

Frequently Asked Questions 2019

Why do you need a ticket to the event?

Glasgow's Christmas Lights Switch On at George Square is a popular event in the city's calendar and officially marks the start of the festive period in Glasgow. Since the number of potential attendees exceeds the physical space available within the square, a means of managing spectator numbers is required.

Why are tickets allocated via an online ballot system?

As demand for tickets has soared over the past few years, the pressure on both box office systems and with 'first-come, first-served' queues meant that many more people were disappointed.

The ballot system gave everyone a 13 day window in which to apply for tickets online without having to wait in a physical queue or apply by phone. If applicants didn't have access to the internet they were invited to visit any of the [33 Glasgow Libraries](#) where staff were happy to assist.

The capacity of George Square this year is 13,000. Each household was entitled to request up to six tickets.

The ballot system means that everyone can apply for tickets and are not required to secure tickets at a specific time or day.

A record number of tickets have been requested for the switch-on of Glasgow's Christmas Lights on Sunday 17 November 2019. 90,923 unique requests were made asking for a total of 434,272 tickets, an increase of more than a third on 2018.

People living within Glasgow City Council's boundaries received 93% of the tickets

For people in Glasgow, only one in every 23 applications was successful this year. For people living outside the city the chance of getting tickets was more than 280 to one.

Entry to the event on Sunday 17 November is by ticket only with any unclaimed or returned tickets going to people who have already entered the ballot. Each ticket permits access for one person only and all adults and children of all ages must have a ticket to gain access to George Square.

How is the ballot operated?

Via an online form you filled in your details and how many tickets you required. The data was then sorted by a third party to identify Glasgow residents and those outwith - 93% of tickets are allocated to those within Glasgow and 7% outwith. The data is then verified by a

process to ensure no duplicate entries are entered into the ballot using email address, household address and name.

The successful applicants are then chosen at random, to ensure the system is fair to all. There is no human intervention in this process – it is all carried out by computer software by a third party.

Should any applications be chosen that do not have a full postal address we will contact the applicant at this stage to confirm details.

What is the capacity for the event?

The capacity for this event is 13,000. The capacity, which takes into consideration the fireworks exclusion zone, is calculated by Glasgow Life in accordance with national guidance and approved by the Licensing Committee, Police Scotland and Building Control & Public Safety.

2,000 tickets have been allocated for local residents and businesses affected by road closures, to Glasgow Life, People Make Glasgow and Young Glasgow online competition prizes and to guests of the city.

How many tickets are issued in the ballot?

11,000 – 93% to Glasgow households and 7% outwith.

Any returned/unused tickets from the above categories will be allocated to people who applied in the ballot in the same process and criteria as before.

Why do people from outwith Glasgow get allocated tickets?

Glasgow is a welcoming city for tourists, workers and visitors. We prioritise event tickets for citizens, while ensuring there is a proportion available for visitors to the city.

I think the same people get the tickets every year – why is this?

Computer software doesn't discriminate with regard to choosing who is successful - everyone has the same chance when they enter.

Why can't we go back to the old way of first-come, first served?

As above, the ballot system is more fair and equitable and allows people to apply over a 13 day period without having to wait in a physical queue or apply by phone.

What are you going to do about people selling the tickets online?

We are very aware of the emotional attachment that people have to the Glasgow Christmas Lights Switch On. We take every opportunity to remind those lucky enough to have these free tickets to use them on the night and not to sell them for profit. It is strictly prohibited to sell tickets, as per our terms and conditions.

Do employees of Glasgow City Council get priority for tickets?

No they do not.

I didn't receive an email to tell me if I was successful or not – what do I do?

There are various reasons why you may have not received an email.

Firstly, we ask you to check your spam folder as your mail provider may automatically send it there. Another reason may be due to a duplicate entry being received for your household address. If either your email address or postal address was used for more than one application, one of them was removed before the draw so an email would not have been sent. It may be that the email just didn't arrive into your server or was blocked by your email provider or that the email address was added incorrectly to your application.

If you have been through this process and can't find your email, please call 0141 287 8080.

How are returned tickets re-allocated?

Any tickets returned are allocated to previously unsuccessful applicants in a second ballot. Those applicants are emailed advising them of their win in advance of the event. If you are unsuccessful in the second ballot, you will not be contacted.

Can I request tickets for a charity or event I am running?

Unfortunately we don't have any ticket allocation to fulfil special requests.

Contact Us

For more information call:
0141 287 8080

Email us at:
events@glasgowlife.org.uk