



FAQ

Here are the answers to some of the questions that are often asked about Bradford Mela.



What is a Mela?

The word Mela comes from Sanskrit language meaning 'a gathering' or 'to meet'. In the UK, Melas provide an opportunity for communities to come together to celebrate and share their cultures. Mela festivals include a combination of markets, funfairs, food and drink, arts and workshops, children's activities, strolling entertainment and a variety of music and dance performances on a number of stages.

Where do Melas come from?

Traditional Melas have been held across South Asia - India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal for countless years. The world's biggest Mela is the Maha Kumbh Mela (held every 12 years), which attracted around 60 million people in 2001 – and is the largest gathering of people in the history of the world and visible from outer space!

When was the first Mela in the UK?

Bradford held the first Mela in Europe in September 1988, with Nottingham hosting the Apna Arts Festival in the same year. You can find more information about past events on our 'History' pages.

Are there other Melas that I can visit?

There are over 90 Melas held all over the UK and across Europe. Representatives from Bradford Mela have been instrumental in setting up an organisation of other Mela organisers, called the European Mela Network, which steers the future development of Melas across the UK and the continent. You can find more details about other Mela events on www.melanet.eu

Where is Bradford Mela held?

Bradford Mela has been held in Peel Park since 1998. Peel Park is one of the top public parks in the Bradford district, gaining the prestigious national Green Flag award for offering excellent 'green' spaces. We aim to return the park to its normal condition as soon as we can after the weekend, please help us to do this by using the litter bins provided. You can find more information on how to find Peel Park on the 'Getting Here' pages on this website

How much does it cost?

Admission to the park and for all the stage performances, children's areas, workshops, and strolling entertainment is free. You don't need a ticket and you don't need to book. You will need some money for parking (if you arrive by car), and if you want to go on funfair rides, shop at the market stalls or for food and drinks (although you're welcome to bring your own picnic into the site).

What times will the Bradford Mela be held?

The entertainment at Bradford Mela runs from 12 noon to 8pm both days. You can arrive, leave and come and go at any times you like. The park will be open before this time, if you arrive early.

What happens if it rains?

Bradford Mela is primarily an outdoor event, and previous Bradford Melas have experienced all kinds of weather conditions from hot sunshine to driving rain. There are plenty of areas that are under cover including workshop tents, information marquees and some of the stages. But please dress appropriately for the anticipated weather conditions.

Who goes to Bradford Mela?

Bradford Mela is for everyone, it's an opportunity to meet people and experience music and arts from different traditions, and visitors come from all ages and all different cultures. It regularly attracts over 100,000 people over the two days, with quarter of all visitors coming from outside the Bradford district.

Is Bradford Mela just for Asian people?

No. Melas around the world have always represented local people and local cultures - Bradford is home to a very broad range of different communities and backgrounds and as such the Bradford Mela reflects that mix. The traditions from all corners of the world and every continent have been presented at Bradford Mela; from the Yurt tents of Outer Mongolia and kora players from Timbuktu, to salsa dancers of Latin America and didgeridoos from the Australian outback. You'll find French crepes sold alongside Jamaican chicken, Kashmiri delicacies and Indian vegetarian foods.

Will my family be safe at the event?

Yes. Bradford Mela is primarily a family event, and safety is one of our top priorities. The site is checked for safety, food stalls inspected by Environmental Health officers, and the stages are managed by a professional security company, in order to ensure the highest standards of safety possible.

What facilities are there for people with disabilities?

We aim to support people with special needs. The Mela site has dedicated 'blue badge' parking spaces, accessible toilets, raised viewing areas at the main stages and members of staff on hand to help with access issues. See the 'Access for Disabled People' page for more information.

Is there anything at Bradford Mela for children to do?

There are plenty of activities guaranteed to educate and entertain children! There is a dedicated children's area where families can have a go at making something or learn a new skill. Children can test their sporting skills and fitness in the b-active arena, enjoy the some of the rides and games in the funfair or cool down with ice creams and tasty snack foods in the market. Peel Park has it's own permanent children's play area with swings and small rides and there's lots of space away from the stages and markets for children to run and play in.

What happened for the 21st anniversary?

The 'Coming of Age' celebrations included specially commission artworks, and an unforgettable festival weekend on 13th & 14th June 2009. Later in the year there will be a retrospective exhibition about the history of the Mela, and a commemorative book.

What else can I do while I'm in Bradford?

You can enjoy an evening meal in one of Bradford's many highly rated Asian restaurants, or see a film or a theatre show. You'll find details about what's on in Bradford at www.visitbradford.com - you can also use this website to help book a hotel if you plan to stay overnight.

When will the next Bradford Mela be held?

Bradford Mela 2010 will be held on Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th June. We look forward to seeing you again then!

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