Draft London Plan
LGBTQI+ Community Response[1]
Submission to the Greater London Authority

2 March 2018

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

This response brings together a number of networks with expertise on LGBTQI+ communities, their needs and spaces, principally Queer Spaces Network, The Raze Collective, Planning Out and University College London (UCL) Urban Laboratory. As well as the longer term engagements of these groups and the research they have produced, the comments on the draft *London Plan* that follow are based on an Urban Lab and Queer Spaces Network meeting held on Friday 23 February at Thought Works, Soho for which 70 people registered including representatives from LGBTQI+ organisations including Gay Men's Health Collective, Planet Nation, and The Outside Project. In this document we use 'LGBTQI+' to refer to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer and Intersex. The +/plus sign refers to further minority identities relating to gender, sex and sexuality, including, for example, asexual people. 'Queer community' is sometimes used as shorthand to refer to LGBTQI+ communities.

The Queer Spaces Network was established to bring together individuals from a wide range of backgrounds, including venue owners, campaigners, planning and policy specialists, performers, audience members, with an interest in protecting and supporting queer spaces in the UK through sharing experiences and knowledge. This includes an email distribution of 75 members and a Facebook community page of 87 members. QSN has a track record of working productively with the GLA and produced a Vision for Queer Spaces (appendix 1), in response to a GLA request, in order to inform the writing of the Mayor's *Cultural Infrastructure Strategy*. QSN advocates for London to be a world class queer city in which queer spaces are both preserved and supported. It notes the importance of the London Plan in achieving this vision, in particular given the lack of a dedicated LGBTQI+ community centre - which contrasts with other global cities, such as New York, which has had such a centre since the early 1980s.

Planning Out, is an LGBT network that seeks to bring together professionals to influence planning policy in London and the wider UK. Planning Out recognises that even though London has one of the largest, most vibrant LGBTQI+ communities in

[1] Coordinated by Ben Campkin [redacted] Laura Marshall [redacted] Ben Walters [redacted] Tim Crocker-Buque [redacted] Chi Nguyen, [redacted]

the world, it lags behind other major world cities such as New York, Chicago and San Francisco in catering for the needs of this demographic. Planning Out would like to see a greater strategic focus in placemaking for queer heritage spaces such as Soho, to protect them from being diluted and losing their special significance in the face of commercial pressures. This could be achieved through the installation of permanent LGBT commemorations, rent control for LGBT families, LGBT carehomes and special provision for the protection and creation of LGBT venues. Planning Out believes these initiatives would not only protect the special character of places like Soho from losing its queer character and heritage, but it would also create a central cultural hub for the LGBT community to come together. This would have a positive impact in improving the physical and mental wellbeing of the community.

QSN, together with The Raze Collective (a charity established to support and develop LGBTQI+ performers and performance, with a membership of more than 190 participants), co-designed a research project with UCL Urban Laboratory in 2016 in order to produce an evidence base for what was happening to LGBTQI+ nightlife spaces in London. This was subsequently developed with funding support by the GLA with a report from a second phase of work being published in 2017. This report presented evidence that 58% of venues had closed since 2006, with a fall from 121 to 51 venues. The report makes 12 recommendations for how planning policy and practice, the GLA and local authorities, can work together to better protect LGBTQI+ night-spaces and to encourage new spaces to open (appendix 2, pp. 53-57). It emphasises that measures to support the retention, re-provision and promotion of LGBTQI+ spaces should be included within Mayor's London Plan, and the Mayor’s Draft Culture and the Night-time Economy Supplementary Planning Guide. This would include a requirement for local authorities to recognise the importance of LGBTQI+ venues in their borough plans; encouragement, support and guidance for LA’s to undertake a Equality Impact Assessment when an LGBTQI+ venue, or one which regularly hosts LGBTQI+ events, is proposed for development; and the fostering of a more consistent city-wide practice of supporting LGBTQI+ venues to stay in operation or be re-provided when they are closed through development.

The research conducted by Urban Lab made clear that Equalities Impact Assessments in some key large-scale urban developments have failed to adequately protect clusters of LGBTQI+ venues and argues that this cannot be allowed to happen in future. For the purposes of such evaluation, in order to fulfil the duties set out in the Equality Act (2010), the report recommended that the Mayor should encourage and support local authorities to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment for any development which affects an existing LGBTQI+ venue or a venue that regularly hosts events designated for the LGBTQI+ community. In performing Equality Impact Assessments, recognising intersectionality within the LGBTQI+

community is vital. For example, if a space predominantly serves LGBTQI+ women, this clientele embody at least two protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 (sex, sexual orientation and/or gender reassignment) and potentially more (race, disability, age).

The research report also welcomed the Mayor and GLA's development of an *LGBT Venues Charter* and recommended that this be widely publicised, with the aim of informing built environment professionals and others involved in developments that risk reducing the number of LGBTQI+ venues, and with a view to replacing venues that are lost during development. We see the *Draft London Plan* as an important venue to share this charter and enforce reference to it in development situations. Local authorities should consider provision of LGBTQI+ spaces as potential cultural and social infrastructure within new developments as they arise, working with LGBTQI+ community organisations to identify potential venue operators to work with developers; and actively working with community organisations provide new LGBTQI+ spaces within existing social and cultural venues when opportunities arise.

In presenting our comments on the draft London Plan we note the important historical precedent of the Greater London Council's proactive support for gay and lesbian communities in the 1980s. In the mid-1980s the GLC published its charter C*hanging the World: the London Charter for Lesbian and Gay Rights* (1985) and supported the establishment of the London Lesbian and Gay Centre in Clerkenwell with capital funding and grants. The Charter very much outlined a vision for addressing the needs of the time, but nonetheless as a visioning exercise where local municipal gay and lesbian politics were attuned to the international context of human rights, it remains an inspirational document.

The question of what role urban policy and practitioners can have in supporting LGBTQI+ communities arose last year in the finalization of the United Nations New Urban Agenda – a key international policy framework, endorsed in December 2016, designed to promote 'a new model of urban development that is able to integrate all facets of sustainable development to promote equity, welfare, and shared prosperity.' In the final discussions about the content and expression of this influential document, there was great controversy when LGBTQI+ people were erased from the list of vulnerable groups that had been included in the draft version, which had specifically condemned violence against and intimidation towards these communities. The deletion resulted from lobbying by a group of 17 countries, led by Belarus, with some of the worst records of violence and intimidation towards those communities. The move is perhaps unsurprising, given that legal recognitions vary so greatly, and that there are still 73 countries with laws criminalising homosexuality.

The inclusion of LGBTQI+ minorities as a vulnerable group would have widened the New Urban Agenda's attention to inequality and inclusivity out to more broadly consider vulnerabilities through the spectrum of sexual and gender diversity. But this was not to be. We take the view that there is an opportunity for London as a queer capital to explicitly redress this exclusion and provide international leadership – building on the New Urban Agenda's important focus on 'cities for all', civic engagement, cultural diversity and on the leveraging of the benefits of urbanisation to improve outcomes for vulnerable groups more broadly.

We welcome the Draft London Plan's principles of sustainability and inclusivity – a word mentioned over 100 times although not defined explicitly – and its emphases on building strong and sustainable communities, creating a healthy city, delivering homes for Londoners and growing a good economy. Given the scale of the document we have concentrated our comments on the following sections which we deem to be most relevant to the development of a plan that is a model of LGBTQI+ inclusivity: Good Growth; Housing; Social Infrastructure; and Heritage and Culture. We note that in the draft plan it is only in the latter chapter that LGBT+ community is explicitly mentioned, and it is notable that these four mentions are in supporting texts rather than specific policies. Although we understand the argument that by not specifically mentioning vulnerable groups the wording of the plan can in some cases be read as maximising inclusivity, in our view the particular needs of London's LGBTQI+ communities are such that specific advice will be beneficial to local authorities and others using the plan in their decision making processes. Our recommendation is that the London Plan should name the specific vulnerable groups mentioned in the UN New Urban Agenda but also make specific mention of LGBTQI+ communities. Based on Urban Lab's research we would argue that failure to name these specific groups in the last London Plan has contributed to a lack of attention to their needs and spaces, resulting in the loss of 58% of venues over a 10-year period. We believe the London Plan marks a unique opportunity for the Mayor and GLA to set a world-leading benchmark in the use of the planning system to address the needs, and protect the spaces and heritage, of LGBTQI+ communities.

2. GOOD GROWTH

Inclusion of LGBTQI+ in the narrative of the plan

There are insufficient mentions of LGBTQI+ in both the policies and the narrative of the plan in order to effectively address the needs of these communities and ensure London has a world-leading plan for LGBTQI+ communities. In order to adequately increase attention to these groups alongside other vulnerable, minority and

community groups, the language of the policies in the Good Growth chapter must be broadened to be less restrictive.

GG1 Build strong and inclusive communities

GG1 F

Support the creation of a London where all Londoners, including older people, disabled people*, and people with young children,* as well as people from other groups with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act, *can move around with ease and enjoy the opportunities the city provides, creating a welcoming environment that everyone can use confidently, independently,* safely and securely without discrimination, *and with choice and dignity, avoiding separation or segregation.*

It is critical there be more mentions in the broader narrative, for stronger callouts in the supporting text around the policy, in line with mention of other minority communities. For example, the vibrancy of LGBTQI+ communities and their importance to the vitality of London can be emphasised as follows, alongside BAME communities:

Paragraph 1.1.2

London *is one of the most diverse cities in the world, a place where everyone is welcome. 40 per cent of Londoners were born outside of the UK, and over 300 languages are spoken here. 40 per cent of Londoners are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, and the city is home to a million EU citizens,1.2 million disabled people,* and the highest percentage of the UK population who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual.[2] *The success of London's communities relies upon this diversity. To keep them strong, London must remain open and inclusive, allowing everyone to share in and contribute towards the city's success.*

Inclusion and nuanced understanding of community

GG2 Making the best use of land

This policy talks about having a clear understanding about what is valued about existing places (GG2 C) but there is no elaboration about how an assessment of what a community actually values will be undertaken. There needs to be an evaluation framework or metric around the assessment of such values to gain a more nuanced understanding of a community's needs.

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[2] Source: Office for National Statistics: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/bulletins/sexualidentityuk/2016

GG1 C & E mention the importance of community, but do not go into details about how to include communities, community spaces, and community participation.

Value and community could be tied together to these two paragraphs:

Paragraph 1.2.7 *London's distinctive character and heritage is why many people want to come to the city. As new developments are designed, the special features that Londoners value about a place, such as cultural, historic,* community *or natural elements, can be used positively to guide and stimulate growth, and create distinctive, attractive and cherished places.*

Paragraph 1.2.8 *Making the best use of land will allow the city to grow in a way that works for everyone. It will allow more high-quality homes,* community spaces, *and workspaces to be developed as London grows, while supporting local communities and creating new ones that can flourish in the future.*

GG2 D emphasises protecting London's open spaces, but there must also be explicit mention of the protection of London's community spaces.

Intersectional understanding of LGBTQI+ needs; greater LGBTQI inclusion across policies

The draft plan's tendency is to contain policies relevant to LGBTQI+ communities around discussions of pubs, and policies around alcohol. LGBTQI+ needs must be mentioned in other relevant sections of the plan, rather than just associating these communities with pubs, nightlife and/or the night-time economy, where there is a danger they are presented as a spectacle for the city, rather than actually integral to the life of the city itself.

There is a need to associate community spaces, including LGBTQI+ spaces, with health and wellbeing. There is a strong emphasis in community discussions on spaces which are not oriented solely towards alcohol consumption, but are rather places where communities can gather, where they do not necessarily have to pay or drink.

The Plan could in general make stronger connections between community spaces, social infrastructure, economics, a healthy city, and good growth.

3. HOUSING

Identity-responsive housing provision and services for LGBTQI+ people in London

There are a number of housing related issues covered by the London Plan that are particularly salient to LGBTQI+ Londoners (H4, H5, H14, H15), who for a range of reasons linked to historic and on-going social oppression and discrimination, find themselves to be at a high risk of being precariously housed, homeless and often lacking the social and familial networks that meet support needs.

The higher than average socio-economic vulnerabilities and related precarious circumstances concerning housing and homelessness faced by members of London's LGBTQI+ communities commonly relate to discrimination driven by prejudice towards sexual and gender minorities whose identities and experiences challenge social norms. For instance, research by Stonewall (2018a) shows that 25% of trans people have experienced homelessness.

It is vital to recognise that LGBTQI+ people are also members of other vulnerable groups. For example LGBTQI+ older people who often feel forced back 'in the closet' in older age, LGBTQI+ young people who face higher than average instances of homelessness and LGBTQI+ people of colour who face intersecting forms of discrimination. Thus, an identity-responsive approach to housing needs, attentive to these intersecting characteristics, must be facilitated through specification in the London Plan.

Examples of identity-responsive service provision for members of the LGBTQI+ community with housing and related social needs include the Outside Project, Opening Doors London, Stonewall Housing, the Albert Kennedy Trust and For Viva (Manchester).

In addition to supporting the new services addressing the housing needs of LGBTQI+ Londoners, the GLA must support *existing* community infrastructure and networks that are well placed to understand and address LGBTQI+ community needs.

LGBTQI+ communities as an 'at risk' group

LGBTQI+ communities should be specifically referenced as constituting an 'at risk' group with higher than average vulnerability to homelessness and specific needs regarding the housing service and provision in H5, H14, H15 and H18.

Evidence supporting this is well documented in research (see reference list), which suggests that despite gains in terms of rights for LGBTQI+ people, there is reason for growing concern regarding prejudice, poverty, safety and homelessness.

For example, it is common that LGBTQI+ people experience identity-related challenges to finding secure employment, have lower than average incomes and experience workplace discrimination, contributing towards higher than average risk of eviction and homelessness (Giray Aksoy et al. 2017; Stonewall 2018a; 2013; Bachmann and Gooch 2017). London, and the UK have seen an increase in the reporting of hate crimes against LGBTQI+ people (Stonewall 2017; Mayor of London 2017), who also commonly experience violence and abuse within domestic settings by partners and family members (AKT 2015; Browne 2007; Bachmann and Gooch 2017; Stonewall 2018b).

As per policy H4, the London Plan should require London b oroughs to facilitate the provision of meanwhile spaces, temporary buildings, property guardianships and empty buildings to provide space for identity-responsive services to address housing needs for LGBTQI+ communities.

In addition to reflecting the evidence of specific vulnerabilities of LGBTQI+ communities in the London Plan's policies on Housing, Good Growth, Social Infrastructure and Heritage and Culture, further preventative measures by the GLA would prove instrumental in addressing existing and intensifying housing and related socio-economic needs within LGBTQI+ communities. For example, establishing and financially supporting the provision of LGBTQI+ sanctuary spaces and supported housing for LGBTQI+ people facing difficult circumstances (see For Viva housing scheme for LGBT people in Salford); supporting the establishment of a LGBTQI+ community centre that hosts organisations providing identity-responsive housing services and advice.

4. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Queer spaces as hugely beneficial to London's social infrastructure

Many LGBTQI+ Londoners are among the city's most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents. Notwithstanding certain recent developments in legal recognition and media representation, many LGBTQI+ people face serious and ongoing challenges across numerous aspects of their lives, including vulnerability to hate crime, violence, discrimination and bullying and lack of equitable access to good education, physical and mental health services, housing, employment and police protection. These needs are complex and dynamic and experienced in multiple ways by different LGBTQI+ people. To understand and constructively address their relation to

one another and wider issues in London requires sustained engagement and action. Yet these needs remain insufficiently understood or addressed at either strategic citywide level or local level. This partly explained though in no way excused by the fact that London's LGBTQI+ population is a minority group, dispersed throughout every borough, and comprises multiple intersecting communities with their own distinctive characteristics and needs. We broadly define queer spaces as spaces created and operated by and for LGBTQI+ people to address their distinctive wants and needs, and note queer spaces as being hugely beneficial to London's social infrastructure, supporting the complex and changing needs of a vulnerable dispersed minority community, and creating platforms for innovative forms of community, culture and enterprise that benefit all Londoners and support the capital's global identity as a uniquely open, innovative and progressive city.

Policy S1 should emphasise the importance of this in the following ways:

S1 *Boroughs, in their Development Plans,* must *undertake a needs assessment of social infrastructure to meet the needs of London's diverse communities,* with particular attention to the needs of underserved or dispersed communities and people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act.

S1C *Development proposals that provide high quality, inclusive social infrastructure that addresses a local or strategic need,* with particular attention to the needs of underserved or dispersed communities and people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act*, and that support service delivery strategies should be supported.*

S1F *Development proposals that would result in a loss of social infrastructure in an area of defined need,* with particular attention to the needs of underserved or dispersed communities and people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act*, should be refused unless:*
1) There are realistic proposals for re-provision that continues to serve the needs of the neighbourhood or communities affected*, or* (etc)

S1G *Redundant social infrastructure* must *be considered for full or partial use as other forms of social infrastructure,* with particular attention to the needs of underserved or dispersed communities and people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act*, before alternative developments are considered.*

GLA support for boroughs' needs assessments

We welcome the expectation in Policy S1 that boroughs should undertake a needs assessment of social infrastructure to meet the needs of London's diverse

communities. Given the relatively small and dispersed nature of London's LGBTQI+ population and the consequent lack of apparently substantial need perceived at borough level, the GLA has an obligation to support boroughs by undertaking needs assessment of vulnerable, dispersed communities at a citywide level.

GLA support for compilation of evidence base related to need for dedicated space for vulnerable, dispersed communities

Policy S1 is especially relevant to planning proposals that would incur the loss of spaces used by minority communities including the LGBTQI+ community. Evidence exists that daytime and nighttime queer spaces are beneficial to the wellbeing of London's LGBTQI+ community, that the loss of such space undermines the needs of this vulnerable community and increasing such space helps meet those needs (Campkin and Marshall, 2016; 2017). Having such evidence easily to hand would help to meet the social infrastructure needs of London's diverse communities at both strategic and local planning levels. As part of its obligation to undertake citywide assessment, the GLA should support through funding and officer time the compilation of a comprehensive integrated evidence base demonstrating the value of dedicated spaces to vulnerable, dispersed communities. This evidence base will compile research suggesting, for instance, that access to queer space is beneficial to the health (S2), education (S3) and overall wellbeing (S4) of LGBTQI+ people. Such evidence will inform decisions under S1F and S1G.

5. HERITAGE AND CULTURE

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, spaces for the LGBTQI+ community serve multiple, important functions, including: acting as spaces to keep people safe from violence in public or at home; to provide social support and develop social networks; to allow a free expression of often repressed identities; to enable

the delivery of essential health and advice services; and to provide space for civil rights organisation and activism. Overall, the silo headings in the London plan make it difficult to cover the cross-cutting importance of these spaces as sites of heritage, culture, social infrastructure and good growth. London boroughs should recognise that they all contain unique and irreplaceable LGBTQI+ heritage and this should always be part of thinking around preservation and celebration of cultural heritage.

There are several significant policies missing from the draft London Plan, namely:

In liaison with the GLA who have committed to maintaining a database of LGBTQI+ venues to monitor openings and closures into the future, the London Plan must stipulate that local authorities be responsible for developing and maintaining their own list of LGBTQI+ venues and resources in their locality, in collaboration with the local community, and ensure no net loss of venues from year-to-year.

All LGBTQI+ spaces predating 1986, and others as determined through a process of research and community engagement, should be specified in the London Plan as legacy heritage venues with protection against redevelopment.

Asset of Community Value status should be redefined to not require only a geographic community (i.e. by postcode of residence) to generate the response, so that alternative communities, such as those with Protected Characteristics (Equality Act 2010) could also apply as a community.

In terms of the specific policies, it is disappointing not to see the protection of LGBTQI+ venues named in any of the policies currently provided. Further to this, we have the following comments on these policies:

HC5 Supporting culture and creative industries

There must be recognition that many cultural spaces have a dual purpose: particularly licensed venues (bars and pubs) that also have a performance and that these are vitally important cultural sites. LGBTQI+ culture is especially important in this regard as it is often developed in safe spaces away from the public and cannot be transferred easily into other venues. This cultural expression can often then move into the mainstream for the benefit of a wider audience, but the unique environment, away from the risk of social othering, is vitally important to the work's development.

HC5A

This policy was strongly supported by the participants in our consultation. LGBTQI+ venues and other spaces tend to cluster together, often for reasons of security.

Consulting the LGBTQI+ community to identify and support identification and development of clusters is essential. London Boroughs must recognise and protect existing queer spaces, as well as support and promote pop-up and meanwhile uses, including new spaces in new developments, using the GLA's *LGBT Venues Charter* which should be specifically referred to in the London Plan.

The London Plan should itself identify and protect larger-scale or longer-lasting clusters of special significance and require boroughs to identify and protect smaller-scale or more recent clusters. Supported by the evidence base mentioned above, these should be recognised as cultural, community and heritage assets. Such clusters benefit social infrastructure, have significance to heritage conservation and growth, and help grow the nighttime and daytime economies.

HC7 Protecting public houses

This is a vitally important policy for the LGBTQI+ community. It must be recognised and prioritised that public houses are uniquely significant to many LGBTQI+ communities in terms of historic/heritage value as civic institutions and past and present use as sites of community and culture. All long-standing pubs (especially those that predate 1986) have significant 'heritage, cultural, economic or social value' to the LGBTQI+ community, and the wider public in London.

HC7C

Participants in our consultation were supportive of this policy specifically, as the closure or threat of closure for redevelopment of pubs with performance spaces has had a huge negative impact on the LGBTQI+ community in the last 10 years.

6. SUPPORT FOR RECLAIM OUR SPACES MANIFESTO

The Queer Spaces Network is a signatory to the Reclaim Our Spaces manifesto and in this response to the draft London Plan we align with the following points:

1. That the London Plan should help produce a shift in thinking so that access to and the value of community spaces is not based on business plans and income generation but on the social value of the community space and its contribution to health and wellbeing, inclusion, integration, empowerment and poverty reduction.

2. That the London Plan should recognise the irreplaceability and uniqueness of many community spaces and looking after them for future generations as being part of a continuing legacy.

3. That the London Plan should value and resource community-centred knowledge and creativity for the contribution this can make to policy discussions and a whole system approach to community engagement across the GLA.

4. That community spaces are not just physical buildings, but social spaces where cultural expression takes place. These social spaces provide movement and interaction between different cultures and it is important they are integrated as well as truly accessible to all.

5. That community spaces are essential to the achievement of lifetime neighbourhoods in which housing, health and education facilities, shops and other local amenities are affordable and accessible to everyone, now and for future generations, and where there is support for community networks based on social co-operation and mutual aid.

6. That housing estates provide a wide range of community spaces – community halls, open spaces, playgrounds and other facilities – which must be protected and their use encouraged.

7. REFERENCES

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Appendix 1

Queer Spaces Network (2017) *Vision For Queer Cultural Spaces in London*, Queer Spaces Network website https://queerspacesnetwork.wordpress.com

Appendix 2

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[1] Coordinated by Ben Campkin [redacted] Laura Marshall [redacted] Ben Walters [redacted] Tim Crocker-Buque [redacted] Chi Nguyen, [redacted]

like to see a greater strategic focus in placemaking for queer heritage spaces such as Soho, to protect them from being diluted and losing their special significance in the face of commercial pressures. This could be achieved through the installation of permanent LGBT commemorations, rent control for LGBT families, LGBT carehomes and special provision for the protection and creation of LGBT venues. Planning Out believes these initiatives would not only protect the special character of places like Soho from losing its queer character and heritage, but it would also create a central cultural hub for the LGBT community to come together. This would have a positive impact in improving the physical and mental wellbeing of the community.

QSN, together with The Raze Collective (a charity established to support and develop LGBTQI+ performers and performance, with a membership of more than 190 participants), co-designed a research project with UCL Urban Laboratory in 2016 in order to produce an evidence base for what was happening to LGBTQI+ nightlife spaces in London. This was subsequently developed with funding support by the GLA with a report from a second phase of work being published in 2017. This report presented evidence that 58% of venues had closed since 2006, with a fall from 121 to 51 venues. The report makes 12 recommendations for how planning policy and practice, the GLA and local authorities, can work together to better protect LGBTQI+ night-spaces and to encourage new spaces to open (appendix 2, pp. 53-57). It emphasises that measures to support the retention, re-provision and promotion of LGBTQI+ spaces should be included within Mayor's London Plan, and the Mayor's Draft Culture and the Night-time Economy Supplementary Planning Guide. This would include a requirement for local authorities to recognise the importance of LGBTQI+ venues in their borough plans; encouragement, support and guidance for LA's to undertake a Equality Impact Assessment when an LGBTQI+ venue, or one which regularly hosts LGBTQI+ events, is proposed for development; and the fostering of a more consistent city-wide practice of supporting LGBTQI+ venues to stay in operation or be re-provided when they are closed through development.

The research conducted by Urban Lab made clear that Equalities Impact Assessments in some key large-scale urban developments have failed to adequately protect clusters of LGBTQI+ venues and argues that this cannot be allowed to happen in future. For the purposes of such evaluation, in order to fulfil the duties set out in the Equality Act (2010), the report recommended that the Mayor should encourage and support local authorities to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment for any development which affects an existing LGBTQI+ venue or a venue that regularly hosts events designated for the LGBTQI+ community. In performing Equality Impact Assessments, recognising intersectionality within the LGBTQI+ community is vital. For example, if a space predominantly serves LGBTQI+ women, this clientele embody at least two protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 (sex, sexual orientation and/or gender reassignment) and potentially more (race, disability, age).

The research report also welcomed the Mayor and GLA's development of an *LGBT Venues Charter* and recommended that this be widely publicised, with the aim of informing built environment professionals and others involved in developments that risk reducing the number of LGBTQI+ venues, and with a view to replacing venues that are lost during development. We see the *Draft London Plan* as an important venue to share this charter and enforce reference to it in development situations. Local authorities should consider provision of LGBTQI+ spaces as potential cultural and social infrastructure within new developments as they arise, working with LGBTQI+ community organisations to identify potential venue operators to work with developers; and actively working with community organisations provide new LGBTQI+ spaces within existing social and cultural venues when opportunities arise.

In presenting our comments on the draft London Plan we note the important historical precedent of the Greater London Council's proactive support for gay and lesbian communities in the 1980s. In the mid-1980s the GLC published its charter C*hanging the World: the London Charter for Lesbian and Gay Rights* (1985) and supported the establishment of the London Lesbian and Gay Centre in Clerkenwell with capital funding and grants. The Charter very much outlined a vision for addressing the needs of the time, but nonetheless as a visioning exercise where local municipal gay and lesbian politics were attuned to the international context of human rights, it remains an inspirational document.

The question of what role urban policy and practitioners can have in supporting LGBTQI+ communities arose last year in the finalization of the United Nations New Urban Agenda – a key international policy framework, endorsed in December 2016, designed to promote 'a new model of urban development that is able to integrate all facets of sustainable development to promote equity, welfare, and shared prosperity.' In the final discussions about the content and expression of this influential document, there was great controversy when LGBTQI+ people were erased from the list of vulnerable groups that had been included in the draft version, which had specifically condemned violence against and intimidation towards these communities. The deletion resulted from lobbying by a group of 17 countries, led by Belarus, with some of the worst records of violence and intimidation towards those communities. The move is perhaps unsurprising, given that legal recognitions vary so greatly, and that there are still 73 countries with laws criminalising homosexuality.

The inclusion of LGBTQI+ minorities as a vulnerable group would have widened the New Urban Agenda's attention to inequality and inclusivity out to more broadly consider vulnerabilities through the spectrum of sexual and gender diversity. But this was not to be. We take the view that there is an opportunity for London as a queer capital to explicitly redress this exclusion and provide international leadership – building on the New Urban Agenda's important focus on 'cities for all', civic

engagement, cultural diversity and on the leveraging of the benefits of urbanisation to improve outcomes for vulnerable groups more broadly.

We welcome the Draft London Plan's principles of sustainability and inclusivity – a word mentioned over 100 times although not defined explicitly – and its emphases on building strong and sustainable communities, creating a healthy city, delivering homes for Londoners and growing a good economy. Given the scale of the document we have concentrated our comments on the following sections which we deem to be most relevant to the development of a plan that is a model of LGBTQI+ inclusivity: Good Growth; Housing; Social Infrastructure; and Heritage and Culture. We note that in the draft plan it is only in the latter chapter that LGBT+ community is explicitly mentioned, and it is notable that these four mentions are in supporting texts rather than specific policies. Although we understand the argument that by not specifically mentioning vulnerable groups the wording of the plan can in some cases be read as maximising inclusivity, in our view the particular needs of London's LGBTQI+ communities are such that specific advice will be beneficial to local authorities and others using the plan in their decision-making processes. Our recommendation is that the London Plan should name the specific vulnerable groups mentioned in the UN New Urban Agenda but also make specific mention of LGBTQI+ communities. Based on Urban Lab's research we would argue that failure to name these specific groups in the last London Plan has contributed to a lack of attention to their needs and spaces, resulting in the loss of 58% of venues over a 10-year period. We believe the London Plan marks a unique opportunity for the Mayor and GLA to set a world-leading benchmark in the use of the planning system to address the needs, and protect the spaces and heritage, of LGBTQI+ communities.

2. GOOD GROWTH

Inclusion of LGBTQI+ in the narrative of the plan

There are insufficient mentions of LGBTQI+ in both the policies and the narrative of the plan in order to effectively address the needs of these communities and ensure London has a world-leading plan for LGBTQI+ communities. In order to adequately increase attention to these groups alongside other vulnerable, minority and community groups, the language of the policies in the Good Growth chapter must be broadened to be less restrictive.

GG1 Build strong and inclusive communities

GG1 F

Support the creation of a London where all Londoners, including older people, disabled people*, and people with young children,* as well as people from other groups with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act, *can move around with ease and enjoy the opportunities the city provides, creating a welcoming*

environment that everyone can use confidently, independently, safely and securely without discrimination, *and with choice and dignity, avoiding separation or segregation.*

It is critical there be more mentions in the broader narrative, for stronger callouts in the supporting text around the policy, in line with mention of other minority communities. For example, the vibrancy of LGBTQI+ communities and their importance to the vitality of London can be emphasised as follows, alongside BAME communities:

Paragraph 1.1.2
London *is one of the most diverse cities in the world, a place where everyone is welcome. 40 per cent of Londoners were born outside of the UK, and over 300 languages are spoken here. 40 per cent of Londoners are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, and the city is home to a million EU citizens,1.2 million disabled people,* and the highest percentage of the UK population who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual.[2] *The success of London's communities relies upon this diversity. To keep them strong, London must remain open and inclusive, allowing everyone to share in and contribute towards the city's success.*

Inclusion and nuanced understanding of community

GG2 Making the best use of land

This policy talks about having a clear understanding about what is valued about existing places (GG2 C) but there is no elaboration about how an assessment of what a community actually values will be undertaken. There needs to be an evaluation framework or metric around the assessment of such values to gain a more nuanced understanding of a community's needs.

GG1 C & E mention the importance of community, but do not go into details about how to include communities, community spaces, and community participation.

Value and community could be tied together to these two paragraphs:

Paragraph 1.2.7 *London's distinctive character and heritage is why many people want to come to the city. As new developments are designed, the special features that Londoners value about a place, such as cultural, historic,* community *or natural elements, can be used positively to guide and stimulate growth, and create distinctive, attractive and cherished places.*

[2] Source: Office for National Statistics: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/bulletins/sexualidentityuk/2016

Paragraph 1.2.8 *Making the best use of land will allow the city to grow in a way that works for everyone. It will allow more high-quality homes,* community spaces, *and workspaces to be developed as London grows, while supporting local communities and creating new ones that can flourish in the future.*

GG2 D emphasises protecting London's open spaces, but there must also be explicit mention of the protection of London's community spaces.

Intersectional understanding of LGBTQI+ needs; greater LGBTQI inclusion across policies

The draft plan's tendency is to contain policies relevant to LGBTQI+ communities around discussions of pubs, and policies around alcohol. LGBTQI+ needs must be mentioned in other relevant sections of the plan, rather than just associating these communities with pubs, nightlife and/or the night-time economy, where there is a danger they are presented as a spectacle for the city, rather than actually integral to the life of the city itself.

There is a need to associate community spaces, including LGBTQI+ spaces, with health and wellbeing. There is a strong emphasis in community discussions on spaces which are not oriented solely towards alcohol consumption, but are rather places where communities can gather, where they do not necessarily have to pay or drink.

The Plan could in general make stronger connections between community spaces, social infrastructure, economics, a healthy city, and good growth.

3. HOUSING

Identity-responsive housing provision and services for LGBTQI+ people in London

There are a number of housing related issues covered by the London Plan that are particularly salient to LGBTQI+ Londoners (H4, H5, H14, H15), who for a range of reasons linked to historic and on-going social oppression and discrimination, find themselves to be at a high risk of being precariously housed, homeless and often lacking the social and familial networks that meet support needs.

The higher than average socio-economic vulnerabilities and related precarious circumstances concerning housing and homelessness faced by members of London's LGBTQI+ communities commonly relate to discrimination driven by prejudice towards sexual and gender minorities whose identities and experiences

challenge social norms. For instance, research by Stonewall (2018a) shows that 25% of trans people have experienced homelessness.

It is vital to recognise that LGBTQI+ people are also members of other vulnerable groups. For example LGBTQI+ older people who often feel forced back 'in the closet' in older age, LGBTQI+ young people who face higher than average instances of homelessness and LGBTQI+ people of colour who face intersecting forms of discrimination. Thus, an identity-responsive approach to housing needs, attentive to these intersecting characteristics, must be facilitated through specification in the London Plan.

Examples of identity-responsive service provision for members of the LGBTQI+ community with housing and related social needs include the Outside Project, Opening Doors London, Stonewall Housing, the Albert Kennedy Trust and For Viva (Manchester).

In addition to supporting the new services addressing the housing needs of LGBTQI+ Londoners, the GLA must support *existing* community infrastructure and networks that are well placed to understand and address LGBTQI+ community needs.

LGBTQI+ communities as an 'at risk' group

LGBTQI+ communities should be specifically referenced as constituting an 'at risk' group with higher than average vulnerability to homelessness and specific needs regarding the housing service and provision in H5, H14, H15 and H18.

Evidence supporting this is well documented in research (see reference list), which suggests that despite gains in terms of rights for LGBTQI+ people, there is reason for growing concern regarding prejudice, poverty, safety and homelessness.

For example, it is common that LGBTQI+ people experience identity-related challenges to finding secure employment, have lower than average incomes and experience workplace discrimination, contributing towards higher than average risk of eviction and homelessness (Giray Aksoy et al. 2017; Stonewall 2018a; 2013; Bachmann and Gooch 2017). London, and the UK have seen an increase in the reporting of hate crimes against LGBTQI+ people (Stonewall 2017; Mayor of London 2017), who also commonly experience violence and abuse within domestic settings by partners and family members (AKT 2015; Browne 2007; Bachmann and Gooch 2017; Stonewall 2018b).

As per policy H4, the London Plan should require London b oroughs to facilitate the provision of meanwhile spaces, temporary buildings, property guardianships and

empty buildings to provide space for identity-responsive services to address housing needs for LGBTQI+ communities.

In addition to reflecting the evidence of specific vulnerabilities of LGBTQI+ communities in the London Plan's policies on Housing, Good Growth, Social Infrastructure and Heritage and Culture, further preventative measures by the GLA would prove instrumental in addressing existing and intensifying housing and related socio-economic needs within LGBTQI+ communities. For example, establishing and financially supporting the provision of LGBTQI+ sanctuary spaces and supported housing for LGBTQI+ people facing difficult circumstances (see For Viva housing scheme for LGBT people in Salford); supporting the establishment of a LGBTQI+ community centre that hosts organisations providing identity-responsive housing services and advice.

4. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Queer spaces as hugely beneficial to London's social infrastructure

Many LGBTQI+ Londoners are among the city's most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents. Notwithstanding certain recent developments in legal recognition and media representation, many LGBTQI+ people face serious and ongoing challenges across numerous aspects of their lives, including vulnerability to hate crime, violence, discrimination and bullying and lack of equitable access to good education, physical and mental health services, housing, employment and police protection. These needs are complex and dynamic and experienced in multiple ways by different LGBTQI+ people. To understand and constructively address their relation to one another and wider issues in London requires sustained engagement and action. Yet these needs remain insufficiently understood or addressed at either strategic citywide level or local level. This partly explained though in no way excused by the fact that London's LGBTQI+ population is a minority group, dispersed throughout every borough, and comprises multiple intersecting communities with their own distinctive characteristics and needs. We broadly define queer spaces as spaces created and operated by and for LGBTQI+ people to address their distinctive wants and needs, and note queer spaces as being hugely beneficial to London's social infrastructure, supporting the complex and changing needs of a vulnerable dispersed minority community, and creating platforms for innovative forms of community, culture and enterprise that benefit all Londoners and support the capital's global identity as a uniquely open, innovative and progressive city.

Policy S1 should emphasise the importance of this in the following ways:

S1 *Boroughs, in their Development Plans,* must *undertake a needs assessment of social infrastructure to meet the needs of London's diverse communities,* with

particular attention to the needs of underserved or dispersed communities and people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act*.*

S1C *Development proposals that provide high quality, inclusive social infrastructure that addresses a local or strategic need,* with particular attention to the needs of underserved or dispersed communities and people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act*, and that support service delivery strategies should be supported.*

S1F *Development proposals that would result in a loss of social infrastructure in an area of defined need,* with particular attention to the needs of underserved or dispersed communities and people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act*, should be refused unless:*
1) There are realistic proposals for re-provision that continues to serve the needs of the neighbourhood or communities affected*, or* (etc)

S1G *Redundant social infrastructure* must *be considered for full or partial use as other forms of social infrastructure,* with particular attention to the needs of underserved or dispersed communities and people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act*, before alternative developments are considered.*

GLA support for boroughs' needs assessments

We welcome the expectation in Policy S1 that boroughs should undertake a needs assessment of social infrastructure to meet the needs of London's diverse communities. Given the relatively small and dispersed nature of London's LGBTQI+ population and the consequent lack of apparently substantial need perceived at borough level, the GLA has an obligation to support boroughs by undertaking needs assessment of vulnerable, dispersed communities at a citywide level.

GLA support for compilation of evidence base related to need for dedicated space for vulnerable, dispersed communities

Policy S1 is especially relevant to planning proposals that would incur the loss of spaces used by minority communities including the LGBTQI+ community. Evidence exists that daytime and nighttime queer spaces are beneficial to the wellbeing of London's LGBTQI+ community, that the loss of such space undermines the needs of this vulnerable community and increasing such space helps meet those needs (Campkin and Marshall, 2016; 2017). Having such evidence easily to hand would help to meet the social infrastructure needs of London's diverse communities at both strategic and local planning levels. As part of its obligation to undertake citywide assessment, the GLA should support through funding and officer time the compilation of a comprehensive integrated evidence base demonstrating the value of dedicated spaces to vulnerable, dispersed communities. This evidence base will

compile research suggesting, for instance, that access to queer space is beneficial to the health (S2), education (S3) and overall wellbeing (S4) of LGBTQI+ people. Such evidence will inform decisions under S1F and S1G.

5. HERITAGE AND CULTURE

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, spaces for the LGBTQI+ community serve multiple, important functions, including: acting as spaces to keep people safe from violence in public or at home; to provide social support and develop social networks; to allow a free expression of often repressed identities; to enable the delivery of essential health and advice services; and to provide space for civil rights organisation and activism. Overall, the silo headings in the London plan make it difficult to cover the cross-cutting importance of these spaces as sites of heritage, culture, social infrastructure and good growth. London boroughs should recognise that they all contain unique and irreplaceable LGBTQI+ heritage and this should always be part of thinking around preservation and celebration of cultural heritage.

There are several significant policies missing from the draft London Plan, namely:

In liaison with the GLA who have committed to maintaining a database of LGBTQI+ venues to monitor openings and closures into the future, the London Plan must stipulate that local authorities be responsible for developing and maintaining their own list of LGBTQI+ venues and resources in their locality, in collaboration with the local community, and ensure no net loss of venues from year-to-year.

All LGBTQI+ spaces predating 1986, and others as determined through a process of research and community engagement, should be specified in the London Plan as legacy heritage venues with protection against redevelopment.

Asset of Community Value status should be redefined to not require only a geographic community (i.e. by postcode of residence) to generate the response, so

that alternative communities, such as those with Protected Characteristics (Equality Act 2010) could also apply as a community.

In terms of the specific policies, it is disappointing not to see the protection of LGBTQI+ venues named in any of the policies currently provided. Further to this, we have the following comments on these policies:

HC5 Supporting culture and creative industries

There must be recognition that many cultural spaces have a dual purpose: particularly licensed venues (bars and pubs) that also have a performance and that these are vitally important cultural sites. LGBTQI+ culture is especially important in this regard as it is often developed in safe spaces away from the public and cannot be transferred easily into other venues. This cultural expression can often then move into the mainstream for the benefit of a wider audience, but the unique environment, away from the risk of social othering, is vitally important to the work's development.

HC5A

This policy was strongly supported by the participants in our consultation. LGBTQI+ venues and other spaces tend to cluster together, often for reasons of security. Consulting the LGBTQI+ community to identify and support identification and development of clusters is essential. London Boroughs must recognise and protect existing queer spaces, as well as support and promote pop-up and meanwhile uses, including new spaces in new developments, using the GLA's *LGBT Venues Charter* which should be specifically referred to in the London Plan.

The London Plan should itself identify and protect larger-scale or longer-lasting clusters of special significance and require boroughs to identify and protect smaller-scale or more recent clusters. Supported by the evidence base mentioned above, these should be recognised as cultural, community and heritage assets. Such clusters benefit social infrastructure, have significance to heritage conservation and growth, and help grow the nighttime and daytime economies.

HC7 Protecting public houses

This is a vitally important policy for the LGBTQI+ community. It must be recognised and prioritised that public houses are uniquely significant to many LGBTQI+ communities in terms of historic/heritage value as civic institutions and past and present use as sites of community and culture. All long-standing pubs (especially those that predate 1986) have significant 'heritage, cultural, economic or social value' to the LGBTQI+ community, and the wider public in London.

HC7C

Participants in our consultation were supportive of this policy specifically, as the closure or threat of closure for redevelopment of pubs with performance spaces has had a huge negative impact on the LGBTQI+ community in the last 10 years.

6. SUPPORT FOR RECLAIM OUR SPACES MANIFESTO

The Queer Spaces Network is a signatory to the Reclaim Our Spaces manifesto and in this response to the draft London Plan we align with the following points:

1. That the London Plan should help produce a shift in thinking so that access to and the value of community spaces is not based on business plans and income generation but on the social value of the community space and its contribution to health and wellbeing, inclusion, integration, empowerment and poverty reduction.

2. That the London Plan should recognise the irreplaceability and uniqueness of many community spaces and looking after them for future generations as being part of a continuing legacy.

3. That the London Plan should value and resource community-centred knowledge and creativity for the contribution this can make to policy discussions and a whole system approach to community engagement across the GLA.

4. That community spaces are not just physical buildings, but social spaces where cultural expression takes place. These social spaces provide movement and interaction between different cultures and it is important they are integrated as well as truly accessible to all.

5. That community spaces are essential to the achievement of lifetime neighbourhoods in which housing, health and education facilities, shops and other local amenities are affordable and accessible to everyone, now and for future generations, and where there is support for community networks based on social co-operation and mutual aid.

6. That housing estates provide a wide range of community spaces – community halls, open spaces, playgrounds and other facilities – which must be protected and their use encouraged.

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Appendix 1

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UCL URBAN LABORATORY

UCL

LGBTQ+ Cultural Infrastructure in London: Night Venues, 2006–2017

Executive Summary

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Revised September 2017

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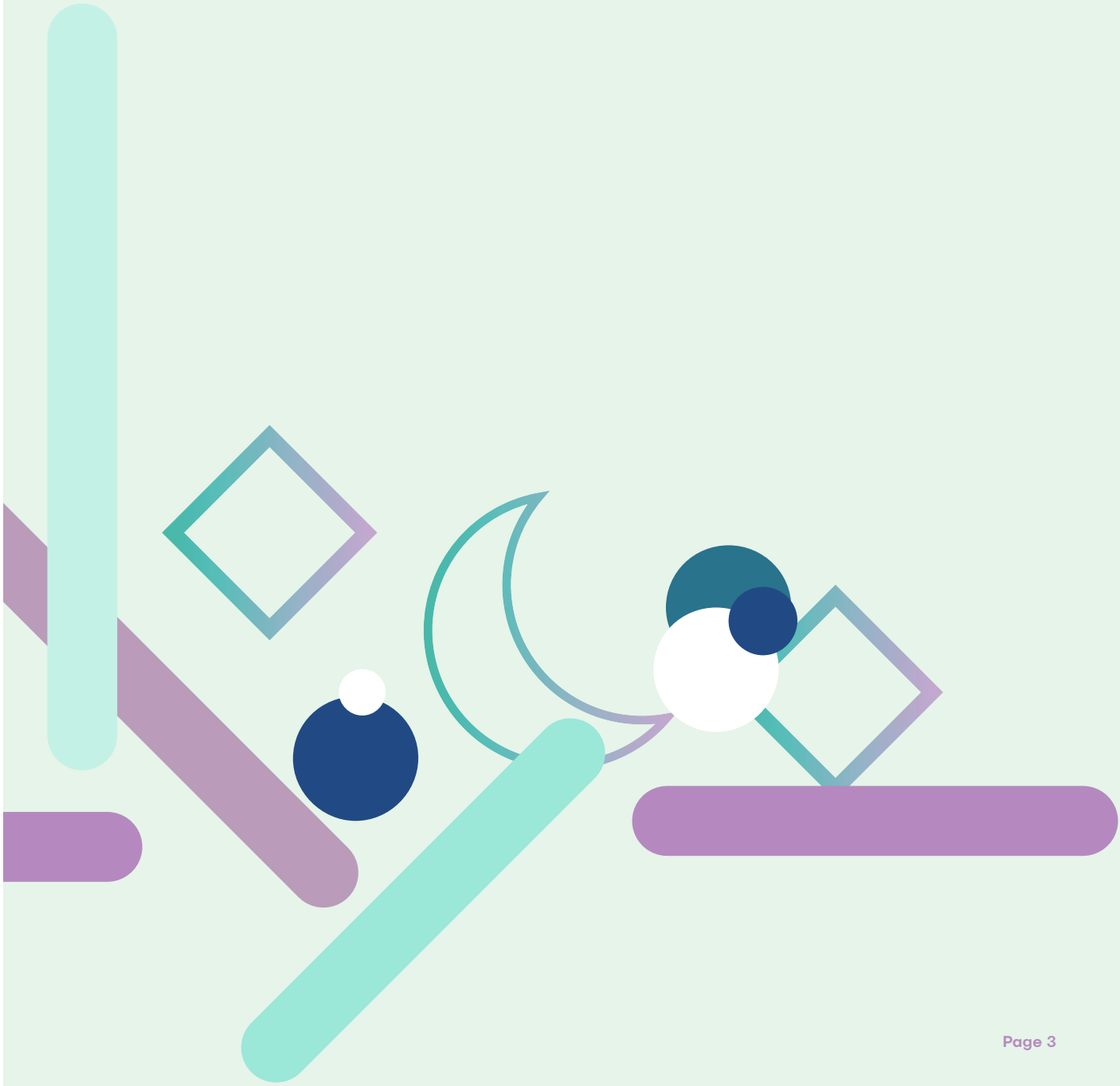
Contents

Introduction and background 4
New evidence to inform the Mayor's *Cultural Infrastructure Plan* 5
Venues: key data 6
LGBTQ+ nightlife venues: main drivers of closure 7
LGBTQ+ nightlife events: key findings 8
Survey data: key findings 9
Pubs, music venues, nightclubs: data for comparison 10

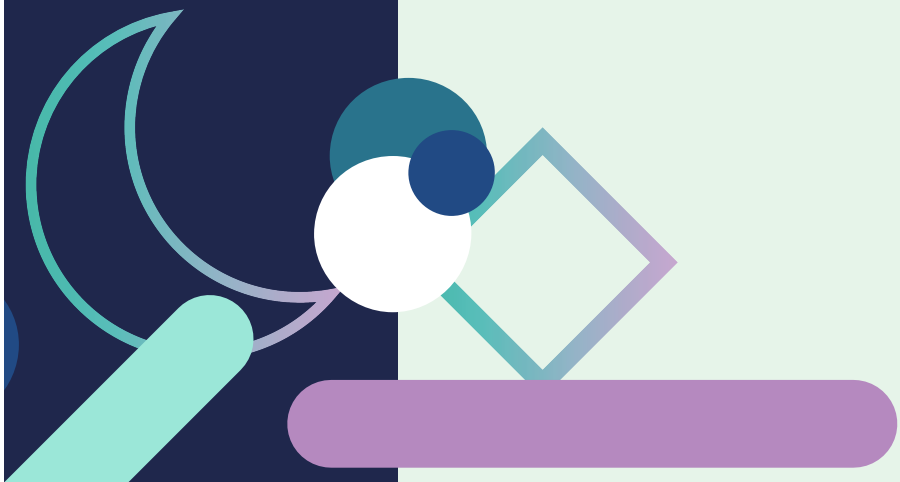


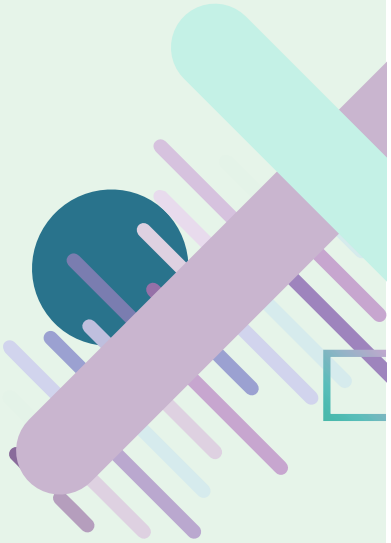
Introduction and background

This research develops a pilot mapping of LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces published in the report *LGBTQI Nightlife in London: from 1986 to the present* (2016). Both projects have been undertaken by UCL Urban Laboratory, a university-wide centre for research, teaching and public engagement on cities worldwide. The pilot research was designed in collaboration with LGBTQ+ community organisations Raze Collective (representing LGBTQ+ performers) and Queer Spaces Network (a group interested in preserving and supporting spaces for the LGBTQ+ community).

The pilot research looked at LGBTQ+ nightlife in London from 1986 – when the Greater London Council was disbanded, marking a shift in urban regeneration policy – to the present day, a time of wide reporting and activism around the closure of commercial LGBTQ+ spaces. It evidenced, for the first time, the recent intensity of closures among London's LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces, with significant impacts on the most longstanding and community-valued venues. It also highlighted that spaces catering to women and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) LGBTQ+ people have been disproportionately vulnerable to closure. The pilot project emphasised the continuing risk to many LGBTQ+ nightlife venues, including those that survey evidence showed the London LGBTQ+ community deemed to be of most value.

The research presented evidence of the diversity of the capital's LGBTQ+ nightlife as an important contributor to neighbourhoods, the night-time economy and culture. It showed the importance of nightlife venues and events to community life, welfare and wellbeing.



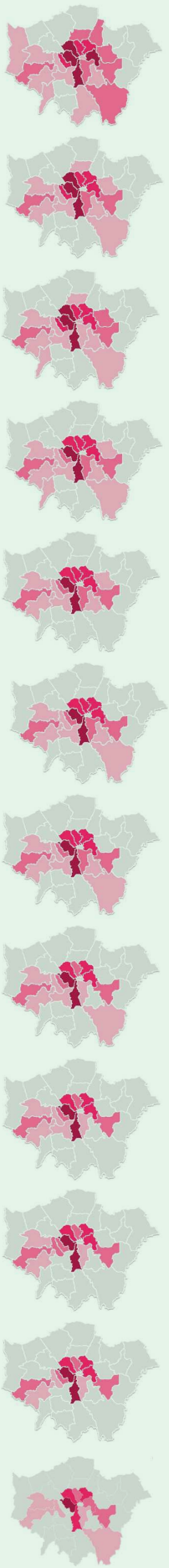


New evidence to inform the Mayor's *Cultural Infrastructure Plan*

This report contains the findings of a second phase of work extending the pilot study.

UCL Urban Laboratory have undertaken an intelligence audit of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer (LGBTQ+) night-time venues in London in order to develop a database of these venues covering the period 2006–2017, and have assessed the trends of openings and closures of these venues and identified opportunities and challenges related to these aspects of London's cultural and social infrastructure.

The Mayor of London has supported this work to further the development of the *Cultural Infrastructure Plan*. This is a manifesto commitment by the Mayor and will be published in 2018. The plan will identify what London needs to sustain and develop culture up to 2030. The collection of quantitative data on venue openings and closures will be reflected within this as part of the capital's cultural infrastructure.



Number of LGBT+ Nightlife Venues lost per year, 2006 (top) to 2017 (bottom)
Source: www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/arts-and-culture/how-were-protecting-lgbt-nightlife-venues

Venues: key data

- Since 2006, the number of LGBTQ+ venues in London has fallen from 121 to 51, a net loss of 58% of venues.
- This compares to drops of 44% in UK nightclubs (2005–2015), 35% in London grassroots venues (2007–2016) and 25% in UK pubs (2001–2016).
- Of all venues counted in our study that were in operation between 2006 and 2017, bars make up the largest proportion of venues (30%), alongside nightclubs (23%); pubs (24%); performance venues (19%); cafés (3%); and other/unspecified (2%).
- A further 35 non-LGBTQ+ specific venues that regularly host LGBTQ+ events have been counted, but since these venues were not the main focus of our research this is a partial representation. Of these venues, 29% also closed between 2006 and 2017.

Notes:

(i) UCL Urban Laboratory have searched for venues using a variety of sources. We expect that the publication of this data may prompt a small number of omitted venues to be highlighted and these will be added to the dataset and the overall figures adjusted as appropriate.

(ii) We have defined 'venues' as spaces designated as primarily LGBTQ+. See commentary, 'LGBTQ+ nightlife events', below.

LGBTQ+ nightlife venues: main drivers of closure

There were 116 venue closures in the period, often with multiple factors at play. The following table shows estimates based on information available.

Reasons for venue closures	Count	%
Became a different LGBT venue	2	1%
Venue continued/converted to non-LGBT venue	32	21%
Redevelopment	57	38%
Lease expiration/renegotiation/ terms/rent increase	10	7%
Taken over by new owner/ company/manager	5	3%
Financial issues/business viability	7	5%
Licensing dispute/revoked	5	3%
Refurbishment/renovation	3	2%
Manager/Owner decision	2	1%
Other/unknown	28	19%
Total number of reasons counted	151	100%
Total number of venue closures	116	

On the basis of this information, as well as detailed case studies of venues, we note:

- The number of closures linked to the redevelopment is significant when we consider the relatively small number of venues in the first place, and also the negative impact of large-scale transport infrastructure development on clusters of venues. This includes 5% linked to large-scale transport infrastructure development and 11% to mixed-use or residential development or conversion.
- Closures involving lease renegotiation frequently featured unfavourable terms or disproportionate rent increases. Operators and customers who have wanted and/or campaigned for venues to stay open have had severely limited negotiating power compared with large organisations leading development, such as large pub companies, property owners, off-shore investors, developers and their mediating agents.

- The number of venue closures linked to business-related financial issues was low, and this included business rate increases and brewery price increases.
- The number of venue closures as a result of a choice made by the owner/manager is likely to be higher than reported and would also include a proportion of the 28% 'other/unknown' category which includes venues for which we have no information.

LGBTQ+ nightlife events: key findings

- Although this research focuses on LGBTQ+ venues, we also present findings related to LGBTQ+ nightlife events held at a range of venues. Solely examining LGBTQ+ venues, limited to established premises, would have excluded a variety of non-venue-specific LGBTQ+ nightlife events, therefore potentially misrepresenting the overall provision of spaces and scenes, and the provision for specific groups within the LGBTQ+ community.
- Longstanding events have had important social outreach functions and value to LGBTQ+ communities, within but also far beyond venues, appearing in multiple spaces and locations around the UK and internationally.
- Our database of nearly 200 events suggests a lack of provision of LGBTQ+ venues or spaces serving women, trans, non-binary and Queer, Trans and Intersex People of Colour (QTIPOC) communities. This is partially due to closures of spaces as well as a longer-standing dearth of permanent spaces owned by and/or run for women's, trans, non-binary and/or QTIPOC communities. Yet these groups have been notably under-represented in media reports about the closure of LGBTQ+ venues.
- Collecting events data highlights an emerging shift towards LGBTQ+ events happening in non-LGBTQ+ venues in south-east London.

Survey data: key findings

As part of the research, 239 members of the LGBTQ+ community completed an in-depth survey about LGBTQ+ nightspaces. Detailed commentaries in response to the survey powerfully illustrate how the heritage of LGBTQ+ people is embedded in the fabric and specific cultures of designated LGBTQ+ venues and events. They also stress that venues are important spaces for education and intergenerational exchange.

- Anxiety and other negative emotional consequences of venue closures were consistently expressed in strong terms.
- Night-time and daytime spaces are desired by members of LGBTQ+ communities: night-time venues alone are not accessible and/or preferable to all.
- The most valued LGBTQ+ spaces were experienced as non-judgemental places in which diverse gender identities and sexualities are affirmed, accepted and respected. These were sometimes described as 'safe spaces'. What this means to individuals varies, according to personal preferences, experiences and the specific forms of discrimination and oppression that people are vulnerable to (e.g. transphobia, homophobia, racism, ableism).
- Where they are found, safe spaces are extremely valuable to the LGBTQ+ communities who use them.
- Spaces that are/were more community-oriented, rather than commercially driven, are considered vital and preferable by many within LGBTQ+ communities.
- Our survey respondents articulated support for the establishment of new LGBTQ+ community spaces in London.

Pubs, music venues, nightclubs: data for comparison

- According to Inter-Departmental Business Register data, the number of pubs in the UK fell by 25% from 2001 to 2016.
- GLA/CAMRA data shows a fall of 25% in the number of pubs in London between 2001 and 2016.
- There has been a 35% drop in London's grassroots music venues since 2007, with 94 venues extant in 2016.
- According to data from the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers data, 44% of the UK's nightclubs closed from 2005 (3,114) to 2015 (1,733).

Full Report

ucl.ac.uk/urbanlab/research/lgbtqi-space

Venues shift and change over time, but if they disappear entirely, the LGBTQI community is poorer for it.

If there are less places for queer people to connect and socialise on a normalised level, stigma returns and pushes the marginalised further into the margins and shadows.

Loss of community and the sense of shared ownership, shared experience, are devastating to marginalised individuals and groups.

Closures make the city less welcoming and less accessible for queer people and further marginalise us.

The LGBTQI community still need safe places where they can connect with each other. LGBTQI people are still closeted, feel isolated and are discriminated against and LGBTQI nightlife spaces give the community a place to feel safe, express their sexuality freely and openly.

LGBT spaces provide a safe space for people to socialise, free from fear of harassment and discrimination.

Survey respondents on the consequences of venue closures

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UCL URBAN LABORATORY

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

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July 2017

urbanlab

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July 2017

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Contents

Executive Summary

Introduction and background 5
New evidence to inform the Mayor's Cultural Infrastructure Plan 6
Venues: key findings 6
LGBTQ+ nightlife venues: main drivers of closure 7
LGBTQ+ events: key findings 9
Survey data: key findings 10
Pubs, music venues, nightclubs: data for comparison 11

Main Report

Introduction and background 12
New evidence to inform the Mayor's Cultural Infrastructure Plan 13
Methods and data sources 13
Why are venues important? Evidence from London's LGBTQ+ communities 14
Consequences of closure 15
Table 1: Consequences of venue closures, quotes from survey respondents 17
Critical commentaries on aspects of LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces 19
Table 2: Most mentioned LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces, communities survey. Nine out of 20 of the spaces most cited are venues that have been closed. 20
Comparison with Open Barbers surveys 21
Trends in venue openings and closures: 2006 to 2017 23
How does the overall fall in numbers of LGBTQ+ venues compare with data on pubs, grassroots music venues and nightclubs? 25
Breakdown of venue types 25
Table 3: Distribution of LGBTQ+ venue types, 2006 to 2017 26

Geographical clustering: shifting scenes 26
Map: LGBTQ+ venue clusters in London 27
Venue client groups 28
Table 4: LGBTQ+ Venues, Target Clientele, 2006 to 2017, all venues 29
Diversity within LGBTQ+ communities 29
Events: overview 31
Events: findings 32
Value of incorporating venue and event data 33
Table 5: Significant long-standing clubnights/events 35
Table 6: Events run by and for women, trans and QTIPOC communities established in recent years 36
Introduction to case study venues 37
Table 7: Main case studies and rationale for choice 38
Table 8: Case studies: data gathered 40
Venue types: scale, space and location 41
Closures and threats: contexts and drivers: summary 42
Closures and threats: contexts and drivers: discussion 44
Recommendations 53
Glossary 58
References 60
Research team 65
Biographies 65
Acknowledgements 67
Appendices 68

Executive Summary

Introduction and background

This research develops a pilot mapping of LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces published in the report *LGBTQ+ nightlife in London: 1986 to the present* (2016). Both projects have been undertaken by UCL Urban Laboratory, a university-wide centre for research, teaching and public engagement on cities worldwide. The pilot research was designed in collaboration with LGBTQ+ community organisations Raze Collective (representing LGBTQ+ performers) and Queer Spaces Network (a group interested in preserving and supporting spaces for the LGBTQ+ community).

The pilot research looked at LGBTQ+ nightlife in London from 1986 – when the Greater London Council was disbanded, marking a shift in urban regeneration policy – to the present day, a time of wide reporting and activism around the closure of commercial LGBTQ+ spaces. It evidenced, for the first time, the recent intensity of closures among London's LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces, with significant impacts on the most longstanding and community-valued venues. It also highlighted that spaces catering to women and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) LGBTQ+ people have been disproportionately vulnerable to closure. The pilot project emphasised the continuing risk to many LGBTQ+ nightlife venues, including those that survey evidence showed the London LGBTQ+ community deemed to be of most value.

The research presented evidence of the diversity of the capital's LGBTQ+ nightlife as an important contributor to neighbourhoods, the night-time economy and culture. It showed the importance of nightlife venues and events to community life, welfare and wellbeing.

New evidence to inform the Mayor's *Cultural Infrastructure Plan*

This report contains the findings of a second phase of work extending the pilot study.

UCL Urban Laboratory have undertaken an intelligence audit of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ+) night-time venues in London in order to develop a database of these venues covering the period 2006–2017, and have assessed the trends of openings and closures of these venues and identified opportunities and challenges related to these aspects of London's cultural and social infrastructure.

The Mayor of London has supported this work to further the development of The Cultural Infrastructure Plan. This is a manifesto commitment by the Mayor and will be published in 2018. The Plan will identify what London needs to sustain and develop culture up to 2030. The collection of quantitative data on venues openings and closures will be reflected within this as part of the capital's cultural infrastructure.

Venues: key findings

- Since 2006, the number of LGBTQ+ venues in London has fallen from 125 to 53, a net loss of 58% of venues.
- This compares to drops of 44% in UK nightclubs (2005–2015), 35% in London grassroots venues (2007–2016) and 25% in UK pubs (2001–2016).
- Of all venues counted in our study that were in operation between 2006 and 2017, bars make up the largest proportion of venues (44%), alongside nightclubs (34%); pubs (33%); performance venues (26%); cafés (4%); and other/ unspecified (4%).

- A further 25 non-LGBTQ+ specific venues that regularly host LGBTQ+ events have been counted, but since these venues were not the main focus of our research this is a partial representation.

Notes:

(i) UCL Urban Laboratory have searched for venues using a variety of sources. We expect that the publication of this data may prompt a number of omitted venues to be highlighted and these will be added to the dataset. We have recommended that closures are recorded on an on-going basis (see 'Recommendations', below).

(ii) We have only included venues as spaces designated as primarily LGBTQ+ and/or with primarily LGBTQ+ programming. For LGBTQ nightlife events see 'LGBTQ+ events', below.

LGBTQ+ nightlife venues: main drivers of closure

Over the period of study, there were 106 venues closures recorded. There are often multiple factors involved, and these are not always public knowledge. For 25% closed venues we have no data on why the venue closed. Based on the information available, we estimate that of all the closures in the period:

- 2% became a different LGBTQ+ venue.
- 30% continued to operate, sometimes under a different name, as a non-LGBTQ+ specific venue.
- 21% of venue closures were influenced by development with 6% linked to large-scale transport infrastructure development and 12% to mixed-use or residential development. This is significant when we consider the relatively small number of venues in the first place, and also the impact of development on clusters of venues.
- 6% of closed venues have been demolished, and 2% remain derelict following closure.

- 9% of venue closures featured lease renegotiations, frequently featuring unfavourable terms or disproportionate rent increases.
- In 6% of cases business-related financial issues were cited, including business rate increases and brewery price increases.
- In 5% cases there was a licensing dispute or a license was revoked.
- 2% were due to a choice made by the owner/manager. We expect that this figure is a low estimate and would also include a proportion of the 25% of closed venues for which we have no information.
- 10% of venue closures affected women's or BAME-specific LGBTQ+ venues.

On the basis of this information, as well as detailed case studies of venues, we highlight:

- the significant number of LGBTQ+ venues that have closed due to proposed or actual transport, residential or mixed-use development, sometimes with negative impacts on clusters of venues;
- that venues have often closed at a point of lease renewal on building leases, where tenant venue operators have been unable to negotiate reasonable terms to continue to lease venues;
- that operators and customers who have wanted and/or campaigned for venues to stay open have had severely limited negotiating power compared with large organisations leading development such as large pub companies, property owners, off-shore investors, developers and their mediating agents.

LGBTQ+ nightlife events: key findings

- Although this research focuses on LGBTQ+ venues, we also present findings related to LGBTQ+ nightlife events held at a range of venues. Solely examining LGBTQ+ venues, limited to established premises, would have excluded a variety of non-venue-specific LGBTQ+ nightlife events, therefore potentially misrepresenting the overall provision of spaces and scenes, and the provision for specific groups within the LGBTQ+ community.
- Longstanding events have had important social outreach and value to LGBTQ+ communities, within but also far beyond venues, appearing in multiple spaces and locations around the UK and internationally.
- Our database of nearly 200 events suggests a lack of provision of LGBTQ+ venues or spaces serving women, trans and Queer, Trans and Intersex People of Colour (QTIPOC) communities. This is partially due to closures of spaces as well as a longer-standing dearth of permanent spaces owned by and/or run for women's, trans, non-binary and/or QTIPOC communities.
- Including events data allows us to consider the nightlife scenes, spaces and cultures most closely associated with women, trans and QTIPOC-oriented LGBTQ+ communities. The evidence we have gathered suggests that these communities, who over the period of the research have had fewer licensed venues marketed towards or designated for them, have been acutely affected by venue closures. Yet these groups have been notably under-represented in media reports about the closure of LGBTQ+ venues.
- Collecting events data highlights an emerging shift towards LGBTQ+ events happening in non-LGBTQ+ venues in south-east London.

Survey data: key findings

- As part of the research, 239 members of the LGBTQ+ community completed an in-depth survey about LGBTQ+ nightspaces. Detailed commentaries in response to the survey powerfully illustrate how the heritage of LGBTQ+ people is embedded in the fabric and specific cultures of designated LGBTQ+ venues and events. They also stress that venues are important spaces for education and intergenerational exchange.
- Anxiety and other negative emotional consequences of venue closures were consistently expressed in strong terms.
- Night-time and daytime spaces are desired by members of LGBTQ+ communities: night-time venues alone are not accessible and/or preferable to all.
- The most valued LGBTQ+ spaces were experienced as non-judgemental places in which diverse gender identities and sexualities are affirmed, accepted and respected. These were sometimes described as ‘safe spaces’. What this means to individuals varies, according to personal preferences, experiences and the specific forms of discrimination and oppression that people are vulnerable to (e.g. transphobia, homophobia, racism, ableism).
- Where they are found, safe spaces are extremely valuable to the LGBTQ+ communities who use them.
- Spaces that are/were more community-oriented, rather than commercially driven, are considered vital and preferable by many within LGBTQ+ communities.
- Our survey respondents articulated support for the establishment of a new LGBTQ+ community centre in London.

Pubs, music venues, nightclubs: data for comparison

- According to Inter-Departmental Business Register data, the number of pubs in the UK fell by 25% from 2001 to 2016.
- GLA/CAMRA data shows a fall of 25% in the number of pubs in London between 2001 and 2016.
- There has been a 35% drop in London's grassroots music venues since 2007, with 94 venues extant in 2016.
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Introduction and background

This research develops a pilot mapping of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQ+) nightlife spaces published in the report *LGBTQ+ nightlife in London: 1986 to the present* (2016). Both projects have been undertaken by UCL Urban Laboratory, a university-wide centre for research, teaching and public engagement on cities worldwide. The pilot research was designed in collaboration with LGBTQ+ community organisations Raze Collective (representing LGBTQ+ performers) and Queer Spaces Network (a group interested in preserving and supporting spaces for the LGBTQ+ community).

The pilot research looked at LGBTQ+ nightlife in London from 1986 – when the Greater London Council was disbanded, marking a shift in urban regeneration policy – to the present day, a time of wide reporting and activism around the closure of commercial LGBTQ+ spaces. It evidenced, for the first time, the recent intensity of closures among London's LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces, with significant impacts on the most longstanding and community-valued venues. It also highlighted that spaces catering to women and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) LGBTQ+ people have been disproportionately vulnerable to closure (examples we cited in the report included Glass Bar, Blush Bar, Bar Titania, Candy Bar, Stokey Stop, First Out (spaces associated with women) and London Black Lesbian and Gay Centre, Busby's, Stallions (spaces associated with BAME LGBTQ+ communities)). The pilot project emphasised that many LGBTQ+ nightlife venues remain at risk, including those that survey evidence showed the London LGBTQ+ community deemed to be of most value.

The research presented evidence of the diversity of the capital's LGBTQ+ nightlife as an important contributor to neighbourhoods, the night-time economy and cultural production. It showed the importance of nightlife venues and events to community life, welfare and wellbeing.

New evidence to inform the Mayor's *Cultural Infrastructure Plan*

This report contains the findings of a second phase of work extending the pilot study.

UCL Urban Laboratory have undertaken an intelligence audit of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ+) night-time venues in London in order to develop a database of these venues covering the period 2006–2017, and have assessed the trends of openings and closures of these venues and identified opportunities and challenges related to these aspects of London's cultural and social infrastructure.

The Mayor of London has supported this work to further the development of The Cultural Infrastructure Plan. This is a manifesto commitment by the Mayor and will be published in 2018. The Plan will identify what London needs to sustain and develop culture up to 2030. The collection of quantitative data on venues openings and closures will be reflected within this as part of the capital's cultural infrastructure.

Methods and data sources

In our research we have intentionally combined qualitative and quantitative methods, including: surveys and workshops with venue owners and operators, performers, promoters, community members; archival work to retrieve and map listings magazines and ephemera related to LGBTQ+ venues; and detailed case studies of a range of closed, established and new venues, based on public documents, interviews with venue operators, media, archives and other sources.

The LGBTQ+ venues dataset we have created is a composite of many different sources, predominantly: city guide websites and blogs, neighbourhood listings, city guidebooks; Facebook and other social media sites; fashion and music media; LGBTQ+ history websites; LGBTQ+ archives; LGBTQ+ media; local

newspapers; national newspapers; pub guides; and venue websites.

We have sampled many different LGBTQ+ listings magazines, but these publications only provide a partial picture of the capital's LGBTQ+ nightlife. Patterns have to be understood as subject to distinct editorial policies, and different publications are linked to specific communities, scenes, clusters or neighbourhoods.

Although we have searched for venues using a variety of sources, we expect that the publication of this data may prompt a small number of omitted venues to be highlighted, which can be added to a map at http://maps.london.gov.uk/lgbtq/

Why are venues important? Evidence from London's LGBTQ+ communities

In this phase of work, in order to contextualise the audit of venues, we have undertaken an analysis of the survey we conducted with LGBTQ+ community members during the pilot phase of the project. Using the online Typeform platform, the communities survey included:

- Five questions relating to demographic information on gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age and other identity characteristics.
- Six questions on LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces, including whether they were important, if so how and why, and if not why not.
- Questions asking for respondents to identify spaces that were deemed to be, or have been, of most value personally and/or for reasons of heritage/LGBTQ+ heritage.

In total 239 people responded to the survey. These responses provide a wealth of information and insight into experiences of London's LGBTQ+ people. The following remarks summarise

the findings. The method of analysis is detailed in Appendix 1: LGBTQ+ Communities Survey – NVIVO Coding.

Consequences of closure

Concerns about the consequences of venue closures were wide-ranging. For the purposes of this report, we note that respondents were particularly concerned about:

The loss of LGBTQ+ individual and community history related to venue closures, especially given the connection between struggles for LGBTQ+ rights and nightlife venues. Respondents expressed anxiety about how closures would erase or invalidate heritage, a sense of common ownership, shared experiences and identities.

The loss of spaces of belonging. LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces were seen as important places to express LGBTQ+ rights and the community rituals that have helped people to survive forms of oppression and discrimination, from one generation to another. Venues were seen to contain, embed or communicate LGBTQ+ heritage in their fabric and atmospheres, and to provide a structure that holds specific communities together.

The importance of LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces to the formation and expression of identities. Respondents emphasised, in particular, places that had been important to coming out – and coping with associated anxiety or rejection. They also discussed how they had felt able to experiment in such spaces; forging or understanding their own identities and feeling acceptance and validation, personal development and the acquisition of self-confidence. Respondents also talked about being attracted to the city because of LGBTQ+ nightlife, and of its importance when they had newly arrived in the city and were therefore finding information, experiencing new scenes, meeting partners and friends. The narratives people expressed emphasised that LGBTQ+ identities are shaped both in relation to specific venues and through the network of venues across the city and in particular neighbourhoods. Respondents also talked about venues as places to escape homophobia, feel like they belonged to something worthwhile, and to have fun –

which was noted as being important to mental health and wellbeing.

***The loss of 'safe spaces' and the consequences for LGBTQ+ communities and individuals was a strong concern for many respondents*.** They remarked on various aspects of what 'safe space' might mean. Main themes included: safety for self-expression; to be with friends; protection from heteronormativity, homophobia, harassment, other forms of discrimination and threats or actual violence. Safe spaces were prized as being open, secure, non-threatening, refuges, inclusive, pockets within safe neighbourhoods, and spaces where cis- and heteronormativity do not dominate and/or are challenged. They engendered feelings of security and safety and freedom to be, without being challenged or having to explain oneself, e.g. to use the toilet without being questioned about one's gender; to not feel 'other' or in the minority; and to feel safe as part of a group. Such spaces were conceived as havens or substitute homes and it was important that they were dedicated LGBTQ+ spaces.

The negative emotional and wellbeing effects of venue closures on LGBTQ+ peoples' sense of identity and community*. The terms chosen to describe these effects were consistently strong*, conveying the anxiety felt about the closure of venues (erasure, erosion, devastation, ostracization, stigma, 'the world closing down', pushing people 'back into the closet'). Some individuals stated that LGBTQ+ venues, specifically those in their own neighbourhoods, were the main spaces in the city where they felt a sense of belonging. Many respondents were specifically alarmed because of a perception that venues are completely disappearing rather than being replaced. Closures were seen to have potential to further exclude LGBTQ+ people, forcing them to live less social/public lives, and impacting on already marginalised groups within the LGBTQ+ communities, for example by eliminating spaces for QTIPOC and women.

The importance of LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces as venues to learn about, experience and be entertained by performance, music, film, fashion and other forms of art and creativity, including those specific to LGBTQ+ people (e.g. drag

‘Closure makes me depressed. We fought so hard in the '70s for our rights, and here in London were blessed with the open manifestation of these rights in our bars and clubs.’

‘Venues shift and change over time, but if they disappear entirely, the LGBTQI community is poorer for it.’

‘Something in the community dies with every closed door, from Madam Jojo’s to the Black Cap to the Joiner’s Arms.’

‘If there are less places for queer people to connect and socialise on a normalised level, stigma returns and pushes the marginalised further into the margins and shadows.’

‘Loss of community and the sense of shared ownership, shared experience, is devastating to marginalised individuals and groups.’

‘[Closures] make the city less welcoming and less accessible for queer people and further marginalises us.’

Table 1: Survey respondents on the consequences of venue closures

performance). Venues were noted to be platforms for performers to launch and develop careers, and closures were therefore seen as a threat for the rise of new artists, art forms, and for the professional development of many artists.

The role of London, as a national and international exemplar of LGBTQ+ culture and community, with a large LGBTQ+ population. Respondents felt that the capital should be a positive example in terms of how LGBTQ+ venues and cultures are supported.

‘[The] LGBTQI community still need safe places where they can connect with each other. LGBTQI people are still closeted, feel isolated and are discriminated against and LGBTQI nightlife spaces give the community a place to feel safe, express their sexuality freely and openly.’

‘Having a safe and unprejudiced place to socialise and have fun is important for my mental health and wellbeing.’

‘LGBT spaces provide a safe space for people to socialise, free from fear of harassment and discrimination.’

‘These venues are not re-opening somewhere else. We're losing them altogether, and for me that is the most alarming. Where will we go?’

Critical commentaries on aspects of LGBTQ+ nightlife

Although respondents were overwhelmingly positive about the value of LGBTQ+ nightlife space to London, to LGBTQ+ communities, and to themselves, several respondents raised points that were directly critical of LGBTQ+ nightlife in London, and its consumers. For example, several respondents who commented on the scene's commercial focus felt it to be geared towards middle-class audiences and exclusionary through its economic profile or other forms of standardisation and/or discrimination. Soho, in particular, was associated by some respondents with commercial, unfriendly and 'sanitised' forms of LGBTQ+ nightlife. In a number of instances this was pitted against community-oriented nightlife, sometimes associated with earlier periods.

A high frequency of the respondents who were critical of aspects of LGBTQ+ nightlife noted the lack of spaces for LGBTQ+ women and lesbians, older lesbians, queer and bisexual women and trans nights and venues.

In observing that LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces were 'far from perfect', respondents remarked on specific exclusionary aspects including: racism, classism, ableism, sexism, transphobia and homophobia. Some respondents expanded on this with critical remarks on:

- an over-dominance of cis gay men (including in women's spaces) and venues/events that promoted idealised body type (hyper-masculine/muscular male)
- alcohol/drinking culture and drug use
- normativity/homonormativity
- loud music and crowds
- prohibitive prices
- a lack of venues outside Zone 1
- an uninspiring or boring atmosphere.

Venues or events that did not display these negatively perceived characteristics – e.g. not being alcohol-centred – were held up as positive examples.

Table 2: Most mentioned LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces, communities survey. Nine out of 20 of the spaces most cited are venues that have been closed.

LGBTQ+ Space (venues and events)	**Status** (Open/closed venue or active/Inactive event)	**Communities survey references**
Royal Vauxhall Tavern	Open	67
Black Cap	Closed	44
Joiners Arms	Closed	33
The Glory	Open	27
Bar Wotever/Wotever World	Active	24
Dalston Superstore	Open	21
First Out	Closed	21
George and Dragon	Closed	19
Retro Bar	Open	17
Heaven	Open	14
The Ghetto	Closed	14
Candy Bar	Closed	13
The Yard	Open	13
G-A-Y	Open	12
Madame Jojo's	Closed	12
The Sombrero (Yours or Mine)	Closed	12
Duckie	Active	11
Soho Venues	n/a	11
Nelson's Head	Closed	10

Comparison with Open Barbers surveys

Our survey findings, which highlight the value of safe spaces in which members of LGBTQ+ communities feel affirmed in their identities, are supported by a client survey carried out in 2016 by Open Barbers, a queer- and trans-friendly hairdressers in East London (see Appendix 2 and Appendix 3). Respondents articulated overwhelmingly positive experiences at Open Barbers, in contrast to experiences with hairdressers that are less welcoming to LGBTQ+ clients and/or less oriented around their needs. Some questions asked respondents to highlight existing and closed (offline) LGBTQ+ 'spaces/services/projects' that they have or had found valuable.

When asked if they have 'ever used or wanted to use an LGBTQ+ space/service/project that no longer exists', four of the five most frequently referenced names were closed venues: First Out, Black Cap, Joiners Arms and the London Lesbian and Gay Centre. The other 'space/service/project' mentioned was LGBTQ+ mental health charity PACE, which closed in 2016.

When considered together, our communities survey and that of Open Barbers emphasise key issues relating to safe spaces for LGBTQ+ communities including:

- Night-time *and* daytime spaces are beneficial to, and desired by, members of LGBTQ+ communities. Night-time venues alone are not accessible and/or preferable to all. Research examining LGBTQ+ nightlife only is therefore limited in terms of the scope of spaces covered. While daytime spaces dedicated to LGBTQ+ communities are relatively rare, further research exploring the dynamics of spaces serving LGBTQ+ communities during the daytime would be valuable.
- For LGBTQ+ spaces to be safe, they must be experienced as non-judgemental places in which diverse gender identities and sexualities are affirmed, accepted and respected. What this means to individuals varies according to personal preferences, experiences and the

specific oppressions people are vulnerable to (for example transphobia, homophobia, racism and ableism.)

- Where they are found, safe spaces are extremely valuable to the LGBTQ+ communities who use them.
- Spaces that are or were more community-oriented, rather than commercially driven, are considered vital and preferable by many within LGBTQ+ communities.
- Findings from both surveys indicate strong support for the establishment of new LGBTQ+ community spaces in London.

Trends in venue openings and closures: 2006 to 2017

Looking at the period from 2006 to 2017, we identified 162 LGBTQ+ venues in total. This reached a peak of 125 venues operating in 2006, and a low of 53 venues operating in 2017. There has therefore been a net loss of 58% of venues.

Although we have methodically searched for venues using a variety of sources, we expect that the publication of our dataset may prompt a small number of omitted venues to come forward, and if that is the case they will be added to the data and an update of overall figures will be published as an addendum.

We also counted an additional 25 venues that we classify as non-LGBTQ+ venues that regularly host established LGBTQ+ events. This is an important category of space, but is not one that we have actively focused on in gathering data, so this number is inevitably an under-estimation. Such spaces are valuable, and if this figure is rising, then that could be positive for LGBTQ+ communities. However, it cannot be assumed without further research that these venues provide the kinds of space most valued or needed by LGBTQ+ people as expressed by the respondents to our communities survey. Examples of currently operating venues of this kind include Bethnal Green Working Men's Club, Hackney Showroom, Limewharf, The Macbeth, Oval House, and The Scala.

The brief for this project was to concentrate on the past decade (from 2006 to 2017). However, following the pilot project, we have a larger historical dataset and we can see from this that the number of venues rises steadily from 1986 to 2001, before dropping slightly, then peaking in 2006, then – with the exception of 2008 – dropping year on year until 2017, with notably sharp falls in 2007

(23 venues closed), 2009 (17 venues closed), and 2016 (11 venues closed).

The fall in provision of LGBTQ+ venues is demonstrated further when we compare this data with the population of London over time. Using Office for National Statistics data showing mid-year population estimates for London there were 15.11 LGBTQ+ venues per million population in 2006, falling to 6.71 in 2016 (conservatively calculated using the 2015 mid-year estimate). As the population of London has risen from 8.3 million to 9 million people over the last decade, it might be expected that the provision to LGBTQ+ venues would also have increased. Instead, the relative number of venues has dropped by 58%.

This significant drop in LGBTQ+ venues is also alarming when seen alongside other recent data. For instance, according to Metropolitan Police data, homophobic hate crime in London rose by 12% over the year to March 2017, to over 2,000 recorded incidents. Furthermore, National Institute for Mental Health in England research indicates that LGBTQ+ people experience higher rates of mental ill health than the rest of the population, and this is supported by research by Public Health England and PACE (London Assembly Health Committee; and see also Meyer, 2003). Stonewall have also identified barriers to LGBTQ+ people accessing healthcare – a context of exclusion in which communal spaces deemed safe spaces by LGBTQ+ communities play a fundamental role, as our survey data emphasises.

Although our research focuses on night-time venues, there are of course many other kinds of space associated with LGBTQ+ communities in London and the UK (Historic England, 2016). In general, we have not included data on venues such as restaurants or theatres, since these are both day and night venues; and we have not included data on saunas, as a specific type of venue used both by day and night and is subject to specific types of license. Our research suggests that the number of non-commercial and/or community-oriented daytime

spaces in London has also diminished – two notable examples mentioned in our survey and other data are First Out café and PACE, a long-standing mental health service for LGBTQ+ people which recently closed after 31 years of operation due to cuts to local authority funding (*Pink News*, 2016).

How does the overall fall in numbers of LGBTQ+ venues compare with data on pubs, grassroots music venues and nightclubs?

For comparison, according to Inter-Departmental Business Register data, the number of pubs in the UK fell by 25% from 2001 to 2016. GLA/CAMRA data shows a fall of 25% in the number of pubs in London between 2001 and 2016. According to GLA/Nordicity data, there has been a 35% drop in London's grassroots music venues since 2007, with 94 venues extant in 2016. According to data from the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers, nearly 50% of the UK's nightclubs closed from 2005 (3,114) to 2015 (1,733).

Breakdown of venue types

Table 3 shows the distribution of venue types in the period 2006 to 2017, which is similar to the distribution in the dataset overall, including our pilot data going back to 1986. Bars make up the biggest proportion of venues (44%), followed by nightclubs (34%) and pubs (33%). Performance venues (26%) are another important category. Non-LGBTQ+ specific venues that regularly host LGBTQ+ events make up 25 of the total (16%), a higher figure than seen in the overall dataset going back to 1986 (3%).

Table 3: Distribution of LGBTQ+ venue types, 2006 to 2017

Type of venue	2006–2017 total number of venues	% of total
Unspecified	7	4
Nightclub	54	34
Bar	70	44
Pub	53	33
Cafe	6	4
Performance/ cabaret space	42	26

Geographical clustering: shifting scenes

London's LGBTQ+ nightlife has been widely dispersed across London, with larger concentrations in some specific areas.

There are distinctive clusters of LGBTQ+ venues associated with Earls Court/Shepherd's Bush in the 1970s and 1980s and King's Cross in the 1980s/1990s; and, continuing into the present, Soho from the 1990s; Vauxhall from the late 1990s and early 2000s, Shoreditch/Dalston/Bethnal Green from the 2000s, and both closures and openings in Bermondsey/Lewisham/ Peckham/Deptford from the 2010s (see map, below).

An interactive map has been created using the data from the audit of venues we have conducted and this will be made publicly available.

Map: LGBTQ+ venue clusters in London.

The interactive map emphasises that as well as the larger clusters, in the period of study numerous smaller clusters are also evident, as well as individual venues in many neighbourhoods across London.

The map also indicates the net loss of venues on a borough by borough basis, comparing the relative density through each year of the study. From this we see that boroughs such as Camden and Tower Hamlets, which started with higher densities of >11 in 2006 have lower densities by 2017.

By 2016 there are only two boroughs with venue counts of >11, which are Westminster and Lambeth. There are 10 boroughs that have no recorded LGBTQ+ venues in 2006 and 19 in 2016. In some cases there was only a

very small number of venues which have been lost but these losses are nonetheless significant given the evidence we have gathered on the important community and neighbourhood functions of LGBTQ+ venues.

Venue client groups

Of the venues documented in the period from 2006 to 2017, we have recorded the clientele group as expressed in listings. These designations may be derived from venue operators or promoters themselves, or be determined by listings magazine copywriters. Where the researchers have personal knowledge of venues, this has been used to refine the data. Although the results can only be indicative – the actual clientele may differ from that reported by venues or by listings magazines – overall we see a bias towards venues that cater for ‘gay’ clients over lesbian, bisexual, trans or queer people, and this correlates with other evidence gathered through the project. ‘Gay’ is an identity that is primarily associated with gay men, but we note that ‘gay’ does not only include male-identifying people, and may be used by venue operators and promoters to target people of all genders.

Table 4: LGBTQ+ Venues, Target Clientele, 2006 to 2017, all venues

LGBTQ+ venues' target clientele	Number of venues with designation towards specific client group (% of all venues, 2006–17)
Unspecified	25 (15%)
Lesbian	46 (28%)
Gay	123 (74%)
Bisexual	30 (18%)
Trans	22 (13%)
Transvestite/Crossdressing	9 (5%)
Queer	16 (10%)
Queer, Trans and Intersex People of Colour	1 (1%)

Note: some venues in our data have targeted multiple client groups.

Diversity within LGBTQ+ communities

In our data only one venue (now closed) was recorded as being oriented around QTIPOC (Queer, Trans and Intersex People of Colour) or BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic) LGBTQ+ communities.

Based on our communities survey and data on LGBTQ+ venues and venue closures, sensitivity to intersectionality and diversity within LGBTQ+ communities is especially important in planning, licensing and support for culture. Multiple and overlapping discrimination and oppressions and related issues of accessibility are experienced differently by members of communities depending upon sexuality, gender, ethnicity, class, abilities, age and faith (Crenshaw, 1991; Doan, 2015; Irazábal and Huerta,

2016). It is vital that LBGTQ+ is not understood as synonymous with gay, and that it is understood that gay bars are not necessarily inclusive or accessible to all members of gay communities, let alone LGBTQ+ communities. This has implications in terms of how the current provision of LGBTQ+ scenes and spaces are understood, including by planners and members of local authorities. For example, that existing, opening and closing spaces benefit particular communities in ways that are not equally inclusive to all within LGBTQ+ communities. They are not, therefore, simply interchangeable or easily replaced.

Events: overview

During our research it has become increasingly clear that collecting data on LGBTQ+ venues only, rather than venues *and* events, is unhelpful in capturing the actual profile of spaces and scenes. Specifically, we are concerned that examining venue data only – limited to established premises – overlooks certain LGBTQ+ people and groups, especially those who have seen venues serving their communities close and/or have experienced a long-standing lack of access to spaces owned and managed by and for them. Those most affected by closures and absences of community-specific venues are women, trans people and queer, trans and intersex people of colour (QTIPOC). Nightlife created by and for these communities tends to take the form of club nights and events of varying regularity rather than full-time and/or established LGBTQ+ premises.

As the findings show in greater detail, on one hand this signals a level of resilience, since members of women's, trans and QTIPOC communities have created and used spaces temporarily within LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ venues. On the other hand, this also signals a lack of secure access to permanent space operated by, and oriented around the needs of, LGBTQ+ women, trans and QTIPOC communities. Events by and for women, trans and QTIPOC communities appear to exist despite lack of access to permanent community-specific spaces, rather than because community-specific spaces are not considered valuable, desirable or beneficial to mental health and emotional wellbeing (Hope 2017; Mohammad 2017; Meyer 2003). The status quo regarding LGBTQ+ nightlife venues does not provide dedicated spaces for members of LGBTQ+ communities equally, with those who experience overlapping and intersecting forms of oppression and discrimination (including homophobia, transphobia, racism and sexism) most adversely effected by a lack of access to community-specific spaces. This raises complex issues around power disparities within LGBTQ+ communities regarding the ownership of, and

access to, spaces that are free from sexism, transphobia and racism. Such issues were raised in multiple aspects of this research, including our communities surveys, our panel discussions, and events, as well as related events by organisations including UK Black Pride (2017).

Events: findings

Evidence produced through our research (including archival research, mapping, surveys and interviews) suggests that LGBTQ+ women, trans people and QTIPOC experience barriers to establishing and/or owning venues – and even, in some cases, to running events. This is not to say that venues cannot or do not host nightlife serving different groups across LGBTQ+ communities in London. Our dataset of venues from 2006 to 2017 demonstrates an overall absence of spaces owned and/or run by and for QTIPOC communities. It also highlights closures of spaces such as Busby's, London Black Lesbian and Gay Centre, Stallions, Glass Bar, Candy Bar and Blush Bar, as well as longer-standing absences of permanent spaces owned by and/or run for trans and QTIPOC communities.

However, the dataset of events suggest a growing number of club nights and other events serving QTIPOC communities. Although some of these events are held in LGBTQ+ venues, this is not universally the case. Our events data highlights an emerging shift towards LGBTQ+ events happening in non-LGBTQ+ venues in south-east London, which reflects both the lack of LGBTQ+ venues in those neighbourhoods and a demand for LGBTQ+ nightlife in south London, serving different communities to Vauxhall's gay male-centric clubbing scenes.

There are observable disparities regarding who owns and manages venues serving LGBTQ+ communities – and which members of LGBTQ+ communities have most access to space. Specifically, venues tend to be owned

and managed by – and to predominantly serve – white, cis, gay men, and this contributes to limiting access to these spaces for members of communities, promoters and performers who are women, trans and QTIPOC. Issues relating to this power asymmetry and lack of access to, and ownership of, spaces have been emphasised in public discussions on LGBTQ+ spaces by women, trans and QTIPOC promoters (for example, by promoters BBZ and performer Mzz Kimberley during an Urban Lab panel discussion at Peckham Festival in 2016 as well as the recent UK Black Pride event on QTIPOC nightlife in 2017). During the latter event, panel and audience members expressed concerns regarding accessing and creating QTIPOC nightlife spaces. These included: the exclusion of people of colour by white promoters and club owners; racism within LGBTQ+ communities; prejudices about black music and clientele leading to harsher policing and security requirements; and questioning of the need for QTIPOC-specific spaces or events by non-QTIPOC business owners.

This evidence of lack of access to permanent and dedicated spaces for LGBTQ+ women, trans and QTIPOC communities supports calls from our performers, promoters and communities survey for the value of, and need for, new LGBTQ+ community spaces in London.

Value of incorporating venue and event data

With these points in mind, we have incorporated venue data in order to:

- Highlight non-LGBTQ+ venues hosting LGBTQ+ nightlife that would otherwise be overlooked. This means that we can feature club nights that have played significant roles in London's scenes, from Club Kali, a long-standing event created for and by South

Asian and Desi LGBTQ+ communities, to relative newcomers like Maricumbia, a Latinx queer dance party.

- Give a more comprehensive understanding of nightlife at LGBTQ+ venues, as demonstrated by the presence of Duckie and Wotever at the Royal Vauxhall Tavern (RVT) – two initiatives that have outreach and social value to LGBTQ+ communities within but also far beyond the venue, appearing in multiple spaces and locations around the UK and internationally.
- Trace emerging scenes and nights in areas of London where LGBTQ+ nightlife has otherwise been uncommon or existed historically but then declined. This applies to nights such as BBZ and Fruité, hosted in non-LGBTQ+ venues in south-east London.
- Ensure the inclusion of LGBTQ+ nightlife scenes, cultures and communities oriented around women, trans, non-binary and QTIPOC, who are acutely affected by venue closures and absences and yet have featured less frequently in media reports that have focused largely on established premises operated by cis, white, gay men.

Table 5: Significant long-standing clubnights/events

Name	Year est.	Description
Blessence	2003	Events for older women of colour in south and east London.
Wotever	2003	Trans-inclusive queer events in South and East London at the RVT (Vauxhall), Hackney Attic and The Glory (Hackney).
Unskinny Bop	2002	Women, Feminist, queer, body-positive night at the Star of Bethnal Green, East London.
Bootylicious	2001	LGBT black music rave/club night at Union (Vauxhall) and previously elsewhere.
Club Kali	1995	Desi, South Asian LGBTQ+ community. Located in The Dome (Tufnell Park), Kolia (Archway), Scala (King's Cross).
Duckie	1995	LGBTQ+/queer cultural production that is accessible and addresses social barriers and exclusions (QTIPOC, youth and older people, homelessness communities, mental health and wellbeing). Various locations, including RVT (Vauxhall), Rich Mix (Bethnal Green), elsewhere.
Exilio Latino	1995	Latin LGBTQ+ and Latinx dance club, Various locations, including Soho, Latimer Road.
Way Out Club	1993	Club night for trans women, drag queens, cross-dresses and transvestites. Based at The Minories, City of London.
Long Yang Club	1983	Social events for gay east Asian men in west London.

Table 6: Events run by and for women, trans and QTIPOC communities established in recent years

Name	Year est.	Description
Cocoa Butter Club	2016	Showcases and celebrates performers of colour, Her Upstairs (Camden).
Fruité	2016	LGBTQ+ night in Peckham, south-east London.
Maricumbia	2015	Night for Latinx communities, requires accessible venue (Limewharf).
BBZ	2016	Night for QTIPOC women and non-binary people in south-east London.
Butch, Please!	2015	Women's night celebrating female masculinities, RVT (Vauxhall).
Femme Fraîche	2015	Night for femme women, Dalston Superstore (Dalston).
Desi Boys	2014	Night for gay South Asian men.
Pout (Glass Bar)	2013	Events for women in King's Cross, organised by people behind Glass Bar.
Boi Box	2013	Drag King nights across London LGBT venues, She Bar (Soho), Her Upstairs (Camden), The Glory (Hackney).
Club Lesley	2013	Night for queer women and lesbians, Dalston Superstore, The Glory (Hackney).

Introduction to case study venues

As part of our research, we have constructed extensive case studies of ten specific venues. We chose venues that were in various locations and that exemplified different periods, neighbourhoods and clientele groups. We included long-standing, recently open and recently closed venues.

In collating this information, our sources included interviews, public documents, planning applications and supporting documents, other archives, plans and other architectural and technical drawings, photographs and media articles.

We would note the absence of economic data and attendance numbers, although where possible we have searched Companies House listings and have asked operators/licensees about venue capacities, turnover and the current status of the businesses they operate.

Table 7: Main case studies and rationale for choice

Name	Year open	Year closed	Rationale for case study
The Black Cap	1965	2015	Longstanding venue in consistent LGBTQ+ use until closure. Now a site of LGBTQ+ community campaign to reopen the venue as an LGBTQ+ space.
Bloc Bar	2015	2017	Part of a network of spaces with a common entrepreneur/operator; links to Black Cap campaign.
Bloc South	2017	*n/a*	Part of a network of spaces with a common entrepreneur/operator. Newly opened venue and representative of large nightclubs in railway arches associated with Vauxhall scene.
Central Station	1992	*n/a*	Established venue that has survived the King's Cross regeneration and expanded its customer-base whilst maintaining a strong LGBTQ+ identity and clientele.
City of Quebec	1946	*n/a*	Historic venue for older gay men with heritage as London's oldest gay bar. Recent refurbishment by pubco.

East Bloc	2011	*n/a*	Basement nightclub that is part of a network of spaces with an entrepreneur/operator in common.
First Out	1986	2011	Popular co-operatively run cafe and bar that closed due to Crossrail project/St Giles regeneration. Originally established with support from Camden Council.
Her Upstairs/ Them Downstairs	2016/ 2017	*n/a*	New performance-oriented space in Camden with links to Black Cap. Creating space for, and supporting, queer and QTIPOC performance and promoters. Replaced Bloc Bar.
Joiners Arms	1997	2015	Early venue established in what evolved into an east London LGBTQ+ scene. Closed and currently part of a redevelopment scheme. Community campaign to reopen an LGBTQ+ space.
The Yard	1995	*n/a*	Long-running successful Soho venue that has recently resisted redevelopment with strong LGBTQ+ community backing.

Table 8: Case studies: data gathered

Case study venues: data gathered
Landowner/freeholder
Building owner (leaseholder)
Venue lessee/tenant
Licensee
Planning use class
Area
Capacity
Accessibility (entrance/bathroom)
Gender-neutral bathrooms
Building date and style
Distinctive architectural, aesthetic and spatial features
Current use
Target clientele
Majority clientele
Marketing
Annual turnover
Staffing
Performers
Connections with other venues
Current status
Special factors allowing venue to open
Challenges to opening
Reasons for closure
Heritage value

Venue types: scale, space and location

The venues ranged from an annual turnover of £450,000 to £2m according to indicative estimates provided by operators. The range of business types varied greatly, from a socialist cooperative with a local authority as a financial guarantor (First Out), to more entrepreneurial models (Bloc bars), independent and pubco-managed pubs (Central Station, The City of Quebec).

The venues employed between 5 and 18 full-time equivalent staff, as well as part-time and casual staff, performers, promoters, security and cleaning staff.

The venues we researched occupied a range of building types in different locations in the north, south, east and West End. These included pubs, basement and railway arch clubs, a Victorian coaching inn, a Victorian carriage house and courtyard, and a hi-tech industrial shed. A number of these buildings were ‘unlisted buildings of merit’ and/or in conservation areas (The Yard, The City of Quebec). These are recognised as built heritage, but as everyday rather than exceptional buildings. Accessibility was an issue in older building stock as well as in underground spaces (e.g. Central Station’s Underground Club, East Bloc).

Three of the case studies were purpose-built as pubs (The Joiners Arms, The City of Quebec and The Black Cap). In a number of other cases, ordinary and former industrial buildings have been creatively and successfully repurposed as LGBTQ+ venues. The venues, overall, varied in scale from approximately 103 m2 to 1,800 m2 with capacity levels ranging from 110 to 300. Often the type of space was an essential attribute helping to define the use of the space. For example, the enclosed outside courtyard at The Yard provides a protected outdoor space, an internal courtyard, and this feature that was

important in the heritage and social value arguments put forward to defend the space against development proposals.

The level of visibility and sense of enclosure were important to operators who pointed to customers' need to feel secure in using the space. In one case the building had been physically attacked in homophobic incidents (Central Station), leading to it being shuttered, and in another the exterior had been designed with the expectation of it being attacked (First Out). The discussion of the visibility or enclosure of venues, and the retention of façades as historical reference points, featured in a number of planning applications related to development and refurbishment (The Joiners Arms, City of Quebec, First Out, The Yard) and a controversial refurbishment scheme by which long-standing clientele felt threatened (The City of Quebec).

In many cases, subtle uses of interior aesthetics were important to creating atmospheres with the attraction of specific client groups in mind, as with the use of references to industrial New York City spaces (Bloc Bar, Bloc South).

Closures and threats: contexts and drivers: summary

Over the period of study, there were 106 venues closures recorded. There are often multiple factors involved, and these are not always public knowledge. For 25% closed venues we have no data on why the venue closed. Based on the information available, we estimate that of all the closures in the period:

- 2% became a different LGBTQ+ venue.
- 30% continued to operate, sometimes under a different name, as a non-LGBTQ+ specific venue.

- 21% of venue closures were influenced by development with 6% linked to large-scale transport infrastructure development and 12% to mixed-use or residential development. This is significant when we consider the relatively small number of venues in the first place, and also the impact of development on clusters of venues.
- 6% of closed venues have been demolished, and 2% remain derelict following closure.
- 9% of venue closures featured lease renegotiations, frequently featuring unfavourable terms or disproportionate rent increases.
- In 6% of cases business-related financial issues were cited, including business rate increases and brewery price increases.
- In 5% cases there was a licensing dispute or a license was revoked.
- 2% were due to a choice made by the owner/ manager. We expect that this figure is a low estimate and would also include a proportion of the 25% of closed venues for which we have no information.
- 10% of venue closures affected women's or BAME-specific LGBTQ+ venues.

On the basis of this information, as well as detailed case studies of venues, we note:

- the significant number of LGBTQ+ venues that have closed due to proposed or actual transport, residential or mixed-use development, sometimes with negative impacts on clusters of venues;
- that venues have often closed at a point of lease renewal on building leases, where tenant venue operators have been unable to negotiate reasonable terms to continue to lease venues;
- that operators and customers who have wanted and/ or campaigned for venues to stay open have had

severely limited negotiating power compared with large organisations leading development such as large pub companies, property owners, off-shore investors, developers and their mediating agents.

Closures and threats: contexts and drivers: discussion

It is difficult to match trends in the provision and closure of venues to specific phenomena, and our case studies demonstrate that closures must be understood through attention to particular circumstances.

However, it is also evident that the shape of provision of LGBTQ+ venues has to be understood within the macro scale context of the neoliberalisation of strategic planning (Acuto, 2013; Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Olesen, 2013; Raco, 2014). Closures therefore can be elucidated by paying attention to the changing landscape of government, Mayoral and local government agendas and policies insofar as they have shaped London's property market and specific forms of development in the period, impacting on permitted development, housing and infrastructure. What is clear from our case studies and broader survey of venues and events is that during the longer period of initial pilot study, and continuing into the period between 2006 and 2017, which the present report focuses on, there has been a shift away from more favourable conditions – in particular for community-focused venues. In recent years even long-established venues are finding it difficult to operate or succumbing to development aimed at maximisation of profit from a plot or building.

The significant drop in the number of venues, and the closure of long-standing venues, in the later 2000s, has to be understood in relation to a complex configuration of conditions such as: the banking crisis of 2008 and an associated period of economic instability; the Conservative-led coalition government's (2010–2015)

austerity programme, launched in 2010; and a period of overall loosening of the planning system in favour of development under the coalition government.

At the London level, sustainability analysts have noted that Boris Johnson's tenure as Mayor of London (2008–2016) was a period during which the strategic policy focus on sustainable development subsided with fewer specific requirements for social sustainability, community and local economic support (Homan, 2010; Lees et al, 2016; Raco, 2014). The revised London Plan (2011) had a more explicit focus on economic growth and welcoming development, a rhetorical emphasis on the minimisation of local government and process (Wilson, 2015), and a focus on the delivery of major transport infrastructure projects including the 2012 Olympic Games (Lees et al, 2016). At the same time there have been extensive cuts to local authorities' budgets under the Coalition and Conservative governments' fiscal austerity agendas.

These phenomena should be set against an overall longer-term shift, from the 1980s to the present, in the concept and practice of regeneration towards a real-estate, property-led approach, which replaced the more community-centred plans supported by the Greater London Council in the 1980s. This shift has been widely critiqued for its impact on social and cultural diversity (Campkin, 2013; Campkin, Roberts and Ross, 2013; Healey, 1992; Imrie and Thomas, 1993; Lees et al 2016).

Across the case studies, and drawing on knowledge from our wider dataset, we point to the following as principle factors in closures and threats to venues:

1. Negative impacts of proposed and actual residential and mixed use development

Many venues have been closed due to proposed or actual speculative residential or mixed use development. In all of these examples, the desirability of the neighbourhood and development value is a key factor, in

a city in which the built environment has become intensely commodified to the point where many social and cultural venues struggle to find affordable space.

Such property developments have often been strongly opposed by local and wider LGBTQ+ communities. Examples include The Yard, where a series of similar planning applications were submitted for a residential development in 2014 and 2015, leading to a high profile and successful campaign, ‘Save the Yard’. One of these applications attracted 416 public comments with 395 objections. The campaign, driven by The Yard’s operator, has resulted in a significant financial burden. The developer has resubmitted closely similar proposals even after previous proposals have failed. In such cases, given the level of opposition based on detailed narratives explaining the value that LGBTQ+ people associate with the venue, it is surprising that an Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken, forcing campaigners to oppose multiple, closely similar, schemes.

The Joiners Arms has also been subject to closure due to a controversial large mixed-use development. In response, campaigners formed the ‘Friends of the Joiners Arms’, successfully listed the venue as an Asset of Community Value; and continue to campaign for an LGBTQ+ venue to be reopened on the site of the original venue. Although there has been engagement with the LGBTQ+ community in relation to the currently proposed development, in the proposals the architects refer to the importance of the pub to the local community without specifying the importance to the LGBTQ+ community specifically (Design and Access statement, 5.7). The physical heritage of the building is prized with the retention of the original facade, albeit without the later shopfront additions; but the social heritage from the LGBTQ+ community’s perspective is overlooked in the official documentation.

2. End of lease renegotiations involving dramatic rent increases

In evaluating case study venues we note that many venues have closed at a point of lease renewal on building leases, where tenant venue operators have been unable to negotiate reasonable terms on which to continue to lease venues. This is a feature in cases such as First Out, The Queen's Head, and The George and Dragon. For example, in the case of First Out, the operators were faced with a choice of extending the contract in the knowledge that they would have to continue to operate through construction works related to the Tottenham Court Road Crossrail development which had already negatively affected viability, in the knowledge that the café would subsequently have to close without compensation, or closing the business when they did, in 2011. This is an unusual case in that the lease had originally been accepted in the knowledge of the impending development, and so in some senses the owners benefited from the opportunity provided by a meanwhile use of the building; only then to be forced to close what had been a very successful business when the redevelopment proceeded.

3. Large-scale transport/infrastructure developments Large-scale transport/infrastructure developments have been a contributor to closures.

First Out is just one example of closure linked to large-scale transport infrastructure development. Other LGBTQ+ venues closed in association with the Crossrail Tottenham Court Road station development include The Edge, London Astoria, and Ghetto. A link can also be drawn between the Kings Cross and St Pancras/Channel Tunnel Rail Link-associated redevelopment and the more gradual closure of bars in the Kings Cross and Angel cluster that was a notable feature of 1980s and 1990s London (The Angel, Bagley's Studios, The Bell, The Cross, Glass Bar, The Green, King Edward IV). While

some of these closures were directly linked to the Argent-led development of King's Cross Central, in other cases indirect factors associated with gentrification, such as less availability of space and higher rents, are important to consider (Campkin, 2013). There are, however, counter examples, such as Central Station (opened 1991). This mixed venue (basement club, cabaret bar/ pub and boutique hotel) has adapted to the new business environment through targeting non-LGBTQ+ customers from surrounding residential and office complexes along with their LGBTQ+ customer base.

It is also worth noting that many venues from the 1980s to the present have taken advantage of the spaces left over within ex-industrial transport infrastructure including Victorian stables and coaching inns (Central Station and The Yard) as well as railway arches (The Cross, Heaven, Bloc South, Area, Crash, Fire). Assessing the impact of transport development on LGBTQ+ spaces would require further detailed investigation but it seems likely that examples such as the opening of the East London Line extension of the London Overground in 2010 are typical in having had both beneficial and detrimental effects: both serving thriving and new spaces and contributing to the factors enabling spaces to open in previously underserved neighbourhoods, while simultaneously causing direct or indirect pressures on others (for instance through rent increases and decreasing available space).

4. Operators/customers who have wanted venues to stay open have had severely limited negotiating power compared with large organisations leading development, such as pubcos, property owners, off-shore investors, developers and their mediating agents.

Of the ten case studies in our original selection, five involved land owned by large property developers/ landholders (Consolidated Developments [2], Sellar Property Group [2], Network Rail) and three of the ten

involved large pubcos (Greene King [2], Faucett Inns, Realpubs, Westminster Pub and Dining Company). The accumulative power of companies with multiple land and/or venue holdings far outweighs that of individual operators. In a number of cases we found that operators were not aware of who actually owns the freehold of buildings because of the complexity of layers of ownership, mediated by agents. Such opacity places limits on the capacity of communities, customers and/or operators to respond effectively when development proposals are tabled.

High-profile cases such as The Royal Vauxhall Tavern and Black Cap demonstrate how a lack of transparency about financial arrangements and lines of ownership pose significant risks for operators and community members in negotiating for spaces to remain open, or to be reopened when already closed.

5. Commercial imperatives to target non-LGBTQ+ clientele

A number of our case study venues (both independent and pubco-owned) featured an intentional emphasis on marketing to and welcoming non-LGBTQ+ clientele, and the purposeful reduction of LGBTQ+ visibility, such as removal of the rainbow flag/symbol, with commercial viability as the stated aim. With large pubcos it is difficult or impossible to request to examine accounts to understand the viability of specific venues, and venue owners are understandably reluctant to disclose details in some cases.

In one case the removal of visible LGBTQ+ markers, and reaching out to non-LGBTQ+ customers, was instigated by the LGBTQ+ operators themselves, working independently from the pubco. This was in response to the large-scale regeneration of the area, and was not perceived as having had negative impacts on the LGBTQ+ venue users because of careful programming of the venue and organisation of the space to ensure

continued LGBTQ+ use. In other cases, however, a strategy of reduced LGBTQ+ visibility, led by a pubco, has been highly unpopular with venues' LGBTQ+ users and has either led to closure or the controversial 'de-gaying' or gentrification of the venue (e.g. The Coleherne).

6. Need for access to professional networks

The question of access to knowledge and technical expertise also appears in various forms through our case studies, where overall the planning system seems to be working against, rather than with or for, LGBTQ+ communities. The prominent role of private consultants (planning, heritage etc.) is notable, and in some cases the ability to employ them on a paid or voluntary basis has been an important factor in driving forward development proposals or campaigns to oppose development. For example, in The Yard Soho, heritage consultants were employed both by the developer/ planning applicant and opponents (the 'Save the Yard' campaign initiated by the venue operator and licensee) with these consultants presenting specialist architectural historical evidence with contrasting conclusions.

In contexts of contested development, campaigners, customers, and/or venue operators have had to mobilise different kinds of social, cultural and professional capital in order to be effective, and so their existing contacts and ability to create and utilise new networks has been key to success. In the case of the Save the Joiners campaign, the campaign has benefitted from a wide range of expertise available within the group's core membership, which includes, for example, charity fundraisers, administrators, marketing professionals, academics, office and project managers. This has been in addition to *pro bono* advice from professionals in local planning, heritage management, architecture, law, business planning, and licensing. However, looking across the different campaigns, it is evident that not all have been equally able to mobilise a support network and the forms

of professional expertise required to analyse and respond to particular situations with recourse to precedents and technical knowledge.

We would also point to the important role played by experienced venue operators and event organisers – both within campaign groups, and in setting up new venues where operators and/or staff have been forced to move or have moved voluntarily. The expertise of such individuals has played an important part in licensing decisions in setting up new spaces, and in two cases this occurred in contexts where a non-LGBTQ+ venue had been closed and the license revoked due to a violent incident. As successful venue operators and event organisers move from between venues, we see the legacies of closed spaces transferring to new venues. This is a feature of many recently opened venues (Her Upstairs/Them Downstairs, Queen Adelaide). Many venues particularly prized by LGBTQ+ communities, such as First Out, also have their roots in earlier spaces (The Bell) and can be traced through to later initiatives (Duckie) via particular staff or strategies.

7. A shift away from policy and planning environment supportive of community-oriented businesses and activities

Our case study research, in common with the other forms of evidence we have gathered, has highlighted a shift away from a period of active city government and local council support –boroughs such as Camden and Lambeth – in the mid-1980s to the harsher commercial realities of the present in which community-focused venues, in particular, find it hard to survive. For example, in the case of First Out, Camden Council were actively supportive in helping to establish the venue, acting as a guarantor on the lease. In the same period, the London Lesbian and Gay Centre and the London Black Lesbian and Gay Centre were also important daytime and night-time venues that were actively supported by local authorities and the Greater London Council.

8. Individual circumstances and responses to changing conditions

Our case studies have highlighted the need to pay attention to the very specific circumstances of each venue. It is apparent from our interviews and case study research that in many cases there is a lack of consensus between venue operators and campaigners in their analysis of situations where venues have closed, or in interpretations of why non-LGBTQ+ clientele are being targeted. This also includes markedly different positions on the likely consequences of certain actions by campaigners, such as the use of Asset of Community Value status and/or architectural listing; or on the financial and other reasons that have led operators, in some cases, to accept venue closure. In the various cases we examined these included ill health, retirement and new business ventures.

While campaigners have been notably more vocal about LGBTQ+ community heritage arguments for supporting LGBTQ+ venues and preventing or reversing closures, in a number of campaigns they have made strong arguments for viability through extensive business plans, again drawing on readily available expertise within their own networks.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this research we appeal to the UK Government, the Mayor of London, Greater London Authority, London Assembly, local authorities, Historic England, LGBTQ+ charities, NGOs and community groups to respond and collaborate in order to protect and nurture LGBTQ+ venues and events into the future. In light of the specific data we have presented on the dramatic rate of venue closures and the continued need for LGBTQ+ venues, we make the following recommendations:

1. The Mayor, Night Czar and other relevant bodies, including LGBTQ+ community organisations and charities, should support the wide dissemination of these research findings to all London local authorities, including planning and licensing and culture departments, to alert them to the falling provision of LGBTQ+ venues, and the value of and need for these spaces.

2. Measures that support the retention, re-provision and promotion of LGBTQ+ spaces should be included within Mayor's London Plan, and the Mayor's Draft Culture and the Night-time Economy Supplementary Planning Guide. This should include:

    a. A requirement for local authorities to recognise the importance of LGBTQ+ venues in their borough plans.

    b. Encouragement, support and guidance for LA's to undertake a Equality Impact Assessment when an LGBTQ+ venue, or one which regularly hosts LGBTQ+ events is proposed for development.

    c. This would lead to a more consistent city-wide practice of supporting LGBTQ+ venues to stay in

operation or be re-provided when they are closed through development.

3. For the purposes of such evaluation, in order to fulfil the duties set out in the Equality Act (2010), the Mayor should encourage and support local authorities to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment for any development which affects an existing LGBTQ+ venue or a venue that regularly hosts events designated for the LGBTQ+ community. In performing Equality Impact Assessments, recognising intersectionality within the LGBTQ+ community is vital. For example, if a space predominantly serves LGBTQ+ women, this clientele embody *at least* two protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 (sex, sexual orientation and/or gender reassignment) and potentially more (race, disability, age).

4. The Mayor and GLA should produce a good practice guide which draws attention to the need to protect LGBTQ+ venues in reference to the public duties bound into the Equality Act (2010) – including the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires public bodies to consider protected characteristics including gender, sexuality, ethnicity and disability.

5. Given that all existing LGBTQ+ venues are considered 'at risk', the *number* and from hereon the *location* of venues be should be monitored by the Greater London Authority and local boroughs in order to prevent a further fall in borough-by-borough or city-wide provision.

6. A confidential mechanism for venue owners/managers to report imminent threats to LGBTQ+ venues to the Night Czar and GLA should be established and widely publicised.

7. We are supportive of the Mayor and GLA's current initiative to develop criteria for the purposes of initiating new LGBTQ+ venues in contexts where development has led to LGBTQ+ venue closure (see Appendices 5 and 6). These are being developed in consultation with a range of organisations – including Queer Spaces Network and UCL Urban Laboratory. Once finalised, we recommend that the criteria are widely publicised, with the aim of informing built environment professionals and others involved in developments that risk reducing the number of LGBTQ+ venues, and with a view to replacing venues that are lost during development.

8. Local authorities should consider provision of LGBTQ+ spaces as potential cultural and social infrastructure within new developments as they arise, working with LGBTQ+ community organisations to identify potential venue operators to work with developers; and actively working with community organisations provide new LGBTQ+ spaces within existing social and cultural venues when opportunities arise.

9. In liaison with LGBTQ+ communities and Historic England, the Mayor and Greater London Authority should develop criteria to define LGBTQ+ spaces of special heritage value to those communities, to be used by local authorities in parallel with the criteria for new LGBTQ+ venues.

10. The Mayor, Night Czar and other relevant bodies, including LGBTQ+ community organisations and charities, should work to promote networking among LGBTQ+ venue owners and managers, night-time entrepreneurs and civil society organisations, to build capacity and a supportive environment so that operators/ owners facing development can share information and be better equipped to act in the interests of LGBTQ+ communities; and able to foster increasingly inclusive

LGBTQ+ nightlife.

11. The Mayor, Night Czar and other relevant bodies, including LGBTQ+ community organisations and charities, should work to establish secure and dedicated community space for LGBTQ+ communities, and work with those communities to foster a programme that supports LGBTQ+ women, trans, non-binary, QTIPOC and other communities disproportionately affected by a lack of provision of venues and/or venue closures.

12. The UK Government, the Mayor of London, the Night Czar, Greater London Authority and other relevant bodies, including LGBTQ+ community organisations and charities, should commission further research to better understand key issues including:

    a. the profile of LGBTQ+ venues in the UK and their value to the UK's culture, heritage, economy, mental health and wellbeing;

    b. nightlife events, daytime and community spaces not captured in data on licensed LGBTQ+ nightlife premises;

    c. the efficacy of Equality Impact Assessments and Asset of Community Value status in protecting LGBTQ+ venues;

    d. issues pertaining to licensing and policing insofar as they have specific impacts on LGBTQ+ venues and events;

    e. the limits of planning powers in protecting venues and heritage associated with minority communities and the specific uses, users and occupiers they are associated with, as opposed to the Use Classes defined in the Use Classes Order;

    f. potential for community land or property ownership through an LGBTQ+ charity dedicated to protecting and nurturing LGBTQ+ venues and

events and in order to counter the negative effects of exclusionary land and property prices and unaffordable rents on LGBTQ+ venue owners and event operators;

g. comparison with other cultural and social infrastructure including losses of venues and models for re-providing space (e.g. theatres, artists' studios) and potential for collaboration.

Glossary

Ableism: interconnected ideas, processes and practices that privilege and accommodate particular people whose bodies and abilities are considered typical. These forms of discrimination happen at the expense of people who do not fit and are disabled by these social standards.

BAME: Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic.

Cisnormativity: the assumption that all individuals' genders match their birth-assigned sex, privilege given to cisgender male/female binaries, and neglect of the possibility and legitimacy of gender/sex diversity.

Cis/cisgender: A person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex they were assigned at birth. A cis/cis/gender person who is not trans.

Heteronormativity: assumptions that privilege dominant forms of heterosexual kinship and gendered practices, norms and relations have historically become culturally accepted as constituting the 'natural' social order.

Homonormative: practices and assumptions that, rather than challenging heteronormative, neo-liberal capitalist institutions – e.g. marriage and monogamy – support and sustain them, while upholding a depoliticised gay culture oriented around consumption and domesticity.

Intersectionality: a concept describing the ways in which oppressions (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, classism, etc.) interconnect and should not be examined in isolation.

LGBTQ+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer. The +/plus sign refers to further minority identities relating to gender, sex and sexuality, including intersex and asexual people.

Non-binary: identifying as a gender that is in-between or beyond the categories 'man' and 'woman', moves between 'man'

and ‘woman’, or as having no gender, all or some of the time. Some, but not all, non-binary people identify as trans.

Pubco: A large pub company owning multiple pubs.

QTIPOC: Queer, Trans and Intersex People of Colour.

Trans: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression does not fully correspond with their birth-assigned sex. This includes, but is not limited to, people who *self-identify* as trans, transgender, transsexual, non-binary, agender and gender queer.

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Research Team

Research team

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Laura Marshall is a postgraduate researcher in the Department of Geography at University College London. Influenced by her background in urban studies, Laura's interdisciplinary research interests coalesce around gender diversity, sexuality and space, as well as, using visual and participatory methodologies to produce scholar/activist research. Beyond research, her activist commitments include volunteering with trans youth organisation Gendered Intelligence. Laura is a contributing author to Sexuality and Gender at Home: Experience, Politics, Transgression (Bloomsbury, 2017) and co-author of the UCL Urban Laboratory report LGBTQI nightlife spaces in London: 1986 to the present.

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

Appendices

Ben Campkin and Laura Marshall

July 2017

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Appendices

Appendix 1: LGBTQ+ Communities Survey – NVIVO Coding

Cristián Valenzuela

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?

- 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 of 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.

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urbanlab