# Sitcom Smoggie Queens celebrates gay life in Middlesbrough



New sitcom Smoggie Queens, on BBC iPlayer, explores the lives of a group of friends within Middlesbrough's LGBTQ+ community. Written by local comedian Phil Dunning, who also stars as the main character Dickie, the show introduces audiences to a cast of eclectic personalities navigating love, acceptance, and the, ahem, unique charm of their regional home.

At the heart of the narrative is Dickie, described as a "volatile" drag queen whose adventures often veer into absurdity. His ensemble cast includes several notable characters: the maternal drag queen Mam, played by Mark Benton, the self-styled "hun" Lucinda portrayed by Alexandra Mardell, the awkward Sal as played by Patsy Lowe, and the newcomer Stewart, portrayed by Elijah Young. The show highlights these characters' camaraderie, illustrating how queer friendship networks serve as chosen families within the community.

The storyline kicks off with Dickie experiencing personal turmoil following a breakup, which sets the stage for comedic escapades that embody the spirit of their north-eastern town. Critics have noted that the series promises to blend heartfelt moments with light-hearted humour, showcased through events such as Titanic-themed drag brunches and speed dating.

Notably, Smoggie Queens features contributions from a variety of well-known actors, including Michelle Visage of RuPaul’s Drag Race fame and local Teesside talents such as Charlotte Riley and Bill Fellows. Their involvement underlines the show's commitment to showcasing regional pride alongside LGBTQ+ representation.

The writing team emphasises that Middlesbrough serves as more than just a backdrop; the town is portrayed as a central character in its own right. Dunning described the project as a "love letter" to Middlesbrough, challenging the prevailing narrative often depicted in televised portrayals of the area. Through its comedic lens, 'Smoggie Queens' aspires to capture the warmth, humour, and resilience of its residents, and to celebrate the distinct culture found within the LGBTQ+ community of the region.

Critics have noted the sitcom's tone as being a blend of comic absurdity and a heartwarming sense of belonging, with descriptions pinpointing its exploration of themes such as personal struggle and friendship. While initial feedback has also commented on the tonal balance, some reviewers have expressed hope that future episodes will enhance the comedy.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.whattowatch.com/watching-guides/smoggie-queens-cast-plot-first-look-and-everything-we-know> - Corroborates the release date, cast, and plot of 'Smoggie Queens', including the characters and their roles.
* <https://www.whattowatch.com/watching-guides/smoggie-queens-cast-plot-first-look-and-everything-we-know> - Provides details about the show's setting in Middlesbrough and its focus on the LGBTQ+ community.
* <https://www.whattowatch.com/watching-guides/smoggie-queens-cast-plot-first-look-and-everything-we-know> - Mentions Phil Dunning as the writer and star of the show, and his character Dickie.
* <https://www.whattowatch.com/watching-guides/smoggie-queens-cast-plot-first-look-and-everything-we-know> - Lists the ensemble cast, including Mark Benton, Alexandra Mardell, Patsy Lowe, and Elijah Young.
* <https://www.whattowatch.com/watching-guides/smoggie-queens-cast-plot-first-look-and-everything-we-know> - Highlights the involvement of guest stars such as Michelle Visage and Bill Fellows.
* <https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/11/28/bbc-drag-sitcom-smoggie-queens-interview/> - Confirms the release date and streaming availability of 'Smoggie Queens' on BBC iPlayer and BBC Three.
* <https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/11/28/bbc-drag-sitcom-smoggie-queens-interview/> - Discusses the show's tone and blend of comic absurdity and heartfelt moments.
* <https://www.whattowatch.com/watching-guides/smoggie-queens-cast-plot-first-look-and-everything-we-know> - Explains how Middlesbrough is portrayed as a central character in the show, challenging common narratives about the town.
* <https://www.whattowatch.com/watching-guides/smoggie-queens-cast-plot-first-look-and-everything-we-know> - Quotes Phil Dunning describing the project as a 'love letter' to Middlesbrough and highlighting its unique culture.
* <https://www.whattowatch.com/watching-guides/smoggie-queens-cast-plot-first-look-and-everything-we-know> - Mentions the show's aim to capture the warmth, humour, and resilience of Middlesbrough's residents and the LGBTQ+ community.