

THE WATERMILL THEATRE ACCESS GUIDE

We hope this guide gives you all the information you need to make your visit to The Watermill an enjoyable one. If there is anything we haven't covered please call or email us. When you're here, if there is anything you need, or any way in which we can help you, please ask.

**Box office 01635 46044 boxoffice@watermill.org.uk admin@watermill.org.uk
www.watermill.org.uk**

ACCESSING THE THEATRE

Public Transport

The theatre is located two miles from Newbury town centre in the small, rural village of Bagnor, which has no public transport facilities. The nearest bus stop is approximately fifteen minutes walk away at Station Road, Speen. Please be aware there are no pavements for approximately half of this route and no street lighting. Buses run every two hours. A community bus service (Handibus) operated by West Berkshire Volunteer Centre and manned by voluntary drivers, transports a group of elderly and infirm to the theatre at least once during the run of each show. Handibus operate in the following areas: Basildon/Beenham/ Bradfield Pangbourne/Purley/Streatley/Theale Tel: 0118 930 4837, Burghfield/ Mortimer Tel: 0118 983 6611, Chieveley/Compton/Downlands Tel: 01635 202519, Hungerford Tel: 01488 682045, Newbury Tel: 01635 37111, Thatcham Tel: 01635 874666

The nearest railway station is in Newbury with a taxi rank outside. The theatre is approximately five minutes from Junction 13 of the M4. Both Cabco (01635 33333) and Newbury Taxis (01635 877777) have cars that are accessible but these must be pre-booked.

Parking

A car park is available alongside the theatre buildings which can accommodate approximately 60 cars with an additional parking area for thirty cars available for use when required. Please be aware the additional car parking area can get very muddy so sensible shoes are in order. We are constantly thinking of ways to improve the surface but we are limited in what we are allowed to do by both funds and the conservation area.

It is usually possible to drop passengers close to the main entrance to the theatre (approx five metres away). Up to five reserved disabled parking spaces are available which should be booked in advance through the box office. Your name will be written on a sign in the space that has been allocated to you. Two of the spaces have been block paved to allow for easier transfer from car to wheelchair. An additional three spaces are alongside a ramp

which provides wheelchair access between the foyer and the toilets alongside the restaurant. There is an accessible toilet in this block. These spaces are on a gravel surface and may not be suitable for those who use a wheelchair. Coach and mini bus spaces are pre-booked via the box office on 01635 46044.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

90% of The Watermill premises are accessible to wheelchair users and people with mobility difficulties. The only inaccessible public area is upstairs in the auditorium which has stepped seating and is reached via a spiral staircase that is not suitable for those with mobility problems. There is no lift, so if you need to be seated downstairs, please let our box office staff know at the time of booking. Ramps around the site allow easy access to the theatre, the lily pond area, the bar and restaurant, accessible toilets and the gardens.

We can accommodate two people in wheelchairs per performance, subject to availability. We also have two wheelchairs of our own on request that can be used for transfers.

We have some seats allocated that are suitable for wheelchair transfers and these should be requested at the time of booking your theatre tickets. Our staff are not trained to lift you into your seat, but will do what they can to make your transfer as easy and comfortable as possible.

If you are unable to get to the bar, we are happy to bring refreshments to you in the auditorium during the interval. Please let the front of house staff or usher know what you would like.

There is a reduction of £2 off each ticket for both a person with disabilities and their companion. Because of the size of our auditorium and the need for us to sell as many seats as possible to remain financially viable, we are unable to offer free seats for companions.

ACCESSIBLE TOILETS

There are two accessible toilets for use by the public – one as part of the main toilet block situated alongside the restaurant, access is via an external ramp in the car park. The other is accessible from the lily pond, bar and restaurant.

SEATING REQUIREMENTS IN THE THEATRE

If you would like to be seated at the end of a row to allow you to leave the theatre during the performance if necessary, let our box office staff know at the time of booking. Or you can choose an end seat if one is available, when you book online. Row E in the stalls offers good leg room.

Please be aware the seats in row O and P in the Circle slips offer a side or overhead view of the stage.

Please feel free to bring a cushion or back support with you if required. If you find you need a cushion when you're here, either in the theatre or in the restaurant, please ask a member of staff and we will do our best to help you.

OUR RESTAURANT

If you are planning to eat in our restaurant and have specific dietary, seating or other requirements, please call the box office and let them know. We always offer a vegetarian option (✓) for both pre-show buffet and post show meal, indicated on the buffet table and in the post show menu, but it is difficult for us to be able to accommodate all dietary needs without notice. Please note, we cannot guarantee that our food will not contain traces of nuts.

OUR BROCHURE IN DIFFERENT FORMATS

Large print brochure

There is a large print brochure at the front of house desk for you to borrow to look at whilst at the theatre. If you require a large print brochure to be sent to you we can provide a black and white photocopy. Unfortunately, the cost of supplying an enlarged colour photocopy is prohibitive for us.

Audio brochures

We will mail out to you free of charge an audio copy, on cassette, of our season brochure. Please call our administration office on 01635 45834 or email admin@watermill.org.uk if you would like to be added to our mailing list.

FACILITIES FOR DEAF AND HEARING IMPAIRED PATRONS

We have an infrared Sennheiser hearing assistance system for boosting the signal to hearing aids. Please ask for a headset to be reserved for you at the time of booking your tickets. These are issued on a first come, first served basis. You can also ask at the front of house desk for a headset when you arrive at the theatre and will be given one if they haven't been allocated. To ensure you are seated in areas where this is effective, please let us know that you would like to use the system when booking. Please note: Digital hearing aids do not work with the Sennheiser necklaces. Sennheiser headsets should be used.

INTERPRETED PERFORMANCES

Some performances are British Sign Language interpreted. We also offer audio description for some performances and a touch tour. Look out for details on the show information pages of our brochure and website. Please call the box office to book your seats and the touch tour, so that we can ensure that you are seated in the seats that will give you the best view, or easy access with an assistance dog.

ASSISTANCE DOGS

Assistance dogs are welcome, but please let us know when you book so that we can allocate appropriate seats for you and tell you about any special effects that might affect your dog's comfort.

ACCLIMATISATION VISITS

If you have not been to the theatre before, we will be happy to arrange for you to come to have a look around to get your bearings when it is not too busy.

If you would prefer to go into the auditorium just before the rest of the audience, or when everyone else is seated, please let the front of house staff know when you arrive at the theatre.

OUR WEBSITE

Our website has been designed so that you can change the default view to text only. The text only view can be selected from the panel on the left hand side of the web page. Our font is scaleable, and its size is determined by the settings of your browser. You can check this setting by selecting 'Text size' in the 'View' drop-down menu of your browser toolbar. The setting should be 'Medium' for a normal text size resolution. There is guidance for resizing font when using Microsoft Internet Explorer, Firefox or Safari

Our website is W3C/ WAI Compliant

In order to help us help you when you visit The Watermill, please tell us about any special requirements you, or anyone in your party, may have when you book your seats.

The Watermill Theatre, Bagnor, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 8AE
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