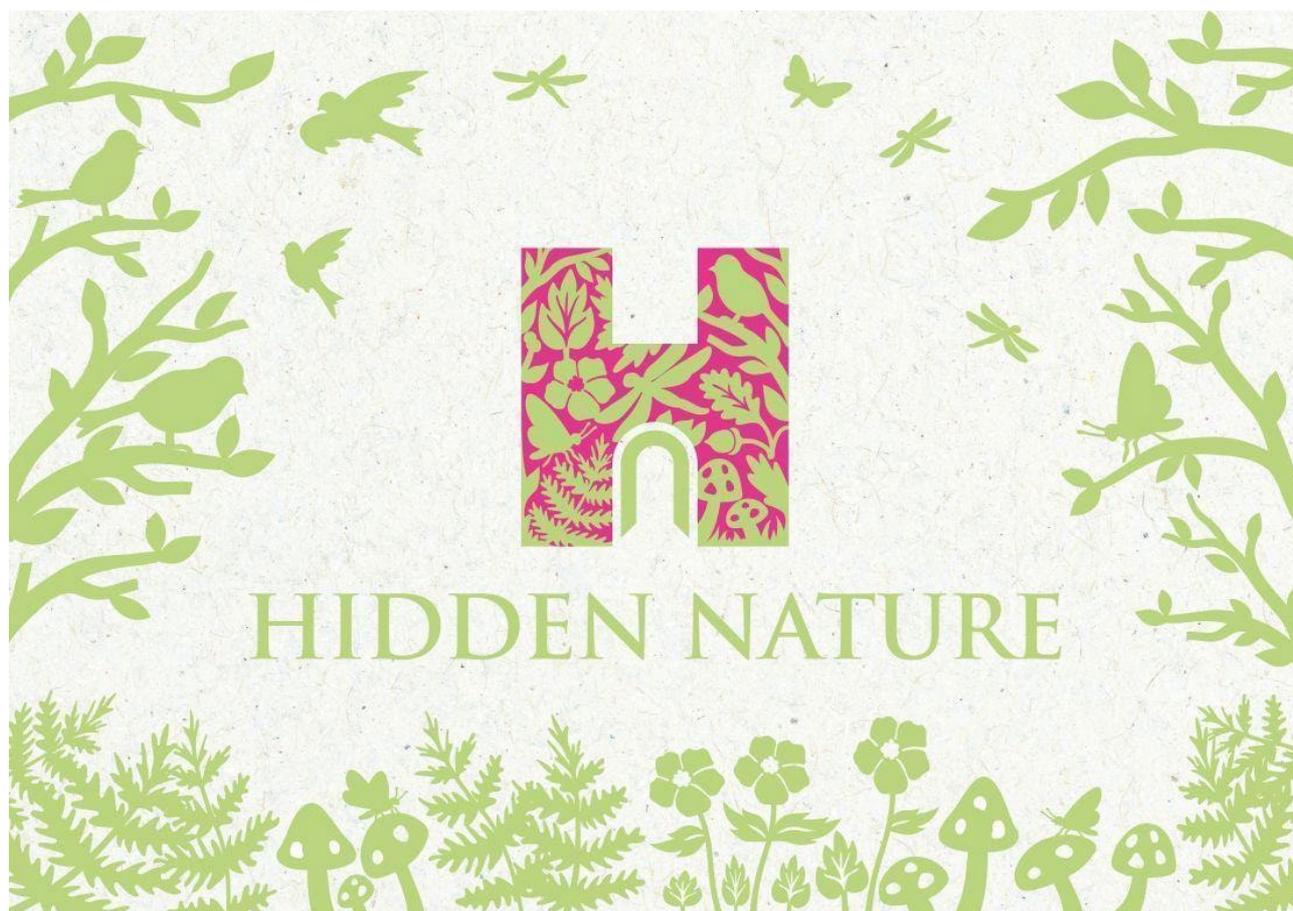


June 2020



PRESS RELEASE

DISCOVER MORE: HERITAGE OPEN DAYS RETURNS

Annual festival of people, places and community is open for registrations

www.heritageopendays.org.uk

11th – 20th September 2020

England's largest festival of history and culture will return in September and this year, support from players of People's Postcode Lottery means as well as experiencing local events, visitors can participate in activities much further afield and see even more hidden places.

For the first time, the Heritage Open Days (HODs) programme will comprise a mix of in-person and digital events; communities will be able to celebrate the stories of the places and spaces that are important to them while staying safe and adhering to current social distancing measures.

Every year around 50,000 volunteers give their time and effort to help create the largest cultural grassroots festival in the country. Last year 5,700 events were organised which welcomed more than 2.4 million visitors. This autumn, some venues and outdoor spaces will open for pre-booked events and visits by small groups, while others will offer virtual tours and digital experiences.

Annie Reilly, Head of Producing, said: "Heritage Open Days is about connecting people so we can share in the amazing stories of the places, spaces, nature, heritage and history around us. The last few months have shown us how online events can bring us together even when we have to remain apart.

"We have seen some ingenious approaches to culture going digital, from virtual tours and online galleries to up-close explorations of artefacts and objects, through to workshops and live-streamed debates. We're excited by the potential for HODs, not least of all because so many more people will be able to experience the festival regardless of where they are in the country."

Sue Skipper, a HODs event organiser from Norwich, said: "For somewhere like the [Britons Arms](#), the current restrictions mean it would be almost impossible to do our usual tour. The prospect of a digital tour sounds fun and something we would like to be able to offer."

This year's theme is Hidden Nature, which offers an opportunity to discover the nature that exists on our doorsteps, as well as the built heritage. Areas of the countryside that aren't normally accessible to the public will be opened up and events will reveal the hidden history of not just our natural landscapes, but also gardens, green spaces, urban parks, orchards, vineyards, farms and forests.

Annie Reilly said: "Over the last couple of months, with time outdoors being limited, access to nature has become even more important to many of us and HODs will give us all something to look forward to. From socially distanced 'netwalking' and rural rambles, to nature-inspired art collections, scavenger hunts, food and craft events – we're excited to see how the theme of 'Hidden Nature' is interpreted and used to create exciting online and offline events and activities."

Heritage Open Days is coordinated and promoted nationally 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.

ENDS

For media enquiries and images contact:

headofcommunications@heritageopendays.org.uk

Francesca Baker and Gemma Pettman

Heritage Open Days Head of Communications

m: 07877 461555 (Francesca)

m: 07968 125717 (Gemma)

w: www.heritageopendays.org.uk

p: 20 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0DH

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Notes to editors:

About Heritage Open Days

- 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); Open Doors Days in Wales (www.cadw.wales.gov.uk/opendoors); European Heritage Open Days in Northern Ireland (www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/european-heritage-open-days); Open House London (www.openhouselondon.org.uk)
- Heritage Open Days will continue to monitor government guidance and public health advice in respect of the coronavirus pandemic and act in accordance with the requirements. The HODs website will be updated accordingly; please check the site regularly for updates.

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 over £500 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
- New players can sign up to pay using direct debit by calling 0808 10 9 8 7 6 5. New players who sign up online at www.postcodelottery.co.uk can pay using direct debit, debit card or PayPal.
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