

## **Open Air Theatre**

### **Frequently Ask Question and advice to those with restricted mobility**

#### **Terracing and Steps**

The question is often asked, “Why is the terracing at the Open Air Theatre so steep?” and “Why are there no vertical handrails up the steps at the Open Air Theatre?”

The Open Air Theatre has been designed in accordance with the Guide to Safety in Sports Grounds Fifth Edition, which is the current standard covering this type of facility.

The Theatre was also designed in accordance with the Building Regulations and has been inspected on a number of occasions by the Building Inspector and Fire Safety Officer and approved as compliant. It has received formal building regulation approval.

The dimensions of the goings (treads) and risers of the steps actually exceed the minimum standards within the building regulations.

In detail, the radial gangways are designed along with the various staircases and exits to allow the whole seating area to be evacuated within 8 minutes. The gangway width is 1200 mm which must be legally maintained without obstruction to allow safe escape. It can therefore be seen that to introduce a central handrail would breach this legislation.

Appropriate signage is displayed at the venue advising people to take care on the steps.

#### **Advice to those with restricted mobility**

There are some allocated spaces for wheelchairs and seats for carers at the foot of the tiered seating and the very top of the tiered seating with vehicular access to the latter for wheelchair access only.

Our advice to those who do not use wheelchairs and have restricted mobility or access difficulties, is to try and book seats in the gold and silver blocks which are on the tarmac road in front of the tiered seats or on the decking, which is in front of the tarmac road and closest to the stage.

Alternatively it is recommended that they book seats in the lower rows of the tiered seating e.g. rows A, B, C etc but this still requires customers to climb and descend the steps from the tarmac road into the tiered seat area and then further steps to the relevant row. The first row which is closest to the top of the staircase, which leads into the tiered seat area, is Row ‘A’.

It is not recommended that those that have restricted mobility or access difficulties book seats in rows T to Z or AA to HH as these are in the top section of the tiered seat area and the steps in this section are steeper than the lower section.