

Fringe opens its doors for #WorldFringeDay

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society leads celebrations across the world today to mark World Fringe Day.

The day began in 2017 at the time of the 70th anniversary of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe – the world's oldest fringe festival – and it now takes place every year on 11 July. World Fringe Day pays tribute to the more than 200 fringe festivals that exist across the world.

Edinburgh, as the birthplace of the fringe concept, leads celebrations, with fringe festivals from New Zealand to Hawaii taking part over the course of the day.

This year the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society is using the day to highlight the Edinburgh Fringe's commitment to openness and accessibility, and has asked other fringes to share their stories and what this theme means to them on social media, connected by the #WorldFringeDay hashtag.

On Saturday the Fringe Society invites you to go along to the Fringe shop on the High Street and find out more about the range of services on offer to customers with access requirements.

There will be BSL interpreted street performances, and the Fringe's access bookings team will be on hand to explain their services and how to find accessible performance information on the EdinburghFestival Fringe website, as well as helping to book tickets on the day.

As an open access festival, the Fringe is not programmed or

curated, and anyone with a story to tell and a venue willing to host them is welcome. The Fringe Society is committed to removing barriers to participation and ensuring everyone is welcome at the festival, a key part of its long-term Fringe Blueprint.

Initiatives this year include accessible stages and viewing areas at the Virgin Money Street Events areas on the Mound and the Royal Mile, BSL interpretation on the West Parliament Square Stage every Saturday of the Fringe, complimentary personal assistant tickets, and an increased number of sensory backpacks for children and adults on the autism spectrum.

Shona McCarthy, Chief Executive of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, said: "World Fringe Day is a celebration of global culture and the ties that bind us across borders. With over 200 fringe festivals across the world, the fringe concept has come a long way.

"We are looking forward to celebrating with our sister fringes and to highlight the importance of accessibility and inclusion in the performing arts. In an increasingly uncertain political climate, it has never been more important for the Fringe to exist as a platform for openness and freedom of expression.

"At the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, we are constantly working to improve access to the Fringe, with the aim of making the Fringe the most inclusive festival in the world for participants and audiences."

