

The Arts by the Sea Festival Accessibility Guide

The 2026 festival takes place between 25th and 26th September. It is a free event and is in Bournemouth Town Centre.

This guide aims to give you information about getting around the festival. If you have any further queries, please contact us at culture@bcpcouncil.gov.uk or call on 01202 128121.

Getting here

By Train

You can travel to the festival from all over the UK by train [[National Rail Enquiries - Official source for UK train times and timetables](#)]. The nearest train station to the festival site is Bournemouth and the festival site is a 30 minute walk from the station (or a short bus ride). There is a bus station and a taxi rank outside the train station (platforms 3 and 4 exit). Most buses will take you into the Town Centre via Bournemouth Square (Gervis Place).

By Bus

You can travel to Bournemouth Town Centre easily by bus from all over the BCP area. More Bus – Plan your journey [[Plan your journey - morebus](#)] Due to improvements in the town centre, bus stops have moved from Gervis Place. This link shows where bus stops have been temporarily located. [Bus stop changes in central Bournemouth from 23 May - morebus](#) For level access to the Lower Gardens and The Square head along Westover Road, towards the road closure, keeping the gardens on your left. The garden can then be accessed via a slight incline. The Square is on the right, via level access The bus stop is 0.1 miles / 0.2 km from the festival.

Taxis

Taxi Companies that have wheelchair accessible vehicles are:

PRC Streamline 01202 373737

United Taxis 01202 556677

Star Radio Cars Ltd 01202 39191

Mobile Radio Cars 01202 518000

Accessible parking and drop-off points

There are several car parks in the town centre near the festival site. The closest car park with the most level access is the Pavilion Car Park, Westover Road. All car parks have accessible parking spaces. Parking is not free. More information can be found here:

<https://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Parking/FindaCarPark/CarParks/CarParks.aspx>

Drop off points are:

- ❖ Pavilion car park (use the external lift on the right side of the building to reach Pavilion Terrace, then access Lower Gardens via level access pavement under the flyover).
- ❖ Bournemouth Pier bus stop (level access to Pier Approach next to the Bournemouth International Centre (BIC)).
- ❖ The BH2 leisure complex in the town centre has parking and is adjacent to the Lower Gardens with level access into the Gardens.

Approaches and entrances to principal locations in Bournemouth

There is level access to performances taking place in Bournemouth Gardens from the Square to the Pier (which can be accessed via Pier Approach)
The Seafront can be accessed through the Lower Gardens (via Pier Approach).
Picnic Park Deli has level access from Westover Road.

Levels and gradients

The festival locations are the Square and Lower Gardens. The Square is the easiest place to access these locations. Access from other points (e.g. Westover Road) may involve some slopes.

Signage

The performance areas are zoned and numbered. There are large numbered flags in each zone area.

Accessible Viewing Area is signposted by flags and shown on the festival map.

The Information Point is located in the Lower Gardens and signposted by a flag.

Lifts

Pavilion lift

You can find the lift on the right-hand side of the Pavilion as you face the front of the building on Westover Road. It gives access from the Pavilion to the Pavilion Terrace overlooking the Gardens. Access to the Lower Gardens and beach from Pavilion Terrace is past Pavilion Dance South West, down a slope and under the flyover to Pier Approach.

The lift is wide enough for one full size wheelchair but may not be wide enough for a large electric wheelchair or mobility scooter. The lift buttons have raised numbers or letters.

There is a cafe on Pavilion Terrace which is only accessible via a slope near the flyover. The café has outside seating and staff will clear an accessible route if there is any obstruction.

For more information on using the lift and accessible routes around the Pavilion, please visit their website or contact the venue:

<http://www.bournemouthpavilion.co.uk/tickets/accessibility/>

Accessible WC's and Changing Rooms Facilities

Public toilets

The festival provides a Changing Places toilet in the lower gardens which is fully staffed between midday and 6.00pm Saturday.

There are also accessible toilets around the festival site:

- ❖ Bournemouth Central East Promenade, next to Harry Ramsden's
- ❖ Pier Entrance
- ❖ Richmond Gardens, Floor 1 multi-storey car park
- ❖ Bournemouth Library in The Triangle

There is also an accessible toilet at Bournemouth Station, next to the National Express ticket office.

Quiet Spaces

If you need to take a break from the noise and crowds Central gardens (by the Cenotaph) or on the beach either side of Bournemouth Pier are less busy.

Assistance Dogs

Assistance Dogs (and all dogs) are welcome in all areas of the festival site (outside the Town Hall, in Central Gardens, Middle Gardens, Lower Gardens, Town Square and Pier Approach). Between 1 May and 30 September, dogs are not allowed on the majority of the beach and must be kept on a lead on the promenades and paths at all times. For exact beach locations where dogs are permitted visit the BCP Council website.

<https://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/AttractionsLeisure/BeachesandWaterfront/BeachGuidelines.aspx>.

Hearing Induction Loops and Captioned Performances

We do not have any Hearing Induction Loops or Closed Captioning for the outdoor performances at the festival.

Performance Specific Access Information

All performances at the festival are free and unticketed.