

Shepton Mallet Carnival 2026

Gap Procedure

The current gap procedure used at all SCGFCA carnivals is operated to ensure that the procession does not get split up and moves at a pace together, that is possible for all entrants.

An issue that can unfold if a large gap appears in any carnival procession is that the spectators make their own decision that the carnival has finished and decide to move in large numbers. If this happens and the organisers and stewards are not able to regain control of the area, the remaining part of the procession will not be able to complete the route and the carnival will be null and void.

What is a GAP?

A gap in procession is when the crowd cannot see the expected next entry, some routes have junctions on the route with buildings that obstructs the distance that can be viewed. If the crowd can't see the glare of the lights or hear music to indicate the next entry is moving towards them and the last entry they viewed is in the distance in the other direction, they will start to question if the carnival is finished.

The gap procedure that we have is designed to prevent this happening, all carts are asked to keep the distance behind them at a reasonable spacing and slow down when required to maintain it with the next cart.

We will place entrants from class 7-13, trade and collecting carts between the larger carts from classes 1-6, this will mean that the reasonable gap distance between carts is larger but the sight of the next cart must be maintained at all times.

The placing of smaller entries between the carts allows a reasonable gap which gives the opportunity for all entries to have some space for the spectators and judges to fully appreciate the entry as it moves towards them.

This removes the issue of entries being accused of creating a gap to gain any judging advantage.

What can cause a GAP?

There have been times previously when entrants have stopped on their own accord to attend to items like;

1. Failure of a section of lights or moving parts
2. Failure of Music system
3. Complete generator failure

We know these issues can cause frustration and heart-ache but they are not a valid reason to stop and hold up the procession for everyone else. An opportunity may arise that the procession does stop and this may give a possibility of accessing the area on the cart to correct the issue. Judges are placed in zones along the route and they will stay with the entry to the end of the zone to see if the fault is corrected for them to judge you as you want them to.

Please also remember that the rest area is not a zone to stop, it's an area for the performers to have a short break.

What can we agree?

We can agree with the entrants, that no vehicle stops on its own accord once it has passed the start line unless the following issues arise.

1. Mechanical, safety or emergency issue with towing vehicle or trailers or parts on them.
2. Medical issue of a performer who needs to be removed from a cart.
3. Other Emergency issue on the route. (spectators, buildings etc)

If any of these issues occur, we ask the Road Crew to assist us in reporting the stoppage and the reason to the nearest Radio Marshal and also via the Whats App chat to ensure the Event Control can then stop the procession and assist as required.

Where can I find a Radio Marshal?

The map of the route below shows the location of the radio marshals, they are positioned at all major junctions on the route and have visibility of the route between them and the next radio marshal, this allows them to check the progress of the procession and report any potential issues to event control.



Gap Monitoring

The responsibility of the progress of the procession is with Event Control who will receive updates from the radio marshals regularly during the carnival. It is only the radio marshals who will report any distance deemed as a gap and speak with the Road Crew captain to request that they slow down until the gap is reduced.

Judges are not asked to report gaps.

Thank you for your co-operation with this.