

ACCESS LIST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Access List?

The Access List has been created to improve our service to you, by safely recording and storing your access requirements. By registering as an Access List Member, you'll be helping us provide a more efficient, accessible, and stress-free booking process whenever you engage with us. We will also keep you updated with any changes and improvements to our access provision and facilities and let you know of forthcoming accessible events such as signed, relaxed or audio described performances. In addition, eligible customers can apply for free Personal Assistant tickets when attending events.

How does it work?

When you register, you'll let us know your access requirements and/or eligibility for a Personal Assistant ticket. This information will then be stored safely on your customer record so you will not have to explain your needs every time you book, it will therefore be quicker and easier when booking for tickets including wheelchair spaces, specific discounts, accessible performances, and free Personal Assistant tickets.

Can I still book a wheelchair position if I do not want to join the list?

Yes. Wheelchair positions are available to book by emailing or calling the Box Office (not currently available online), you do not have to be an Access Member to book wheelchair positions or tickets for accessible performances.

What is a Personal Assistant ticket?

Previously known as a companion ticket, a free ticket for a Personal Assistant (PA) is available for any Deaf or disabled person who has purchased a ticket to an event or performance and would be unable to attend without the help of their personal assistant. A disability is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as;

A physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

'substantial' is more than minor or trivial – e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed

'long-term' means 12 months or more – e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection

You can find more details www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010

The PA must be able to assist the Deaf or disabled person to access the venue and its facilities, remaining with them to ensure their wellbeing and comfort. Anyone designated as a PA must be able to assist the person to leave the building in the event of an emergency.

What proof of eligibility do I need to apply for a Personal Assistant ticket?

You will need to provide proof of eligibility to book a Personal Assistant ticket.

These include;

Front page of DLA letter (Medium or Higher Rate) (the annual increase and Christmas bonus letters are also accepted)

Front page of Attendance Allowance letter (no specific rate required)

Front page of PIP letter (no specific rate)

Evidence that registered severely sight impaired (blind)

Recognised Assistance Dog ID card

CredAbility Access Card (with +1 icon)

Blue Badge (Both sides)

If these are not available, please provide details and alternative proof of eligibility and we will be happy to look at your application.

Please ensure that you send scans or photocopies of documents only as these will be securely destroyed in accordance with current GDPR regulations once your application has been processed. Please feel free to blackout information that relates to the amount of benefit paid or health conditions that might be on documents submitted that you do not wish us to see.

How many Personal Assistant tickets am I entitled to?

Personal Assistant tickets are intended for people who would be unable to attend the event without assistance. Each eligible person on the booking will be entitled to one free Personal Assistant ticket when booking a standard ticket for themselves. If the standard ticket is subsequently returned or cancelled the Personal Assistant ticket will be cancelled as well.

I am booking on behalf of a person with access needs or eligible for a free PA ticket, can I still use my account to book the tickets?

Yes, you should provide details of their access needs and proof of eligibility (if applicable). Please indicate on the form if you will be booking on behalf of someone else and this will be stored on your account rather than theirs.

Will free Personal Assistant tickets still be available without joining the Access List?

After 1 May 2024 proof of eligibility will be required to book a Personal Assistant ticket, you do not need to join the list, but you will need to provide proof of eligibility before each individual booking can be confirmed. If you choose to join the Access List, you will only have to provide your documents once and this will remain on your customer record for 1 year allowing you to book whenever you need to.

I have already booked a free Personal Assistant seat for a show taking place after 1 May 2024 when the new scheme will start, will this still be valid?

Yes, all existing bookings for Personal Assistant (previously known as companion) tickets will be honoured. You will however need to provide proof of eligibility if making any new bookings after this date.

How long does the membership last?

Your Access List membership lasts for a maximum of 1 year after which time we will contact you to check if you still wish to remain a member and update your details. If you are eligible for a Personal Assistant ticket, you will be asked to submit current proof of eligibility to continue your membership.

Is the Access List for everything on www.whatsonreading.com?

Currently the Access List covers events and performances taking place at Reading Arts venues; The Hexagon, South Street, The Concert Hall and selected events at Reading Museum. Please see listings and venue information for details of other access policies and procedures.

How do I apply?

You will need to download the Access List Application Form and submit it by email or post.

If applying for Personal Assistant ticket please complete the form and then email a scan or photograph of your proof of eligibility to accessthearts@reading.gov.uk or send by post to : Access Scheme, The Hexagon, Queens Walk, Reading, RG1 7UA

We are happy to assist you to complete your application form over the phone – please call 0118 960 6060 (weekdays 11am-2pm). Please allow 14 days for your application to be processed (21 days if sent by post).

How long will it take for my application to be processed?

Please allow 14 days for your application to be processed and 21 days if you are sending proof of eligibility by post.

I am unable to download or access the form. Is help available to complete the application over the phone?

Yes. Please email accessthearts@reading.gov.uk or call 0118 960 6060 (weekdays 10am-5pm and our Box Office will be happy to assist or complete the application on your behalf.

I still have questions, who can I contact?

If you have any questions, please contact us on 0118 960 6060 (weekdays 10am - 5pm) or email accessthearts@reading.gov.uk