

PRESS RELEASE

It's all NEW! Heritage Open Days 2015 marks a fresh start for England's biggest festival of history

After a spectacular 20th anniversary event in 2014, which saw a record three million visitors, Heritage Open Days 2015 is set to build on the successes of last year with new funding, original events and a host of wonderful properties taking place for the first time. Heritage Open Days is now wholly supported by the National Trust, with funding from Players of People's Postcode Lottery, enabling the four-day festival of heritage to continue to grow and develop.

“After last year's triumphant event, we're looking to make 2015 another superlative year,” says Loyd Grossman, Patron of Heritage Open Days. “New funding sources and a higher profile means we are in a stronger position than ever before to celebrate our wonderfully diverse local heritage, and to encourage local communities to engage with the hidden histories on their doorstep.”

This year's festival promises to be the most diverse yet, with a greater variety of places taking part and regular participants invited to create original and innovative events. Join guided walks, visit secret archives, discover hidden works of art – or simply soak up the sunshine in a garden of your choice.

10-13 September
www.heritageopendays.org.uk

NEW HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2015:

- * **Wilton House, Salisbury** – This gorgeous 17th century Manor House opens for free on the Saturday of the HODS weekend, giving the chance to discover works of art by van Dyck, Rembrandt and Brueghel, the opulent interiors and 22 acres of parkland and gardens, with a fabulous adventure playground for kids.
- * **Winchester College, Hampshire** – A unique opportunity to discover the medieval heart of the college, with guided tours taking in the 14th century Gothic Chapel, the original Scholars' Dining Room, the medieval cloisters and the 17th century redbrick schoolroom. Advance booking essential.
- * **Great War Huts, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk** – A unique chance to get a first look at a collection of 100 year old wooden army huts and re-created trenches, that will form part of a new First World War visitor centre and museum, opening in 2016. Visitors will also be able to see the trenches site, and handle British and German uniforms and equipment.



Historic England



* **Westgate Excavations, Oxford** – Discover the largest ever archaeological excavations in Oxford, with guided tours around the Westgate site, the chance to meet archaeologists and the opportunity to discover the remains of Greyfriars Abbey. On Saturday, join an Archaeology Walk through Oxford, to discover the city's Saxon, Medieval and more recent history.

* **More than Fish @ Hub, North Tyneside** – Discover the hidden heritage and historic industries around Tyne & Wear in a special HODS exhibition at the Hub, an open-plan exhibition and co-working space in North Shields. Join in with a project to create a new map of the North East and discover that there's more to fish than Fish Quay!

* **Halesworth Heritage, Suffolk** – A brand new hub of events in and around Halesworth, including archive films at the Cut Arts Centre, tours of the 16th century Black Dog Antiques Building and the 18th century Cross Ram Office Building, guided town walks and exhibitions of rarely seen historic photographs and maps.

New Stories, Old Places:

Heritage Open Days is a fantastic way to discover a new side of a familiar site or building, uncovering secrets and unlocking areas not usually open to the public....

- ❖ Discover the secret garden that lies behind the **Judges' Lodging** Museum in Lancaster, never normally open to the public. The Grade I listed museum is Lancaster's oldest town house, originally home to Thomas Covell, a notorious witch-hunter. Discover the collection of Gillow furniture and Fine Art in the Regency period rooms, and relax in the tranquil garden that lies in the shadow of the house.
- ❖ The **Halifax Playhouse** began life as a Methodist Chapel in 1836; 113 years later it was converted into a theatre. Take a guided tour around the front of house, and discover backstage areas that the audience never usually gets to see. Members of the company will be on hand to explain all aspects of putting on a production.
- ❖ It may be an antiques shop now, but **Black Dog Antiques** in Halesworth, Suffolk began life in the 16th century as a posthouse, before becoming a playhouse, brewery, stables and pub. Discover the secrets uncovered by recent renovations, and join a tour of the building to understand the building's role in Halesworth's history.
- ❖ Who says stamp-collecting can't be glamorous? Join a special HODS tour of the gorgeous Georgian building that houses the **Royal Philatelic Society** in London, the oldest such society in the world. This is a rare chance to see behind the scenes at the museum and archive, including where stamps from around the world are authenticated.
- ❖ Horticulturalists should head to Guildford for the **English Cut Flowers Day**, which celebrates Surrey's historic role as supplier of cut flowers to the London Markets. Plantpassion is a 21st century cut flower farm, which will open up its flower field and stage an exhibition on the history of the flower industry in Surrey.

New ways to keep the kids happy:

With every event free, Heritage Open Days makes a great family day out, with plenty of new activities this year to keep all ages entertained....

- ❖ There are buttons to press, experiments to try and interactive exhibits galore at **Green's Windmill & Science Centre** in Nottingham; a restored 19th century tower mill, with working sails that help produce the mill's own flour. The Science Centre will have an exhibition of the building's history and treasures from the archive.
- ❖ Families are the focus for this year's **Chilworth Gunpowder Heritage Event** in Guildford, with countryside wardens offering free family nature trails, and the chance to try your hand at tree sculpture. History experts will be on site to give information on the ancient building, originally built by the East India Company in 1626 as a gunpowder factory.
- ❖ Kids can plunder the dressing-up box at **Clayton Hall Living History Museum** in Manchester, which opens up the most historic, Tudor part of the building exclusively for HODS. The Hall will be dressed as a Victorian home, offering visitors the chance to experience what it would have been like during Victorian times. The building stands on a scheduled ancient monument, and there will be a chance to see what investigations and surveys are currently going on.
- ❖ There's something magical about dusk, and candlelight, and for HODS, **Lewes Priory** in Sussex makes the most of both. On Saturday evening the ruins of the Priory of St Pancras will be lit with thousands of candles, to re-create how it would have felt 500 years ago, when the monks were in residence. Live music and food both on offer.
- ❖ They can join in with medieval dances, meet the court jester, Peter the Fool, and join in with Tudor games at the **Tudor Fayre and Charter Day** at the Buckinghamshire County Museum. There are birds of prey to meet, the chance to try calligraphy and wandering puppeteers, stilt-walkers and street entertainers to keep all ages occupied throughout the day.

National Trust Newbies:

Every year dozens of National Trust properties open for free on the Saturday of HODS weekend, offering special events and tours. This year, many sites are taking the chance to *do something new...*

- ❖ **Godolphin House & Gardens** in Cornwall joins Heritage Open Days for the first time this year, offering visitors the chance to stroll around the beautiful 16th century gardens, explore the rolling woodland, take in the amazing views over St Ives Bay and channel a little Poldark at the remains of the Godolphin family mine.
- ❖ A distinctive Lake District Villa, the first tenant of **Allan Bank** was William Wordsworth in 1808, along with his circle of Lake Poets. For the first time the labyrinthine cellars of Allan Bank will be opened up for Heritage Open Days, giving visitors the chance to explore the original footprint of the house.
- ❖ Take a step back in time at beautiful **Arlington Court** on the edge of Exmoor, which is putting on a 'Victorian School Days' event for HODS, with the chance to discover what school would have been like for Victorian children. There are traditional Victorian games for families to play and activities for children.
- ❖ Jane Austen fans should head to **Mompesson House** in Wiltshire, which celebrates the twentieth anniversary of its role in the 1995 film of Sense and Sensibility. A new exhibition includes costumes from the film, as well as historic Regency drawings and accessories, and an exploration of the links between Austen's fictional 'Dashwood sisters' and the Portman sisters, who lived at Mompesson when Austen was alive.
- ❖ **Nymans** may be most famous for the beautiful, rolling gardens, but the ruined Messel House is a wonderfully atmospheric site. For HODS, Nymans is offering the chance to see areas of the house that are usually closed to the public, and to look behind the scenes with members of the team who run the house.

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Notes to Editors:

About Heritage Open Days

- Heritage Open Days is co-ordinated and promoted nationally by the National Trust, 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); Open Doors Days in Wales (<http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/opendoors/?lang=en>); European Heritage Days in Northern Ireland (www.ehsni.gov.uk); Open House London (www.open-city.org.uk).

About People's Postcode Lottery

- People's Postcode Lottery is a charity lottery. Players play with their postcodes to win cash prizes while raising money for charities and good causes across Great Britain and globally
- People's Postcode Lottery is an External Lottery Manager and manages multiple society lotteries promoted by different causes supporting a range of good causes. For details on which society lottery is running each week, visit www.postcodelottery.co.uk/society
- Postcode Lottery Limited is regulated by the Gambling Commission under certificate nr 829-N-102511-009 and 829-R-102513-008. Registered office: Titchfield House, 69/85 Tabernacle Street, London, EC2A 4RR
- People's Postcode Lottery players support the following Trusts – Postcode African Trust, Postcode Animal Trust, Postcode Care Trust, Postcode Children Trust, Postcode Community Trust, Postcode Culture Trust, Postcode Dream Trust, Postcode Global Trust, Postcode Green Trust, Postcode Heroes Trust, Postcode Planet Trust, People's Postcode Trust and Postcode Sport Trust. These Trusts are funded entirely by players and support a variety of good causes. For further information on each charity, visit: www.postcodelottery.co.uk/charities
- 50p from every £2 ticket goes to good causes and players have raised £66.4 Million for good causes across the country
- There are five draws a month with prizes every day and each ticket costs £2 – paid monthly in advance by direct debit. For further prize information, visit: www.postcodelottery.co.uk/prizes
- Maximum amount a single ticket can win is 10% of the draw revenue to a maximum of £400,000
- Players can sign up by Direct Debit, credit card or PayPal online at www.postcodelottery.co.uk, or by calling 0808 10-9-8-7-6-5.