

Brighton

Location, Parking and Access

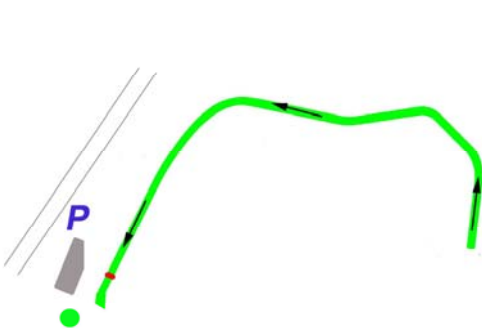


Located east of the city, the racecourse is signposted from both the A23 and A27. The signposting will take you away from the congestion of the city centre.

Parking is on grass with an overflow car park the far side of the course.

Brighton station is 1½ miles from the course and a free shuttle bus service operates from Queens Road, 200 yards south of the station. Travel time from London is less than an hour and there are many trains hourly. There are also rail links to Eastbourne, Lewes, Worthing and Portsmouth.

Course Layout



The circuit is left handed (anti-clockwise) and horses who have performed well at Brighton previously are worth following. The course stages flat racing only.

The course is horseshoe shaped, a mile and a half in length, and is one of those courses that does not have a complete circuit.

The course is very undulating. The first three furlongs are uphill followed by a downhill run entering the home straight, before rising in the final 2 furlongs. There is a marked camber towards the inside of the track.

Horses who have performed well at Brighton previously are usually well worth following. It suits front runners who are compact and speedy. Long striding galloping types seem to be at a disadvantage, especially over the minimum distance.

The configuration of the course suggests that low drawn horses should hold the advantage over sprint distances and all things being equal that tends to be the case. However getting away quickly is a far bigger advantage and would easily overcome any draw bias.

Admission

Brighton operates a dual enclosure policy. The Premier enclosure costs £20 (£20 August festival and £25 Ladies Day) and the Grandstand enclosure costs £15 (£19 August festival and Ladies Day), concessions £9 (£10). Under 16's free.

Annual membership £180

There is no strict dress code at Brighton, smart casual is preferred.
(2011 prices)

Discounts: Seniors **Disabled** **Group**

Overview

The excellent Graham Greene book "Brighton Rock" paints a vivid picture of life at Brighton racecourse, which used to have a terrible reputation with razor gangs and nefarious goings on, it certainly wasn't a course where any respectable person would be seen.

Those days are thankfully long gone, although it was not that many years ago that Brighton, run then by the local council, was on the brink of closure due to neglect and lack of investment. Fortunately the late Stanley Clarke and his Northern Racing team came along on their white chargers and have begun the process of turning Brighton around. It has improved beyond all recognition, a place where respectable people, indeed families, can go and have a good time. There are still areas for improvement, the catering especially, and the main stand does have a depressing feel about it.



There are two enclosures, which share the grandstand. The lower level of the stands consists of tiered viewing. You need a good sense of direction to negotiate the steps as they are offset two or three times, so it is comparable to negotiating a maze. Quite why it has been designed in that manner I don't know. The upper level in both enclosures consists of seating.

The tiered viewing area is exposed to the elements and the front rows of the seating are exposed when wet.

During the April 2008 visit there was evidence of the ravages of the bad winter weather, with a section of the grandstand roof being missing. This should be repaired by the end of April 08 weather permitting.

Viewing is good and allows viewing of the entire track, apart from the first furlong of the 1½ mile course. The area in front of the stands is narrow and hardstanding.

There is a lawn in the Premier enclosure and an open area at the end of the grandstand enclosure.

The course's biggest asset, its location, is also its biggest drawback. As the marketing department are keen to point out, there are spectacular views of both the downs and the sea and when the fog is in abatement the entire course can be clearly seen. It is unfortunate that the spectacular location of the course also works against it and being located on a hill near the sea it will always be prone to fog and the "fog problem" does manifest itself a couple of times a year. The weather is always a risk. If, like me, you have a three hour journey each way to get to Brighton, then it is probably worth checking the weather forecast first. During the first visit racing was almost abandoned because of the fog.

They do have more hot, sunny race days than not and I would not put anybody off visiting the course.

As I have already said the viewing of the racing is good, there is a big screen to assist, although binoculars would not go amiss. The amount of seating provided is a great positive and is something other courses could take note of. On a glorious sunny day it is a great location to spend a day at the races, on a dank wet foggy day it can be depressing.

If you do not fancy driving the free bus transfer is a boon, however a couple of points to bear in mind there. The bus departs 25 minutes after the last race and on the first visit it was late, having been held up in traffic. It was also lashing down with rain and the small bus shelter could not accommodate the number of people waiting for the bus, therefore there were a large number of soaked to the skin racegoers wending their way back to the city centre.

Best Viewing Position



Anywhere in the upper level of the grandstand will give excellent viewing of the course although a pair of binoculars is strongly recommended.

Catering

The premier eating location is Silks which charges £55 (including admission) or £40 if you already hold a Premier badge.

Eating opportunities elsewhere are, frankly, disappointing. There are counters in both enclosures selling snacks, same options in both enclosures. There was the bap of the day (£4.90), which happened to be pork, OK as an option as long as you can eat pork. There were pies, pasties and sausage rolls (£3.50), however they looked to be overcooked and unappetising and purchasing one proved the point and it ended up in

the bin.

There was a selection of baguettes for £3.50

An acceptable bangers and mash (£6.00) or Chilli (£5.70) was also available.

There was a seafood bar in the Grandstand enclosure, prices ranging from £3.50 - £5.00.

On an earlier inspection a single mobile unit offered fish and chips for £5, curry sauce and chips £4 (sold out by 3:00) or sausage and chips for £4. After the disaster of the pie I thought I would have a go at the sausage and chips ... sadly they joined the pie in the bin. The chips tasted of old oil and the sausage had the texture of ... who knows - but it wasn't sausage. I am pleased to report this unit has now disappeared, to be replaced by a burger unit which seemed to be doing a reasonable trade. Burgers were £5 (£5.50 with cheese). They also sold chips which, although not sampled, did look to be OK.

It is disappointing there is not a full range of catering options at the course, there are no healthy options and the quality has much to be desired.

Bitter and Lager were priced at £3.40 a pint.

Ancillaries

Bookmakers

On both visits there were around 20 bookmakers in attendance. The over round was 1.67% a runner, however fields were small which could account for the percentage.

Racecard

An average, functional, racecard. No editorial but all the required information is there.

Toilets

There were plenty of toilets. There was a problem with a leaking roof in the gents toilet in the Premier enclosure on the day it rained.

Parade Ring

A small parade ring at one end of the course, at the Premier end of the Grandstand, with access from both enclosures. There is some button seating around the outside and some, limited, tiered viewing.

The winners enclosure is part of the parade ring. There was no apparent pre-parade ring.



Non Racing Attractions

Need I say – this is Brighton the self proclaimed seaside capital of the South Coast. Kiss me quick on the one hand and architectural culture (Royal Pavilion) on the other and everything else in between. Concerts at the Brighton centre. Shopping in The Lanes. The gay village.

Contact Details

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Ownership	Northern Racing
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Fixtures 2012

April 26th (eve)
May 3rd (eve) , 22nd & 31st
June 1st , 12th (eve) , 19th (eve) & 26th
July 3rd & 19th
August 8th, 9th , 10th & 21st
September 7th & 17th
October 9th & 18th

Inspection Dates

<i>Date</i>	<i>Weather</i>	<i>Type</i>
15/05/07	Wet with fog – dense at times	6 flat midweek
26/06/07	Mainly sunny with some drizzle	6 flat midweek
13/04/08	Sunny	7 flat weekend
08/04/09	Sunny	6 flat midweek
04/07/10	Sunny	6 flat weekend
25/05/11	Broken cloud and very windy	7 flat midweek