

Accessibility at the Bedford River Festival 2026



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



The Bedford River Festival is a community event where we like to welcome everyone of all ages and abilities. With the event covering such a large footprint with half of it on parks we appreciate this can be a challenge for some.

To help counter some of the challenges we keep the majority of hard standing footpaths open with activities and attraction based around these paths. The accessible map highlights which bridges might not be suitable for all so you can plan your routes around the site and there is a quiet hour between 10am – 11am each day. At every toilet block there will be at least one disabled toilet unit.

To find out more information on the events and activities at the River Festival, please see the [main programme](#).

The Exclusive Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) family area will be located in the family area, in the same area as last time in St. Mary's Gardens. The area will be cordoned off, and will include soft play, and a dedicated bouncy castle for Children and Young People with SEND. A wide range of information will be available about events, clubs and activities for SEND families who live in Bedford Borough.

There are 4 [Changing Places toilets](#) across the River Festival Site – [River Street Car Park](#), [The Pilgrim's Progress](#), [The Higgins Bedford](#), and [Russell Park](#) (opposite the Tennis court, close to the inclusive park).

What is a RADAR toilet key?

A RADAR key opens over 9,000 locked public disabled toilets, enabling people with a disability to use locked toilet facilities across the UK. Anyone who considers themselves to have a disability is eligible for a RADAR Key.

Apply for a RADAR key

To apply for a RADAR key, please download the [RADAR toilet key application form](#) (PDF) and return it to Local Offer by post, in person or by email local.offer@bedford.gov.uk.

Once Bedford Borough Council, receive the completed form, we will call you within five working days to take payment and then issue the key.

How do I find out about all the Changing Places Toilets in Bedford Borough?

Please visit [changing places toilets available in Bedford Borough](#).



Accessible Site Map

BEDFORD RIVER FESTIVAL | 18TH & 19TH JULY 2026

For more information visit www.bedford.gov.uk/riverfestival



1 Bridges (1-14)
(bridges 5 & 8 are not suitable to wheelchair & pushchair users so have been taken off this map)

Railway

Park & Ride / Bus Points

Parking

Disabled Parking
(limited spaces available)

Toilets, Disabled Toilets & Baby Changing

Changing Places

First Aid - St. John Ambulance

Road closure point

Information & Lost Children Point

Drinking Water Point

SEND Family Area

HEADLINE SPONSORS



Getting to the Event

The Bedford River Festival always draws huge crowds and you are advised to plan ahead and think about how to get here, where to park and how to get around the 105 acre site.

We would like visitors to consider how they travel to the event and where possible use public transport or use other sustainable modes of transport.

Stagecoach will be running extra buses so make it easier for people to get to and from the River Festival, please check their timetables for routes and further information.

Walking or By Bike

Why not walk or cycle to the River Festival and enjoy the journey as part of the day? Choosing to travel actively helps reduce congestion, is better for the environment, and lets you take in more of Bedford's scenery along the way. The Bedford Borough Council website offers a range of useful resources, including walking and cycling maps that highlight the Bedford Cycle Network, rural cycle routes, and town centre walking routes. These maps make it easy to plan a safe and enjoyable route to the festival, whether you're coming from nearby or exploring further afield. www.bedford.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-travel/walking-cycling-and-riding/cycle-lanes-and-routes

We have secure bike storage at the Cycle Shelter on Horne Lane, to register for access please email sustainable.transport@bedford.gov.uk with full name, contact number, and address. Registered users will receive login details within seven working days, granting access through the OneKey app for a more secure and convenient experience.

By Car

Visitor parking is available at the town centre car parks, and Everard Meadow and Bedford International Athletics Stadium (£10 a vehicle per day), ONLY CARD PAYMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Blue badge holders can park in the Everard Meadow and Athletic Stadium car park but please be aware that this is a grass field.

Additional car parking for disabled visitors will be available at Longholme Way (MK42 0BX) - a blue badge will be required.

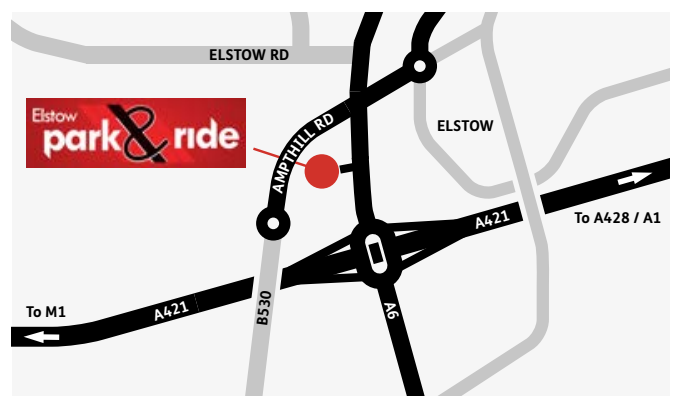
Park & Ride

Elstow Park & Ride (MK42 9XF) will be running an enhanced service during the River Festival weekend.

Grant Palmer will be operating a 15 minute service dropping off and collecting from Bedford town centre. Elstow Park & Ride is located in Progress Park on the A6 - just north of the A6 junction of the A421.

- £2.40 single, £4.80 return.
- Free parking.

For more information, please visit www.grantpalmer.com.



Getting to the Event *continued*

By Train

[Thameslink](#) and [East Midlands Railway](#) trains come to Bedford train station - please check their websites for timings.

Additional train services will be run on Sunday 19th July between Bletchley and Bedford. For more information please visit the [London Northwestern Railway](#) website.

By Bus

Stagecoach will be offering extra late services for our customers on Saturday and Sunday to make your celebrations even easier.



Please visit www.stagecoachbus.com to find out exact times.

Saturday 18th July

- Additional 9D Services added to allow hourly service to Stevenage.
9 / 9A / 9B / 9D Bedford - Hitchin – Stevenage

Sunday 19th July

- 9D Services now extended to serve Hitchin and Stevenage HOURLY all day (between 07:00 and 21:00) with one additional journey at 21:30 too.
9 / 9A / 9B / 9D Bedford - Hitchin – Stevenage
- 1BD - 4 Additional evening journeys added to allow continuous service up until 21:30.
1 Bedford – Kempston
- 5BD - 4 Additional evening journeys added to allow continuous service up until 21:30.
5 Bedford - Elm's Farm
- 6BD - 4 Additional evening journeys added to allow continuous service up until 21:30.
6 Bedford - Kempston

This year, Stagecoach are offering a 25% discount off our Small Group and Large Group Day Riders to attract more visitors to the River Festival. **Discount Code: EARVRFESTGROUP25R46V**
Can only be redeemed on the Stagecoach App between 15/07/2026 and 20/07/2026.

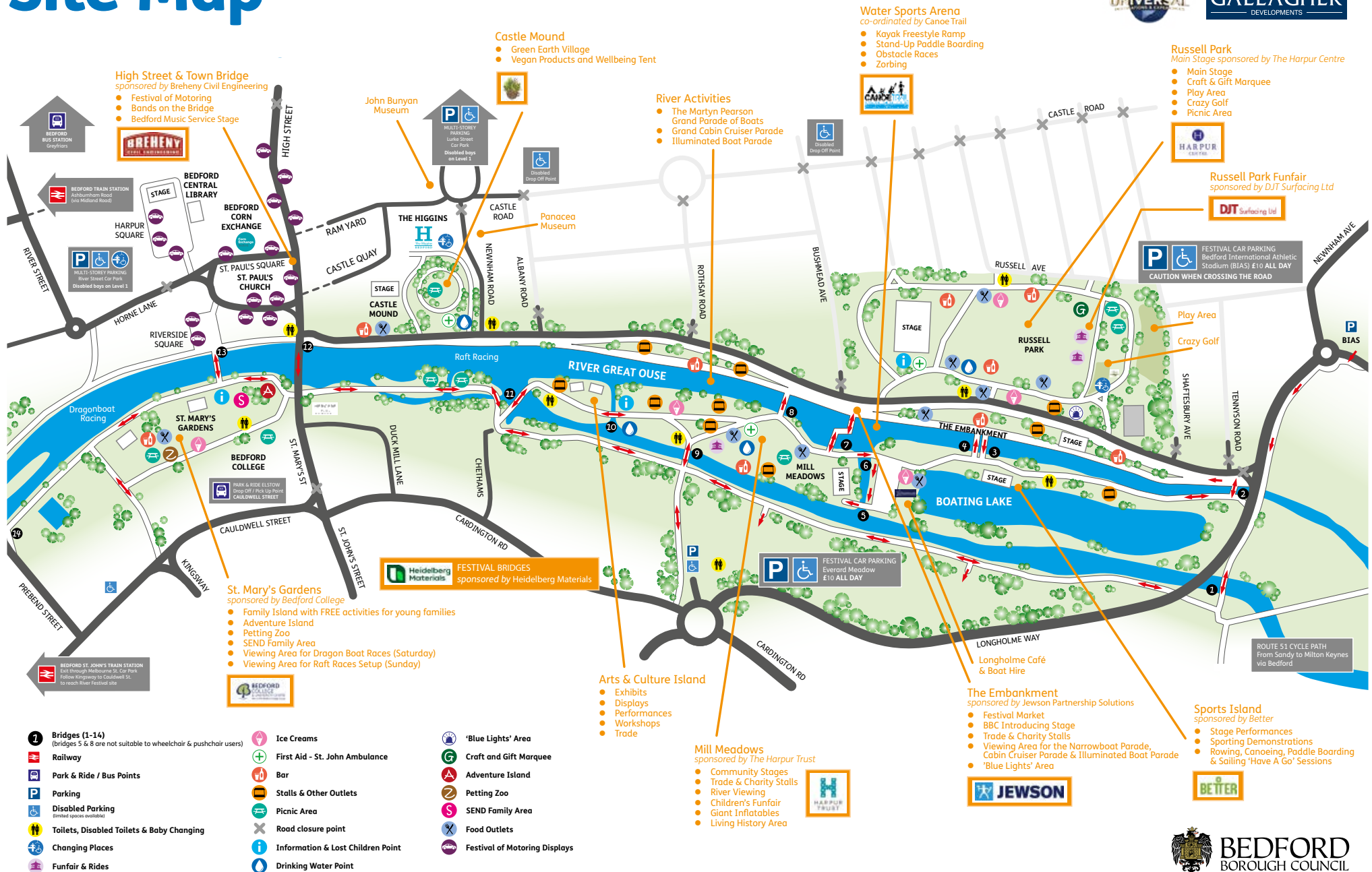
Terms and Conditions:

- *Can be redeemed a maximum of two times per customer.*
- *Only valid for use on the following products:*
 - *Bedford Small Group Day Rider, Bedford Large Group Day Rider, Bedfordshire Plus Small Group Day Rider, and Bedfordshire Plus Large Group Day Rider.*



Site Map

HEADLINE SPONSORS





The Local Offer has up-to-the minute information on what is going on in Bedford Borough to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities (SEND) and the families / carers that support them.



For more info visit **localoffer.bedford.gov.uk** or scan the QR code with your smart phone.

Finding out more...

For more information and downloads, please visit the Bedford River Festival website:



<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/riverfestival>



events@bedford.gov.uk

To find out more about this and other activities going on all year round in Bedford's parks, please follow one of our digital platforms:



[@BedfordEvents](#)



[@bedfordevents](#)



[@BedfordEventsUK](#)

