

plymouth prideevent 2008

Media Release

Ref: PP/JEN020

June 9, 2008

Thousands show their Pride in Plymouth

An estimated 2,500 people, including Plymouth Sutton MP Linda Gilroy and city council leader Cllr Vivienne Pengelly, attended plymouth prideevent 2008 on Saturday and enjoyed themselves so much that the event ran well past its closing time.

It was opened by the city's Lord Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor Brian Vincent and Pauline Murphy, after the Rainbow Flag was flown over Plymouth Guildhall for the first time.

It was the second year of the city's Pride event, organised by a committee of volunteers from lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans (LGBT) communities and members of support organisations.

The Lord Mayor and Mayoress met Plymouth's oldest lesbian, 91-year-old Jo Monk, and they also stayed for much of the day and attended activities as diverse as a cabaret performance by drag queen Lizzy Drip and a public question time session with representatives of the police, health services, and the city council.

They also viewed an LGBT communities' history exhibition, including Holocaust Memorial Day, and a display on famous lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans people in history.

Other events during the day included a talk by Iraqi refugee Ali Hili, who spoke on the sufferings of the LGBT communities in his home country and showed video footage of some of the horrors which have seen more than 400 killed for their sexual orientation in the past three years.

There was also an interactive health village organised by Plymouth Teaching Primary Care Trust, and more than 60 stalls covering everything from civil partnership venues, charitable activities, and trades union membership, to books and cosmetics.

An accident on the motorway caused traffic delays for some of the day's entertainers, which resulted in changes to the timetable, and headline act Billiam went on stage slightly later than planned.

The boyband, who are the official support act for the Girls Aloud Tangled Up tour 2008, had barely any preparation time but still gave a stunning show in the Guildhall's main hall.

Lizzy Drip proved so popular that she returned to the stage for a second performance and continued to rapturous applause for 20 minutes past the official 4 pm closing time.

It concluded a day which broke all records for the LGBT committee, which now has to start all over again with plans for 2009.

Committee chairman Mark Ayres said: "It has been a brilliant event and could hardly have gone better. We must have had a thousand people in the Guildhall at any one time, it was absolutely packed.

"Now, we have to take all the good points from this year into 2009 and look at ways to further improve and make it even bigger and better again."

Plymouth prideevent 2008 is a registered charity raising funds in support of the city's LGBT organisations and working in partnership with Plymouth City Council, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, Plymouth Primary Care Trust, Out Youth Group, Plymouth Pride Forum, Plymouth Sound Radio, The Swallow public house, Zeros Nightclub, Eddystone Trust, Intercom Trust, Fyne Times, In Other Words Books, She Bang, University of Plymouth, and the TUC South West.

More information about the Pride event is available by visiting the website www.plymouthprideevent.co.uk or emailing info@plymouthprideevent.co.uk or telephoning 07753 339965.

ENDS

Notes for Editor:

- The phrase 'trans' should be used as it is a particular term covering transsexual, transgender, transvestite
- Photos are available on request
- Queries on this media release can be directed in the first instance to Julia Netherton or John Thorne, M2S Media, PR consultants to plymouth prideevent, on 01823 663146 or email julia@m2smedia.co.uk or john@m2smedia.co.uk