

BALTIC

Accessibility Guide 2023 for Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art

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Image of Baltic, a converted flour mill next to the River Tyne, with a blue sky.

Photo: Colin Davison 2021

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Accessing this document

- This document can be downloaded from Baltic's website in .pdf format.
- Baltic can also provide a printed version, on request.
- When opening the pdf version online, Baltic's Web Accessibility and Language Toolbar, allows this document to be read aloud, the colour theme changed, use of a ruler or screen mask, zoom function and can be translated to a range of languages.
- You can open the 'Recite Me' language and accessibility toolbar by clicking on the button called 'Accessibility Tools' found the top left right hand corner on every page of Baltic's website.

Welcome

Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art is situated on the South Bank of the River Tyne in Gateshead, next to the Millennium Bridge. The main entrance is located beneath street level on Baltic Square, with steps and a ramp leading to it from South Shore Road.

Baltic has six floors, including galleries, a shop, eating area and café. There are lifts to all floors, and accessible toilets on all floors except Level 5.

The Hello Desk is in the main entrance of Baltic. There's always a member of Baltic Crew at the Hello Desk; they can advise you on any aspect of your visit and answer any questions you might have. Baltic Crew can also give information about our exhibitions.

If you have any queries in advance of your visit that are not covered in this document or require any assistance on your future visit please telephone 0191 478 1810 or e-mail info@Balticmill.com. You can also use these contact details to request the use of a wheelchair, mobility scooter or tri-wheel walker in advance.

Baltic is a member of the Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme, run by Visit England and ensures high quality experiences at tourist attractions.

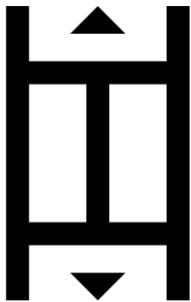
If you require any assistance when you are at Baltic on your visit please ask any member of Baltic Crew who can be found on every floor in the building.

At a Glance



Level Access

Steps or a ramp lead to the main entrance and level access entrance on South Shore Rd. Blue badge holders park free, contact security via the intercom on exit.



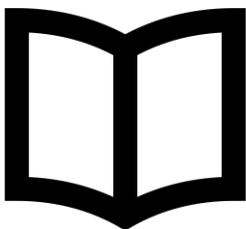
Lifts

Glass lifts with Braille buttons travel between Ground Floor and Level 6, saying and showing each floor number. An alternative (not glass) lift is available if preferred. There's an accessible lift from the Hello desk to the upper Ground Floor area.



Hearing

There is a Hearing Loop system at the Hello Desk, inside Baltic Shop and Baltic Kitchen. All Baltic Crew have disability awareness training.



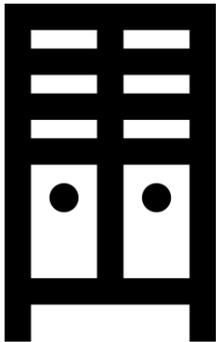
Visual

Glass doors and full-height windows have contrast markings. Exhibition guides, labels and any floor maps that are be available for the exhibitions are available in large print format. These can simply be picked up.



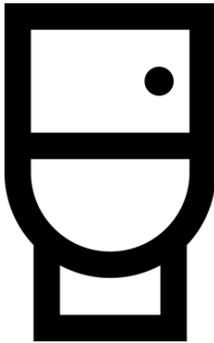
Assistance Dogs / Animals

We welcome trained and uniformed assistance dogs. Water bowls for dogs are available on request.



Lockers

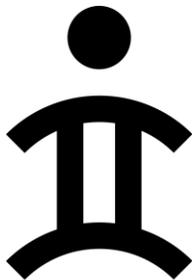
Lockers are available to store items such as bags and coats during your visit. Lockers cost £1, and are emptied at 5.55pm every day. Items cannot be left over-night.



Toilets

Toilets are available on every floor with the exception of Level 5, and all have level access. Female and male toilets are available on Ground Floor.

All stand-alone access toilets feature clos-o-mat toilets. Sanitary products are available for free upon request.



Baby Change

Singular baby changes are located on Ground Floor, Level 1 and Level 2. Baby change facilities are also available in both female and male bathrooms, on Ground Floor.

If you require free nappies, wet wipes or any other assistance speak to a member of Baltic Crew.



Water Refill

There are two water refill stations at Baltic. One on the Ground Floor, adjacent to the Hello Desk, and another on Level 2. Feel free to re-fill your bottles here.

Before you visit

- You're welcome to drop-in for free anytime during our opening hours; Wednesday-Sunday, 10am-6pm. Last entry 17.45.
- You can read an information guide on what to expect on a visit to Baltic, and further safety measures by visiting www.baltic.art/visit

What to Expect

Find out what to expect on a visit to Baltic with this Visual Story guide - a guide with words and pictures. It is sometimes called a Social Narrative.

You can find these on our website here, or on the individual exhibition pages. If you would like to have it sent to you via email or post, would like to chat about your visit before coming, you can email us on myexperience@balticmill.com or call us on 0191 478 1810.

Facilities

- Walking stick stools
- Wheelchairs (booking advised)
- Tri-wheel walkers (booking advised)
- Adult changing facilities (booking advised)
- Four-wheel mobility scooters (booking advised)
- Accessible toilets on all floors, except Level 5
Baby changing facilities
- All stand-alone access toilets feature clos-o-mat toilets
- Large Print guides
- Lifts to all floors
- Subtitles on a selection of Baltic films available on Level 2
- Magnilink print enlarger in Baltic Library (booking advised)
- iMacs with built in access facilities in Baltic Library
- Hearing loops are located at the Hello Desk, Baltic Shop and Baltic Kitchen.
- Braille, audiotape, descriptive tours, sign language interpreted tours, personal guidance, all available on request prior to your visit.
- Online Accessibility Features
- Exhibition Social Stories

Getting here



Image of Baltic a converted flour mill, and its main entrance from an open paved Baltic square. Photo: Graeme Peacock.

Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art,
Gateshead Quays,
South Shore Road,
Gateshead,
NE8 3BA

Wednesday-Sunday, 10am – 6pm, last entry 5.45pm

For more information on getting to Baltic, as well as a map of how to reach us please visit www.baltic.art/map

Travel by Train

- The nearest railway station is Newcastle Central Station; approximately 0.5 miles uphill from the building.

Travel by Metro

- The nearest Metro station is Newcastle Central Station or Gateshead Metro Interchange.

Travel by Bus

- Gateshead Bus Interchange or Newcastle Central Station are our closest bus stations.
- The Voltra 53 & Voltra 54 buses run every 12 minutes during the day and directly serve Baltic, stopping right outside our building
- Buses start from both Gateshead Interchange and Newcastle Central Station.

Travel by Taxi

- Accessible taxis are available locally through Deans Taxis. They can be contacted on 0191 444 4444, or ask at the Hello Desk where Baltic staff will be happy to book this for you.

Travel by Bicycle

- [Gateshead cycle map can be downloaded here.](#)
- We're accessible by bicycle via South Shore Road and the Gateshead Millennium Bridge.
- There are bike racks on Baltic Square, near our main entrance, which are maintained by Gateshead Council and free to use.
- We also have lockers available to store items such as bags and coats during your visit. Our lockers cost £1 and are emptied at 5.55pm every day. Items cannot be left overnight.

From Gateshead Town Centre

- We advise proceeding down West Street, turning right at the end of the road (onto Askew Road) and then left, crossing the road at the traffic lights to proceed under the train bridge.
- Now facing the iconic Tyne Bridge bare left down Bottle Bank (with the Tyne Bridge on your right, and Hilton on your left).
- At the bottom of the road, cross the road and take the first right along Hillgate, passing underneath the Tyne Bridge.
- During the summer month Kittiwake season, please beware the floor may be slippery.
- Follow the road along the River Tyne as it joins South Shore Road, passing Sage Gateshead on your right.
- You will then reach Baltic Square on your left where you can enter Baltic.
- This is also a step-free route.

Travel by car

- Parking spaces are available in the Car Park, behind our building. Follow Signage for 'Gateshead Quays' and 'Other Car Parks' until specific signage for Baltic Car Park becomes visible.
- If you are travelling via the clean air zones be aware from 30 January charging applies for non-compliant vehicles. Check your vehicle in advance at [gov.uk/clean-air-zones](https://www.gov.uk/clean-air-zones)

Parking



Image of road entering a carpark entrance, cars behind a barrier and paying station, with notices saying 'Pay here on exit' and 'Welcome to Baltic'.

- Spaces are pay on exit and you can pay by card or cash.
- Our Car Park charges are as follows:

Up to 1 hour £2.00
Up to 2 hours £3.50
Up to 3 hours £5.00
Thereafter £1.50/hour
- Blue badge holders park free. For ticket validation please contact security via the intercom on exit. There are 4 additional Blue Badge parking spaces directly adjacent to Baltic on South Shore Road. Blue Badges must be displayed at all times. There are dropped curbs for wheelchair users.
- Motorcycles can park, free at all times, in the designated Motorcycle bay.
- Our coach drop-off point is next to Baltic on South Shore Road.

- For level access to Baltic from the car park take the roadside route and longer ramp onto Baltic Square. Alternatively, take the route along the river side of the building for level access.

Main Entrance and Hello Desk

- Upon entering there are 10 steps with handrails to reach the ground floor and lifts. There is an access lift to the right of the stairs.
- Entrance to Baltic is free, and donations are welcome.
- The Hello Desk is located in the main entrance and is 90cm tall.
- Four digital screens are located on the wall to the left of the desk, with information about Baltic. To the right of the desk is a large lightbox containing artwork. This artwork changes approximately three times per year.



Image of low Hello desk in Baltic's foyer, with three lanes of stairs in the background. Desk has word 'Hello' in large letters on.

- Immediately on the left on the lower ground floor is Baltic Shop. On the right is Baltic Kitchen, toilets with hoists and changing beds and access lift to ground floor and Front Room / Baltic Riverside.
- The main entrance is well lit, with an increase of natural light as you head towards the scenic lifts.
- The main entrance is on the lower ground floor with level access from Baltic Square.
- The floor surface on the ground and lower ground floor is slate-tiled. The rest of the building is untreated wood. Sometimes the exhibition spaces are carpeted.
- There is a Hearing Loop system at the Hello Desk, as well as inside Baltic Shop and Baltic Kitchen.
- Lockers are available. You are welcome to use our lockers to store items such as bags and coats during your visit. Our lockers cost £1. The lockers are emptied at 5.55pm every day. Items cannot be left over-night.



Image of steps from Hello Desk to lifts, with metal handles and white marking at the edge of each step.

Getting around inside

6 – Six Rooftop Restaurant

5 – Viewing Box

4 – Level 4 Gallery and Viewing Platform

3 – Level 3 Northumbria University Gallery

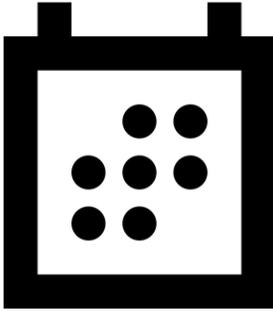
2 – Level 2 Gallery, Learning Lounge, Library and Sensory Room.

1 – Event Space

M – Front Room / Baltic Riverside

G – Ground Floor Gallery, Baltic Shop, Hello Desk and Baltic Kitchen.

- There are toilets and access toilets on all floors apart from Level 5.
- Please ask at the Hello Desk for large print guides, and loan of wheelchairs, scooters and tri-wheel walkers.
- There is a staircase accessing all floors and three main glass lifts.
- If you would like to use an alternative lift, please ask a member of staff.



Ticketing

- For events: No proof of eligibility is required. Carers go to Baltic events for free. If you require a free carers ticket for a paid event please

email communicationsteam@Balticmill.com

- Tickets for events can be booked online at www.baltic.art/tickets

Exhibitions

- Baltic's exhibitions change approximately 3 times a year, and depending when you visit some floors may be closed. Please check Baltic's website or chat to crew on the day for full details of the exhibitions which will be open at your time of visit.
- Exhibitions may contain sound, film, flashing lights or other sensory experiences which may not be suitable for all visitors.
- Clear signage will be provided and we advise visitors to ask Baltic Crew for further information where necessary.
- Depending on the exhibitions there may be seating around the galleries, please ask for further information.
- Lighting will vary according to each exhibition, please ask for further information. In some situations, crew members may have torches and emergency lighting, where possible crew member will adjust lighting if required.
- There is contrast markings on all glass doors and full height glass windows.
- Exhibition guides are available in large format.
- Galleries are situated on Ground floor, Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4.
- There is an outside Viewing Terrace on Level 4 and an indoor Viewing box on Level 5, with a balcony overlooking the Level 4 gallery.



*Image showing dark film screening, three screens showing a film lighting up benches in front of them. John Akomfrah, *Precarity 2017 Ballasts of Memory* installation view Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art 2019 Photo: Rob Harris © 2019 Baltic Courtesy of the artist, Smoking Dogs Films and Lisson Gallery*

Learning Lounge

- Baltic's Learning Lounge is an informal learning space.
- All of the films playing in the Learning Lounge are subtitled.
- There's a pair of computers and free wi-fi that can be used.
- The Learning Lounge has soft seating, tables and chairs as well as comfortable matting.
- Towards the rear of the Learning Lounge, is an Under 5s Play Hive.
- This area celebrates Baltic's journey from a flour mill to our present day as an art gallery.

Allergen Warning

- Please supervise your children's play at all times.
- Please be aware this area contains small parts and uses **Wheat** (that contains gluten) as a play material.
- Grain may also contain **Legumes, Poppy Seeds & Mustard Seeds**.
- Please keep your shoes on in this area, and keep the grain in the grain pit. This is a self-led play area, please help us to keep it tidy. Thank you.



Buggies

There is an area to park your buggies alongside the entrance to Learning Lounge. All items are left at the owner's risk.

Baltic Library

- Baltic Library is located in the Learning Lounge on Level 2. We offer standing and sitting desks. If you need help or support, please speak to a member of crew.
- The Library is a reference-only free, drop-in resource with over 13,000 books on contemporary art, artists, design and visual culture.
- Access to Baltic Library may be challenging for some visitors due to the lack of a button operated door smaller areas for mobility. We are aware of this and working towards resolution, please chat to a member of Baltic Crew, Call 01914781810 or email info@balticmill.com for any more information.



Image of Learning Lounge - wooden floor, tables and spiral staircase with metal casing around it.



Image of Learning Lounge on Level 2, wooden floor, small rugs, table, chairs and play items.



Image of Baltic Library, circular wooden tables with chairs, large shelves with books and computer facilities.



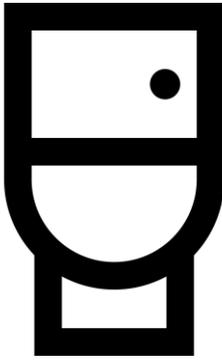
Image of 3 glass lifts, metal edges and see through glass panels that show the outside view including Baltic Square.



Image of Viewing Terrace on Level 4, dark wooden flooring, and transparent glass panels to show the local landscape including Millennium Bridge and River Tyne.



Image of Level 5 Viewing Box, wooden floor and three large window panels with horizontal metal bar across the front, displaying view of Newcastle Gateshead, including Millennium and Tyne Bridge, River Tyne and skyline.



Visitor Toilets

- There are toilets on every floor of Baltic, with the exception of Level 5.
 - Female and male toilets are available on Ground Floor.
 - All stand alone access toilets feature clos-o-mat toilets.
- All floors have level access to the toilets.
 - The width of the doors to enter the access toilets is 82cm. The stand alone toilet doors have a push button open function.
 - The height of the toilet from floor to seat is 45cm.



Image of ground floor access changing room with hoist and fold down bed, toilet with height adjustable sink

- There are fixed vertical and hinged horizontal grab rails adjacent to the toilet and grab rails beside the sink

- There are pull-cord alarms in all access toilets which can be activated if a visitor requires assistance.
- All cubicles are well lit using fluorescent bulbs.
- The surface of the toilet floors is matt tiled.
- All sinks include sensor type taps
- Where fitted, overhead tracking hoists have a safe working load of 200kg / 440lbs.
- The fire alarm includes an audible and a visible element which can be heard and seen from within the access toilets.



Image of ground floor access changing room with hoist and fold down bed, toilet with height adjustable sink

Specific toilet facilities are as follows:

Level 4:

Access toilet with hoist

Level 3:

Access toilet with hoist

Level 2:

Access changing room with hoist and fold down bed, toilet with height adjustable sink

Level 1:

2 Access toilets with height adjustable sinks

Baby change room

Access toilet with hoist

Access shower room with toilet and adjustable sink

Ground Floor:

Access changing room with hoist and fold down bed, toilet with height adjustable sink

Accessible toilet cubicles are also available within the gender specific toilets

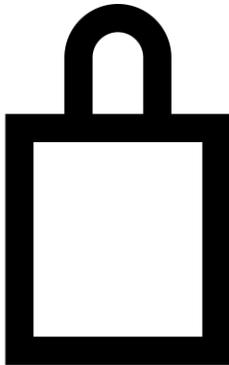
Baby change room



Image of ground floor baby change room, with sink and fold down baby change table.



Image of Baltic Shop, with tables and shelves full of items including books, arts & crafts. A mannequin torso models a white t-shirt with motif on the front.



Baltic Shop

- Baltic Shop is located on the lower ground floor of the building and has level access from the main entrance.
- There are two doors into Baltic Shop; one located directly on the left as you enter the building, the other inside the building adjacent to the Hello Desk.
- There is an access lift opposite one of the shop entrances which can be used to access this level from the main gallery building, including the accessible side door.
- The shop has a level floor throughout.
- There are a number of different display units used in the shop to house books, magazines, cards and home-wares. These include free-standing and wall based units, in general these have a minimum of 100cm between them to allow access, and all areas of the shop

are accessible, though there are some areas where a direct route between units is not possible. The highest units are 120cm.

- There is a low counter area at the till and card readers are moveable.
- There is background music in the shop, which is played at a moderate level and can be switched off by staff, please let us know.
- There is a hearing loop system, and signage in place to make visitors aware of this.
- Staff are always available to give assistance.



Image of Baltic Shop, tables stacked with different products. Table closest with mugs and coasters.

Catering



Image of Baltic Kitchen, rectangular wooden tables with plastic chairs spaced out on a slate floor.



Baltic Kitchen

Baltic Kitchen is currently having a refurbishment and will be open soon.



Front Room / Baltic Riverside

Front Room is an area to relax and have refreshments. Front Room is located on the Baltic Riverside, Mezzanine level. There is an accessible lift to Front Room.

- Front Room offers counter & table service, whichever suits you best. Crew will welcome you and offer you free drinks and snacks
- Here you can eat your own packed lunch.

- There is room for pushchairs and wheelchairs to manoeuvre around the tables, and Baltic Crew are on hand to help if any assistance is required.
- High chairs are available in Front Room.

Customer Care & Support

- A number of Baltic Crew have introductory BSL training and some are Dementia Friends.
- All exhibition guides are available in large print format. These are available on exhibition floors and at the Hello Desk.
- Baltic produced films are subtitled.
- If required, in the event of an emergency you will be assisted by staff either out of the building or to a safe refuge point.
- There is a selection of sensory equipment inside Baltic's Sensory Room, located in the Learning Lounge on Level 2.
- We offer children's parties that can be tailored for everyone. Visit www.baltic.art/childrens-parties for more information and to book.

Guide last updated April 2023