

Wigtown
Festival
Company



ACCESS STATEMENT

Introduction

Founded in 2007, Wigtown Festival Company is an award-winning literary charity (limited by guarantee) which runs the annual Wigtown Book Festival. It also delivers an annual programme of literature development activities in the Dumfries & Galloway (D&G) region of south-west Scotland.

We develop new audiences, help writers fulfil their potential, support the region's literature sector and create opportunities for young people to enjoy and learn through writing and storytelling. Our organisation is based in Scotland's National Book Town, Wigtown, a remote rural community of just under 1,000 people.

We aspire to make Dumfries and Galloway a better place to be a writer and a reader – a place where literature changes lives. The Company is based at 11 North Main Street, Wigtown, DG8 9HN.

Wigtown Festival Company firmly believes in enabling access for all and continues to work towards providing greater access facilities. This statement offers advice on access currently available.

Wigtown is rural and predominantly surrounded by countryside. The closest city is Glasgow which is 94 miles North. Wigtown is situated on a hill with a gradual approach – the situation of each venue varies and is described later in this statement.

Wigtown Festival Company has a policy to ensure that all venues are, as far as reasonably possible, accessible to all. The specific facilities are detailed under each venue. There may be occasions when disabled access is not possible e.g. for a site specific event such as a nature walk, or literary event at an historic venue. In these circumstances, visitors would be made aware of this.

Wigtown Book Festival takes place across several venues in and around Wigtown. Primarily these are:

- Festival Marquee, Wigtown Primary School, New Road, DG8 9JE
- McNeillie Tent, Old Bank Bookshop Garden, South Main St, DG8 9EH
- The Den, Wigtown Primary Dining Hall, New Road, DG8 9JE
- Festival Bookshop, Ground Floor, County Buildings, DG8 9JH
- The McNeillie Library, Ground Floor, County Buildings, DG8 9JH
- The Martyrs Cell, Lower Ground Floor, County Buildings, DG8 9JH
- Festival Box Office, 11 North Main Street, DG8 9HN
- The Print Room, 11 North Main Street, DG8 9HN
- Main Hall, First Floor, County Buildings, DG8 9JH
- Supper Room, First Floor, County Buildings, DG8 9JH
- The Visitor Centre, Second Floor, County Buildings, DG8 9JH
- The Burrow, By County Buildings, DG8 9JH (Children's)
- The Kist, By County Buildings, DG8 9JH

- Wigtown Parish Church, Bank Street, DG8 9HS
- Sacred Heart Church, Wigtown Square, 6 Chapel Court, DG8 9ET
- The Gardens, Central Square, Wigtown
- Deception Island, Wigtown Gardens, Central Square, Wigtown
- The Yurt, Wigtown Garden, Central Square, Wigtown

Venues

Festival Marquee, Wigtown Primary School playing fields

The Festival Marquee is situated on the grass playing fields of Wigtown Primary School. There are three ramps for wheelchair users from the tarmac onto the grass playing fields. Rubber mats will be placed on the grass up to the marquee entrance. Inside the marquee, there is a wooden floor, with a raked seating area at the rear. There are no steps into the marquee. The marquee is kitted with a large screen, visible from all rows. The marquee also has a loop system for people with hearing impairments. Seats can be reserved for those with disabilities – please advise on booking.

The Festival Bookshop, Wigtown Square

The Festival Bookshop is situated downstairs in the County Buildings. The Festival Bookshop is wheelchair accessible from the main entrance to the county buildings. The internal layout of the Bookshop enables wheelchair access. **Male and Female Toilets** are available through a door on the back left of the foyer and to the right once through the door and an **Easy Access Toilet** through the second alcove on the right, beyond the Library.

County Buildings, Wigtown, DG8 9JH

The County Buildings is situated within Wigtown Square. From the pavement, there are two shallow steps or a ramp to the right of the front door, accessible through a red gate, which is normally tied open. There is a further shallow step into the building, or a ramp leading inside the **front door (95cm)**. The ground floor contains **The McNeillie Library** which is situated immediately to the right as you enter the building, **Male and Female Toilets** through a door on the back left of the foyer and to the right once through the door and an **Easy Access Toilet** through the second alcove on the right, beyond the Library. The building is fitted with a **Lift (93cm/143cm)** which is situated through a door to the back left of the foyer and then immediately to the left. The lift enables access to the first floor – **Main Hall, Supper Room and Easy Access Toilet** – and also to the second floor – **The Visitor Centre**. All doors within the building are double doors which enable wheelchair access. Similarly, all rooms offer wheelchair access internally. In the event of an emergency when the lift cannot be accessed, the building is fitted with three **Evac Chairs** which the staff within the building are trained to use. **The Main Hall** is fitted with a loop system and has a large screen, visible from all rows.

McNeillie Tent, The Old Bank Bookshop Garden, South Main St, Wigtown DG8 9EH

The McNeillie Tent is situated in the garden of The Old Bank Bookshop. Access to the marquee is via the side gate which is normally tied open. A concrete path leads to the grass where a path is then laid using rubber mats to lead to the door of the marquee. The marquee has double doors and is internally accessible for wheelchairs. The McNeillie Tent has an induction loop system in place.

The Burrow, By County Buildings, Wigtown, DG8 9JH

This marquee is situated on the road outside the County Buildings in the main square, which is closed to traffic during the festival. Whilst the road slopes slightly, the marquee entrance, through double doors, is flat and wheelchair accessible. The marquee is internally accessible for a wheelchair, has a large screen which is visible from all rows and an induction loop system in place.

The Kist, By County Buildings, Wigtown, DG8 9JH

The Kist is situated on the road outside the County Buildings in the main square, which is closed to traffic during the festival. Whilst the road slopes slightly, the marquee entrance, through double doors, is flat and wheelchair accessible. The marquee is internally accessible for a wheelchair and stallholders are advised that they should not display on the floor in front of their stalls to ensure access is always available.

The Den, Wigtown Primary Dining Hall, New Road, Wigtown, DG8 9JE

Wigtown Primary School is designed over three levels with no internal ramps or lifts. To access **The Den** (dining hall area), enter the school at the upper entrance through the 'nursery' gate and enter via the door to the left of the long row of windows. There is a flat entry to the school via this door. There will be a portable changing place toilet outside the primary school on the 1 and 2 of October.

The Print Room, New Road, Wigtown. Behind 11 North Main Street, DG8 9HN

The Print Room is situated behind Wigtown Festival Company offices at 11 North Main Street, with a separate access on New Road. The pavement has a lowered curb on the corner beside the entrance to the main building at 11 North Main Street. The Print Room has a ramp, with a handrail, to access the main door. The second emergency exit is also ramped. There is a wheelchair-accessible toilet within the venue.

Wigtown Parish Church, Wigtown Parish Church, Bank Street, DG8 9HS

Wigtown Parish church (1m) is wheelchair-accessible via a ramp at the west side of the building. Volunteers will be notified and can help you find the entrance if needed. The interior of the church is wheelchair-accessible. If you require specially assigned seating, please let us know when you book so that we can reserve your seat. The church is fitted with a loop system and will contain a large screen, visible from all rows. The church contains an Easy Access toilet. Four disabled parking spaces are available directly in front of the church.

Sacred Heart Church, Sacred Heart Church, Wigtown Square, 6 Chapel Court, DG8 9ET

There is step-free access from the road outside into the church grounds. The main entrance to Sacred Heart church (1m) has easy access. Sacred Heart is just around the corner from the lorry park, which contains disabled parking spaces. There is no induction loop system. Toilets are available within the porch of the church.

The Yurt, Wigtown Gardens, Wigtown Square

The Yurt is wheelchair accessible. If you have booked an event at the Yurt, please let us know if you have accessibility requirements beforehand so that we can ensure appropriate seating arrangements.

Deception Island, Wigtown Garden, Wigtown Square

Deception Island is a very small venue and unfortunately therefore not wheelchair-accessible. However, Elizabeth Lewis Williams' full talk on Deception Island will be showing in the McNeillie tent and is accessible for all.

Car Parking and Arrival

Car parking is available around the main square in Wigtown, is free and is well lit by streetlights. There are two Blue Badge parking bays on South Main Street, where there is a lowered curb to the pavement. The Lorry Park, accessed on South Main Street, beside The Old Bank Bookshop and opposite the County Buildings, is designated for Blue Badge holders during the festival and is a flat, tarmac surface.

Visitors can be dropped off outside the County Buildings, on South Main Street or North Main Street. From here, they can access all venues in the County Buildings, the young adult marquee and The Kist. The road here is closed to traffic and therefore there is no kerb. Drop off is not available outside the Festival Marquee and Festival Bookshop during busy periods on weekends due to a street market, however, support is available from the box office, where a wheelchair and/or volunteer are available to assist visitors to the Festival Marquee and Festival Bookshop.

All venues (apart from Deception Island) are accessible at ground level or via ramps, which do not have handrails. All doors open outwards, though all venues are manned by volunteers who will ensure doors are opened. The exception to this is the County Buildings main door which opens outwards but is not always manned. All doorways offer clear space for manual wheelchairs and motorised wheelchairs to access.

Box Office and Number 11 (Book Festival Shop)

The Wigtown Festival Company premises is at 11 North Main Street. It is accessible through the shop where there are three shallow steps to enter, and through the side entrance (between two upright pillars) accessible via a ramp. This door is not always open, but a bell is situated by the door and a member of staff will open the door and provide assistance if required. The box office is situated through the shop on the ground floor. The interior of the shop is wheelchair accessible.

The box office where tickets are available in advance of the festival and during the event is on the ground floor of Wigtown Festival Company premises at 11 North Main Street, through the shop.

Seating is available in the Box Office and Shop on request. The floor is laminate in the shop and foyer, whilst the floor in the box office is a short pile carpet. The entire area is well lit with a combination of fluorescent tubes and spot lights.

The counter in the box office is staggered at two heights allowing easy access for wheelchair users to purchase tickets and make enquiries.

All venues offer clear signage regarding events, payment methods and directions to other venues. The box office does not have a loop system, but all visitors are attended to on a one-to-one basis. The box office can also offer a pen and pad to assist those who cannot verbally express their enquiries and for a volunteer who cannot express their responses to visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing. A wheelchair and tri-wheel walker are both available for loan from the box office, on request.

Public Toilets

Public toilets are available within the County Buildings which are open during building hours. The Easy Access toilets described here all have clear space for a wheelchair and have grab rails to the left and the right of the WC. The horizontal rail to the right is a pull down rail to enable maximum space for access to the WC. Easy Access toilets are fitted with a red alarm cord. Toilets are well lit with ceiling spotlights. The floor is non-slip laminate. All sinks are fitted with lever taps. Additional public toilets are available at the junction between North Main Street and High Vennel, beside the public telephone box, these have a shallow step in. These are open 24 hours.

Additional Information

Assistance dogs are welcome.

Hard of Hearing

Loop Systems

The Festival Marquee, County Buildings Main Hall, Wigtown Parish Church, The Burrow, Print Room and McNeillie Tent are all equipped with induction loop technology for d/Deaf people.

Visually Impaired

If you require a large print programme, please contact the office, they will be printed on request. Wigtown Festival Company's shop at 11 North Main Street stocks a small number of large print titles and audio books related to festival events. Signage is being upgraded as replacements are required, to ensure that colours, fonts and sizes are in line with guidelines for clear print material.

Companion Tickets

Free tickets are available for all carers where an individual is unable to attend an event independently. These can only be booked directly through the box office – in person, or by telephoning 01988 403222. Access requirements will be taken at time of booking and appropriate arrangements made based on the information provided.

Unfortunately carer concessions are not available for tastings, lunches and dinners.

Under-26 Concessions

All tickets to the YA programme at Wigtown Book Festival are free for under-26s.

Several events have Pay What You Can options intended for people under 26.

Hidden Disabilities

"The Sunflower is a globally recognised symbol for non-visible disabilities, also known as hidden disabilities or invisible disabilities.

Not all disabilities are visible – some are not immediately obvious. They include autism, chronic pain, and learning difficulties as well as mental health conditions, mobility, speech impairments, and sensory loss such as speech, sight loss, hearing loss, or deafness. They also include respiratory conditions as well as chronic conditions such as diabetes, chronic pain, and sleep disorders when these significantly impact day-to-day life. Although you may not be able to see these invisible impairments and conditions, they're still there.

People living with these often face barriers in their daily lives including a lack of understanding and negative attitudes. So some choose to wear the Sunflower lanyard to discreetly identify that they may need support, help, or just a little more time in shops, transport, or public spaces." - www.hiddendisabilitiesstore.com

Sunflower lanyards will be available in the Box Office for anyone with a non-visible disability. Our volunteers will be trained to recognise the hidden disability sunflower. If you have any specific needs or any further questions, please contact the Box Office at **01988 403222**

Accommodation

To view the accessible accommodation listings for the area, please visit the Visit Scotland website [here](#).

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance please phone 01988 402036 or email mail@wigtownbookfestival.com.

Pre-Arrival

By road

From the South - follow M6 onto the M74, leave the M74 at Gretna (junction 22) and follow the signs for A75 Stranraer (drive time approx. 1.5 hours). At Newton Stewart roundabout, pick up the signs for Wigtown, 1st exit on the left.

From the North -

From Glasgow - follow the A77 to Ayr. From Ayr take the signs for A713 Castle Douglas. At New Galloway pick up the A712 'Queens Way' to Newton Stewart then onto Wigtown. *Alternatively, from Ayr, you can follow the A77 to Girvan, then A714 to Newton Stewart via Barrhill.*

From Edinburgh - follow the M8 to Glasgow and then pick up the A77 (as per directions from Glasgow). *Alternatively, head south on the A702 to Abington and onto the M74, exit at Moffat (junction 15) and follow the A701 to Dumfries. Follow the signs A75 Stranraer, at Newton Stewart roundabout, pick up the signs for Wigtown, 1st exit on the left.*

By bus / coach

From the South - the National Express coach service travels across the region on a daily basis with a pick up and drop off at Newton Stewart (6 miles from Wigtown). To find out more about timetable information visit www.dumgal.gov.uk/timetables

From the North – for further information and time tables visit www.travelinescotland.com/lts/#/timetables or call 0870 6082608

In the Region -

Local stage services operate on a daily basis, with regular bus services across the region from Dumfries. For further timetable info visit www.dumgal.gov.uk/timetables or call TravelLine 0870 6082608.

By rail

From the South - Scotrail services operate on a daily basis from Carlisle to Dumfries. Click on www.scotrail.co.uk or call 0870 606 2031 for further information.

From the North - Scotrail services operate on a daily basis from Glasgow to Stranraer via Ayr stopping at Barrhill to connect by bus to Wigtown. (Note there are no transport links between the station and the village of Barrhill to connect to the bus and is about a 1 mile walk downhill from the station. Information regarding the bus frequency can be found at www.travelinescotland.com/lts/#/timetables or call 0870 6082608. Click on www.scotrail.co.uk or call 0870 606 2031 for further information regarding the train timetables to Barrhill.

By ferry

From Ireland - a number of services operate from Larne/Belfast to Cairnryan. For the most up to date information, click on the links below:

Stena Line (up to 6 crossings daily) Travel time 2hr 15 min For further information and booking visit www.stenaline.co.uk or call 08447 70 70 70

AFerry – Online booking site. www.aferry.co.uk or call 0844 5765503

Larne to Cairnryan:

P&O (up to 7 crossings daily) Travel time 2hr For further information visit www.poirishsea.com or call 0870 24 24 777

By air

Prestwick, our local airport, operates regular Ryanair flights from Dublin as well as package holidays from popular resorts. The airport has its own bus and train stations with connections via Ayr. For all information please see gpia.co.uk or ryanair.com. The nearest airport servicing flights from London and other major European cities is Glasgow Airport, (www.glasgowairport.com) which has transport links into central Glasgow where onward connections can be made.

Contact Information

Address: Wigtown Festival Company, 11 North Main Street, Wigtown, DG8 9HN.

Telephone: 01988 402036 or 01988 403222

Email: mail@wigtownbookfestival.com

Website: www.wigtownbookfestival.com

Grid reference: NX 43371 55406

Hours of operation:

2 August - 2 October: 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday; 10am – 4pm Saturday; 12noon – 4pm Sunday.

23 September- 2 October: 9am – 6pm daily

Local accessible taxi: McLeans Taxis 01671402925

Local public transport: Stagecoach, 01776704484