



Dublin City Council St. Patrick's Festival Relaxed Parade Space



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

Visual Guide





St. Patrick's Festival Relaxed Parade Space

Welcome to the St. Patrick's Festival Relaxed Parade Space! Stretching right around the Bank of Ireland located at College Green, the Relaxed Parade space is being designed specifically to allow many neurodivergent families, individuals and people with sensory processing and communication differences to access the parade. With bespoke facilities and limited capacity to allow freedom of movement, we aim to create an adapted space that is welcoming, inclusive and still embodies the spirit and fun of this iconic National festival event!



We have created this Visual Guide and included maps of the plan as well as images of previous parades and how the area at College Green looks on a typical day.

We hope this will support you/your family to find the Relaxed Parade Space and plan your journey to and from the Relaxed Space as best you can.





Your journey

St Patrick's Day is one of the busiest days of the year in Dublin City Centre. The parade travels from Parnell Square on the northside of the city all the way to Kevin Street on the southside of the city.

Please allow additional time to get to the Relaxed Parade Space. Transport services will run a **Sunday timetable** so your bus/train/LUAS may take longer.



A large number of roads are closed on the morning of the 17th to facilitate the Parade. Please plan your journey in advance as this may make it difficult to drive into the city centre in a way that you are used to. You can look up all road closures on the St Patrick's Festival website: www.stpatricksfestival.ie/practical-info/what-to-expect





PUBLIC TRANSPORT

If you are travelling to the city centre via public transport, the closest bus stops to the Relaxed Parade Space that will be accessible on the 17th of March are:

Here is a list of temporary stops ->

TEMPORARY STOPS	ROUTES GOING TO/FROM HERE
Wood Quay pick up for:	C1, C2, C3, C4, G1, G2, 26, 37, 39/a, 52, 60 & 70.
Cook Street	49, 54a, 56a, 68, 69, 77a, 79/a, 150, 151.
Upper Ormond Quay set down for:	C1, C2, C3, C4, G1, G2, 26, 37, 39/a, 52, 60 & 70.
Nassau Street	Passenger information and Stance Relief Duty
Mark Street	47 & 61.
Mountjoy Square North on north side of street	33, 38/a, 41/b/c {access direct from Gardiner St.}
Mountjoy Square North on south side of street	7, 40/40b/d, 120, 145. {access from Gardiner St, Mountjoy Sq. south, east to north}
George's Quay	6, 27a/b, H1, H2, H3, & 130.

LUAS

Red Line will operate as far as Smithfield.

Green Line will operate as far as Stephens Green.

DART

The closest Dart Stations is Pearse Street.

Please note that Tara St Station will be closed until 4pm.

TRAVELLING BY CAR

Due to Parade Day crowds, it may take longer than normal to get to the area, so we advise planning your journey into the Relaxed Parade Space in advance. If you travel to the city centre by car, we recommend using on street parking on Fitzwilliam Square and the surrounding streets.

Parking facilities are very busy on the morning of the parade so we would also advise contacting any relevant parking facilities that you may intend to use for more information.



Access to the Relaxed Area

The Relaxed Parade Space is located on the grounds of the Bank of Ireland at College Green, across from Trinity College. Pedestrians will be directed to **enter via Fleet St, crossing over crossing point I or enter via Foster Place, crossing over crossing point J**, see map below.



There will be two entrances to the Relaxed Parade Space close to the crossing points marked on the map above. We will have volunteers around the crossing points who will be able to direct you towards the entrances.



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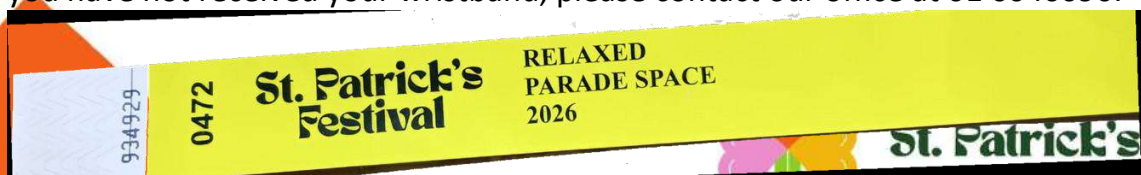
The entrances will be clearly marked with pink and green signs and teardrop flags like below:



If you need help to find or get into the space, look out for staff carrying the Relaxed Parade Space signage, who will be standing close to the crossings. They will be wearing blue Relaxed Parade Space jackets like the ones pictured below and will have backpacks and flags with the Relaxed Parade Space branding.

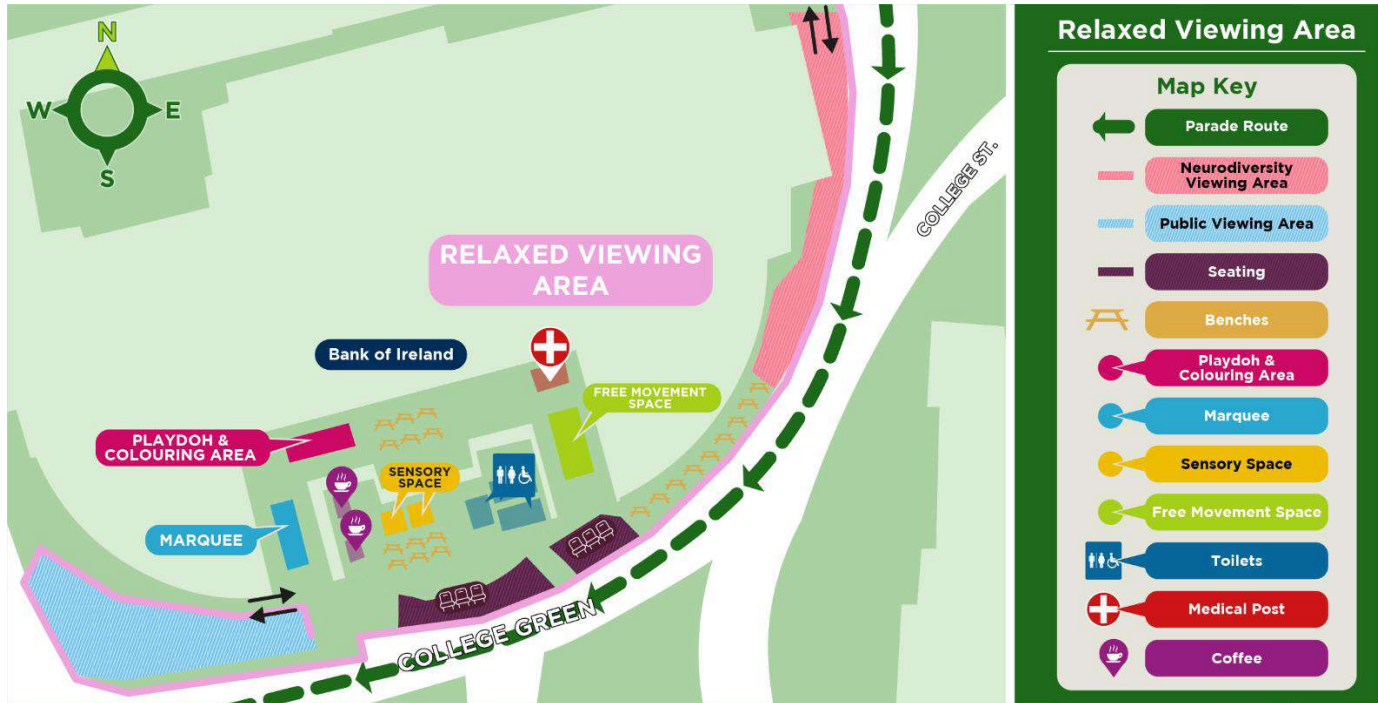


Please note that you require wristbands for entry to the Relaxed Parade Space. If you have not received your wristband, please contact our office at 01 6040090.



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Welcome to the Relaxed Parade Space



Here you can see a plan for how the Relaxed Parade Space will be laid out on the day. There may be minor adjustments to the layout on the day, but we will keep it as close as possible to this map.

You will be able to access the Relaxed Parade Space by showing the wristband you have received in the post to security at the entrance.



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The Relaxed Parade Space will include:

- Limited seating for those who need to take a break;



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- A large shared sensory space – with equipment to help attendees to regulate and take time out of the busy atmosphere of the parade when needed;



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- Private break sensory spaces that can facilitate both adults and children



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- A 'More space to move about!' area – for attendees who need an open space, free of pedestrian traffic, to run, spin, dance, twirl, etc;

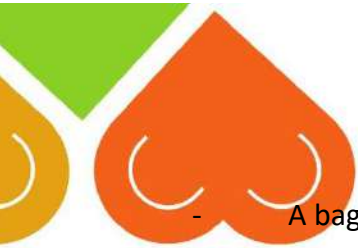


- Some entertainers onsite before the Parade begins;



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- A tea/coffee unit with some café seating (Please note: this unit will sell confectionery and hot and cold drinks, but there are no other food outlets onsite, so we advise attendees to bring their own food/snacks or packed lunch);



- A bag-drop area where you can leave larger bags, buggies, etc., as required.

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- Toilet facilities (including a wheelchair accessible toilet) *



**Please note, while there are accessible toilets onsite, if you need full changing facilities, there is an accessible Accessoloo unit at D'Olier Street outside SPAR, open from 9am – 4pm on 17th March.*



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The Parade

Here are some photos of previous parade bands and floats:



You can also find videos of previous parades on YouTube here: [St. Patrick's Day 2024 Festival Highlights](#)



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Duration: The Parade will take approximately two hours to pass.

It will get to the Relaxed Parade Space between 12.30 and 12:45.

The parade is made up of:

- The Ceremonial Section - consisting of 8 groups including The Garda dogs and mounted unit.

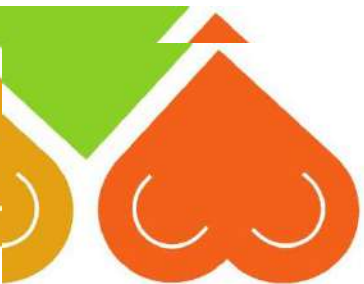


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- The Grand Marshal & St Patrick himself.



- The Performance Section, which includes:
 - 12 Marching Bands



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- 7 Large-scale Pageants & Showpieces – here you will see music and pageantry, performers in costumes, dancers in colourful costumes and large decorative floats.



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Parade Performance as it passes

Due to the geographical location of the Relaxed Parade Space, the parade naturally slows down and narrows as it moves through the area, which will allow for a more moderate pace. Please feel free to clap and encourage the performers, who would love to interact with you. If you are not comfortable interacting with performers or may find it stressful or overwhelming to be too close, maybe consider stepping back into the courtyard so that you can observe more from a distance.

As you may know, Dublin St. Patrick's Parade is one of the largest in the world and includes over 4,000 performers from around the globe. The scale of the parade, as well as the age range of the performers means that there is likely to be variation in how different groups present their performances in terms of colour, sound, volume etc.

You may spot some of the younger performers pausing to take a little rest or have a drink/refreshments as they pass by to keep their energy up throughout the parade!



Please bring any sensory supports, such as ear defenders, or sunglasses that help you to moderate input. If you forget to bring these, don't worry! We will have some spares onsite on the day. The Relaxed Parade Space also allows additional space so that attendees can choose to move further away from or closer to the performance as needed.

Potential Sensory Triggers: Smoke, lights (but not flashing), live and recorded music (including brass, percussion and drums), bright colours, dramatic costumes, movement, dancing.



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Using the Relaxed Parade Space

Supervision

It's important to note that while there will be security present at the entrances/exits of the Relaxed Parade Space, it is a large area and **it is essential that parents/guardians/carers stay with their charges at all times.**

Coming and going

- The Relaxed Parade Space will be open from 10am to 4:00pm.
- In order to avoid congestion on this busy day in the city centre, we suggest arriving at the Space early. From 11.30 onwards, it will be more difficult to access the entrance to the Relaxed Parade Space as the city becomes more congested.
- As long as you have a wristband, you can leave and re-enter the Relaxed Parade Space during the day.
- When the Parade finishes, please be aware that the streets outside the Relaxed Parade Space will become crowded with people leaving the Parade. The Relaxed Parade Space will remain open so, if you'd like to, you can wait until the initial rush is over to exit the Space.
- If you need to leave suddenly and quickly, security onsite will be able to assist you.



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What to bring?

- **Prepare for weather** - St Patrick's Day can bring all kinds of weather - sometimes all in the one day! Please ensure that you bring extra layers, rain gear, etc.



- **Snacks** - There will be some food outlets onsite selling teas and coffees, with some confectionery and snacks, but if you have any specific dietary requirements, we would advise you to please **bring your own food and snacks**.



- **Regulation/sensory supports** - Any small items that help with regulation are very welcome in the Relaxed Parade Space



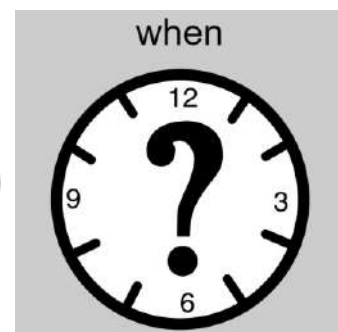
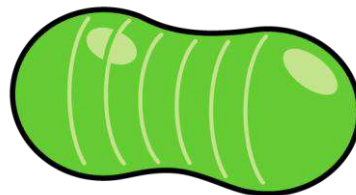
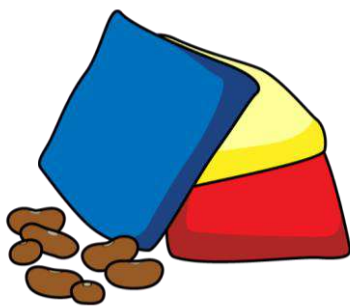
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What not to bring?

- In order to respect other people's sensory sensitivities, we ask that you do not bring noisemakers such as whistles, horns and blowers into the Relaxed Parade Space.



Use of Sensory and Quiet spaces



- In order to facilitate as many people as possible being able to access the sensory area and quiet spaces, try to limit your time in those spaces to shorter periods of 10 minutes where possible. We will have supervisors at all areas of the space, and ask you to listen to their advice on safe and appropriate use of spaces so that everybody can enjoy the space.



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Communication Aids

We will have several communication boards around the space, provided by Finding Charlie's Voice. The communication boards will look like this:



Patrick's Day Communication Board



Playground Communications Board Use these symbols to make choices, share ideas and direct actions during play

what [?]	I [person]	go [phone]	drink [cup]	stand [person]	loud [face]	cold [face]	up [arrow]	Ireland [flag]	bean bag [chair]	peanut ball [ball]	yes [face]	no [face]
where [?]	you [person]	see / look [eyes]	eat [person]	sit [person]	tired [face]	hot [face]	down [arrow]	band [band]	bubbles [bubbles]	home [house]	fun [face]	again [arrow]
when [?]	he [person]	hear / listen [ear]	stop [STOP sign]	rest [bed]	sick [face]	scared [face]	on [person]	parade [parade]	music [trumpet]	coat [coat]	later [clock]	now [person]
who [?]	she [person]	help [person]	want [hand]	draw [drawing]	happy [face]	funny [face]	off [person]	dancers [dancers]	glasses [glasses]	bag [bag]	ready [person]	turn [arrow]
why [?]	they [people]	talk / speak / say [mouth]	finished [hand]	dance [person]	sad [face]	different [diamonds]	under [person]	text break [tent]	magician [magician]	bus [bus]	thank you [person]	sorry [person]
Scan the QR code and follow us!	it [square]	show [person]	play [person]	walk [person]	angry [face]	more [pile]	behind [person]	snacks [snacks]	tea/coffee [cup]	car [car]	I hurt myself [person]	oops [person]
	parents [people]	clap [hands]	spin [person]	sign [hand]	quiet [face]	same [diamonds]	beside [person]	ear defenders [ear defenders]	ACC [ACC sign]	toilet [toilet]		
					excited [face]	surprised [face]		seating area [person]				

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	1	2	3	4	5
n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	6	7	8	9	10



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Other support

Who can I contact for support in advance?: If you have any questions or queries before Parade day you can contact us at info@stpatricksfestival.ie or phone 01 6040090

Who can I contact for support on the day? If you need support on the day of the Parade, please talk to anybody wearing a blue Relaxed Parade Space jacket. Anybody wearing a jacket will be able to provide you with assistance or help you to find the support that you may need.



Feedback

The Relaxed Parade Space continues to be evaluated and developed for future festivals.

We know that we won't get everything right for every attendee this year.

Your feedback is key in developing this initiative.

Please let us know, after the event, what worked and didn't work for you.

We will email a survey to you after the event and would be very grateful for your feedback.

Share your story

We really want the world to see how this initiative (and initiatives like this) helps to open up experiences that may not have previously been available to people who have sensory processing and other related issues and their families. We would like to spread the joy as far as possible, so if you're comfortable, please feel free to share your parade day stories with us on social media by tagging St Patrick's Festival and Dublin City Council!



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The Relaxed Parade Space is brought to you by Dublin City Council and St. Patrick's Festival in partnership with AsIAm, with support from Bank of Ireland, Neuroconvergence Ireland and Neurodiversity Ireland.

