



Orchard West - Disability Access Policy

Orchard West is committed to enabling all our patrons to participate in our events equally and with dignity and respect.

In order to further this commitment, Orchard West has adopted the Disability Access Policy set out in this document. For the purposes of this policy, "disability" is to be understood in the broadest sense of the word and covers all disabilities coming within the scope of the Disability and Equality Act 2010.

KEY AIMS

The key aims of this policy are to ensure that:

1. All our patrons are able to access and enjoy live entertainment, music, dance, drama;
2. Persons with disabilities are not treated less favourably for a reason relating to their disability than others to whom that reason does not apply;
3. All reasonable steps are taken to prevent any of the physical features of the Theatre (or indeed our practices, policies and procedures) from making it unreasonably difficult for persons with disabilities to make use of our services;
4. All reasonable steps are taken to provide auxiliary aids and services to enable and assist disabled patrons in making use of our services;
5. Persons with disabilities therefore feel as valued and experience the same high levels of satisfaction with our services as our other patrons.



REALISING OUR AIMS

Set out below are some of the ways in which we have sought to realise our key aims.

Staff

The Customer Experience Manager has overall responsibility for looking after our persons with disabilities interests and should be your first point of contact if you have any queries regarding this policy.

At each performance at the Theatre, we also aim to provide staff who have been specifically trained in disability awareness and who will be available to assist persons with disabilities in accessing our services.

In addition, all our members of staff are provided with regular basic training in disability awareness and etiquette, are aware of this policy and are able to assist patrons with queries regarding disabled access to the Theatre.

Those who need additional assistance.

Our policy allows customers who require an essential companion a complimentary ticket so that they can access our facilities at all times. The essential companion must be able to help the person with disabilities access the theatre and its facilities, remaining with them at all times to ensure their wellbeing, comfort and safety. All tickets are subject to availability at the time of booking.

Proof of entitlement.

In order to be registered for essential assistance tickets, proof is required prior to booking. Please e mail ticketoffice@orchardtheatre.co.uk with one of the following:

PIP

DLA

Attendance allowance





Carer's Allowance

We can accept Access Cards and CEA Cards providing they have the +1 endorsement.

Full details are available from the Ticket Office upon request or via the Customer Experience Manager at zkitto@orchardtheatre.co.uk

Access to the Theatre

Parking

There is no parking on site at Orchard West, and the drop off point is directly outside of the main entrance.

6 Bays on Hythe Street DA1 1BG opposite Orchard West (by the Coffee Pot). Charges up to 6.30pm. No charge after 6.30pm.

3 Bays on Hythe Street DA1 1BG outside the old Post Office building. Up to 3 hours anytime.

6 Bays on Orchard Street (opposite Weatherspoon's) DA1 2DT. This road leads to the back of the new venue. Parking for up to 3 hours.

6 Bays on Spital Street DA1 2BJ (opposite McDonalds). Parking up to 3 hours.

There are five public disabled parking spaces in Suffolk Road to the right of the clock-tower and further spaces are available in the town centre and on the lower level of the Orchards Shopping Centre Car Park.

Please note that, due to health and safety reasons, our staff are unable to assist patrons with disabilities in and out of their transport or mobility equipment.

Inside the Theatre

Access to the foyer and its facilities including the bar and toilets are accessible to all.



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Auditorium seating is available in the Front Stalls which are all level access.

Seating in the Front and Tiered Stalls do not have arms rests. Tiered seating have hand rails located on each side of the side stairwells.

The Front Stalls is flat theatre style seating with no steps from A-U Rows. The Tiered Stalls is raked theatre style seating with one step between each row from W – AQ Rows.

Wheelchair users are accommodated in nine spaces across V Row, which is located directly inside Door A. Additional seating is provided next to these spaces for an essential companion.

As the use of motorised mobility scooters in the busy public areas of the theatre may pose a hazard, persons with disabilities who are unable to access the Theatre by other means must inform the Ticket Office at the time of booking or (where tickets have not been pre-booked) immediately upon arrival. Our staff will then be able to provide those customers with information regarding the safe use of their scooter in the theatre and the safe storage for during a performance. Customers who do not need to enter the auditorium on their mobility scooter are able to park them outside of the auditorium in our foyer space.

Orchard West reserves the right to refuse admission to any customer, where it is believed by the Duty Manager that, at such time, admission would contravene the conditions of the licence and/or pose a higher than acceptable risk to public safety.

Patrons who require particular seating arrangements in order to accommodate difficulties they may have in attending performances should contact the Ticket Office.

Patrons and their carers/companions are welcome to visit the Theatre prior to attending a performance in order to familiarise themselves with the Theatre's layout. These visits can be arranged by contacting the Duty Manager on 01322 220099 or by email zkitto@orchardtheatre.co.uk

The Ticket Office is briefed on the style of performances in case either a patron or their assistant requires further information as to its suitability for that patron prior to deciding whether to book. Information is offered in good faith. However please be aware that the creative elements of a live performance may not have been finalised

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at the time of booking and may even be changed on the performance day, but please discuss personal requirements on the day with the Duty Manager.

Warning notices advising of the use of strobe lighting effects and pyrotechnic explosives and trigger warnings are displayed outside the auditorium entrances on the day of the performances concerned and can also be discussed in advance at zkitto@orchardtheatre.co.uk or with the Duty Manager on the day of the performance.

Further assistance for those with impaired hearing

Hearing-aid systems

Orchard West has the Sennheiser Hearing System to help those with impaired hearing.

Infrared headphone receivers and necklace style induction loop transceivers are available from the Ticket Office on the day of the performance. No fee is charged for the use of the receivers.

For loud music concerts these systems may not be suitable. The Ticket Office and Duty Manager are able to provide advice as to whether these systems may be suitable in respect of any particular show.

These systems are regularly checked to ensure that they are operating correctly. However, in the unlikely event that you experience any difficulty, please report the matter to a member of staff.

Accessible Performances

Signed, Audio Described, Captioned and Relaxed Performances

The theatre hosts interpreted performances on selected shows. Details of these shows may be obtained upon request from the Ticket Office and are included within the seasonal brochure and on the theatre's website.

Further assistance for those requiring assistance dogs.





A complimentary seat space can be made available for the use of guide/assistance dogs. Please advise the Ticket Office at the time of booking, so that suitable arrangements can be made.

The seasonal brochure, as well as of those programmes that are produced in-house, are available with advance notice in large print.

Your comments

We regularly review this policy as well as the facilities we provide to persons with disabilities, in order to ensure that all our patrons feel welcome at Orchard West.

We greatly appreciate any suggestions you may have about how we could improve your access to and enjoyment of Orchard West and its facilities.

If you would like to provide comments please e mail

ticketoffice@orchardtheatre.co.uk or zkitto@orchardtheatre.co.uk