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## PRESS RELEASE

# Heritage Open Days Celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with 25 NEW Highlights

[www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk)

13<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> September 2019

With a dynamic programme of over 5,000 events, Heritage Open Days is England's largest annual festival of history and culture. Every September, doors are flung open at some of the country's best-known attractions, as well as private and community spaces, thanks to support from the National Trust and players of People's Postcode Lottery. To celebrate the festival's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, **25 new places** are opening their doors, from country houses, museum archives and gardens, to theatres, wildlife reserves, distilleries and even a solar farm.



Image credits: The Hon. Nicholas Howard, WWT Slimbridge, National Trust, Bombay Sapphire, National Maritime Museum Greenwich

“It’s always exciting when new places join Heritage Open Days,” says National Manager, Annabelle Thorpe. And this year we have a bumper crop of first-timers. I can’t think of a better way to celebrate our 25th anniversary than by sharing it with these iconic places.”

Many of the venues taking part for the first time are not normally open to the public, including the **Mausoleum at Castle Howard** and the **Burnley Empire Theatre**, which is opening its doors for the first time since closing in 1995\*. Other events are offering behind-the-scenes access to



their buildings and archives, such as the **Prince Philip Maritime Collections at Royal Museums Greenwich**, with items being presented by local community groups as part of this year's People Power theme. While **Eton College Collections** are welcoming visitors to special curators' choice trails, opening an appointment-only exhibition, and offering a rare chance to see School Yard.

The 25 new places cover a wide range of topics; natural heritage will be celebrated at the **home of World Wildlife Fund founder, Sir Peter Scott**, while the country's manufacturing and industrial heritage will be on show at working sites, such as the **Bombay Sapphire Distillery**. Visitors can also explore the restored **Wentworth Castle Gardens**, newly reopened and launched this year as part of the National Trust. And, at places like these which normally charge, festival visitors get free entry, making it a great opportunity to experience local destinations on a budget.

Here's a selection of the 25 highlights being held this year, with full listings attached.

### **Castle Howard Grounds and Mausoleum, North Yorkshire**

*Booking open, with some tickets reserved for release on August 12th*

Explore the 18th-century landscape at Castle Howard, filled with statues, follies and monuments, with a special opportunity to visit the Mausoleum. Designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, this is a rare chance for the public to see this unique structure and enter the family crypt.

**Sat 14<sup>th</sup>, Mon 16<sup>th</sup> and Fri 20<sup>th</sup>, 10:30am**

### **Burnley Empire, Lancashire**

*Booking opens August 30<sup>th</sup>*

Look around this abandoned theatre, with the first chance for the public to see the interior since its closure in 1995. Guided by volunteers, visitors will take a hard hat view of the ground floor, and learn about community plans to restore the building as a multi-purpose entertainment space.

*\*Due to unforeseen circumstances, this event no longer includes interior access*

**Sun 22<sup>nd</sup>, 11am – 3pm**

### **Prince Philip Maritime Collections, Royal Museums Greenwich, London**

*Booking open, with some tickets reserved for release on August 12th*

Take a behind-the-scenes tour of the museum's storage collection, which until recently has rarely been seen by the public since locating to the site in the 1970s. Curated by local residents, visitors will also get a unique interpretation of the items, based on the heritage stories of their communities.

**Fri 20<sup>th</sup> and Sat 21<sup>st</sup>, 10:30am, 12pm, 1:30pm, 3pm (also 4pm on Fri)**

### **Eton College Collections, Eton College and Windsor Festival and Fringe, Windsor**

*No booking required*

Join a special Curators' Choice Trail of objects from the school's archives and collections of art, natural history and antiquities, with a fun extra trail and art activities for children. Visitors can also see School Yard, and enjoy the Tower Gallery exhibition, which is normally by appointment only.

**Sun 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1:30pm – 4:30pm**



## **Scott House at WWT Slimbridge Wetland Centre, Gloucester**

*No booking required*

See the 1950s home of environmental conservation campaigner, Sir Peter Scott, once visited by the Queen. Learn about his life and work, and the People Power he harnessed in founding the local Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust as well as the World Wildlife Fund.

**Sat 14<sup>th</sup>, 10am – 4pm**

## **Bombay Sapphire Distillery Self-Discovery Experience, Whitchurch**

*Booking open, with some tickets reserved for release on August 7th*

Discover this famous gin distillery, with an immersive audio and sensory tour! Visitors will see the mix of Victorian architecture and modern glasshouses, sample ten exotic minerals which flavour the drink, and try a cocktail tailored to their personal taste profile in the Botanical Dry Room.

**Tues 17<sup>th</sup> and Thurs 19<sup>th</sup>, 12pm**

## **Wentworth Castle Gardens, National Trust, Barnsley**

*No booking required*

Newly reopened as a National Trust site, visitors can explore centuries of history in this Grade I listed landscape, including 63 acres of formal gardens, 18th century 'Union Jack' garden, restored Victorian conservatory and 'ancient' hill-top folly Stainborough Castle.

**Tues 17<sup>th</sup> – Thurs 19<sup>th</sup>, 10am – 4:15pm**

Heritage Open Days 2019 runs between 13<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> September. Booking details vary per event, and all details can be found on our website at [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk).

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For more information and photographs:

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### **About Heritage Open Days**

- Heritage Open Days (13<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> September 2019) is England's largest festival of history and culture; in 2018, over 5,500 events welcomed more than three million visitors across the country.
- All events are free, including access to many sites that usually charge for admission.
- Heritage Open Days is coordinated and promoted nationally by the National Trust with support from players of People's Postcode Lottery, and run 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](http://www.doorsopendays.org.uk)); Open Doors Days in Wales ([www.cadw.wales.gov.uk/opendoors](http://www.cadw.wales.gov.uk/opendoors)); European Heritage Open Days in Northern Ireland ([www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/european-heritage-open-days](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/european-heritage-open-days)); Open House London ([www.openhouselondon.org.uk](http://www.openhouselondon.org.uk)).
- For further details, visit [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk), follow on Twitter @HeritageOpenDay, or subscribe to the newsletter.

## About People's Postcode Lottery

- People's Postcode Lottery manages multiple society lotteries promoted by different charities and good causes. People play with their chosen postcodes for a chance to win cash prizes. A minimum of 32% from each subscription goes directly to charities and good causes across Great Britain and internationally - players have raised £450 million so far. For details of the charities and good causes which are promoting and benefitting from the lottery draws, please visit <https://www.postcodelottery.co.uk/good-causes/draw-calendar>.
- It costs £10 a month to play and winning postcodes are announced every day. The maximum amount a single ticket can win is 10% of the draw proceed. For details, please visit [www.postcodelottery.co.uk/prizes](http://www.postcodelottery.co.uk/prizes).
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