



AUDIENCE GUIDE

COVID-19 Safety Policy and General FAQs

Socially-distanced outdoor theatre is new, so new in fact that there's no one has a tried and tested method of doing it yet – there's no *benchmark* (sorry). Theatres and venues putting on live shows this summer are having to work really hard to figure out the best ways to keep audiences and staff safe whilst at the same time creating a welcoming atmosphere where our imaginations can run wild.

This document outlines how we're planning to do just that. We're learning as we go, so please bear with us! We want your trip to be as stress-free and enjoyable as possible, and we all have to work together to make sure this happens.

Please read this guide carefully before your visit. It outlines our COVID-19 Safety Policy as well answering some general questions. We can't wait to welcome you to Rowntree Park for York's first ever socially-distanced outdoor theatre performances!

OUR COVID-19 SAFETY POLICY

In conversation with York City Council, and in line with current government guidance, we have implemented a range of measures to ensure the health and safety of our audiences and staff. These measures are under constant review, and apply across all of our performances throughout the Park Bench Theatre season.

Arriving

We will be opening the gates for each performance one hour before the show start time, to allow everybody to arrive at their leisure and avoid large queues. Please arrive at the park in plenty of time. All tickets will be digital, and checked without contact at a social distance at the entrance to the performance area (more information on how to buy tickets can be found below).

Loos

All performances take place without an interval. The Rowntree Park toilets will be open before and after all our performances.

Social distancing

Each household or social bubble will be seated at a safe distance from other households or social bubbles, in line with government guidance at the time of the performance. You will be directed to a designated 'social bubble spot' by our volunteer stewards. Please be patient with them and sit where they direct – they know best! (More information about our seating arrangements can be found below).

Food and refreshments

You are welcome to bring your own food and drink to all our performances (as long as you take your rubbish home afterwards!) PLEASE NOTE: no alcohol is allowed to be consumed in Rowntree Park so please only bring non-alcoholic drinks with you.

Departure

Our stewards will be managing the departure from the performance area so that we don't have large crowds all leaving at the same time.

Ticketing policy

If you have any symptoms of COVID-19, have been diagnosed with the virus or have been in direct contact with a diagnosed individual in the past 14 days, **you must not attend the event**. If you are unable to attend due to illness, please email boxoffice@yorktheatreroyal.co.uk and a ticket transfer can be arranged. Tickets can only be refunded if the booked performance has sold out.

GENERAL FAQs

Where will the performances take place?

All performances take place in the Friends Garden in Rowntree Park (point 2 on the map below). There will be a one-way system to enter and exit the performance area with stewards on hand to direct you. You'll be able to enter and exit the park through all the usual gates. Please note: the Friends Garden will be a no smoking zone from when doors open to the end of the performance.



Is there parking available at the park?

There is disabled parking available in the small carpark on Terry Avenue. However, we advise you to park in Castle Car Park and enjoy the short walk along the river to the site.

Is the park wheelchair accessible?

Yes, however there is a steep path up to the cafe/down from the Richardson Street entrance.

I have access requirements. Who do I contact about that?

Please email us at info@parkbenchtheatre.com to let us know your requirements and we can help ensure these are met when you visit.

What are the seating arrangements?

The seating area for all performances will be spaced with 'bubbles', area which comfortably fit up to four people. Our stewards will direct your group to one or more of these bubbles. You're welcome to bring picnic blankets and camping chairs to sit on but please note that if you are seated near the front, you may be asked you to sit on the ground so as not to block the view of other audience members.

Why do I need to wear headphones?

Headphones will be required to hear the dialogue, sound effects and music in our performances. All audience members will be given a receiver on entry which headphones can be plugged into. (The receivers will be cleaned and sanitised between use and is a simple small 'phone-like' box which will sit in your bag, in a pocket or on your lap while you watch).

Just before the performance starts, our stewards will tell you to put on your headphones. For your own comfort and to help us manage your safety, we encourage you to bring your own (no wireless or Bluetooth ones, please. They must be 'plug in' headphones or earphones). However, you can book a pair of new headphones to take home and keep when you purchase your ticket online, which can be collected when you visit (please note: there will be a £1 contribution towards the cost of these headphones, which are similar to the type you get on a plane or a museum audio guide).

What happens if it's raining on the day I plan to visit?

Performances are only cancelled in extreme weather conditions; we do play in the rain! The use of umbrellas is not permitted during performances, in consideration of other audience members, so please bring waterproofs. We can only refund you if a performance is cancelled. If the weather looks dodgy for a performance, check out our social media pages where we'll keep you updated. It can get cold quickly in the evening, so bring warm clothing even if the day has been hot!

What are your social media pages?

Good question! You can find us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/enginehousetheatre>), Twitter (https://twitter.com/Engine_House) and Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/enginehousetheatre/>).

Will you be selling tickets on the door?

No, sorry. Tickets can only be purchased online to limit the risk of contact. However, tickets will be available to buy up to the very start of each performance (unless it's sold out) so you'll be able to rock up before a performance and buy them on your phone. All tickets are digital and will be sent to you in your confirmation email once you have booked them.

Will I have to wear a mask during the performances?

No. Because performances take place outside and everyone will be observing social distancing, there is no need to wear a mask.

What happens in captioned performances?

To make Park Bench Theatre as accessible as possible, some of our performances are captioned. For these performances, we'll be using an innovative app called the [Difference Engine](#), a discrete digital tool for making performances accessible to D/deaf, hard-of-hearing audience members which delivers captioning direct to audiences own mobile devices.

- How do I set up the Difference Engine on my mobile device?
 1. Download the free App: IOS (iPhone/iPad) from the App Store. On Android it can be downloaded from the Google PlayStore.
 2. Connect to the network by: setting your device to Airplane mode to avoid interruptions, re-enable your WiFi, select the Difference Engine Network. Write in password: engine123
 3. Open the app on your phone and select captions.

If you have a different device or an older version of IOS or Android connect to the network as in step number 2. Open your browser and type 192.168.0.105 into the address bar and press enter. Select captions.

NOTE: If you require help, our volunteers will be on hand to help. Don't be afraid to ask questions!

- **I can't see the captions! What can I do?** Check you are connected to a 'Difference Engine' WiFi network – this should be running at least 20 minutes before the captioned performance begins. If you are connected, but no captions appear, try closing the App completely (swipe it closed) and restarting – or powering your device off and on again. If neither of these work, flag down one of our volunteers.
- **I selected Captions in the App, but it said I was not connected to a Difference Engine network?** Go to your Settings and select the 'DifferenceEngine' network.
- **I can't see the 'DifferenceEngine' network in WiFi settings?** This will only show at a performance where the Difference Engine system is being used. If you cannot

see this network, and you have your WiFi switched on, then the system is not running. Contact someone from the venue/company where the event is happening as they may not have started the system (or the firewall may be preventing it broadcasting to browser versions).

Still got a burning question? Email us at info@parkbenchtheatre.com and we'll get back to you as quickly as we can.