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Image Credit: National Trust Images/Jo Hatcher, Hannah Stamp, The Quilters' Guild of the British Isles, Pendon Museum Trust

PRESS RELEASE

Miniature villages, lost houses, video games and quilts: Heritage Open Days spotlights England's diverse architectural heritage

The country's largest festival of history and culture runs 12-21 September
www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Heritage Open Days is just a few months away and an exciting programme with thousands of events and experiences is already taking shape. The free festival is brought to you by the National Trust, supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery and delivered by thousands of local organisations and volunteers. Each year it brings over a million people together to celebrate their heritage, community and history.

From historic houses to factory floors, museums to music halls, churches to mandirs, and greenhouses to graveyards, a diverse array of places, spaces and community groups will offer up free events for all this Autumn.

Hundreds of organisers will embrace this year's theme, Architecture. Visitors can explore the miniature world of **Pendon Museum** in Oxfordshire, showcasing 1930s English rural life. **Newark Civic Trust** will host hands-on demonstrations, showcasing the skills required to maintain and repair historic buildings. Visitors at **Chartwell, National Trust** can take an architecture tour unpacking the 700-year history of the building. Meanwhile, **York's Quilt Museum** will display quilts inspired by British architecture. **East Riding Archives** will unveil a fully explorable Bridlington in Minecraft, allowing everyone to get up close to buildings past and present. Visitors can even mix it up with a sea shanty-tinged flash mob at **Ipswich's Heritage Harbour**, led by the Orwellermen and the Shefarers of Pin Mill. And at **The City Bookshop** in Norfolk, visitors can uncover mansions and large country houses lost to time.

Outside of the theme, 2025 sees a wide range of participants, including places that usually charge for events outside of the festival, free sites putting on something extra special and many places that aren't usually open to the public.

Early highlights include: **Panshanger Park** where visitors can trace the history of this nature reserve through its former lives as a grand country estate and a bustling quarry. **The GL11 Community Hub** who are weaving together oral history & art to create a deeper understanding of the women who worked at Cam Mills in Gloucestershire. **The Newcastle Deaf Centre** will invite visitors to learn about Deaf culture and try handicrafts focused on Deafness. Transport enthusiasts will enjoy the **Walthamstow Pumphouse Museum's** collection of steam and diesel engines, offering a glimpse into the evolution of industry. Finally, time travel awaits at **Bradwell Abbey Medieval Fayre**, where reenactments, pageant wagons and mead aplenty will transport attendees back to the days of knights and noble festivities.

Liam Montgomery, Heritage Open Days Marketing & Projects Manager, said, 'For many, architecture is about more than just buildings; it's really all about people, and the ways we interact with the world around us. This year's festival is a great opportunity to delve into the rich tapestry of local stories across England. It's an open invitation to explore, learn, and be inspired by people and place'

Founded in 1994, Heritage Open Days has been making history and culture more accessible for more than 30 years. Last year over 2,350 organisers and 41,700 volunteers ran 5,427 events across the country, attracting one million visits. Around one-third of visitors had not visited a heritage site/event in the past year while 82% of festival-goers said their visit made them more proud of their local area.

There's still plenty of time to get involved, local organisations, community groups and enthusiasts have until August 14th to register their events by visiting the Heritage Open Days website.

Laura Chow, Head of Charities at People's Postcode Lottery, said: "Heritage Open Days bring communities together in a truly unique way, shining a light on the stories, spaces and skills that shape our shared history. I'm delighted that support from players of People's Postcode Lottery helps make this vibrant celebration of culture and creativity accessible to everyone, inspiring new generations to connect with the heritage all around them."

Heritage Open Days is brought to you by the National Trust with support from players of People's Postcode Lottery. Every single Heritage Open Days event is free, including access to many sites that usually charge for admission.

For further information, and to register your event, visit www.heritageopendays.org.uk.

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**A selection of photos from previous HODs events is [available here](#)
Photos from events in this release are [here](#).**

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Notes to editors:

About Heritage Open Days

- Heritage Open Days is England's largest festival of history and culture. Running for ten days every September, the festival offers free access to heritage events and activities across England.
- Heritage Open Days is brought to you by the National Trust, supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery, and delivered locally by a large range of organisations (including civic societies, heritage organisations and local councils, community champions and thousands of enthusiastic volunteers)
- Heritage Open Days is England's contribution to European Heritage Days, taking place across 50 countries. Other events in the UK are Doors Open Days in Scotland (www.doorsopendays.org.uk); Open Doors Days in Wales (www.cadw.wales.gov.uk/opendoors); and European Heritage Open Days in Northern Ireland (www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/european-heritage-open-days).
- The public facing event directory goes live on **2nd of June**
- The festival recently received the [Sector Impact Award](#) at the 2025 Museum + Heritage Awards for 30 years of consistently supporting community engagement.

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