

## Should People Living in Reading Get Priority Tickets to Reading Festival?

This weekend, the town of Reading will be taken over by Festival Fever, with top names bringing in an average of 87,000 people from all over the Southern half of the UK each year. But with this influx of people, and with the festival being held so central in the city, should the festival be thinking of the residents of Reading?

[Compare My Move](#) has looked at the Glastonbury model of local ticketing, and researched how Reading could implement the same system and the postcodes that will be affected if that does come into place.

### The Glastonbury Method

The Glastonbury local sale is split into two zones, the inner zone and the outer zone. The inner zone encompasses towns and villages that are closest to the festival, and therefore get priority over the outer zone, which encompasses towns and villages close to Glastonbury that will be affected but aren't as adjacent as the inner zone.

There is also a Sunday ticket sale available to a catchment area outside the outer zone that encompasses central Somerset and Mendip areas - this ticket is just valid for the Sunday of Glastonbury and is given to residents that may still be affected by the festival, yet aren't in the inner or outer zones.

For the 2023 festival, the inner zone had their specific tickets go on sale at 9 a.m. on Sunday 20th November 2022. The outer zone can then join the sale at 10 a.m., and the Sunday tickets are available at 11 a.m. ([glastonburyfestivals.co.uk](https://glastonburyfestivals.co.uk)). However, these tickets are limited.

## What Areas of Reading Would Be Affected?

Reading Festival is adjacent to the centre of the city, and this is the area that is affected most by the masses that go to the festival. However, the city sees a lot of people heading south to the Tesco Extra on Portman Road for supplies, and North to Caversham for some hot food.

**The City Centre, Caversham, and West Reading would then create our 'inner zone' for local ticketing**, meaning that residents of RG1, RG4, and RG30 would get access to a set number of tickets before the general sale. However, it wouldn't only be this inner zone that is affected, there will be areas, especially leading into Reading, that are affected by the 87,000 music lovers that will make their way in.

On the outskirts of Reading, there will be huge amounts of cars trying to get through to the festivals. The A329 and the A4074 are going to be congested, and towns like Pangbourne and Whitchurch-on-Thames will also see many commuters as well as people looking for a place to stay. **Our outer region can then include parts of RG8 as well as RG31.**

## What Do Residents Think?

[Compare My Move](#) spoke to a few Reading residents on how the festival affects the town, and whether they think a local ticket sale for Reading festival would be a good idea.

Ella Taylor, who currently lives in RG1 and is not going to the festival this year had this to say about the impact the festival has on the town:

*"Bank holidays are usually busy in Reading but it's completely different when the festival is on. The traffic increases massively in the days leading up to the weekend, right up until the end of the bank holiday. **The public transport is a lot busier***

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***which makes it difficult to travel through Reading and even getting in/out of Reading is difficult.*** The supermarkets are also particularly busy."

When asked if Reading Festival should have priority ticketing, as Glastonbury does, for those who live in the area, Ella said:

*Yes, I think there should be. I wouldn't expect a free ticket for living near to the festival but I think discounted or priority tickets should be available for local residents.*

*Whilst I understand the festival brings in a lot of money for businesses in Reading, the whole weekend is very inconvenient for those who live nearby. I live less than a 20-minute walk from the festival grounds so I can even hear the music from my house so sometimes **I would rather avoid being at home whilst it is on.** I have to take all the festival goes into account whilst making plans for the bank holiday, **my commute to work takes longer, and there's a lot more litter in the streets over the weekend so I think a local ticket scheme would be a really nice gesture,** given all of the disruptions the festival can cause.*

[Compare My Move](#) also spoke to Alex Steddy, who has lived in RG1, and has been to the festival 4 times said that **"the north of the town sees a lot more congestion than the south."** and described the northern areas of the town as **"Carnage"** when the festival is on. A lot of this will have to do with the festival being more toward the north and having easier access to the north of the town - however, another reason will be that the infrastructure in the south of Reading is much more used to influxes of people, with the easy access to the M4 and the roads built for mass access to the Select Car Leasing stadium.

When asked if there should be a local ticketing service for Reading festival, as there is with Glastonbury, Steddy said **"It would definitely help"** However, **"it wouldn't be as effective at easing tensions with the population of the town, because of the target demographic of the festival"** meaning that because Glastonbury is widely

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known to have something for everyone, people of all age groups would be happy with a ticket. Whereas Reading and Leeds Festival is targeted more toward a younger generation.