

Fannish Inquisition Survey: London in 2014

Seated Worldcon: Loncon 3 - The 72th Worldcon

What are your dates? 14-18 August 2014

What is your convention host city? Is your convention site in a city center location or a suburb? If a suburb, what are the transport options into the city center? How far is the site from the city center?

Our host city is the great metropolis of London. Our site is ExCeL London in the new Docklands business district just to the east of the city centre.

What is the typical current airfare to your closest airport from world cities such as London, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Melbourne? Atlanta?

London has not one, but five airports. But there are two which will be of most interest to this group London Heathrow where most trans-continental flights land and London City the closest airport to our site.

Current airfares for the similar period next year are:

- Boston - \$850 to Heathrow, \$1,000 to City
- Chicago - \$900 to Heathrow, \$1,250 to City
- L.A - \$1,250 to Heathrow, \$1,400 to City
- Melbourne - \$1,800 to Heathrow, \$2,250 to City
- Atlanta - \$1,400 to Heathrow, \$1,460 to City

Do international flights, as well as domestic, fly into your local airport? Which airlines? If not, where is the closest international airport? Are direct flights from the cities above flown into your local airport?

International flights come into all 5 London Airports. Heathrow has direct flights to most countries in the world and services all major international airlines. London city is a little more restricted with flights just to most western European capitals by most major European airlines.

How far is your convention site from the nearest airport/train station and what is the likely cost of getting to the hotels by both public transport and taxi from that airport/train station?

ExCeL is less than a mile from London City Airport and the best means to get from there to your hotel will likely be by taxi (currently about £5).

ExCeL is about 75 minutes from Heathrow by public transport (currently costing between £5-£30 depending on your route).

London has several major rail stations, including St Pancras International with trains to several European cities. Each station is about 45 minutes from ExCeL by public transport (current cost about £5).

What hotel(s) are being used for the convention? How many rooms, what type, accessibility issues, etc.?

Loncon 3 will not have a single major hotel, but will use a wide range of on-site hotels ranging from budget to four-star. We currently have about 1,000 rooms blocked and will extend this as membership numbers require and rooms in the budget hotels cannot be blocked.

Our room types are general UK double/twin (single double bed or twin singles) although some of the four star hotels offer kings and twin small-double beds. All the hotels were built in the last 20 years (most later than that) and are generally fully compliant with UK disability legislation.

What are your hotel room rates? Do these rates include breakfast? Do they include internet in the room? How firm are these rates?

The rates are:

- Ramada Suites(4*): £125 Single occupancy, £145 Double occupancy, £175 Suite (Sleep up to 4)
- Aloft Hotel(4*): £110 Single occupancy, £120 Double occupancy
- Ibis Hotel(3*): £95 Single occupancy, £105 Double occupancy
- Novotel(4*): £125 Single occupancy, £135 Double occupancy, £155 Triple occupancy
- Crown Plaza(4*): £130 Single occupancy, £140 Double occupancy
- Custom House(2/3*): £85 Single occupancy, £100 Double occupancy

There is also a Premier Inn which for the equivalent period in 2013 is currently about £65 a night (room only).

All rates include all taxes and most include a full buffet breakfast, the exception being the Aloft which includes a grab-and-go breakfast (muffins, coffee etc), and the Premier Inn where it is an add-on.

What is the cost to *park* at the convention / hotel facilities?

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We are currently negotiating with ExCeL to see if we can get reduced parking rates for dealers and other exhibitors who we expect to be the main users of parking facilities, as we expect most of our attendees will use the excellent public transport links to ExCeL offered by the DLR and London in general. However for information, the current parking rates at ExCeL are:

- Day visitors - £15/\$24 for up to 15 hours
- Overnight stays - £20/\$32 for each 24 hours

Some of the on-site hotels also offer cheaper parking for guests

- Ramada Suite - 50 free parking places
- The Aloft - 65 parking places at £14/\$22 per 24 hours
- The Custom House - 80 parking places at £10/\$16 per 24 hours

What is the distance from the main hotel(s) to the closest entrance of the convention site? What are the transportation options for those who prefer not to walk or who have mobility difficulties?

The Aloft is the closest hotel about 30 meters from door to door. The rest of the hotels are about 250-500 meters from an ExCeL entrance. However we will be using the East end of ExCeL and the Ibis/Novotel/Crowne Plaza/Custom House are at the West end and a 500 meter walk within ExCeL should be added to these distances.

Transport options - you could use the DLR. there are three stations on site along the same route so if you are in a hotel at the SWest end you could catch the DLR from one of the two stations ohn the West end of the site to the station atg the East end.

However this is a modern site and all entrances have ramped access.

If using overflow hotels (or hotels not directly connected) what is the cost of a cab ride door-to-door with the convention center?

Most of our current hotels though not connected to the Convention Centre are on the ExCeL campus and are easily walk-able distances from ExCeL along largely traffic free routes. However if Loncon 3 is a popular as we suspect it might be, we may then need to use over-flow hotel in Stratford (not the one up in Warwickshire) and Canary Wharf. A cab from these two locations will be about £7-£10 depending on the time of day and traffic, but both locations are very easy rides on the DLR to ExCeL.

Please describe your convention site facilities. For example, the quantity and sizes of rooms, tech options, accessibility issues, etc.

We will (unless we get much lager than we expect) generally be using the East end of the ExCeL centre, specifically the ICC and parts of the North Hall.

The convention will be split over 4 levels all connected by several banks of elevators and a pair of escelators rated at carrying 5,000 people an hour:

- Level-0 - Entrance level for our Auditorium (seating up to 4,000), Hospitality/Party hall and the London Suite of upto 5 programme rooms seating up to 270 in total. Rooms range in size 50sqm up to 100 sqm (180 sqm when combined)
- Level-1 - Entrance level for North Hall (Exhibits) and main concourse for food outlets and restaurants, and main entry level to ExCeL.
- Level-2 - Mezanine floor that will be used to host Green room etc
- Level-3 - Capital Suite of upto 17 programme rooms seating upto 2,700 in total. Rooms range from 50sqm to 230sqm (1,300sqm when combined)

In addition to this (but separate from the rest of the function space on these levels we have the South Gallery (Level-2) with upto 34 programme rooms seating 3,000 in total (70-100sqm and 200sqm combined) and the Platinum Suite (level-3) with upto 7 programme rooms seating 1,600 in total (50 - 400 sqm, 1,600sqm combined). The platinum suite has its own bank of elevators and pair of escelators. There are about 8 elevators & stair-cases going up to the South Gallery but these are generally only accesible from outside.

Where will your large events (i.e. Hugo Ceremony and Masquerade) be held?

The large events will be held in a configurable auditorium that will seat up to 4,000, although can be extended to bring his up to 6,000. It has significant built in audio and lighting tech. But we expect to add to this for video at the very least. The seating is a mix of flat (40%) and racked (60%)

Please describe the restaurant scene near your site.

There are 35 cafes and restaurants on the site, two thirds of which are in ExCeL. In addition to these there are several more a short walk away and huge complexes of restaurantas and bars at Canary Wharf (just a few stops along the DLR) or at the O2 a short hop across the Thames on the cable car.

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Please describe the policies / laws regarding smoking in your hotel(s), convention center, and city.

All the hotels, restaurants, bars and function space are no-smoking in public spaces by law. A few hotels still have smoking bed-rooms but these are getting rarer and cannot be guaranteed to be available by the time of the convention.

What type of weather can we expect at the time of year your convention is to be held?

Warm - but not hot:

- Average Temperature - 18C/64f
- Evening Temperature - 13C/55f
- Peak temperature - 23C/73f

Precipitation - is about 2 inches during August with a 33% chance of a shower on any one day. The sun shines for an average of 13 hours, 80% of the daylight hours.

What are some of the main tourist attractions of your city?

Are you serious this is London - it is just full of tourist attractions. But to list a few, and by no means all of the attractions:

- The British Museum
- The British Library (Access to the books is for members only, but it has several public exhibition areas)
- The Science Museum
- The Natural History Museum (including the Darwin Centre)
- The Victoria & Albert Museum
- The Imperial War Museum
- The National Maritime Museum (including the Queen's House)
- The Museum of London
- The Design Museum
- The Royal Observatory
- The Cabinet War Rooms (including the Churchill Museum)
- The London Transport Museum
- Sir John Soane's Museum
- The Bank of England Museum
- The Brunel Museum
- The Museum of Brands, Packaging & Advertising
- The Geffrye Museum
- The Museum of Childhood
- New London Architecture
- The Sherlock Holmes Museum
- The Bramah Museum of Tea & Coffee
- Vinopolis
- The Wellcome Collection
- The National Gallery
- The National Portrait Gallery
- Tate Britain
- Tate Modern
- The Hayward Gallery
- Dulwich Picture Gallery
- The Tower of London
- Hampton Court Palace

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- The Banqueting House
- Kensington Palace
- Kew Palace
- Buckingham Palace
- Kew Gardens
- Greenwich Park
- Hyde Park
- Kensington Gardens
- St James's Park
- Richmond Park
- Regent's Park
- Chelsea Physic Garden
- Hampstead Heath
- The National Theatre
- The Royal Opera House (including the Royal Ballet)
- Sadler's Wells
- Shakespeare's Globe
- The Old Vic (and also the Young Vic)
- The O2 (formerly called the Millennium Dome)
- London Zoo
- London Aquarium
- London Wetland Centre
- Harrods
- Foyles
- Selfridges
- Fortnum & Mason
- Harvey Nichols
- Hamleys
- Borough Market
- Portobello Market
- Madame Tussauds
- The London Eye
- The London Dungeon
- St Paul's Cathedral
- Westminster Abbey
- Southwark Cathedral
- Westminster Cathedral
- St Martin-in-the-Fields
- Lambeth Palace
- HMS Belfast
- The Cutty Sark
- The Golden Hinde (replica)
- The River Thames
- The Thames Barrier

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- Tower Bridge
- The Millennium Bridge
- London Bridge
- Regent's Canal
- Wembley Stadium
- Lord's
- The Olympic Park
- Twickenham Stadium
- The All England Lawn Tennis Club (Wimbledon)
- The Houses of Parliament (including Big Ben)
- Horse Guards Parade
- The Guildhall
- The Monument
- The Albert Hall
- Nelson's Column
- The Royal Exchange
- St Pancras International Station
- London Wall (only fragments remaining)
- The Royal Naval College
- The BT Tower
- 30 St Mary Axe (the "Gherkin")
- The Lloyd's Building
- London Bridge Tower (the "Shard of Glass")
- City Hall
- Canary Wharf
- The 2014 World Science Fiction Convention

Who is on your committee? Who is your bid chair? What experience do they have in general? In running this convention in particular?

Our executive committee is jointly chaired by Alice Lawson (Worldcon DH in 1995 and 2005) and Steve Cooper (Worldcon DH in 2005 and DDH in 2011). They are advised by Vince Docherty (Worldcon Chair 1995, 2005) and Colin Harris (Worldcon Chair 2005) and are supported by Deb Geisler (Worldcon Chair 2004), Claire Brialey (Worldcon DH 1987 and 1995), and Mark Plummer

Our executive committee is made up of

- Exhibits - DH Farah Mendlesohn (Worldcon Programmer)
- Events - DH Helen Montgomery (Worldcon Flying Monkee and Chairs Staff)
- Facilities - DH Mike Scott with DDH TR Renner
- Hospitality - DH Eemeli Aro with DDH Alison Scott & Patty Wells
- Logistics - DH Nigel Furlong (Ran transport logistics for Olympics) and DDH Mark Meenan
- Programme - James Bacon with DDH Liz Batty & Ian Stockdale
- Promotions - Nicholas Whyte and Paul Taylor
- Publications - Kees van Toorn with DDH John Coxon
- Services - DH Rita Medany with DDH Carolina Gomez-Largerlof

Who is the chair of the convention? What experience do they have?

Alice Lawson & Steve Cooper

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Steve Cooper has worked on numerous Worldcons and in a senior level as Publications Division Head for Interaction in 2005 and as Deputy Division Head for Renovation in 2011. He has also been on the committee for one UK Eastercon (LX in 2009).

Alice Lawson has been the chair of several UK conventions including Eastercon: Paragon (2001) and of Novacon 39 (2009). She is a stalwart of UK convention committees and was the Services Division Head for Interaction in 2005 and was on the committee of Intersection in 1995

What arrangements will be made for evening socializing and party space? Do you have a corkage waiver?

Loncon 3 will try a unique experiment. Because of the difference between traditional UK evening socialising (the Con Bar) and traditional Worldcon socializing (the Parties). We will combine these into one space.

We will be creating a Hospitality Hall (about 4,500 sqm) which will be open till at least 2am, probably 3am. This will combine the UK fan bar with purpose built alcoves (up to 50sqm) for the parties. This space will also host the general lounge seating area and other hospitable / fun things.

Supplies for the parties will be sourced through the CC's caterers at drop point rates which should be competitive with local super-markets, and which for general items like soft drinks be able to be topped up at short notice. However we can arrange corkage for specific alcoves to bring in specialty items (such as Japanese sachi) that cannot be easily sourced in UK. But we expect this to be rare and we will be concentrating any subsidy on the general supply rates.

Are you planning to have any membership discounts for certain groups, such as young adults, military, or seniors? We will have five standard attending rates:

- Adult - Currently £95 / \$160 (Rate rise 1st May 2013)
- YA Attend - £65/\$110 (Fixed to end of PreCon sales) for those under 26
- Child Attend - £30/\$50 (Fixed to end of PreCon sales) for those under 16
- Infant - £2/\$3 (Fixed to end of PreCon sales) for those under 6

We also have a family rate for two adults and 2 or more Children at £230/\$390 YA members can be substituted for a Child for \$35/\$60 for each YA added.

Our Supporting membership rate is £25/\$40 and is planned to stay at that rate.

We are currently offering discounts for Bid Friends, YA Friends and Pre-Supporters. These are

- Adult Friends - £70/\$120

Are you participating in pass-along funds?

Yes - we can confirm Loncon 3 will fully participate in pass-along funds