# Former Glastonbury manager warns overcrowding risks a fatal crowd crush



As the Glastonbury Festival approaches, concerns over safety and overcrowding have sparked significant debate about the event's current management practices. A former festival manager has made alarming claims, suggesting the festival is a “disaster waiting to happen” due to dangerous levels of overcrowding that could lead to a potentially fatal crowd crush. This whistleblower, who held a senior position last year, revealed that widespread drug-taking adds further complexity to the safety issues, with festival staff reportedly overwhelmed by the need to assist those suffering from overdoses.

The 2024 event is set to welcome approximately 210,000 attendees, raising questions about the adequacy of safety measures. Notably, the capacity of the 900-acre site increased by 7,000 in 2022, a change that has contributed to concerns about crowd management. Attendees have already reported frustrations over overcrowding at smaller stages during previous festivals. For instance, during a performance by the electronic group Bicep last year, crowd density forced management to halt the act due to safety fears. Such incidents highlight the ongoing struggle faced by organisers as they balance accommodating major artists at intimate venues while ensuring safety for festival-goers.

Major artists like Olivia Rodrigo and Charli XCX are headlining this year’s festival, but performances at smaller stages, where many fans flock to see their favourite acts, often experience severe crowding, a situation that has plagued past events. Festivals often grapple with maintaining an appealing atmosphere while implementing effective crowd control strategies, particularly at stages designed for a smaller audience. These challenges have been articulated by festival-goers who feel organisers underestimate crowd sizes, leading to stage closures and safety concerns during key performances.

In light of this year's impending festival, there have been calls for improved crowd management strategies. Somerset Council has even put forth recommendations aimed at enhancing safety measures, with festival organisers acknowledging the need for ongoing improvements. They assert that their crowd-control plans are comprehensive and include a dedicated team focused on safety. However, critics remain concerned that these measures have yet to fully address the escalating risk of overcrowding.

Echoing the sentiments of the former manager, an audience member during last year’s festival voiced fears of a major incident occurring soon due to these unresolved issues. As headliners prepare to take the stage, the looming shadow of overcrowding underscores the necessity of vigilant safety measures to protect attendees. As the festival draws near, many are left to wonder how long the event can continue to rely on luck and positive intent to keep its attendees safe from harm.

In the face of such tensions, the Glastonbury Festival remains a momentous cultural event for many—but it is clear that significant work is needed to ensure it does not become a tragic incident in the annals of music festivals.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14768341/Glastonbury-accident-waiting-happen-overcrowding-insider-crowd-crush.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/music/article/2024/jun/29/glastonbury-festivalgoers-frustrated-by-overcrowding-at-smaller-stages)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14768341/Glastonbury-accident-waiting-happen-overcrowding-insider-crowd-crush.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/glastonbury-2024-shania-sunday-crowds-b2571695.html), [[5]](https://inews.co.uk/culture/music/glastonbury-2024-major-problem-overcrowding-3139726)
* Paragraph 3 – [[4]](https://www.nme.com/news/music/glastonbury-2024-sugababes-fans-react-to-overcrowding-at-west-holts-stage-3769918), [[6]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-somerset-67779655)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14768341/Glastonbury-accident-waiting-happen-overcrowding-insider-crowd-crush.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://inews.co.uk/culture/music/glastonbury-2024-major-problem-overcrowding-3139726), [[6]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-somerset-67779655)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14768341/Glastonbury-accident-waiting-happen-overcrowding-insider-crowd-crush.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/article/2024/jun/29/glastonbury-festivalgoers-frustrated-by-overcrowding-at-smaller-stages> - This article discusses the overcrowding issues at Glastonbury Festival's smaller stages in 2024. Fans were frustrated by areas being closed off to prevent crowd crushes, with acts like Sugababes and Bicep experiencing significant crowding. Organisers acknowledged the challenges and stated that major artists performing at smaller stages is part of the festival's unique appeal. They emphasised their commitment to crowd safety through dynamic management plans. ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com/music/article/2024/jun/29/glastonbury-festivalgoers-frustrated-by-overcrowding-at-smaller-stages?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/glastonbury-2024-shania-sunday-crowds-b2571695.html> - This article highlights the overcrowding problems at Glastonbury Festival in 2024, particularly during performances by artists like Sugababes and Avril Lavigne. Fans criticised organisers for underestimating the crowd sizes at smaller stages, leading to safety concerns and set interruptions. The festival's organisers responded by emphasising their robust crowd management plans and the challenges of accommodating large audiences at intimate venues. ([independent.co.uk](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/glastonbury-2024-shania-sunday-crowds-b2571695.html?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.nme.com/news/music/glastonbury-2024-sugababes-fans-react-to-overcrowding-at-west-holts-stage-3769918> - This article reports on fans' reactions to overcrowding at the West Holts stage during Sugababes' performance at Glastonbury 2024. Many attendees were turned away due to safety concerns, leading to frustration and calls for better crowd management. The piece also notes that similar issues occurred during the band's previous performance at the Avalon stage in 2022. ([nme.com](https://www.nme.com/news/music/glastonbury-2024-sugababes-fans-react-to-overcrowding-at-west-holts-stage-3769918?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://inews.co.uk/culture/music/glastonbury-2024-major-problem-overcrowding-3139726> - This article discusses the overcrowding issues at Glastonbury Festival in 2024, highlighting the challenges of managing large crowds at smaller stages. It mentions specific instances where areas were closed off to prevent crowd crushes and notes the festival's increased capacity. The piece also touches on the organisers' crowd management strategies and the balance between maintaining the festival's intimate atmosphere and ensuring safety. ([inews.co.uk](https://inews.co.uk/culture/music/glastonbury-2024-major-problem-overcrowding-3139726?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-somerset-67779655> - This article reports on recommendations from Somerset Council to improve safety at Glastonbury Festival 2024, including better crowd control and additional facilities. The council's suggestions aim to address public safety concerns and prevent crime and disorder during the event. Festival organisers have accepted the recommendations and plan to review the feedback. ([bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-somerset-67779655?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/information/advice/drugs/> - This official Glastonbury Festival page provides information on drug use at the event, highlighting the risks associated with illegal substances and the festival's policies. It advises attendees on the dangers of polydrug use and the importance of seeking help if they feel unwell. The page also notes that those in possession of illegal drugs risk being removed from the festival site and refused re-admission. ([glastonburyfestivals.co.uk](https://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/information/advice/drugs/?utm_source=openai))