

OurSpace Map

OurSpace Exhibition by [OurStory Scotland](#)

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow, 2008



Information for the OurSpace map was provided by members of the LGBT community in 2008: our space and places change all the time, so the map would look different today.

1. Glasgow LGBT Centre

Earlier based in Dixon Street, the Centre moved to Bell Street and has been home to café bar **M.E.T.** and many organisations including the LGBT choir Queer Notes, Vivid Youth, Crosslynx and the Gay Dads group.

2. Glasgow Women's Library

GWL first opened in 1991 in Garnethill as a women-only space. GWL has moved several times as its work and collections have expanded; first to 109 Trongate in 1994, then in 2006 to temporary accommodation at 81 Parnie Street in preparation for the planned move to the Mitchell Library.

Lesbian Archive and Information Centre, based at GWL, is the UK's largest and most significant collection of materials about lesbian lives, activism and achievements. Originally set up in London in 1984, it was re-housed in GWL in 1995.

LiPS (Lesbians in Peer Support) was a project based in the LAIC that supported young lesbian and bisexual women who live in the Glasgow area. From June 2000, over 200 young women received one-to-one support and information or took part in the LiPS youth group and workshops.

3. Mitchell Library

The Mitchell houses the OurStory Scotland LGBT collection and we hold our regular meetings here. LAIC (Lesbian Archive and Information Centre) and GWL (Glasgow Women's Library) are to relocate to the Mitchell.

4. Steve Retson Project

A sexual health project for gay and bisexual men, offering advice and information, testing, treatment and free condoms. Launched in 1994 to address HIV prevention by catering for the wide range of health needs of gay men, SRP was the first of its kind anywhere in the United Kingdom. Now based at the Sandyford Centre and at the Glasgow LGBT Centre.

5. Gay & Lesbian Book Sections in Waterstones and Borders

The Gay & Lesbian sections of Glasgow's bookshops have been a vital resource for many LGBT people. For some it is the only way to access information about the gay community. Once you pluck up the courage to go over and pick up a book a whole new world can be opened up for you, and you realize you're not the only one!

6. George Square

The site of the LGBT Community Fair at Pride Scotia in 2006 has also always been a significant meeting place. When LGBT people contacted the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard for advice and support, the befriending service would offer to meet them in the public and safe space of George Square.

7. Glasgow Green

The use of Glasgow Green as a meeting place for gay men goes back a long way, and court records from the 1920s, analysed by Jeff Meek of Glasgow University, show that the location that figures most often in legal cases was Nelson's Monument in Glasgow Green. Homosexuality was illegal in Scotland until 1980 (13 years after the law changed in England and Wales). This use of Glasgow's most central public park appeared to hit a peak in the 1920s. An area of dense shrubbery surrounding the monument offered some protection from prying eyes.

8. Glasgow Film Theatre

The GFT in Rose Street has long been a meeting place for LGBT people due in part to its continued support of LGBT films and events. They have hosted regular LGBT film seasons and Glasgay! screenings. The building itself was also an important meeting place in the past for the Glasgow LGBT Youth Group.

9. Green's Playhouse

Green's Playhouse opened in 1927 at the corner of Renfield Street and Renfrew Lane. It closed in 1973 and reopened as the Apollo, Scotland's premier rock venue. In its time it was Europe's biggest cinema with over 4000 seats, and it became well known amongst gay men as a place to meet.

10. Citizens Theatre

Situated in the midst of the Gorbals, this internationally known Glasgow theatre, led by its inspirational actor/manager Giles Havergal, together with its cast, was producing ground breaking theatre in the late 1960s through to the present day.

Close Theatre Club

Based in an annex of the Citizens Theatre in the 1960s this short-lived experimental theatre club specialized in modern drama. With no raised stage the audience was in "close" proximity to the actors performing the piece. It was a popular club in its day and attracted gays of all appetites. Sadly in the late sixties it was consumed by fire, never to return.

11. The Glasgow Women's Centre

Formed in the early 1980s, the women's centre was based in Miller Street, up several very steep flights of stairs. Many of Glasgow's first lesbian groups were established here, such as Lesbian Line and Fourwalls Women's Housing Cooperative. It was the hub of political and social activity with dozens of campaigns, protest marches and demonstrations organised in these crumbling damp rooms.

12. The q! gallery

Based in the Salt Market this is Scotland's first visual arts gallery dedicated to queer art and artists. It also hosts a small bookshop and pottery store.

13. Glasgow Gay Centre

The Centre came into being at 534 Sauchiehall Street in 1977 as a result of efforts by members of the Glasgow Branch of the Scottish Minorities Group (SMG) subsequently the Scottish Homosexual Rights Group (SHRG), then Outright Scotland - a group of people dedicated to campaigning for 'The Rights and Welfare of Homosexual men and Women.' This group was active in other spheres and set up the Glasgow Gay Advisory Service (GGAS), a telephone information and helpline in premises provided by a sympathetic businessman.

14. Scottish Minorities Group (SMG)

From these premises, at 12 Renfield Street, SMG published newsletters. In 1978, the newsletter 'SMG News' changed to 'Gay Scotland', and the group itself was renamed the Scottish Homosexual Rights Group (SHRG). Gay Scotland was the forerunner of the glossy of the same name, now unfortunately defunct.

15. The Club

In the late 1970s SHRG bought premises at Queens Crescent to form a licensed Gay Club. While its café and function suite were successful for some time, it could not compete with other new gay venues which had recently come on the scene in Glasgow.

16. The Star Club

From the early to mid 1980s, the Communist Party social club in Calton Place was the venue for monthly lesbian discos. Frequently showcasing live music from women performers these popular nights attracted women from all over Scotland.

17. Iona Community

The Iona Community is an ecumenical Christian community that was initially linked to the Church of Scotland. The Iona Community had a hall at Community House, 214 Clyde Street, which was used by the Scottish Minorities Group for meetings and for planning campaigns for gay law reform.

18. Vintners

A very busy and popular gay bar in Clyde Street during the 1970s to early 80s, catering for a wide age range, with the small "intimate" bar situated below & The Large Bar and diner above. Sadly Vintners did not survive the end of the eighties era, and was demolished in the early 1990s.

19. Waterloo Bar

Holding its position since the early 1970s as the longest running original Glasgow gay bar, the Waterloo Bar in Argyle Street was the domain of Betty Hutton who held court and the microphone for the popular karaoke nights.

20. Central Hotel

As part of the great British Railway Hotel tradition of the 50s, First Level Cafe at The Central Hotel was popular with the gay crowd for "afternoon teas" at the weekends, or for a quiet late drink after the chaos of the "half ten" bar bells rang in the surrounding city centre bars.

Glasgow's Merchant City has been home to the LGBT Centre and several bars, clubs and businesses including:

Bennets (21) in Glassford Street, launched in 1982 and becoming Glasgow's longest running LGBT nightclub.

The Polo Lounge, Moda and **Delmonicas (22)** all three bars sharing the same block on Wilson Street and Virginia Street.

Revolver (23) a small basement bar at 6A John Street.

Court Bar (24) LGBT friendly since 1970s in Hutcheson St.

Brunswick Hotel (25) is a regular sponsor of Glasgow!

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