.

## Actions for the GLA:

To achieve the above vision, we are asking the GLA to take the following actions:

1. Designate all LGBTQI+ spaces pre-dating 1986, and others as determined through a process of research and community engagement, as **legacy venues** with protection against redevelopment, as per the model in San Francisco.
2. Direct all local planning authorities to ensure **no net loss of LGBTQI+ spaces** year on year. We expect this will require support for an audit of existing LGBTQI+ spaces.
3. Work with the LGBTQI\_ community and local planning authorities to review their lists of designated and non-designated heritage assets to **offer protection to suitable sites with LGBTQI+ heritage** interest.
4. Direct the Night Czar to hold **quarterly surgeries dedicated to LGBTQI+ spaces** to listen to the ongoing concerns of the community and monitor progress against this vision.
5. Direct the Night Czar to engage with LGBTQI+ **business owners** to better understand their specific needs in terms of licensing, policing and interaction with local government.
6. The GLA should **commission joint research** into better understanding the needs of the queer community in London; how LGBTQI+ people interact with public and private spaces; and what further action needs to be taken to improve the safety and wellbeing of queer people in London.



# Appendix 5 Draft criteria for the definition of LGBTQ+ venues

In response to the Greater London Authority's request for advice on the definition of LGBTQ+ venues for planning and licensing purposes, we recommend the use of the following criteria - written in liaison with members from Queer Spaces Network (June 2017) - which could be used for use in engagements with developers in planning future LGBTQ+ venues. Given the findings of our research and the dramatic loss of LGBTQ+ nightlife venues over the past 10 years, it is our view that such criteria should be part of a requirement to replace any loss of existing LGBTQ+ spaces.

- The venue must be initiated and operated by people who identify as LGBTQ+.
- All staff must be LGBTQ+ friendly, including having undergone relevant equality and diversity training and/or having a track record in operating inclusive LGBTQ+ venues.
- There should be visible indicators on the building's exterior to indicate that it is an LGBTQ+ space (e.g. a sign, notice, rainbow flag or other recognisable signifier).
- The venue must be accessible with appropriate facilities for all LGBTQ+ people, including those with disabilities and people of all genders.
- The venue must be actively marketed as an LGBTQ+ space in online and/or print media.
- The majority of the venue's programming must be directed towards LGBTQ+ identifying clientele.

- The venue must have and implement an outreach plan to demonstrate how it is working to support the LGBTQ+ community, in particular members of the community that have been disproportionately affected by closures and/or have fewer spaces created by and for them. This includes women, trans and non-binary people, and BAME LGBTQ+ people / queer, trans and intersex people of colour (QTIPOC), and LGBTQ+ people with disabilities.

# Appendix 6 Mayor's LGBT+ Venue Charter, published 6 July 2017

1. A visible rainbow flag should be displayed on the outside of the venue

The rainbow flag is a universal symbol of the LGBT+ community.

The symbol could be displayed as an actual flag or alternatively a sign, sticker or other physical signifier.

2. The venue should be marketed as an LGBT+ venue.

This will be an integral part of the venue's business plan.

Marketing needs to effectively reach the LGBT+ community e.g. through social media, print and digital journals, blogs and other relevant websites. Many LGBT+ venues display LGBT+ magazines/literature/posters in the venue itself.

Venues will engage in community outreach, such as hosting events around significant dates like Pride.

3. The venue will provide a welcoming, accessible and safe environment for all.

The venue will welcome anyone regardless of background or identity, religion, race/ethnicity, gender identity or expression, disability, age or sexual orientation. The venue will be accessible to disabled people, in line with legislation[1] The management will consider adopting gender neutral toilets. Stonewall has published guidance[2] on this.

4. Management and staff should be LGBT+ friendly.

Door and bar staff will create a welcoming and safe environment. Door and bar staff will be LGBT+ friendly.

There are LGBT+ friendly security firms in London who provide licensed security staff (many of whom are LGBT+

individuals themselves). There are also relevant training providers.

5. Programming should be LGBT+ focused. Where the venue programmes regular entertainment, this should be principally LGBT+ focused.

