



THE GREAT HALL

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION GUIDE

PUTTING YOUR NEEDS FIRST

We welcome everyone to Cardiff Students' Union and want our buildings and spaces to be available to all.

Our goal is to ensure that all Deaf and disabled customers have an enjoyable experience at The Great Hall.

From early access schemes to companion tickets, accessible viewing areas, and medical support, we are committed to accommodating your needs. Whether you're visiting for the first time or returning.

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FIRST ACCESS SCHEME

What is the First Access Scheme?

The First Access Scheme provides early access to the venue and its services for Deaf and disabled customers, along with their companions, before general admission. This allows eligible customers to enter 15 minutes before the public, offering a more comfortable experience.

The First Access Scheme allows early access to the foyer, where you'll find:

- a bar,
- merchandise stand,
- seating
- accessible toilet facilities.
- cloakroom

This helps you avoid queues and the busy environment by passing through security, grabbing a drink, and visiting the cloakroom before general admission.

Deaf and disabled customers can enter the venue at 18:45 via the Box Office before general admission at 19:00 (unless otherwise stated on the ticket).

Early access allows entry to the foyer, which is level with the auditorium. *However, early entry to the auditorium is not possible as the band may still be preparing for the show.*

How does the First Access Scheme work?

Customers registered for the First Access Scheme can report to the Box Office from 18:45 (unless stated otherwise on the ticket). Here, tickets will be scanned, and customers will be escorted to the foyer via a lift or steps, depending on their preference.

Companions can join the First Access Scheme if they arrive with the customer at the Box Office.

All floors are flat with a hard surface, and the walking distance from the Box Office to the foyer is 20m (with a journey in a lift).

At 19:00, the doors to the auditorium will open, allowing customers early access before the general admission.

How to register for the First Access Scheme?

To use the First Access Scheme, customers must complete the Accessibility Application Form for each show they attend. Availability is limited and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Please see more information [here](#).

Summary:

- Early access to the venue for Deaf & Disabled customers.
- Entry at 18:45 via the Box Office.
- Access to the foyer before the public.
- Successful registration required via the Accessibility Application Form.

COMPANION TICKETS

What are companion tickets?

Cardiff Box Office offers complimentary tickets for companions assisting Deaf and Disabled customers attending an event. These tickets allow companions to accompany customers throughout all venue services.

Availability is limited and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Companions are expected to assist with wayfinding, help the customer enter and exit the venue and auditorium, purchase and carry food and drinks, and fulfil all access requirements. They should not leave the customer alone for long periods, be unable to meet the customer's access requirements, or be inebriated at the event.

How to register for Companion Tickets

Companion tickets can be applied for using the Accessibility Application Form. This is an evidence-based system, and companion tickets are only available through this form, not through any ticket agent including Ticketmaster Universe

Summary:

- Free tickets for companions assisting Deaf and Disabled customers.
- Companions assist with various tasks throughout the event.
- Registration required via the Accessibility Application Form.

ACCESSIBLE VIEWING BALCONY

What is the Accessible Viewing Balcony?

Cardiff Box Office offers two large seated accessible viewing balconies with an unrestricted view of the stage and crowd, available only to Deaf and disabled customers. Those who have applied successfully will follow the First Access Scheme and be escorted to the Accessible Viewing Balcony just before general admission doors open.

There is dedicated space for wheelchair users.

A steward is present at each viewing balcony for the entire event to assist customers with inquiries.

Getting to the Accessible Viewing Balcony

Customers should arrive at the Box Office 15 minutes before General Admission doors to use the First Access Scheme. From the foyer, customers using the accessible viewing balcony will be escorted to the balcony just before the general admission doors open. Movement is via a lift and hard flat floors, with steps and handrails available if preferred.

Summary:

- Two large seated accessible viewing balconies.
- Early access and escorted entry via the First Access Scheme.
- Stewards available for assistance during the event.

TICKETS & ACCESSIBILITY APPLICATION FORM

Tickets can be purchased from the Cardiff Box Office website (cardiffboxoffice.com). The website works with standard screen readers.

If the customer wishes to utilise the accessible viewing balcony, first access scheme, or a complementary companion ticket they should complete the application form also found on the website here. Companion tickets can also be arranged using this form.

IMPORTANT: Deaf and Disabled customers should purchase a standard ticket for the show they wish to attend from the Cardiff Box Office website before completing an accessibility access form.

All tickets are digital and will be sent to the registered email address.

What is the Accessibility Application Form?

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve venue accessibility, we have introduced an 'Accessibility Application Form.' This online form is exclusively used by our Box Office team to accommodate the specific access needs and requests of our Deaf and disabled customers. The system is designed to help our team better understand and meet your needs, making the booking process smoother for you and more efficient for us.

The Accessibility Application Form can be accessed online here. Deaf and disabled customers who wish to use the First Access scheme, accessible viewing balcony, or request complimentary companion tickets must complete this form. To prevent misuse and ensure these tickets are available only to those with a legitimate need, the form requires proof of eligibility. Accepted forms of evidence include:

- The front page of a DLA/PIP letter (no specific rate required)
- The front page of an Attendance Allowance letter (no specific rate required)
- Proof of being registered as severely sight impaired (blind)
- A recognised Assistance Dog ID card
- A letter from a 24-hour Care Home
- A recognised Access Card with a +1 symbol (such as CredAbility)
- You are welcome to redact any information related to the amount of benefit paid or specific health conditions when submitting documents.

If you do not have any of the above evidence, the form provides space for you to explain why you need access to our accessibility services.

The implementation of this system allows us to offer a greater number of tickets to our customers and helps us identify both our strengths and areas for improvement. For those requiring a companion, this system ensures greater ticket availability, and for those attending independently, it helps us find the best possible seating to enhance your experience.

Summary:

- Online form for specific access needs.
- Requires evidence of eligibility.
- Helps the team accommodate customers' requirements effectively.

BOX OFFICE ENQUIRIES

Customers can contact our customer services for Deaf & Disabled facilities enquiries via email: hello@cardiffboxoffice.co.uk

Event Day Enquiries

On event day the Box Office Inbox will be busy and there is no guarantee that all emails receive a response.

Customers can enquire to the Box Office staff at the venue before doors. Arrival instructions for the Box Office can be found on this website. The Box Office opens at 18:45.

THE HEADLINER LOUNGE

The Headliner Lounge is part of our premium upgrades for the ultimate experience at The Great Hall. Please find more information here, including how to purchase tickets.

All of our accessibility provisions, including PA/Companion tickets, the First Access Scheme, and the Accessible Viewing Balcony, are fully available to anyone who purchases the Headliner Lounge Upgrade.

Entry and admission to the Headliner Lounge is via the same route as General Admission, so please see the “Getting Here” section. The route is step free.

There are accessible toilets within the Headliner Lounge.

Accessible Viewing Balcony & The Headliner Lounge

If you are booked onto the Accessible Viewing Balcony, the same process will be followed as described in the “Using our Accessible Viewing Balcony” section.

The viewing balcony will open 15 minutes before General Admission is permitted entry. Before this, please feel free to enjoy the Headliner Lounge benefits.

The Headliner Lounge is approximately 10 metres away (step free, flat surface) from both viewing balconies.

PA/Companion & The Headliner Lounge

If you have booked a PA/Companion ticket, this will also apply to the Headliner Lounge. Your PA/Companion will be able to access the same benefits as you. Please see the PA/Companion ticket section for more information.

First Access Scheme & The Headliner Lounge

The Headliner Lounge opens one hour before General Admission.

ARRIVING AT THE VENUE

How to arrive and access the venue

All Deaf and Disabled customers should enter via the Box Office Upon arrival to enter the Accessible Viewing Balcony or use the First Access Scheme. There are chairs available at the Box Office to use while waiting for the venue to open or to use if there is a small wait while we serve other customers.

Deaf and Disabled customers should enter via Senghennydd Road CF24 4AY, using the push-pad door to the left of The CO-OP, this is a direct entrance to the Box Office to avoid the general admission queue. This door will be marked with a BLUE feather flag.

This door is motorised and has flat access with a hard surface all the way to the Box Office and venue.

Google Maps Link to Door: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/MHB7sLBif3kUoERi6>

What Three Words: [///clever.goes.chip](https://www.what3words.com/#!/en/3q3q-3q3q-3q3q)

Parking

There is no private parking at The Great Hall. However, an accessible drop-off zone is available outside The Sherman Theatre, with flat, hard ground leading to the Box Office.

Drop Off

There is an accessible drop-off zone outside The Sherman Theatre, this is XXX distance to the Box Office via flat hard ground. This is a public space and is used by other venues so it may be busy upon arrival. Vehicles are not able to park here, it can only be used for drop-off and pick-up.

Arrival By Train**Cathays Train Station**

Cathays train station is located less than 200m from the Box Office.

Step Free Access: Category B3

While both platforms at Cathays are step-free, there is no facility for wheelchair users, mobility scooter users or persons with reduced mobility to cross between Platform 1 and 2 due to a steep footbridge. Customers who have travelled from the Valleys and wish to access the University or the Civic Centre are advised to travel to Queen Street station, change onto a North-bound service and alight at Cathays on the return service.

Cardiff Central Train Station

Cardiff Central Train Station is just shy of 2km (1.2 miles) walk from the Box Office.

Step Free Access: Category A

Step free access is available to Platforms 0 to 8.

Arrival by Taxi

Taxis can drop customers at Cardiff Students' Union outside the main door to the box office within 20m of the door to box office.

Summary:

- Access via Senghennydd Road with motorized flat access door.
- No private parking, but an accessible drop-off zone is available.
- Chairs available at the Box Office while waiting.

The Box Office

After arriving at the venue, the box office is 50m from the entrance along a flat and lit hall.

Chairs will be available at the Box Office while waiting for the venue to open, these can be used by customers who are registered on the First Access Scheme or Accessible Viewing Platform.

A lowered counter and hearing loop is available at the Box Office.

The floor surface is hard and level.

MOVING AROUND WITHIN THE VENUE

The auditorium is one level up from the Box Office, two lifts are in place with flat access from the Box Office.

For those who require a lift, a steward will be available from the Box Office to escort customers to the auditorium. Additional stewards are dotted around the venue at the various lift locations to provide direction when required.

For customers using the accessible viewing balcony or First Access Scheme a steward will escort them and their companion from the Box Office to the Balcony.

Building Levels

Ground Floor: Box Office and Entrance

Level 1: Main Auditorium, Foyer, Bars and Merchandise

Level 2: Accessible Viewing Platform and Bars.

Lifts in the venue

There is currently one passenger lift in the venue that has access to all floors, we are building a second too. The lift has internal dimensions of:

Door Width: 2ft 3 (0.67m)

Height: 6ft 3 (1.905m)

Width: 5ft 6 (1.67m)

Depth: 3ft 8 (1.11m)

Stairs

All stairs within the venue have handrails on both sides.

There are 22 steps from Box Office to The Great Hall

Toilets

There are accessible toilets on each level within the venue with step-free flat access from the auditorium or Accessible Viewing Balcony.

All locks use a radar key which can be collected from any bar within the venue or the box office. Customers must bring the key back to the area they got it from.

- The door clear opening width to all the toilets is ...
- There is clear floor space in all the toilets up to ...
- The space beside the WC is 800mm
- There is right- and left-hand transfer to the WC
- Vertical rails are fitted beside the WC
- The basin taps are lever taps in all toilets
- There is a strobe light linked to the fire alarm in all accessible toilets
- There is an emergency cord in all accessible toilets that trigger an alarm to security in the event of an emergency. The locks can be opened from outside in an emergency by a trained professional.
- There are colour contrasts between surfaces
- There is clear signage to all toilets
- There are baby changing facilities available at the Box Office Toilets and Accessible Viewing Balcony Toilets

Distances to toilets

All accessible toilets have step free access from any location within the venue.

- The distance from the Left Accessible Viewing Platform is 5m
- The distance from the Right Accessible Viewing Platform is 45m
- The distance from the main auditorium is 30m
- The distance from the Box Office is 30m

Radar Key

A radar key can be collected from any bar within the venue or the box office. Customers must bring the key back to the area they got it from.

FOOD AND DRINK

For Customers using the accessible viewing platform, food and drink can be ordered from the adjacent bar, which has a lowered counter. This includes hot food.

There are no doors and a clear, hard surface to move from the accessible viewing balcony to the bar. The distance is 10m.

For Customers in the auditorium, food and drink can be ordered from the foyer bar, which has a lowered counter. This includes hot food such as hot dogs. The distance from the auditorium to the bar is approximately 20m

- There are accessible toilets close to the food and drink areas.

Induction Loops

There is an Induction Loop fitted into the Box Office as well as the cloakroom.

Hearing aids need to be switched to the T position to receive the signal.

Medical Facilities

At all events Cardiff Box Office operates with an on-site professional medical team.

- The medical area is accessed via a hard flat surface and is close to the lifts.
- A fully private facility is available to the medical team.

The medical team can be contacted by speaking to any member of staff or security.

EMERGENCIES AND EVACUATIONS

In the event of an emergency there will be both an audible alarm in all areas, as well as flashing lights in the main auditorium and strobe lights in the accessible toilets.

Stewards will ensure the safe exit of all people.

There are Evacuation Chairs available. These have a safe working load of 136kgs, and staff are trained to use them.

All areas of the venue have emergency evacuation plans including the accessible areas. Our staff are fully trained in the evacuation of the venue and each accessible area has a specially trained member of staff who can evacuate people from the accessible areas.

QUIETER SPACES

There are tables and chairs at the building's reception on Level 2 outside of the noisy music venue, customers can access this area by speaking to a member of staff. This is the quietest part of the venue and is next to the medical facilities.

Another option is the balcony which is usually open to general admission and is often less busy but still noisy. There is a quiet bar, tables and chairs, the space is flat and accessible. Customers should ask staff for directions or follow signs to the "Balcony". Should a customer require a lift to access the Balcony they can speak to any steward who will direct them.

ASSISTANCE DOGS

Cardiff Box Office welcomes assistance dogs inside the venue.

- Venue staff unfortunately are not able to look after assistance dogs during a performance.
- Water bowls can be provided from reception on level 2.
- Assistance Dogs are not able to be left unattended within the venue.

BRINGING MEDICINES, FOOD & DRINK

Cardiff Box Office welcome attendees who need to bring medicines, food or drink to manage a medical condition. Customers are welcome to contact us in advance of your

visit for advice, prior written acknowledgement from the venue of your requirement, or should you have any concerns or questions; you are also welcome to bring any supporting documents to the venue with you should you wish.

Our door staff are trained in our venue policy regarding understanding our policy for customers with medical requirements and understand that people may need to supply their own provisions to self-manage their condition. If a member of door staff has any questions, they will call a Duty Manager to discuss the matter in private.

NOISE LEVELS

We have little influence in the running of live music events when it comes to sound levels. Artists generally travel with their own sound and lighting systems and their engineers control them throughout the event. We do monitor both sound quality and decibel output and we will advise production crews, when necessary, although we will not be able to turn the volume down unless it is breaching legal limits. Ear plugs are available on request from the bars.

STROBE LIGHTING

Shows will bring their own lighting operator and, in some cases, their own lighting fixtures. This means Cardiff Box Office has little control over what lighting is used during the show.

Please also be aware that most shows will contain strobe lighting or smoke effects. Signage will be available in the venue to advise customers of this.

MERCHANDISE

There is a merchandise stand located on Level 1, this is the same level as the main auditorium. The Accessible Viewing Balcony is on Level 2, the following processes are in place to ensure Deaf & Disabled customers have the same opportunity to purchase merch. [PHOTO](#)

First Access Scheme and Accessible Viewing Balcony customers during their early entry will be offered the option to visit the merchandise stand on the way to the balcony. Additionally, customers can ask the stewards to escort them to the merchandise stand during the event.

There is a lowered counter table at the merchandise stand and staff are on hand to assist.

WHEELCHAIR USERS

The Great Hall is fully accessible by wheelchair. [PHOTO](#)

There are available lifts, toilets and viewing platforms available plus lowered counters at bars, merchandise and box office.

HEARING LOOPS

Hearing loops are available at the Box Office, Cloakroom and Accessible Bars.

ASSISTED PERFORMANCES

Currently The Great Hall is unable to provide BSL interpretation, captions or audio descriptions for live music events. However, this is something that is ongoing.

Customers who require these services should get in contact with us by completing the accessibility application form and our team will be able to best advise you.