

Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras 2024

Parade Audience Visual Story



WHAT IS A VISUAL STORY?

- Visual stories are used to prepare a person for and increase the predictability of a new environment or situation.
- This helps bring familiarity to a process and helps to reduce anxiety and stress.
- This visual story is written in plain English and uses pictures to make it accessible for everyone.
- Developed in partnership with Autism Spectrum Australia

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ABOUT SYDNEY MARDI GRAS

Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras (SGLMG) is an LGBTQIA+ organisation that hosts the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade and Festival. There are also other events and supportive initiatives throughout the year.

SGLMG began in 1978 as a political protest for equality and now:

- celebrates LGBTQIA+ identity
- advocates for equality
- promotes diverse voices

Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras was established on the values of acceptance and inclusion. We are dedicated to making it an accessible and inclusive event for all visitors.



ABOUT SYDNEY MARDI GRAS

The Sydney Mardi Gras Parade is:

- A celebration of LGBTQIA+ people and allies
- An opportunity for LGBTQIA+ people to connect with each other
- Held on multiple streets in the city that follows some of the route of the original protesters



OUR FUTURE...

2024 Theme: No future, is a match for a future, where we're together...

No future, is a match for a future, where we're together...

The 2024 Festival will call on our communities to imagine and demand the world for ourselves we rightfully deserve under the theme *Our Future...*

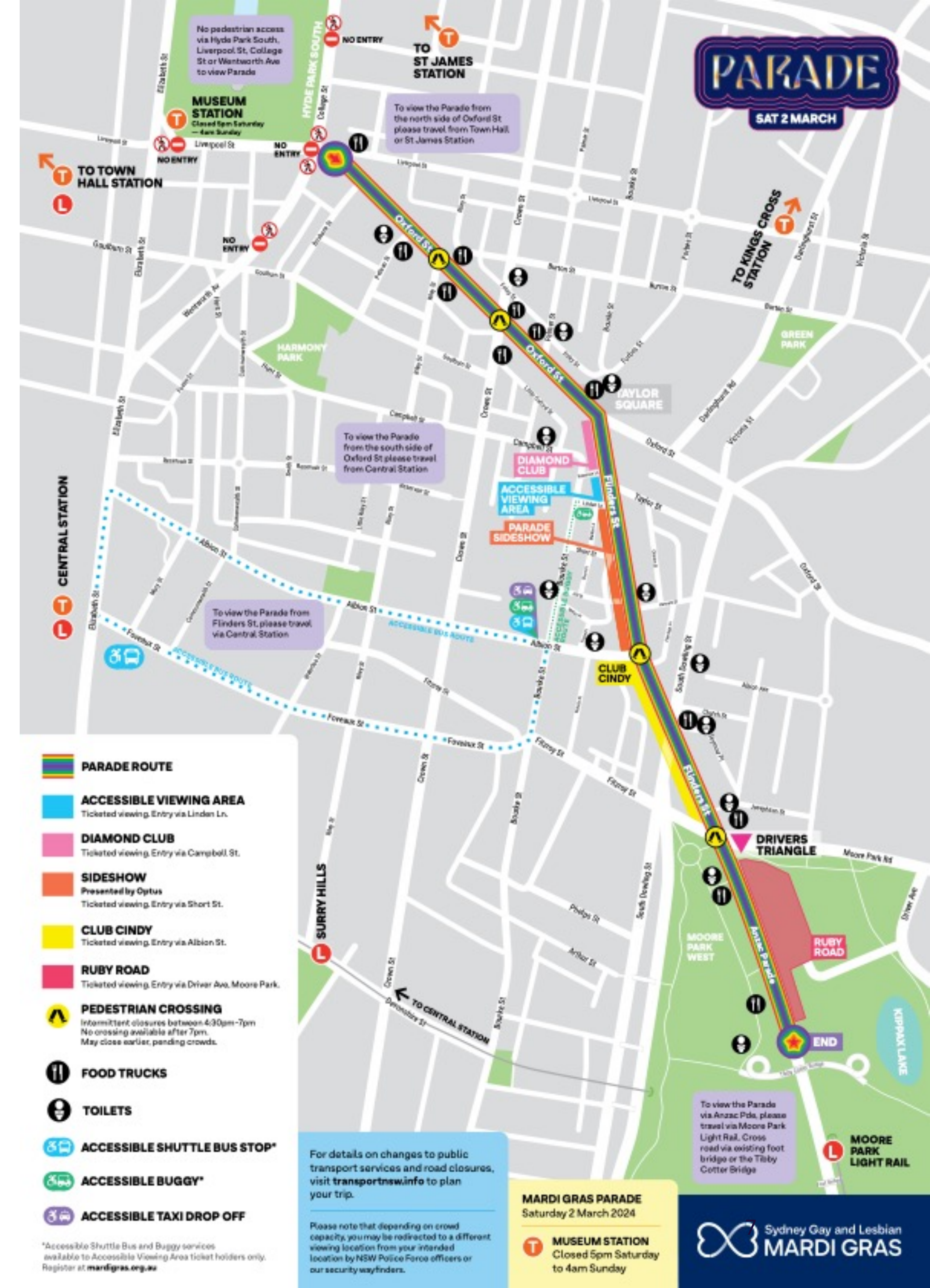
Our Future... beckons all to participate, influence, and champion LGBTQIA+ causes. It's a chance to look forward while honouring the past, and will be a testament to the power of coming together to manifest endless possibilities.

"Our Future... is not just a theme but a call to action, a bold invitation to define and shape our path forward as a community. It acknowledges our past, but encourages us to envision what comes next. It's a statement that is open to interpretation and engagement, irrespective of geographical location or physical attendance. It's our collective journey and story to share."

Gil Beckwith, Acting CEO of Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.

WHEN AND WHERE IS PARADE?

- The Mardi Gras Parade will happen on Saturday 2nd March 2024 from 6:45pm to 11:00pm.
- The Mardi Gras Parade route is Oxford Street, Flinders Street and Anzac Parade.
- **6:45pm:** Smoking Ceremony and Dykes on Bikes
Before the parade, there will be a Smoking Ceremony. Then Dykes on Bikes will ride their motorbikes along the parade route.
- **7:30pm:** Parade starts
The parade will start at Hyde Park. Parade floats and participants will travel along Oxford St, Flinders St and Anzac Parade.
- **11:00pm:** Parade ends
All parade participants and spectators will leave



ACCESSIBILITY AT THE PARADE:

Mardi Gras have worked to ensure that the Parade is as accessible as possible.

Accessibility features include:

- Dedicated accessible viewing areas. I need to register in advance for this area. I can find more information on Page 10.
- Wheelchair accessible toilets.
- Assistance animals are welcome.
- The Hidden Disability Sunflower program is recognized at the Parade. Event staff are trained to identify and support people wearing the Hidden Disability Sunflower.

If I need more information about accessibility I can:

- call 02 9383 0900 or
- email accessibility@mardigrasarts.org.au
- Visit <https://mardigras.org.au/parade-accessible-viewing>



BOOKING TICKETS:

HOW CAN I BOOK TICKETS TO THE PARADE?

1. The Parade is free to view from either side of the parade route, without a need for tickets. There are some sections that only people with booked ticketed can access.
2. There is a Free Accessible Viewing Area that I will need to get a ticket for. I can book tickets for this area at this link:
<https://www.mardigras.org.au/event/accessible-parade-viewing-area/>
3. There are three paid ticketed areas that include dedicated accessible viewing; Diamond Club, Sideshow and Club Cindy. I will need to book and pay for my ticket. I can book tickets for any of those areas at this link: <https://www.mardigras.org.au/parade-viewing-areas/>
4. There is one paid ticketed area has a dedicated Quiet Space. I can book tickets for this area at this link: <https://www.mardigras.org.au/parade-viewing-areas/>

If I need more information or assistance with booking accessible viewing tickets I can:

- Call 02 9383 0900 or
- Email tickets@mardigrasarts.org.au

ACCESSIBLE VIEWING AREAS

Sydney Mardi Gras have worked to ensure that the Parade is as accessible as possible.

Accessible services in the ticketed areas include:

- Dedicated wheelchair accessible seating in all viewing areas except Ruby Road (Please contact Sydney Mardi Gras to arrange this).
- Wheelchair accessible toilets in all ticketed areas.
- Hearing loops are only available in Sideshow and Club Cindy. Hearing loops are not necessary for general parade viewing
- The Hidden Disability Sunflower program is recognized at the Parade. Event staff are trained to identify and support people wearing the Hidden Disability Sunflower. This can be a lanyard, badge or wristband.
- Shops like Woolworths nearby to purchase food for the free Accessible Viewing Area.

If I need more information about accessibility I can:

- Call 02 9383 0900 or
- Email: accessibility@mardigrasarts.org.au
- Visit the website: <https://www.mardigras.org.au/event/accessible-parade-viewing-area/>

ACCESSIBLE VIEWING AREA

Entering and exiting the Accessible Viewing Area

- To enter the Accessible Viewing Area, I will need to show my QR code ticket.
- The security guard will check my bag to make sure that I don't have anything I shouldn't have.
- Then I will be given a wristband. Once I have my wristband I can exit and re-enter the Free Accessible Viewing Area throughout the event.

Leaving the Accessible Viewing Area at the end of the Parade

- The parade will finish around 10:45pm-11:00pm.
- An accessible shuttle bus will leave at 9:00pm from where I was first dropped off. If I don't catch the 9:00pm shuttle bus, I will need to wait until the crowd has left to catch the next shuttle bus. This is because there will be too many people on the road for the shuttle bus to get through safely.
- I can wait in the Free Accessible Viewing Area until the shuttle bus can pick me up. Security will stay at the Accessible Viewing Area until everyone has left, so I will be safe.
- The Quiet Space will close at 10pm.

PLANNING MY JOURNEY:

I will plan my journey to and from the parade before the event.

Driving

- There won't be any parking near the parade route. I can get someone to drop me off at a street nearby and walk to the Parade.

Public Transport

- I can plan my trip on the TransportNSW website: <https://transportnsw.info/>
- I will tap on & off when using public transport.
- It will be busy, with lots of people, so I might have to wait, or give myself extra time to get to the Parade.

Light Rail



I can catch the light rail to Central and walk or wheel to the Parade.

Bus



I can catch a bus to Central or Albion Street and walk the rest of the way.
I can catch the free accessible shuttle bus from Central station to get closer to the Parade.
Details for this are on the next page.

Trains:



I can catch a train to Central Station or Town Hall Station and walk or wheel to the Parade.

PLANNING MY JOURNEY:

Accessible Shuttle Bus

If I am going to any of the ticketed areas, I can ride the free accessible shuttle bus to get there.

I will get on the bus on the corner of Foveaux Street and Mary Street, next to Central Station.

I may need to show my QR Code Ticket or my sunflower lanyard/badge/wristband to get on the bus.

The bus will take me to the corner of Albion Street and Bourke Street and then I will walk the rest of the way to the ticketed area.

SGLMG Security will be driving the buggies, look out for

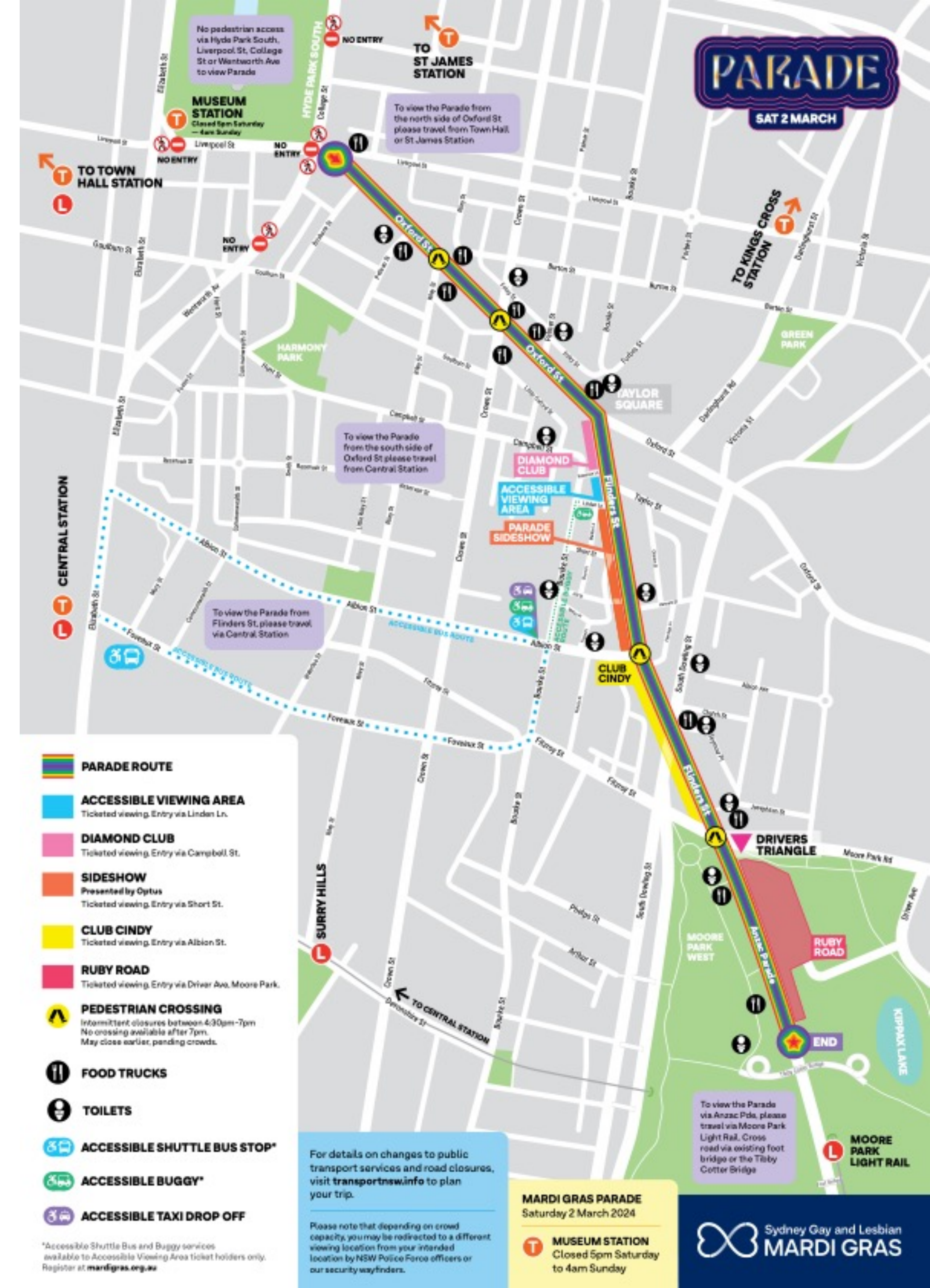


Accessible Golf Buggy

If I am unable to walk up Bourke Street to get to the ticketed area, I can wait to get a ride on a golf buggy which will take me to the entry gate. I may need to ask staff/security at the bus stop to call the golf buggy for me.

PARADE ROUTE MAP:

- I can download a copy of the Parade Route Map from the website here: <https://mardigras.org.au/plan-your-parade-experience>
- The Parade Route Walking Direction Map will become available at the end of January 2024 at the website here: <https://mardigras.org.au/plan-your-parade-experience>



WHAT SHOULD I BRING?

The Mardi Gras Parade is an outdoor event. I will check the weather conditions on the day.

If it is going to be a sunny day, I could bring:

- A hat
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen

If it is a rainy day, I could bring:

- Warm and weatherproof clothing
- Plastic ponchos
- Umbrella

If the Parade is delayed or cancelled due to severe weather conditions, Sydney Mardi Gras will let me know via social media.

I can follow Mardi Gras on Facebook , Twitter , or Instagram

I should also bring:

- A phone with key contacts saved, and an “In Case of Emergency” (I.C.E) phone number stored
- Anything that may help me to cope with crowds, lights and noise (e.g. headphones, earplugs, visor/sunglasses, sensory items)
- A refillable water bottle, and preferred food and non-alcoholic drinks
- Something to do while I wait (e.g. a device, games or books)
- A Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard or wristband (if I have one)
- Phone charging cable

WHAT NOT TO BRING -

There are things that I am not allowed to bring to the parade.

This is to keep everyone safe.

Things that I am not allowed to bring include:

- Alcohol
- Fireworks or Explosives (includes flares and sparklers)
- Illegal Drugs or Substances of any kind (prescription medication is OK)
- Promotional Material including Banners, Stickers, Signs and Flyers
- Any materials that display racist, sexist or homophobic attitudes
- Weapons of any kind
- Glass bottles/items



WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

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What I will see during the parade:

- People of all ages
- Same-sex or non-binary couples
- People who do not appear as either male or female
- Groups of people marching along the street
- Brightly coloured floats
- People in costumes (some might not be wearing much clothing)
- Some nudity
- People hugging and kissing
- People dancing, yelling and singing
- Drunk people
- Security, police and ambulance paramedics. They are here to keep me safe
- Cameras from the media and the general public taking pictures of the crowd



WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

Some sensory experiences I might notice during the parade include:

- Fireworks and bright lights
- Smoke effects
- Confetti
- Announcements over speakers
- Loud music and performances
- Sirens from emergency services vehicles
- Loud Helicopters
- Crowd noise (e.g. singing, chanting, cheering and shouting over the music)
- Busyness and crowding, or people very close to me
- Smells from food vendors
- Standing for a long period of time

To help me cope, I can bring:

- Noise cancelling headphones, or earplugs
- A hat and/or sunglasses
- Sensory items/stim tools

WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

Parade teams and Parade volunteers:

If I feel sick, overwhelmed or tired, I should ask security or volunteers for help. They will be in all ticketed areas and along busy streets. I should not try to jump or break fence lines but should ask security or staff where I should go. I should also listen to security and volunteers and follow their directions. They are here to keep me safe. Parade volunteers and staff will be wearing different coloured shirts, depending on their role. This includes:



First Aid:

If there is an emergency, or someone needs immediate medical attention, I need to notify Parade volunteers or security. They will help to organise medical teams who are located on site. If I request help, I must make sure that I can be easily found by medical teams.



Security: There will also be They are here to keep me safe. They are also trained to identify that people wearing a Sunflower Lanyard might need a bit of extra time, support or understanding.



Mardi Gras Volunteers: I can ask Mardi Gras staff if I need help, or if I am lost.

HAPPY MARDI GRAS!