

SCENE

MANCHESTER LGBTQ+ FILM & TV FESTIVAL

2025 SUMMARY

+

BE PART OF 2026



SCENE
MANCHESTER LGBTQ+ FILM & TV FESTIVAL

MANCHESTER CAMERATA



MANCHESTER'S LGBTQ+ FILM AND TV FESTIVAL

SCENE 2025 ran for its second year from Friday 15th August – Thursday 21st August celebrating queer stories on screen. The festival took over the city, proudly working with programming, accommodation and venue partners from the Manchester and worldwide.

The festival champions brand new and classic works from narrative to documentary, features to shorts, Mancunian and international. At SCENE we're proud to screen a diverse programme of stories and welcome creatives from all over the world.

Running during Manchester Pride season (which unusually is in August), SCENE has raised tens of thousands for local LGBTQ+ charities since 2024. SCENE creates safe spaces for members of the community, allies and fans to explore relevant topics and make connections with LGBTQ+ heritage and culture through Film & TV as well as a place for queer filmmakers and talent to meet and share inspiration.

SCENE is produced by CityCo on behalf of Manchester Accommodation Business Improvement District. Whilst Mancunians love the festival, over a third of our audience comes from outside Manchester with attendees this year from as far as Mexico.

**SCENE 2026 WILL TAKE PLACE
THURSDAY 20TH – THURSDAY 27TH AUGUST 2026**



Pictured: the cast of BBC Three's What It Feels Like For A Girl at SCENE 2025

SCENE 2025

After launching in 2024 with a Queer As Folk UK cast reunion and welcoming stars like Julie Hesmondhalgh and legendary American documentarian David Weissman (*We Were Here*, *The Cockettes*) our second edition grew in scale with our audience doubling and more queer creative talent and exclusive film and TV screenings at the festival.

The 2025 festival welcomed Russell T Davies back with a celebration of his seminal drama *Cucumber* as well as the cast of BBC 3's hot drama *What It Feels Like For A Girl* and RuPaul's Drag Race creators Randy Barbato and Fenton Bailey.

Our opening event was a live comedy night in partnership with Channel 4 kicking off our queer comedy strand that included Jonathan Harvey (*Gimme Gimme Gimme*) in conversation and a Victoria Wood A Thon alongside a strand that celebrated LGBTQ club scenes and nightlife.

We partnered with Sheffield DocFest for a day of new LGBT documentaries from the festival and premiered new queer narratives features in the North including *Plainclothes* and *Departures* (which was filmed in Manchester). A free outdoor screen and vibrant shorts programme rounded out the festival with many screenings followed by filmmaker Q&As.

The festival closed with the Manchester Camerata playing a night of music by classical queer composers at Aviva Studios and a drag 30th anniversary screening of *Showgirls* at HOME.





SCENE CLOSING FILM

SHOWGIRLS

30TH ANNIVERSARY 4K REMASTER

@HOMEMCR @SCENE_FESTIVAL



Pictured: Sexquiste cabaret in-screen pole dance performances at our closing film Showgirls 4K remaster

SCENE 2025 IN STATS

4,100 attendees

53 screenings and events

31 Narrative Features old and new

10 Panels

8 Documentary Features

8 venues

All ticket profits donated to LGBTQ+ charities

Over £10,000 raised



SCENE 2025 IN STATS

4148

Festival attendees

83%

Attendance increase from 2024

£10,000

Donated to LGBTQ+ charities from ticket sales/profits

99%

Rated the festival "excellent" or "good"

1.87m

Total PR campaign reach

39.5%

of Skiddle tickets sold were to people outside of Manchester



Pictured: The SCENE free outdoor screen on First Street

2025 FESTIVAL PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS



Sheffield
Doc | Fest

WORLD
OF
WONDER



IRIS PRIZE



WARNER BROS.
DISCOVERY

Hera

HOME



GAZE

PREMIER

attitude

DIVA

We're proud to see that in only 2 editions of the festival SCENE is receiving support from broadcasters, media companies, brands and festivals from the UK and around the world. Above are a selection of companies who partnered on or supported the 2025 festival.

Manchester is a thriving hub for creative arts - city institutions like HOME, Manchester's cult cinema CULTPLEX and Factory International (the producers of Manchester International Festival) work with SCENE to co-produce events alongside CityCo and our partners Premier PR.

Venues across the city including traditional cinemas like VUE and HOME as well as spaces in hotels and the city's iconic Canal Street and New Century Hall all support the festival by hosting our diverse events making the festival truly a citywide takeover.



An

Altogether Different

Comedy
Night



2025 PROGRAMME

The festival took place across 6 main venues with a varied programme across each day

AVIVA STUDIOS

Channel 4 Presents:
An Altogether Different
Comedy Night

In Conversation with
World of Wonder
+
Party Monster Screening

Manchester Camerata
LGBTQ+ Composers
concert
+
Monk in Pieces
documentary screening

NEW CENTURY HALL

In Conversation with
Jonathan Harvey + Beautiful
Thing Screening

Waterloo Road:
Everyone Welcome

10 Years of Cucumber with
Russell T Davies & Cast

In Conversation with
What It Feels Like for a Girl

The Victoria Wood-A-Thon

Bulletproof: A Lesbian's Guide
to Surviving the Plot

SCENE Greater Manchester
shorts showcase

+
curated shorts programme
from GAZE and Iris Prize
festivals

VUE at PRINTWORKS

Best of Sheffield DocFest
Gen_

The Secret of Me

Strange Journey: The Story of
Rocky Horror

New Narratives

Departures

Plainclothes

Dreams in Nightmares

Streets of Gloria

Some Nights I Feel Like Walking

Drive Back Home

Queens of Drama

HOME

Opening Film:
Lesbian Space Princess

Showgirls 30th
Anniversary in 4K
+
Pre Show Cabaret

You Don't Nomi

54 (Director's Cut)

Vegas in Space

Cheryl Dunye Early Career
Shorts

+
The Watermelon Woman
screening





RUSSELL T DAVIES

SCREENWRITER & TELEVISION PRODUCER

SEE

Pictured: Russell T Davies introduces a 10 year anniversary screening of his Channel 4 drama Cucumber

2025 PROGRAMME

The festival took place across 6 main venues with a varied programme across each day

FIRST STREET OUTDOOR SCREEN

Our free outdoor cinema screening musical and comedy classics

Wizard of Oz

Wicked Sing-a-long

The Devil Wears Prada

To Wong Foo Thanks for Everything
Julie Newmar

Mean Girls

The First Wives Club

Some Like it Hot

CULTPLEX

Manchester's home of cult cinema

Barb and Star Go To
Vista Del Mar

Bottoms
party screening

Mondo Queero's Midnight Movie

GASP! x SCENE Queer Horror
All Dayer

FAIRFIELD SOCIAL CLUB

ON THE SCENE - Protest!
Documenting Dissent

An immersive recreation of the party after the 1988
Section 28 protest filmed as part of a documentary
to be a screened at SCENE 2026

TREEHOUSE HOTEL

I'm Your Venus

Queerchester

A new documentary featuring footage from
Manchester's 90s queer clubbing scene,
charting it's evolution at venues such as
Manto, Danceteria, Paradise Factory and
Flesh at the Hacienda.



Pictured:: Producer director and stars of BBC One's Waterloo Road

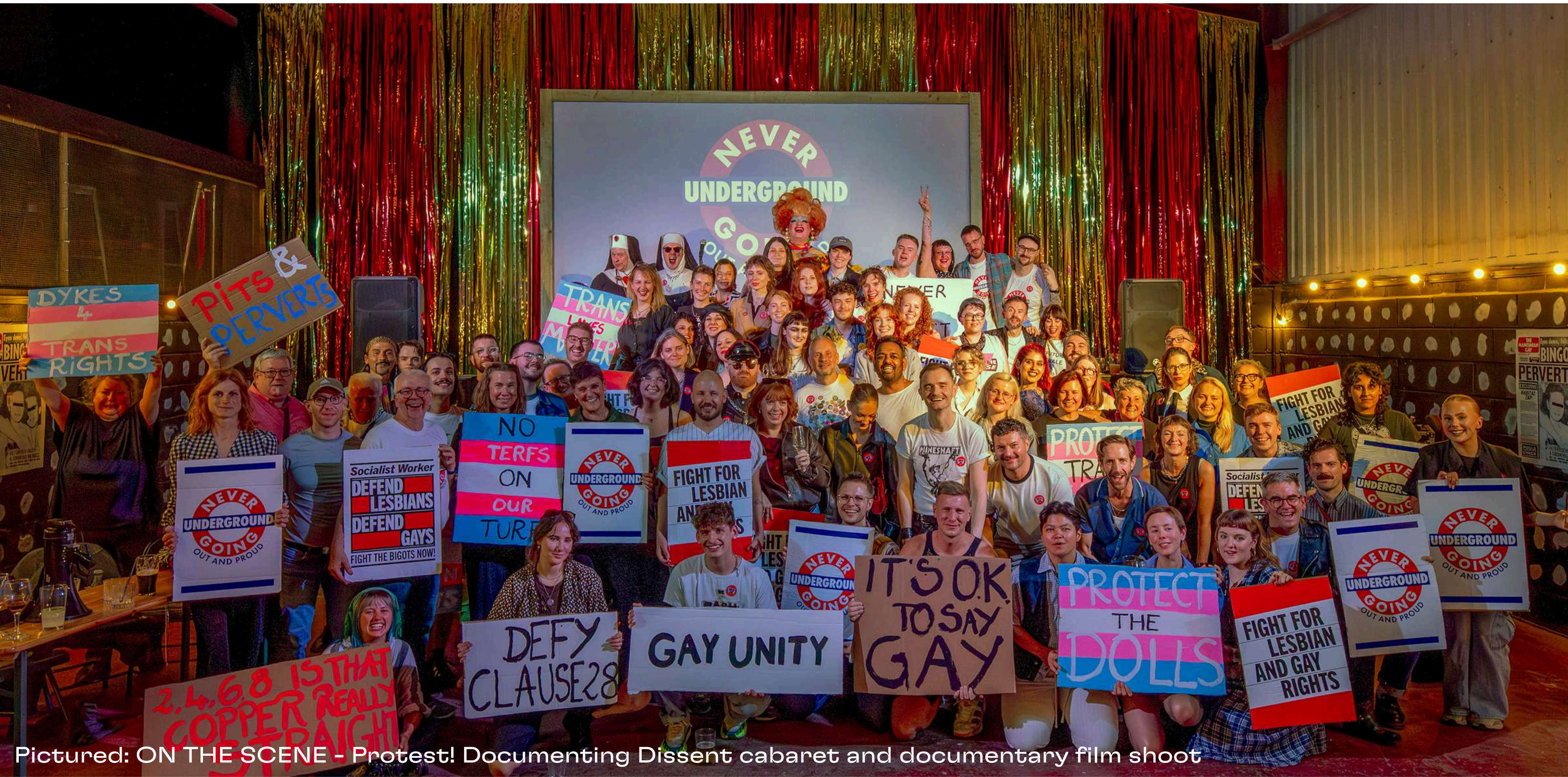


CREATIVES

SCENE 2025 gave a platform for filmmakers, actors, directors, journalists (and even some comedians!) to talk about their work and share their passions with our audience

- Adam Ali
- Adam Leatherhead
- Alex Thomas-Smith
- Anna Phylactic
- Banksie
- Becca Dudley
- Berwyn Rowalds
- Cecily Hitchcock
- Cyril Nri
- Eleanor Tiernan
- Ella Gauci
- Ellis Howard
- Fenton Bailey
- Gary James Williams
- Greg Thorpe
- Hannah Jones
- Jake Dunn
- Jez Butterworth
- Jonathan Harvey
- Jonathan Mayor

- Joshua Val Martin
- Kate O Donnell
- Laquarn Lewis
- Lill
- Luke Oliviera Davies
- Mark Jordan
- Nathaniel Hall
- Neil Ely
- Olga Koch
- Peter Teth
- Randy Barbato
- Rainbow Noir
- Regan Latimer
- Russell T Davies
- Scott Bryan
- Stephen Bailey
- Terri White
- Thomas Dukes
- Uma Loob
- Vincent Franklin



Pictured: ON THE SCENE - Protest! Documenting Dissent cabaret and documentary film shoot

OUR AUDIENCE

Here in Manchester, we're one of the UK's most exciting destinations for brands and media companies looking to connect with a vibrant, diverse, and growing LGBTQ+ community. Today, 65% of companies prioritise Manchester alongside or even ahead of London for media campaigns. For brands aiming to engage both the media industry and a forward thinking LGBTQ+ audience, Manchester offers meaningful opportunities to connect with an influential and passionate community.

SCENE Manchester's LGBTQ+ Film and TV Festival is the perfect platform to tap into this energy. We connect brands with a highly engaged audience eager for inclusive storytelling, cultural connection, and memorable experiences. Manchester is home to one of the UK's oldest queer communities who party and protest side by side and many in our audience seek deeper connections to LGBTQ+ community and history through our festival.

Behind the scenes, Manchester's media industry is thriving. With world-class production facilities, infrastructure and creative talent, the city is a hub of innovation with both the BBC and ITV calling MediaCityUK home and Channel 4 recently moving to the city. Loved by both global streaming giants and homegrown producers, Manchester has become a powerhouse of the new creative revolution.

With a proud legacy of LGBTQ+ activism and a warm, northern welcome, Manchester is both a cultural and commercial hub. More than 1 in 10 Mancunians identify as LGBTQ+, contributing to a UK market worth over £6 billion annually. This makes Manchester not only a fantastic place to live and work, but a prime location for brands looking to make authentic connections with an audience that values representation, diversity, and an unmistakable spirit of "everybody welcome."





Pictured: World of Wonder founders Randy Barbato and Fenton Bailey in conversations with former editor of Empire Magazine Terri White ahead of a screening of their classic film Party Monster



BE PART OF IT

Join the UK's biggest celebration of LGBTQ+ Film and TV

SCENE 2026 will take place
Friday 21st - Thursday 27th August 2026

Speak to our Programming Team about featuring
your show, film or short at SCENE 2026

Gary James Williams
Programme Lead

gary.williams@cityco.com



SCENE is an official Fringe partner event of Manchester Village Pride, the new community interest company who are hosting the Pride celebrations across the city this year.

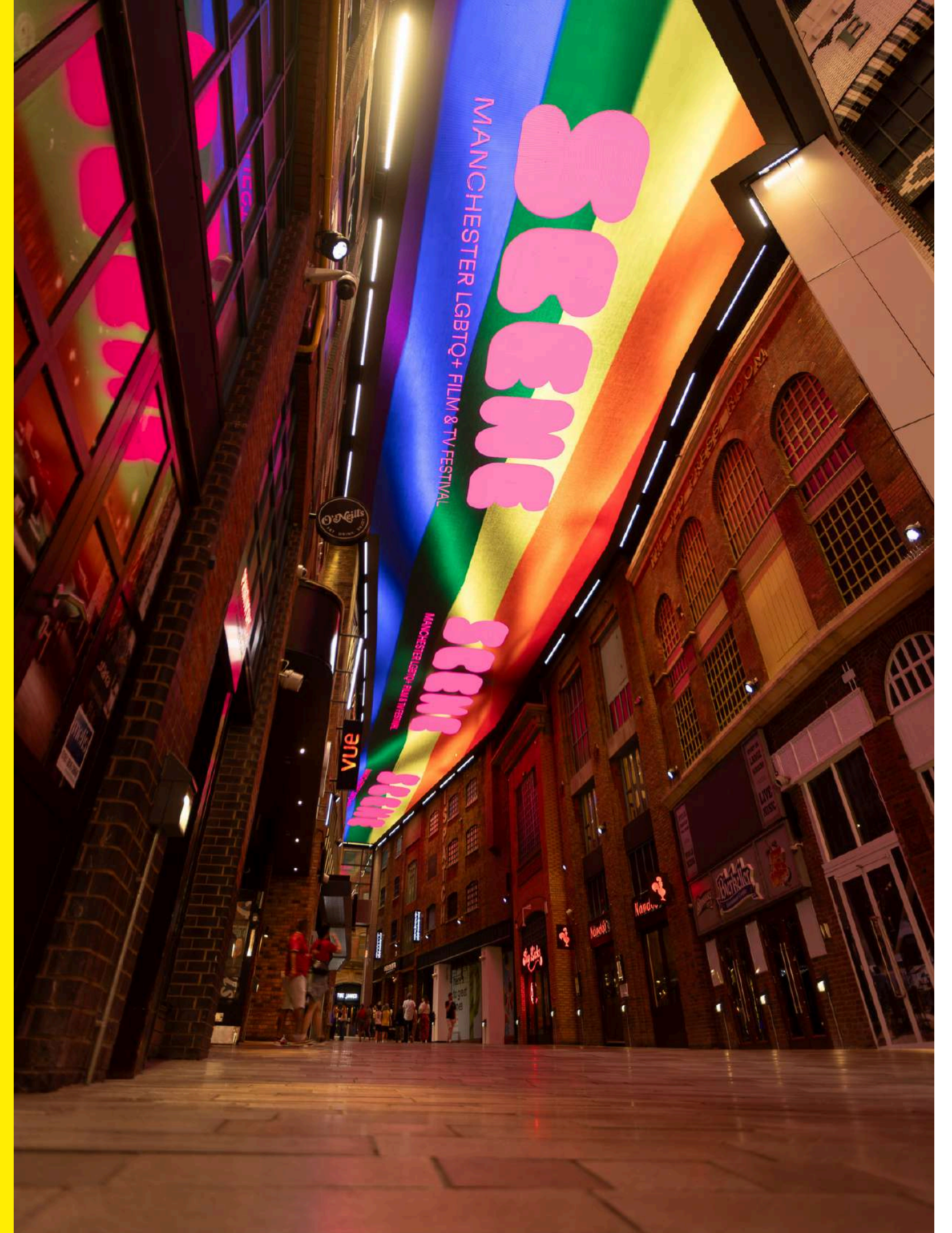
SCENE ticket profits will be donated to Manchester Village Pride CIC which will be used to support the 5 LGBTQ+ Charities based in Manchester.

MARKETING 2025

SCENE 2025 was supported by a wide-reaching local and regional marketing campaign, enhanced by Marketing Manchester's national and international promotion.

SCENE 2025 CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:

- Strategic media partnerships with Attitude
- Strategic media partnership with DIVA magazine
- PR campaign run by Premier PR
- 80 pieces of coverage (incl Pink News, Metro, Big Issue)
- 1.87million reach (up 20% on 2024 event)
- 75 city centre SCENE branded banners
- Influencer launch event
- Inclusion in Marketing Manchester international and national Summer campaign
- SCENE + Stay campaign focusing on encouraging overnight stays at the festival and extended Manchester Pride period
- Partnership with Manchester Pride giving access to social media posts and solus emails
- Instagram followers increased by 50%




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HOME > CULTURE 3 JULY 2025

Cucumber reunion, Beautiful Thing and Party Monster lead SCENE Festival 2025 lineup

In partnership with SCENE Festival

By Attitude Staff



Drag legends Lorraine Black (left) and Arma Phobic (right) are among the gorgeous hosts of SCENE Manchester (Image: Fabio De Paoli)

SCENE Festival returns to Manchester this August with a full city takeover celebrating LGBTQ+ storytelling across film, TV, music and more.

Running from 15 to 21 August 2025, this year's programme includes anniversary screenings, cast conversations, documentary premieres and drag takeovers - all timed to coincide with Manchester Pride week.

19 limited access to exclusive content and over 200 back issues

Trending

- 1 Joanna Lumley arrives... What's the point of acting?
- 2 The Morning's Dylan Clark reveals first boyfriend since divorce - and they've already talked kids
- 3 Dryden Peck shares behind-the-scenes glimpse of life on the set of 'The Rabbit with Noah Calhoun'
- 4 Meta Nicks anti-LGBTQ+ bill is 'a terrifying... advice on preventing AI political bias'
- 5 Soaps: First look video of gay hearts... 'I've always been a fan of the gay soap camp' (EXCLUSIVE)

attitude

LEARN FROM THE PAST. SUBSCRIBE TO OUR FUTURE.

19 limited access to exclusive content and over 200 back issues

METRO

Russell T Davies: 'My friend's threesome helped me win a Bafta'

EXCLUSIVE Tom Percival

Published August 8, 2025 10:29am Updated August 8, 2025 10:29am

Comments



PRODUCER) (ORIGINAL) (CAST)

Manchester Evening News

Five amazing things to do in and around Greater Manchester this weekend

There's festivals, picnics, and flower shows all taking place across the region over the next couple of days

Scene Festival 2025



DIVA


The world's leading magazine for LGBTQIA women and non-binary people

Love women? Love DIVA! Buy the latest issue now!

HOME CELEB CULTURE LIFESTYLE NEWS SUBSCRIPTIONS CURRENT ISSUE DIVA AWARDS

SCENE festival hosts over 4,000 attendees in astonishing second year

Published on: 28 August 2025 Published by: EDITOR



The Manchester-based TV and film festival also raised £10,000 for Manchester Pride



#ProudAllOver





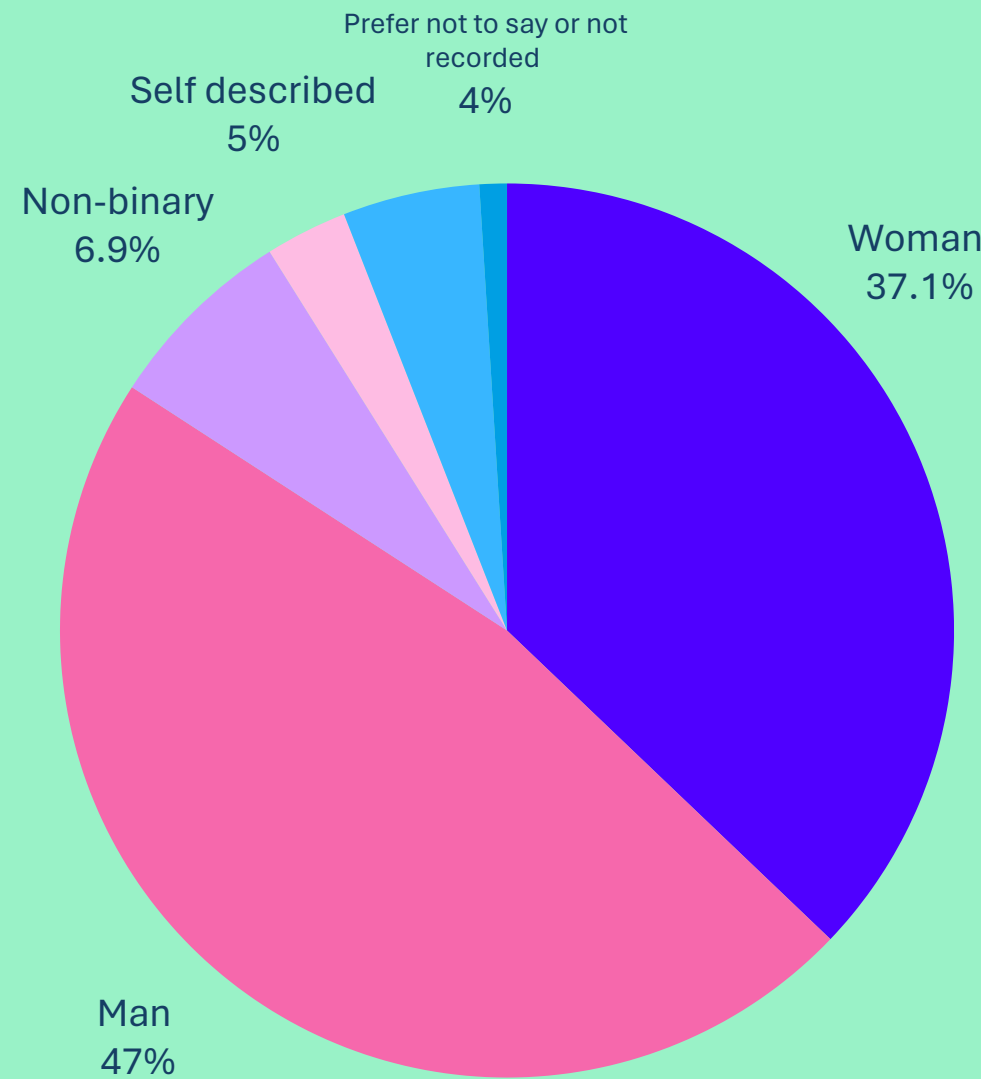
AUDIENCE FEEDBACK & RATINGS

Our audience love SCENE. In only two years we're thrilled to see the festival be taken to heart by ticket buyers and attendees from Manchester and increasingly around the UK and the world.

99% of those survey rated the festival event they attended as Excellent or Good

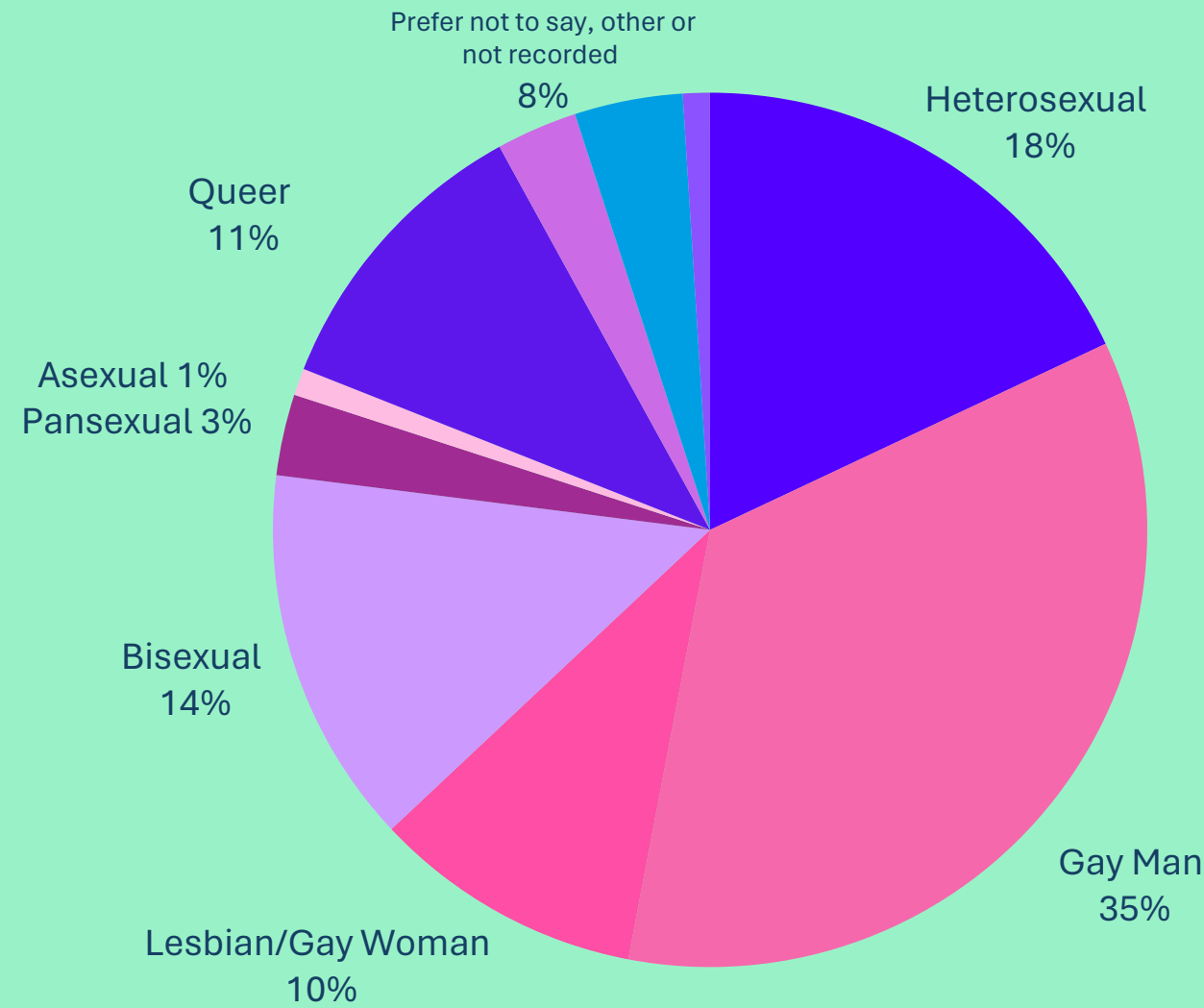
2025	
EXCELLENT	88.0%
GOOD	11.0%
OK	1.0%
POOR	0.0%

SURVEY RESPONSES 2025

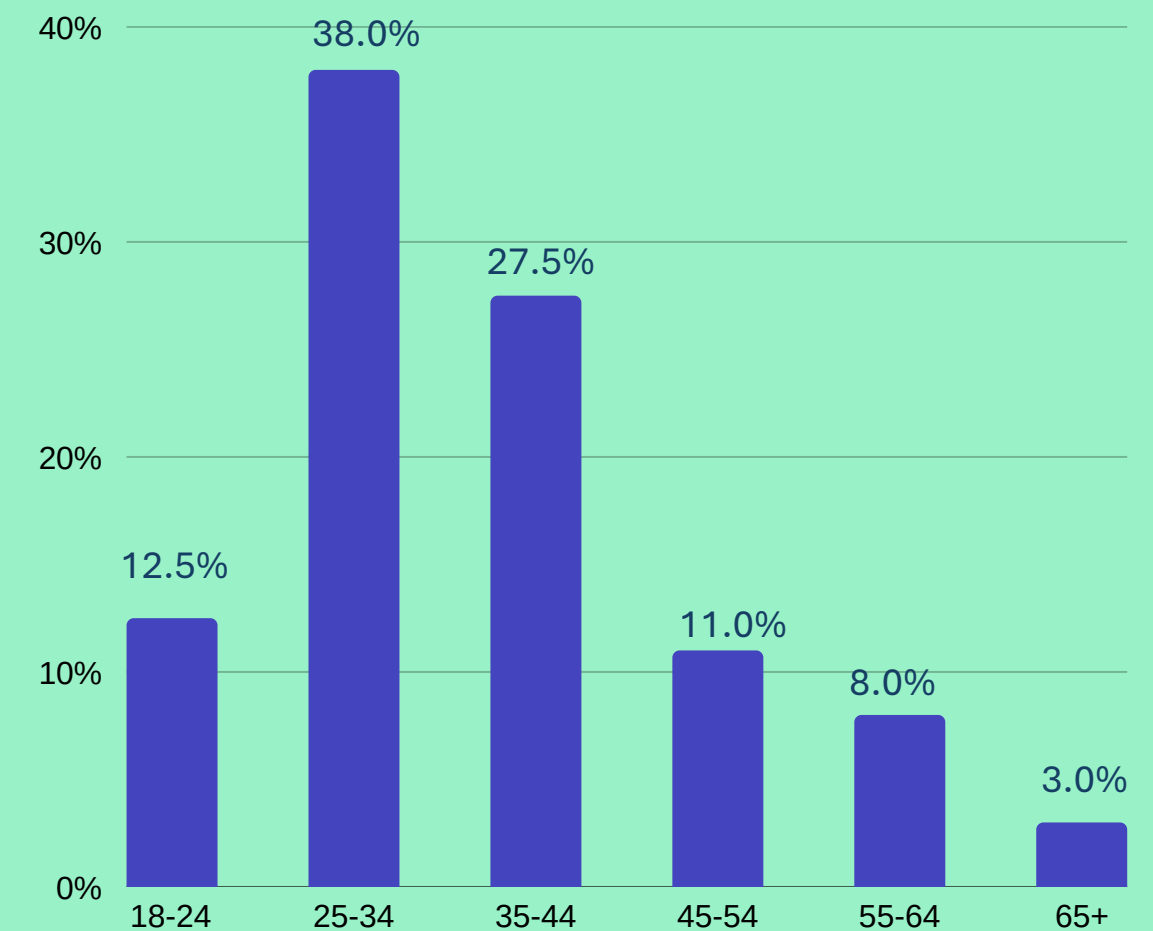


Gender

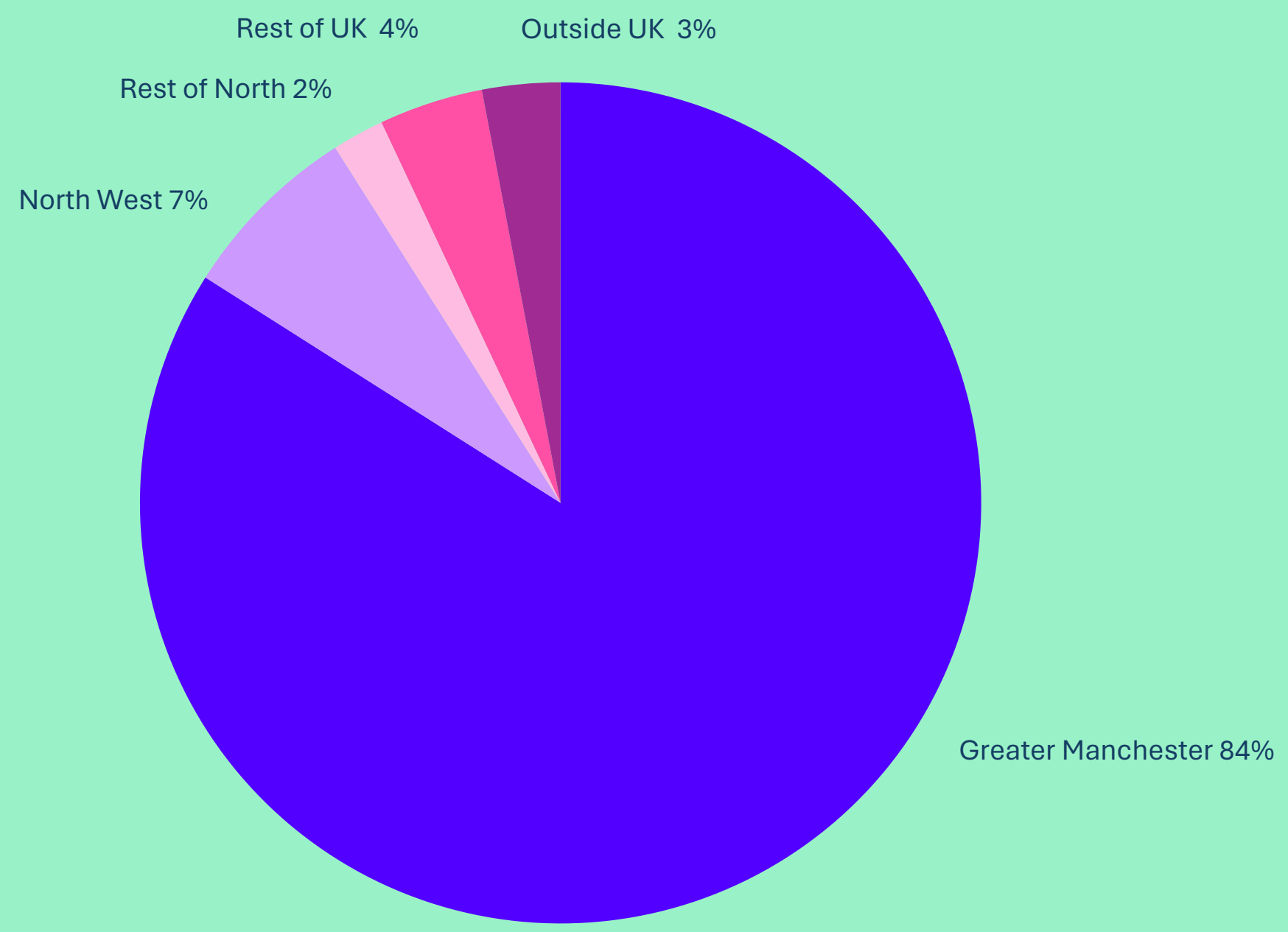
Note: Woman includes Trans Women and Man includes Trans Men



Sexuality

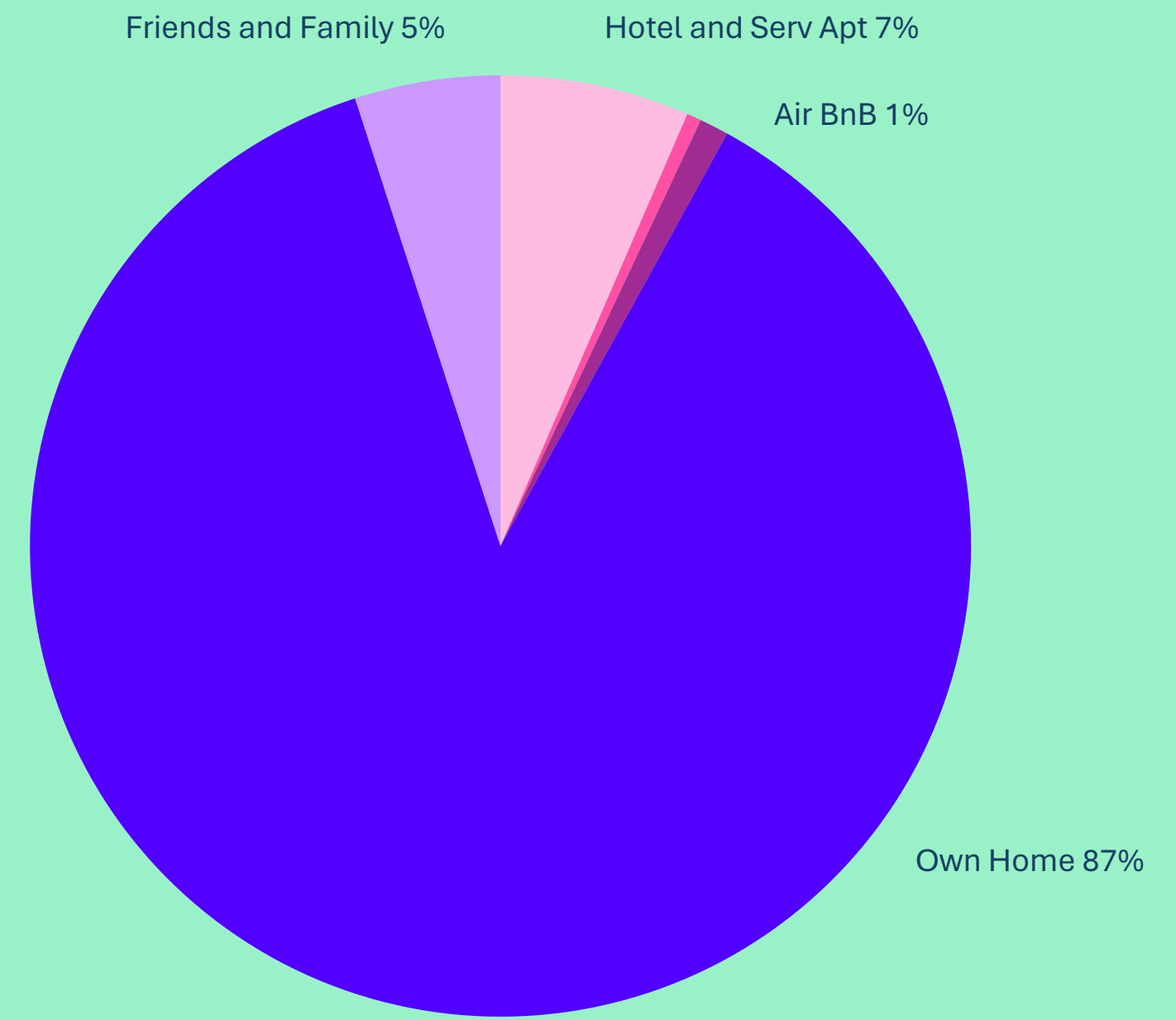


Age



Travelled From

An increase of 3% of those attending the festival from outside of the Greater Manchester on Year 1 with those outside of the UK increasing 2%



Stayed

Of those surveyed 7% stayed in Hotel or Serviced Apartment, an increase of 3% on Year 1



Pictured: Writer Jonathan Harvey in a career retrospective conversation with journalist Scott Bryan

ACCOMMODATION

SCENE is funded by Manchester Accommodation Business Improvement District a ground-breaking initiative led by the city's hotel and serviced apartment providers to help create new events and additional activities that will attract more people to visit and stay in Manchester and Salford.

As well as delivering international marketing campaigns and attracting business tourism Manchester ABID creates new festivals like SCENE and fund bids to bring major events to the city including The Brits, MOBOS, MTV EMAs, the UK's first regular season NBA game coming in 2027.

in the 7 day period SCENE festival takes place hotel occupancy has increased 6% in 2 years.



SEE MORE

WEBSITE

<https://www.scenefestival.com/>

FACEBOOK

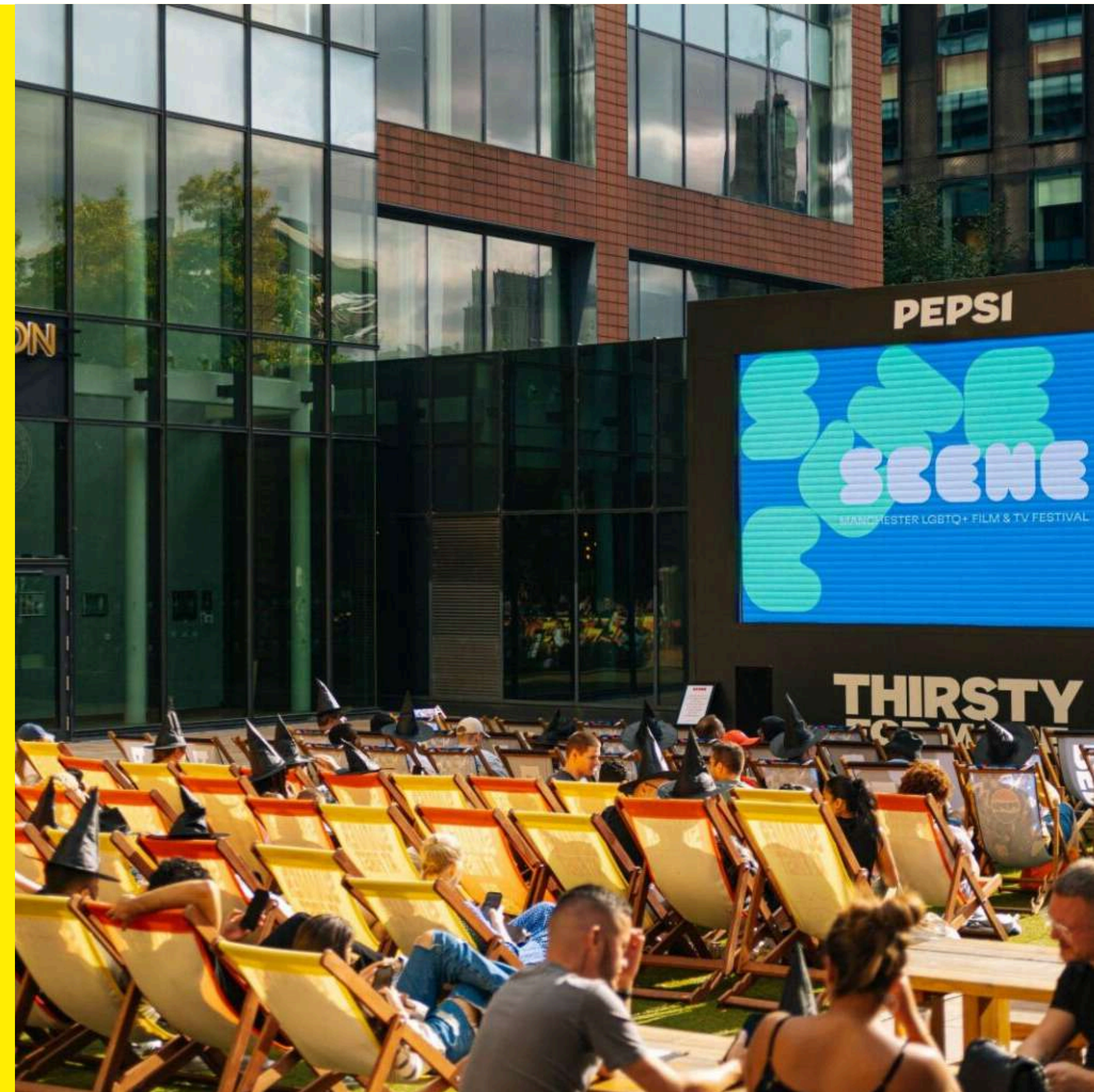
<https://www.facebook.com/SCENEFestival/>

INSTAGRAM

https://www.instagram.com/scene_festival/

GALLERIES

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/citycomanchester/opencity/albums/>



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