

Access Register Help Guide

How We Can Help

THE GRAND
THEATRE | BLACKPOOL

The Grand Theatre Access Register – How We Can Help

Blackpool's Grand Theatre presents a combination of accessible performances from Audio Described, British Sign Language Interpreted and Captioned to additional services including Touch Tours, Headsets, Assistant Dog minding and Familiarisation Visits, including a 3D Virtual Reality experience to Photographic Maps, Dementia Friendly Guides, Visual Stories, and PECS Cards.

Signing on to the Access Register will now help our Box Office and Front of House to assist you with your individual needs, including the ticket booking process and your visit. You can now book your tickets online including free personal assistant tickets.

The Access Register helps advise you on upcoming shows with accessible performances, and new services (subject to you approving contact). This pack includes some helpful notes on the services Blackpool's Grand Theatre offers and how you can now book tickets online.

If you require assistance at any time our Box Office are there to help, call **01253 290 190** or email **box@blackpoolgran.co.uk**

What is an Audio Described performance?

Designed to improve the experience for people who are blind or visually impaired, as well as listening to the dialogue on stage, the theatregoer can wear a headset and listen to a live description of the action on stage. The description only happens in between dialogue and supplements the voices of the performers in explaining the emotions and action of each scene.

How to book your audio described seats – Once on the seating map look for seats identifiable in the Stalls (ground floor towards the front) with a ★ icon. Being signed up to the Accessible Register allows you access these seats.

What is a Captioned Performance?

These allow theatregoers with varying degrees of hearing to view the full text as it is spoken or sung, including sound effects and off-stage noises. These appear on a scrolling screen, positioned on or at the side of the stage. Captioning can also be helpful to those who use English as a second language and for most audiences when interpreting difficult dialects within shows. We also find that this can help with slight hearing impairments.

How to book your captioned seats – Once on the seating map look for seats identifiable in the Stalls (ground floor towards the front) with a ★ icon. Being signed up to the Accessible Register allows you access these seats. Please note that captioning can be seen from many of the theatres seating.

What is a British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreted Performance?

It interprets the production live on stage. The interpreter is always clearly visible without compromising the actors on stage. During these performances, the interpreter will stand clearly and communicate with the audience by signing

throughout the show. In certain circumstances one of the actors may be the interpreter.

How to book your BSL signer seats – Once on the seating map look for seats identifiable in the Stalls (ground floor towards the front) with a ★ icon. Being signed up to the Accessible Register allows you access these seats.

What is a Relaxed or Chilled Performance?

A relaxed or chilled performance takes a more casual approach to noise and movement in the auditorium, but the performance itself is unchanged.

This performance is ideal for people who feel more at ease knowing they can go in and out of the auditorium during the show including people with dementia. This performance is for everybody and babes in arms are welcome (not walking or requiring their own seat).

Are we Dementia Friendly?

Blackpool's Grand Theatre supports Dementia Friends, an Alzheimer's Society initiative, to help people develop an understanding of dementia and turn it into action to support customers and employees who are affected by the condition. Over 50% of the theatre's employees have received Dementia Awareness Training.

Blackpool's Grand offers many additional services including Visual Story Boards, Photographic Maps, Familiarisation Visits and PECS Cards.

How do I book a Book?

- Before making a booking, please log in to your online account (this will make the process easier along the way, you will need your email address and)
- Select the show, click book and choose a time
 - Please note Audio Described and BSL performances will be indicated by the logo under the performance dates.
- When selecting seats:
 - For Wheelchair accessible tickets look out for the ♿ symbol, these indicate the Wheelchair spaces. Next to each of these spaces there is a Wheelchair companion seat (indicated with a ★) available to book.
 - If you require the Audio Described service, we recommend the ★ seats located in the front stalls for an optimal experience. However, if these seats are not ideal for you, you can choose any other seats.
- Once you have selected the seats you require, continue to the basket.
- If you require a Personal Assistant ticket, once the seats are added to your basket, one of the tickets will automatically become complimentary. (If booking for more than one person who requires a personal assistant ticket, please contact the Box Office on 01253 290 190.)
- If you require a headset for any performance, this can now be pre-booked online. Once you have added your seats to the basket, there will be an option to add a headset to your booking. You will then be given a ticket for a headset that you hand in to a member of Front of House to exchange for a headset.

What is a Touch Tour and how do I book?

On occasions a free touch tour approximately one hour prior to the performance will be available. During a touch tour, a member of the visiting company will give you an introduction to the production and tell you about the visual elements of the production; you will also be able to explore the set and touch selected props and costumes. Touch tours are listed on our website and will be accessible to Access Register members.

How do I book an Audio Headset online?

Audio Headsets are available from the Front of House team (simply present your voucher), a limited number of headsets are available, we advise pre-booking when making your ticket reservation.

There is an induction loop in the Main Theatre and The Studio. You can use this by adjusting your hearing aid to the 'T' setting.

Booking your audio headset. During your booking you will be offered the option to book a headset, simply select and add to your basket. You will get an additional voucher which you will present to a Front of House staff member when you visit. Please note headsets are limited in numbers so we advise booking early.

Brining an Assistance Dog

Assistance dogs may be taken into all three venues Main House, Space or Studio – please tell us when booking, to ensure your seat has enough space. If you prefer, you may leave your dog with a member of staff during the performance.

As you are registered on our Access Register when you make a booking our Front of House team will know you have an Assistance Dog – please do let us know in advance (by calling 01253 290 190) if you need a dog minder.

Online and Large Print

As part of our Digital Strategy we are committed to ensuring from 2020 that our videos and trailers produced in house include captions or subtitles where possible. You can choose to switch these on and off depending on the platform or channel you are using such as YouTube or Facebook.

If you would like some information in an alternative format like large print or Audio, please do call the Box Office team who can help.

Accessible Guides

We offer various ways to find out about our accessibility;

- take a tour of our beautiful building and facilities available through our 3D VR www.blackpoolgrand.co.uk/3dvr
- read and download our Access Guide online at www.blackpoolgrand.co.uk/access
- listen to our latest audio files (shows and access updates)
- Photo Maps (Blackpool North Station and Blackpool Tower Tram stop to the theatre)

Accessible Maps

Arriving at the Blackpool Grand by Blackpool Transport or train and not sure where you go next? Download one of our Accessible Maps from Blackpool North Station, and nearby tram stop for full details of the best routes including distance and duration, step-free journeys and visual cues to help you on your way.

Please note that sometimes things do change and there are highway works ongoing in Blackpool – we will update these guides every 6 months.

3D Virtual Reality (VR)

Blackpool's Grand Theatre has developed a 3D VR experience. This allows you via desktop, tablet or mobile phone to travel all public areas of the theatre. Idea if you are a first-time visitor or would like to walk the venue for accessible needs.

You can also view the experience through VR Headsets using your phone.

Immerse yourself, see the view from your seat, or stand on our incredible stage. In addition, view our bars, Studio and Space venues.

Accessible Facilities

We want to make your visit to The Grand a comfortable and enjoyable one — here's more information about the facilities you'll find throughout the venue.

Our performance spaces:

Main Theatre - Spaces for standard wheelchairs are available in the rear of the Stalls (eight), with companion seats. The stalls are accessible by platform lift through the main foyer, and via Stage Door Bar (if you would like pre/interval-drinks), and staff will be happy to help you. Due to the age of our building the front doors can be opened by an on-duty front of house member of staff. An accessible toilet is available towards the rear of the Stalls.

Stalls seats close to the signer are reserved for people with hearing impairments for BSL-signed performances. For captioned performances, seats with the best view of the screen are reserved for people with hearing impairments, so please book early and ask for these seats.

Studio – Lift access is available up to the Studio; our Front of House staff can assist. If you require any beverages, please ask one of the ushers who will gladly help. An accessible toilet is available by the lift.

Involuntary Noise Policy

Blackpool's Grand Theatre is a fully inclusive, welcoming venue and organisation, with a strategic aim to allow access to the arts to all members of the community. We often welcome visitors to the building with a disability, including patrons who may make involuntary noises. We always endeavour to ensure we are best placed to offer the highest level of service to all customers and this policy outlines Blackpool Grand Theatre's definitive approach to dealing with involuntary noise. Our Involuntary Noise Policy is available online at www.blackpoolgrand.co.uk/access.

Exceptions

In some circumstances of accessibility, we are restricted being a Victorian 1894 building. However, in our next capital project one of our main aims is to improve the accessibility of the building for customers, visiting companies and employees.

We currently have no lift access to the Dress Circle, Upper Circle, or Gallery.

Moving forward from 2020, Blackpool's Grand is committed to ensuring that our videos produced 'in-house' will include caption facilities (including YouTube and Facebook).

Amending or updating any of my personal details

You can amend your personal details at any time. To make things quicker and easier for you we suggest calling the Box Office on 01253 290 190 who can help.

Alternatively, email box@blackpoolgrand.co.uk

Something won't work?

At any time if something doesn't work for you do let us know as soon as possible we are here to help, simply call the Box Office on 01253 290 190. Alternatively, email box@blackpoolgrand.co.uk

Commitment

We're committed to promoting equality by treating people fairly and with respect and by taking steps to address any inequalities in the services and facilities we offer.

We believe that providing the best access possible is an essential component of being a theatre.

Equality Act (2010)

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on providers of goods, services and facilities, such as Blackpool's Grand, to make reasonable adjustments in order to avoid a disabled person being placed at a "substantial disadvantage" compared with non-disabled people when accessing these services and facilities. Under the Equality Act 2010 it is unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people less favourably because they are disabled. There is also protection from direct disability discrimination and harassment for people who are associated with a disabled person, for example, a Personal Assistant. Service providers have to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people in the way they deliver their services. This is so that a disabled person is not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled people in accessing the services.

Contact us

If you would like to discuss your access needs further or have any questions, then please contact our Box Office team on 01253 290 190. Alternatively, email box@blackpoolgrand.co.uk.

