



# MERSEA ISLAND FESTIVAL 2024



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**Arrivals from 5pm:** Please check in at Reception. You'll be given a full copy of the Festival programme and a wristband. One of our volunteers will show you to where you're staying.

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup>: The high tide will not stop you getting on the island for a 5pm arrival

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>: The high tide may cover the Strood until 5pm

For safety reasons, please use your hazards lights if driving on the grass during arrivals and departures.

**Parking:** After unloading, please leave your vehicle in the long stay car park and leave the short stay car park free for our day visitors. If you need close access to essential medical items, please speak to the Festival Co-ordinator.

**Dinner on the first night** (Sunday/Friday) will be served from 6.30pm to 8pm in the Dining Hall. Please let us know if you're arriving late. We've got a live band from 8.30pm and our activity programme starts the next morning.

**Our Village Leaders and other volunteers** are helping to run the Festival and try to make sure everyone has a good time. If they are not able to help you, they will know someone who can.

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**Fire Alarm:** If you hear a fire alarm in one of the buildings, or six blasts on an air horn, please make your way towards the seawall and the assembly point along the fence.

If you see a fire, raise the alarm by shouting 'FIRE' and then use the air horn in your Village Marquee or activate the nearest break glass call point.

**Assistance on site:** Your Village Leaders and the volunteers are there to help you if needed, or you can go to Reception. For non-medical assistance overnight, please go to your Village Leader.

**First Aid:** This is available via Reception. If required overnight, contact the Duty Person via the radio or the phone number on the counter. If you feel the situation warrants it, call 999 and then inform the Duty Person.

The Festival makes sure that there are qualified first aiders on site to help anyone who might need urgent treatment. Beyond that we can provide details of the nearest pharmacist, medical practice or hospital.

**Medication storage:** Any medication that needs storing in a fridge can be done so in the First Aid Hut. Access is arranged via the staff in Reception.

**Hoists:** There are six accessible toilet and shower rooms on site and an accessible toilet. We have a shower table and two changing tables. One of the toilet and shower rooms has a ceiling hoist and there is a hoist for access to the swimming pool. We have several

portable hoists for general use, but cannot allocate them to individuals. We do ask that visitors bring their own slings.

**Going off site:** Other than for a Festival activity, please sign out and then back in at Reception. We then won't be looking for you should there be an emergency.

**High Tides:** After the first Sunday they are predicted to cover the Strood (the road to the island). Please see the info below for the advised time to allow either side of high tide if you have to go off the island. Heights can be subject to weather conditions on the day. Details will also be in the programme provided on arrival.

Date	High Tide	
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup>	12:02	Won't stop you arriving for 5pm
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup>	12:52	Allow 30mins either side
Tues 20 <sup>th</sup>	13:38	Allow 1 hour either side
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup>	14:19	Allow 1¼ hours either side
Thur 22 <sup>nd</sup>	14:58	Allow 1½ hours either side
Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup> *	15:36	Allow 1½ hours either side
Sat 24 <sup>th</sup>	16:15	Allow 1½ hours either side
Sun 25 <sup>th</sup>	16:55	Allow 1¼ hours either side
Mon 26 <sup>th</sup>	17:39	Won't stop you leaving after lunch

\*The tide on Friday won't stop those leaving, and should be clear of the Strood for the 5pm arrivals.

**Lost Property:** If you lose something, please ask at Reception in case it has made its way to our lost property box.

**Smoking and Vaping:** Smoking and vaping is not allowed anywhere on site other than in the area indicated by your Village Leader, or outside the Bar. Please use the cans provided for cigarette butts.

### **Photo and videos**

Our volunteer Media team will be taking photos and video to compile a DVD of everything we get up to, and well as to use in promotional material. The DVD is shown on the last morning of each camp. If you do not wish us to use your image, please let Reception know. With your own photos, please respect that not everyone likes appearing on social media.

**Dogs:** Only assistance dogs can be brought to the Festival, and after prior agreement with the Festival Co-ordinator.

**Beach, Seawall and Lake:** These areas, beyond the gates and fences, are not part of the Festival site. However, access may be used as part of an Instructor-led activity. Please keep to the designated routes and help to keep the gates closed when not in use. Keep clear of the crumbling seawall and at low tide keep to the sand. The mud is very soft and deep!

**Fire pits, camping stoves and disposable BBQ's:** These are not allowed on the site.

**Security:** The Mersea Island Festival accepts no responsibility for the loss of valuable items during your time at the Festival. If you wish to store anything in the centre safe, please go to Reception.

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**Cash facilities:** There is no cashpoint machine or cashback facility on site. The nearest cashpoint is at Waldegraves Leisure Park (CO5 8SE), a 10-minute drive or 20-minute walk away. Please ask at Reception for further details.

**Departures:** There are no activities on the last day of each camp. The camps officially finish after we have watched the Festival DVD, taken some group photos and had lunch. While we hate to see you go...

- Friday: Lunch is at 12.30pm. Please arrange to leave by 2pm latest to avoid getting stuck by the tide.
- Monday: Lunch is at 12noon. The high tide is later in the day and won't affect getting on and off the island.

If you know you'll be leaving before lunch, please let Reception know.

**Drinks:** Tea, coffee and squash are available in village marquees and the Dining Hall during the day and evening. All the cold taps outside are drinking water. There are vending machines in the Dining Hall and the Main Hall lobby. A Tuck Shop is open during the day. The Snack Shack is open each evening, selling non-alcoholic cocktails. Cash only. The Bar is open each evening and takes card and cash.

**Laundry:** There is a laundry room with a standard washing machine and tumble dryer for any emergency washing and drying. Washing tablets are available from Reception.

**Meal Times:** Breakfast is served from 8am to 9.30am and lunch from 12.30 to 1.30pm. Dinner is from 5.30pm to 6.30pm, with the exception of the first day of each camp (Sunday/Friday).

**Menu:** Any dietary needs you advised us about have been passed to the Catering Team. A menu will be available on arrival, and any specific needs can be discussed with the Catering Manager then.

**Phone charging:** Your mobile phone, power pack or other electronic device can be left and charged at Reception. You'll be given a ticket which will need to be handed over when you collect your item. Please bring your charger and make sure the device is on silent.

**Shop:** From Reception you can buy a Festival t-shirt and order a DVD for each camp. Essential toiletries are also available. If you need anything else, please ask. Card payments are accepted for transactions of £5 and over.

**Snack Shack:** Open each evening for when you've got the munchies. Run by our volunteers, the Snack Shack sells hot food along with non-alcoholic cocktails. When it's gone, it's gone! Cash only.

**Spending money:** Here's a guide to the things you can buy at the Festival.

- Festival T-shirt £9
- Festival DVD £6
- Snack Shack food and drink: £1 - £2
- Badge/Magnet (Art Tent) £1 – 1.50
- Tie-dye t-shirt (Art Tent) £2

As a guide to bar prices: Pint of Beer £5, Bottled Beer £4.50, Spirits: £4.50

**Toilets and Showers:** There are numerous toilet and showers on the site, including accessible facilities for those with disability. Please ask a Volunteer or at Reception if you can't find what you need.

**Wi-Fi:** There is Wi-Fi available on the site, but it is not great. Best signal will be near the veranda by the Bar. The password will be available from Reception.

**Wristbands:** All campers are given a Festival wristband on arrival, to be worn at all times. If you have a dietary requirement (Vegetarian, Gluten free etc.) you'll also need a yellow one.

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## Activities

You'll be given full details of the programme on your arrival. Every effort is made to deliver the activities in the programme, but they can be subject to change. Please keep an eye on the notice boards in your village, the Dining Hall and Reception.

**Accessibility:** There are a few activities that are not fully accessible, but our Instructor staff and volunteers will do their best to get everyone involved where it is safe to do so. If you use a wheelchair, please see the details for boat rides off the beach and kayaking & paddleboarding in our activity list, or ask at Reception, about access for activities on the lake and beach.

Off-site activities marked with a **W** have wheelchair accessible transport (2 spaces)

**Activity clothing:** For most activities, participants should wear loose, comfortable clothing. **Footwear must be worn** for all activities on the land, in the sea or on the lake. Sandals and flip flops are not permitted for activities. For kayaking and paddleboarding, wear your swimwear and a t-shirt plus trainers or water shoes. For the boat rides, wear clothes and shoes that can get wet. You may wish to wear a waterproof top to keep out the wind – and water!

**Activity equipment:** Any safety or other equipment required for an activity will be provided by the Instructors.

**Activity booking:** Booking is only required for offsite activities (crabbing, pitch & putt, foot golf and fishing) and your act in the Camp Concert. It would be great to be able to offer everyone a place on offsite activities. Unfortunately, this is not possible due to the

limitations of the activities and not the transport available. There may be spaces left on a departing minibus but it doesn't mean there are spaces at the other end.

Places need to be booked in the Main Hall:

- Monday 10.30am for activities on Monday and Tuesday plus the Camp Concert
- Tuesday 12.30pm for activities on Wednesday and Thursday plus the Camp Concert
- Saturday 10am for all activities at the weekend

When booking we need the name of each person going. To help ensure as many people have a chance to participate in these activities, 1 person can book up to 4 places on an activity.

For on-site activities, in some cases there is a limited number of places, as shown in the detailed programme. These are available on a first come, first served basis, or a managed system will be used if high demand.

## Activities A to Z

Activities marked with a **W** are off site and have wheelchair accessible transport (2 spaces). Activities marked with a **B** need to be booked for.

**Aerial Adventure:** With helmet and harness, work your way around the aerial obstacle course. Unfortunately not all sessions are accessible to wheelchair users. These will be highlighted in the programme.

**Aerobics:** Have a gentle limber up each morning to get ready for the day.

**Adapted Bikes:** A range of bikes and trikes to try on our marked track.

**Adventure Course:** Wear a helmet and clamber round an obstacle course under the watchful eye of an Instructor. Unfortunately this activity is not wheelchair accessible.

**Archery:** Our Instructors will help you try and hit the target, with the use of a standard or adapted bow.

**Art Tent:** A range of creative activities included encaustic wax painting, badge making and tie-dye t-shirts.

**Band Workshop:** Come and have a go at being a rock star!

**Beauty Workshop:** Get yourself looking fabulous for the evening parties.

**Biscuit Decoration Workshop:** Have a go at decorating your own cookie. Can be eaten afterwards!

**Boat Rides off the beach:** Wade through the water (or maybe carried) to get on a boat for a quick ride on the estuary. Buoyancy aids are provided. Wear clothes and closed shoes you can get wet. No sandals or flip flops. Unfortunately the beach and boat are not fully wheelchair accessible, but we will do our best to get people on if safe to do so.

**Boccia (week):** A taster session in this inclusive sport, related to bowls and petanque.

**Bookbus and Storytelling (week):** The Essex Libraries staff will be here with their Bookbus to help you find a book for a quick read, and tell a story or two.

**BSL Workshop:** Learn some basic British Sign Language in a fun taster session.

**Bushcraft Workshop:** Making keepsakes from natural sources to take away, or cooking foods over the hot coals.

**Camp Concert B:** On the Wednesday and Saturday night there's our Camp Concert - our version of Britain's Got Talent (though no judges). Please book your act for the Camp Concert on Monday morning, Tuesday lunchtime or Saturday morning, and look out for the running order to see when you're on.

**Canjo Workshop:** Make a basic instrument out of a couple of pieces of wood and a tin can.

**Caving:** Climb (or be pulled) through our maze of pipes.

**Circus Skills:** Try your hand at juggling, plate spinning or maybe making a bubble or two.

**Climbing:** The instructors will help you climb the wall, or hoist yourself from your chair to the top.

**Coastal Discovery:** A chilled session of beach combing and art – and find out about local smugglers!

**Crabbing in Brightlingsea by ferry B:** Meet at the Sports Hut and take a short minibus trip then ½ mile walk to catch a foot ferry over to Brightlingsea. This trip is not wheelchair accessible. Bring a waterproof and a sun hat. A buoyancy aid is provided. Please note the times of departure may be different to the trip via road. For the trips at 12.45pm, participants will be given priority to have lunch earlier. Please see Reception for details.

**Crabbing in Brightlingsea via road B W:** Meet at the Sports Hut to take the accessible minibus round to Brightlingsea (approx. 45 mins) and crab off the jetty. Bring a waterproof and a sun hat. A buoyancy aid will be provided. Please note the times of departure may be different to the trip via ferry. For the trips at 12.45pm, participants will be given priority to have lunch earlier. Please see Reception for details.

**Drumming Workshop:** Our local tutor will lead you through a session and help you hit the beat on the African drums.

**Evening Film:** Watch a film or two on our large screen. Details of what's showing each evening will be displayed in Reception in the afternoon.

**Fishing B W (week):** Travel by minibus to a nearby lake for an afternoon's fishing. Wear something to keep out the wind and wet or keep off the sun. A buoyancy aid will be provided. Booking required. Accessible transport available.

**Foot Golf B:** Travel by minibus to a nearby course for a kick around the course.

**Football Workshop (week):** A local coach will help you try your football skills.

**Giant Swing:** Wearing helmet and harness, get strapped to the bar and pulled in the air, before letting yourself go.

**Golden Boot Football Tournament (week):** Our annual informal tournament for the coveted trophy.

**Kayaking and Paddleboarding:** Try a sit-on kayak or paddleboard and make your way across the lake with friends. Wear your swimwear, a t-shirt and closed shoes you can get wet. No sandals or flip flops. A buoyancy aid and helmet will be provided.

To help ensure everyone takes part safely, all those wishing to try kayaking and paddleboarding, including wheelchair users, should first go to the containers beside archery to check in and receive their safety equipment. Access to the lake for wheelchairs is then available via the corner of the site by the Giant Swing. There is no access to the lake car park or toilets on Monday.

**Pedal Karts:** Take a spin around our marked out track.

**Pitch & Putt B W:** Travel by minibus to a nearby golf course for a session with a golf club and ball. Accessible transport available on some sessions.

**Seated Pilates (week):** Join for a fun warm up to music, mobilising joints and preparing muscles before an introduction to seated Pilates.

**Signing to Music (week):** Crafty Drama are a Colchester-based group that promote inclusion and sign language through music and dance. Come and watch or maybe take part.

**Singing Workshop (week):** After a gentle warm up a local tutor will lead you in some simple songs to show off your vocal talent.

**Swimming:** The pool is 1m deep from end to end. It is only available at the time in the programme when a lifeguard will be present.

**Trampolining:** Local qualified coaches help you have a 'low' bounce on the trampoline – on your feet, your back or your bottom.

**Ukulele Workshop (week):** Essex Music Services will be running sessions for you to have a go at playing these smaller versions of a guitar. No experience required.

**Water Aerobics:** Limber up in the 1m deep pool. This is not a swimming session.

**Zipwire:** Climb up inside the tower or be hoisted up the wall, then 'zip' to the end of the wire.

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## Evening Entertainment

**First Sunday:** Our 'Welcome Party'. Catch up with old friends and meet new ones as you move to the music.

**Monday:** Hit the dancefloor for Big Jim's Disco

**Tuesday & Friday:** Green Colour Party - wear something green! Doesn't have to be a full outfit – could be just a hat or tie.

**Wednesday & Saturday:** Camp Concert – our legendary talent show.

**Thursday & Sunday:** On the last night of each camp we're having a 'Myths & Legends' fancy dress party. Who will you be at the fancy dress party on the last night of each camp? Here's some ideas...

King Arthur and Knights of the Round Table; George and the Dragon; Robin Hood; the Loch Ness monster ; Hercules; Fairies; Witches; Gnomes; Pixies; Dragons; Unicorns; Mermaids; Viking/Norse mythology e.g. Thor, Odin, Loki; Egyptian, Roman and Greek Gods.

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**If you have any questions, please see your Village Leader or the staff in Reception**



# MERSEA ISLAND FESTIVAL 2024 - What to bring



Whatever you bring, please label it with your name! Even your undies and trainers.

## Clothing

For the day-time activities, please bring lots of loose fitting clothes which you don't mind getting dirty. As a guide, these could include:

- Sweaters or sweatshirts
- Jogging bottoms/loose trousers
- Shorts
- T-shirts
- Socks and underclothes
- Swimming costume
- PJ's
- Anorak or cagoule (essential for boat trips)
- Closed trainers for activities\*
- Closed footwear for wearing in the water\*



### Party Gear!!

**Tues/Fri:** Wear something **GREEN** for our Colour Party. Doesn't have to be a full outfit - could be just a hat or tie.

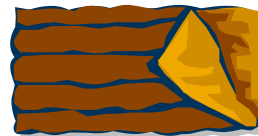
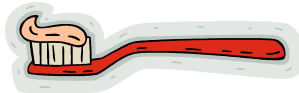
**Thur/Sun: Myths & Legends -** Who will you be? Maybe Robin Hood or a mermaid? Hercules or an Egyptian Goddess?  
|

\* Open footwear (e.g. sandals and flip flops) cannot be worn for activities on land, the lake or in the sea.

*Remember to bring clothes for the cold and wet as well as the hot weather!*

## Other items you will need are:

- Wash kit/toiletries
- Sun Cream
- Sun hat
- Towel (preferably 2)
- Torch (with maybe some spare batteries)
- Sleeping bag
- Pillow. Preferably not feather
- A cheap camera (for photos of your new friends)



## Spending money

All meals (breakfast/lunch/dinner) are provided, but some cash will be useful for the sweet and drink machines and our evening snack bar. There is a bar facility open each evening, with a card machine, and a DVD and t-shirt are also available to order or buy. There is no cash machine or cash back facility on site.

**Please don't bring expensive items e.g. cameras, electronic games and jewellery. Come prepared to enjoy yourself and not have the worry of losing or damaging precious possessions.**

Lost property will be held for 3 weeks after the Festival before being disposed of.