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FESTIVAL GUIDE

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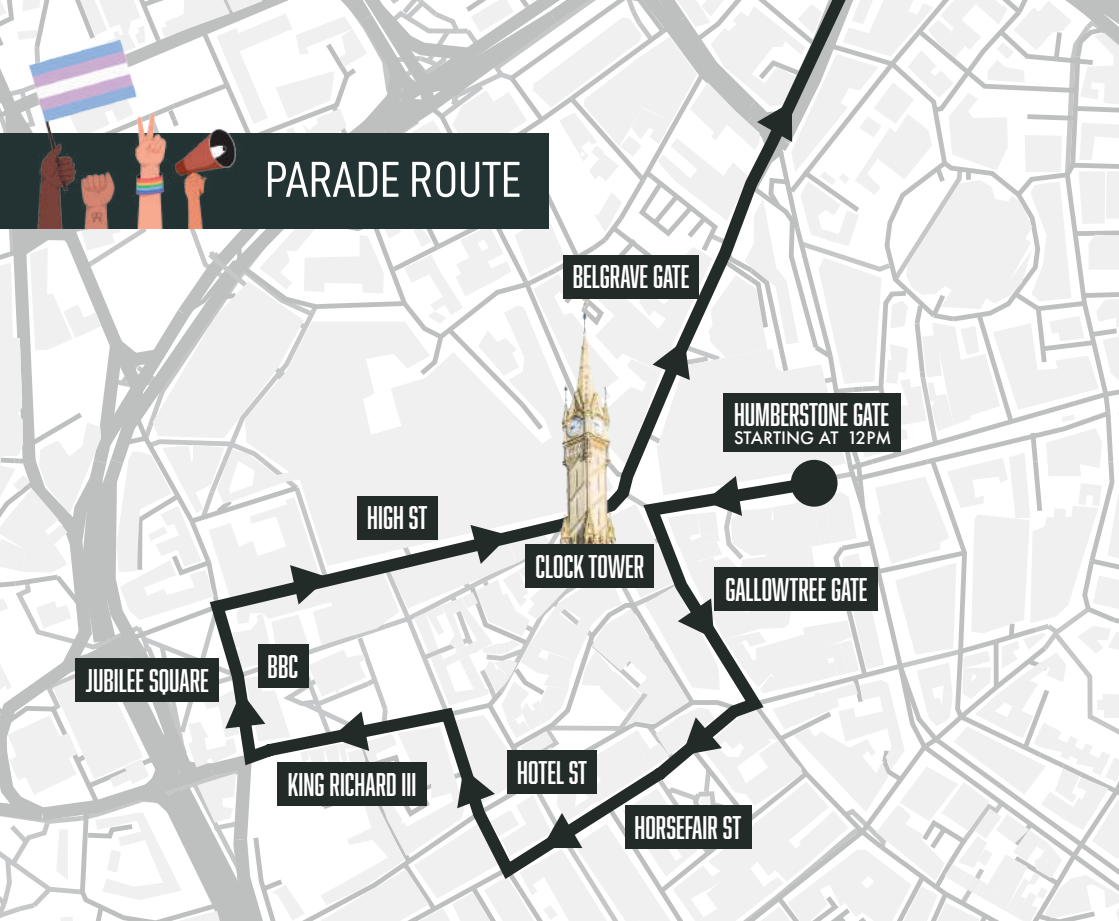
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PARADE ROUTE



WELCOME

Hello everyone, and welcome once again to your fully inclusive Leicester Pride, Celebrating 16 years of progress, diversity and inclusion.

Our constant commitment to highlighting issues important in our community features heavily through all aspects of our city's festival. From our Trans siblings and their allies leading this year's parade, to our speaker today Katie Neeves on the Main Stage, which also boasts a non-binary radio broadcaster and an openly gay footballer.

Times are changing. We here at Leicester Pride are dedicated to the liberation and equality of all our LGBTQIA+ kin.

We will not step aside and deny our duty to educate and improve lives when around the world, members of our community continue to be oppressed and silenced because of their desire to live authentically and free from hate.

14 countries in the world still have the death penalty for gay sex, 5 of which regularly carry it out. The mainstream media continues to highlight the repression and roll back in America, with its 'don't say gay' bill and the stripping away of women's reproductive rights with Roe V Wade being repealed.

All this seems to point in one direction, but it only paints half the story. There are incredible movements across the globe who fly the flag for freedom, championing trans rights and social media outlets who provide safe online spaces. There are also TV shows dedicated to the art of drag and it's only going to get bigger and better.

Remember, Pride is a protest, first and foremost. WE must stand shoulder to shoulder declaring in one voice a message of defiance, positivity and change. Ultimately, Trans youth must hear the message from all our mouths. **YOU ARE LOVED!!**

With the arrival of a new government, so too comes the promise of replenished hope. The King's speech laid out, with renewed effort, the banning of conversion therapies across the country. This ban is fully trans-inclusive.

Things are changing. Things will get better.
(continued on next page)

SAFETY INFORMATION

Please note that the event site is glass free. This means no glass bottles, alcohol or containers are allowed on the event site. During the parade you cannot drink alcohol as most of the city streets are alcohol free areas.

Please ensure that you wear suitable clothing and footwear, remember to use sun cream and drink plenty of water. We will be operating Challenge 25 throughout the day, so please bring identification with you.



We have a zero tolerance on any form of hate crime, if you experience or witness any, please report it to my security team. I hope you enjoy Leicester Pride 2024, rest assured that public safety and your welfare is my top priority.

Craig Thorpe
Security & Safety Operations Director
E-mail: security@leicesterpride.com

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WELCOME



DONATE

Until we arrive at a place of equality and acceptance, know that you will always have a safe space here with us in Abbey Park. It has always been Leicester Pride's aim to unify further our unique and extraordinary city, with its wide ranging and thoroughly diverse citizens.

We hope that this year's parade, park, and Pride's personal message to you all shines through. We are here, we are queer, we've always been here, and we aren't going anywhere!! Stay safe, love each other and remember that we are stronger together.

Martyn Parker
Chairman

Craig Thorpe
Director

Simon Harrison
Event Manager

Leicester Pride is one of the UK's largest free Pride festivals

Our aim has always been to keep the festival free to attend for all. To achieve this we work with many sponsors and partners and we are forever grateful to them for their generous contributions.

If you are able, we would welcome you to support us directly. We are a registered charity and all money is invested into our annual events or donated to other local LGBTQ+ charities.


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*Offers are on selected plots and selected developments only and are subject to change. Moving schemes cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or scheme. [^]Indicative figures, based on HBF "Watt a Save" report published February 2023. +We', 'our', 'us' refers to the Barratt Developments PLC Group brands including Barratt Homes, David Wilson Homes and Barratt London. We are the only major national housebuilder to be awarded this key industry award every year since 2010. "We" refers to the Barratt Developments PLC group brands including Barratt London, Barratt Homes and David Wilson Homes. Based on HBF star rating scheme from 2010 to 2023 derived from the NHBC national new homes survey at eight weeks (<https://www.hbf.co.uk/policy/policy-and-wider-work-program/customer-satisfaction-survey/latest-results/>), over 90% of Barratt Developments PLC group customer would recommend our brands to a friend.



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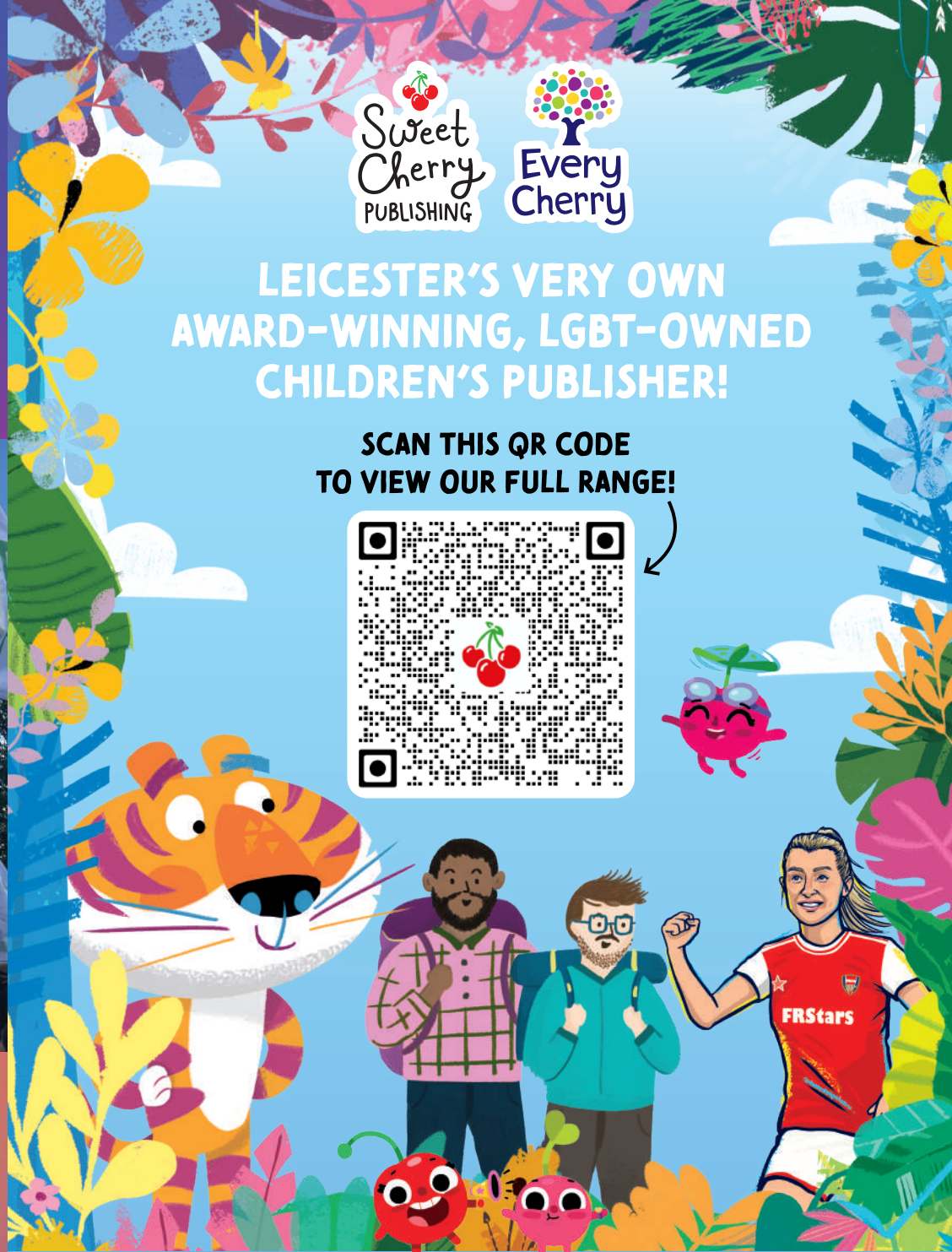
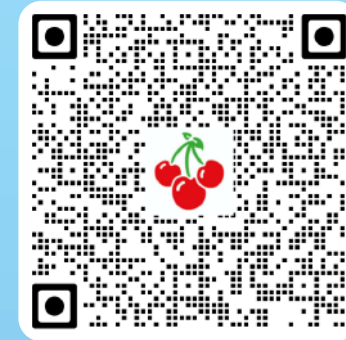


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KATIE NEEVES

Katie Neeves is a Leicester woman on a mission – but not just any woman and not just any mission!

She lived for 48 years as a successful male photographer, while struggling with her gender from the age of three and hiding her big secret to the world. Until one day, enough was enough and Katie came out to the world via social media. Katie has gone on to form Cool2BTrans to support and inspire other trans people, and to educate everyone that trans people are just ordinary people who want to be happy – just like everyone else.



Describe yourself in ten words or fewer.

Happy, transgender, lesbian, parent, speaker, trainer, presenter, photographer, dancer, musician.

What are your favourite things?

I adore spending precious time with my amazing daughter and with my lovely girlfriend, but I am totally addicted to public speaking too. I come alive in front of an audience and I love nothing more than using humour to educate them about what it's like to be transgender and how they can support those who are.

What is your favourite thing about yourself?

I'm living my truth now and I'm absolutely loving it! I lived as a man for 48 years, while battling the inner conflict of Gender Dysphoria since the age of three. My inner conflict has disappeared now and I just can't stop smiling!

If you could tell the whole world one thing, what would it be?

I would (and I do) tell the whole World that trans people are just ordinary people who want to be happy. No-one chooses to be trans. We don't transition to be someone we are not. We are not a threat to anyone. We. Just. Want. To. Be. Happy.



KATIE NEEVES

What do you wish you could tell your younger self?

I would tell my younger self that it's OK to live your truth. The World will let you in. I spent 48 years trying to be the person that I thought others wanted me to be, but then I realised that no-one else cares. They are too wrapped up worrying about their own life to care about how others live their life. Other people do, however, respond very favourably to authenticity and vulnerability. So don't fight it. Just be you.

Why do we still need Pride?

Pride is a protest. Sadly, many people have forgotten that and they think it is just a flamboyant carnival, but we have more reasons to protest now, than ever.

Anti-trans rhetoric and misinformation have increased enormously in the media, in politics and on social media in recent years. This has led to a 186% increase in recorded trans hate crime in the 5 years between 2018 to 2023 and yet 90% of trans hate crime still goes unreported to the Police.

54% of trans people feel unable to leave their house, due to transphobia and 62% of trans people feel unable to use public toilets due to the transphobic abuse we face.

We have also seen proposals to change laws to make life more difficult for gender non-conforming people, the introduction of temporary laws (without Parliamentary debate) to ban life-saving puberty blockers to trans adolescents (while still prescribing them to non-trans kids with Precocious Puberty) and we have seen misleading Government guidance being issued to both schools and to hospitals which encourages staff to unlawfully discriminate against trans and non-binary people.

We have also had to fight for a full ban on conversion practices and campaign against the new "Section 28" ban on LGBTQIA+ inclusive sex and gender education in schools.

So forgive me if I don't view our collective walk through the streets of Leicester as a parade. For me, it's a protest march and I will be there, shouting as loudly as I can. I long for the day when we have nothing to protest about.

I am definitely not "the fun police" though, so after the march, let your hair down, catch up with friends, sing your heart out and dance like no-one is watching. Be free to be you and have the time of your life!



ZANDER MURRAY

Zander Murray is the UK's first openly gay professional footballer.

He played for Bonnyrigg Rose, a Scottish Professional Football League club in League 2.

The striker has scored 100+ goals and holds the club record for number of goals scored in one season at his former Gala Fairydean Rovers.



Leicester Pride is thrilled to announce that Zander Murray – one of only FIVE out LGBTQ professional footballers IN THE WORLD – will co-host Leicester Pride on August 31st, 2024. We caught up with this pin-up sport star ahead of the big day...

What do you think it would take to change the landscape of football associations around the world regarding being gay in football?

Simple answer is to help more players in feeling comfortable to be open about it (their sexuality) and to continue the great initiatives and advocacy work from it all. I'm proud to be a part of the football v homophobia campaign. To have our 'challenging homophobia' workshops funded by the SFA was massive. I'm working closely with bodies down south and I hope this national approach can be replicated down south soon. It is important to note that many organisations are doing great work regionally – Fare/Kick It Out/Stonewall and Football v Homophobia, to name just a few.

What was your most unforgettable match, and why?

Scoring my 100th career goal, which was also my first game being openly gay. That strip is now in the Scottish football museum!

What is the impact on your life since you came out?

I definitely feel my life is beginning, but how my story and now my ambassador work has impacted others has been so rewarding and empowering. I want no one to struggle like I did between the ages of 13-29. Thank God for Benidorm Pride; my first Pride event at 29, which led me to coming out!

Can you describe the feeling of scoring your first professional goal?

Pure raw nostalgia, an emotion so difficult to replicate. Years of hard work and in my case personal struggle with sexuality. Being on that pitch was my release. I would have been lost without it.



ZANDER MURRAY

What has been your proudest achievement in soccer so far?

My proudest moment has been that I get to inspire the younger generations and encourage them not to give up: be that role model that I wished I had growing up. Of course, homage must be given to Justin Fashanu who paved the way for us all. But, to get a struggling academy to reach out after my workshops means so much. It gives me just as much joy as playing.

We need to keep changing hearts and minds. Continuing putting the "why" into pride flags. Without visibility more lives will be lost. I have no doubt that is the sad truth.

Which victory meant the most to you and your team?

Playing for Bonnyrigg last season. Last game of the season to stay up we had to win it! Had an amazing support also that day. We turned up and won 3-0. Got myself on the scoresheet. Meant a lot.

Is there a specific game that dramatically changed your career?

I remember playing Dunfermline in a friendly. I was, maybe, 29 years old. After the match I got offered a two week trial with them. I turned it down because I was in the closet. I hated myself and was terrified if anyone found out. That was the moment I said 'enough's enough': you need to accept yourself, Zander or this will eat your alive.' Two years later, I got the move back up to pro as an openly gay player.

What is one moment on the field you'd like to relive?

Scoring the last minute winner in my twenties to win the league.

Who was the toughest opponent you've ever faced?

James Forrest, Jose Quitongo or Muzzet Izzet.

How have you found the reaction in the changing rooms since coming out?

It's new; it's different for everyone. I'm never going to be the cool, popular guy but yeah, it's gone well.

Have you won any titles or awards, and which is the most meaningful to you?

My 100th goal and my strip in the museum trumps anything!!

If you were going to take a penalty, would you be aiming for top left or bottom right?

Fake bottom left and go the other way.

As a gay man, can you explain the off-side rule simply?

Men going ahead of opponent when ball is kicked! Did not mean for that to sound kinky...

Given the chance, would you have come out sooner?

Nah, delighted now!

Look at me co-hosting Leicester Pride. Eyyy up, me ducks!!

See you soon x



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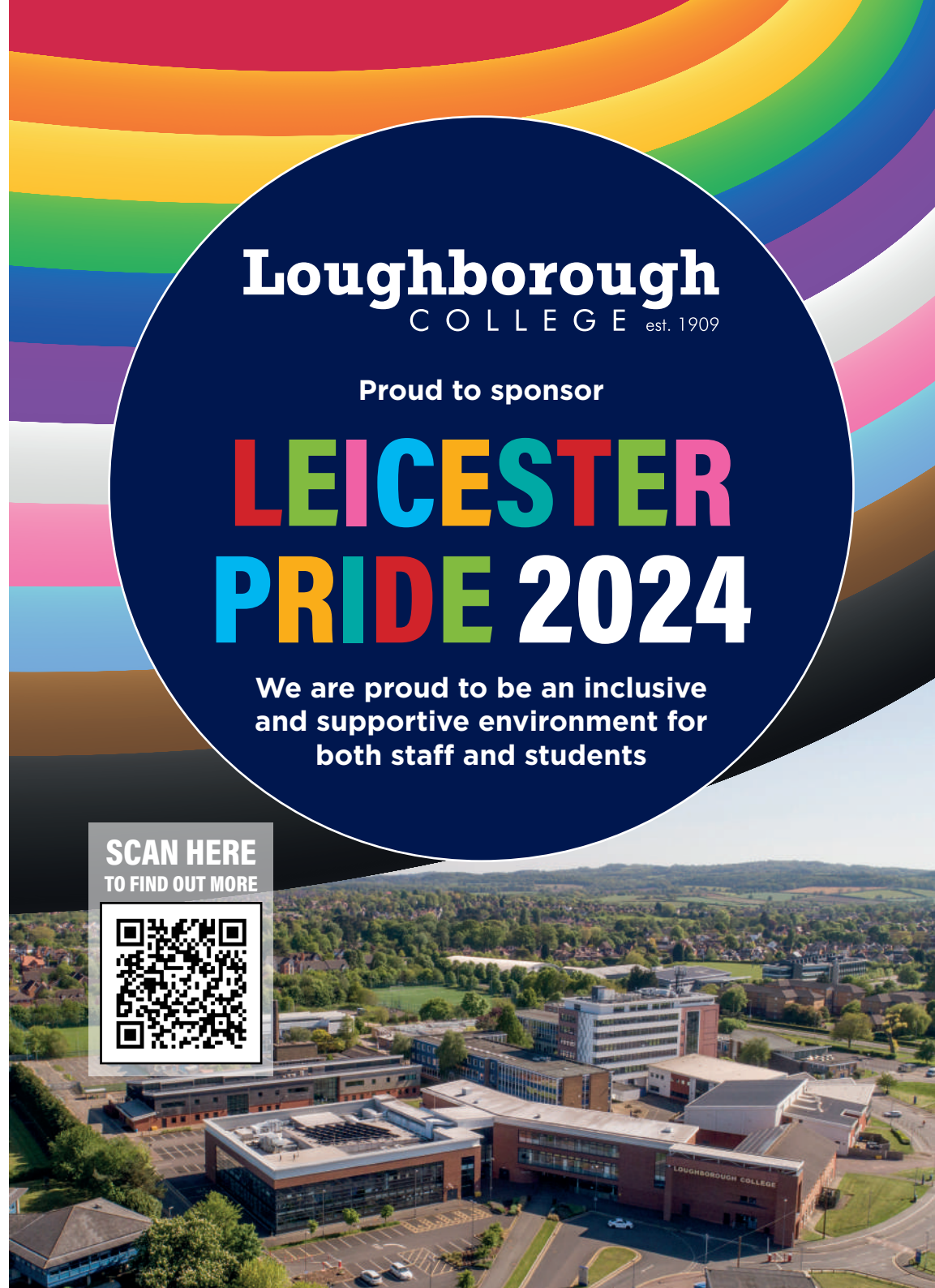
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Lee Sleight, CEO

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Aron Simpson-Webb, LGBTQ+ Network Lead

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