

Escape into autumn with the National Trust this October half term

As the nights draw in and nature puts on a vibrant display of colours, the National Trust has a whole host of events and activities planned to keep little explorers entertained this autumn. From ghoulish tricks to nature's treats, the conservation charity is offering heaps of fun for all the family this October half term.

Escape into the great outdoors together on an autumnal walk to collect a rainbow of fallen leaves. Embark on a nature trail to discover wildlife, as well as the weird and wonderful fungi that's emerged. Challenge friends and family members to seasonal fun and games during autumn days out and workshops at National Trust places across the country.

There are plenty of Halloween-themed activities and events to help celebrate the spookier side of the season too. From pumpkin displays to creepy crafts, spooky story-telling sessions and frightfully entertaining Halloween trails, there's plenty of fun for everyone.

The National Trust have listed some of the most exciting events and activities in Derbyshire to keep the whole family entertained this October half term.

Calke Abbey

Approximately 1,000 hectares in size, Calke Abbey offers ancient parkland, formal gardens, and plenty of opportunities for autumnal walks and cycle rides. This half term, hire bikes from Calke Explore and explore the Tramway, which is drenched in colour at this time of year. Or enjoy a spooky adventure to celebrate Halloween. Venture into the tunnels and discover an underground forest. As you explore, keep a look out for the tunnel's new residents, who have made themselves at home in the forest. Emerge into the light and then go on a hunt to spot creepy creatures causing mischief around the Stableyards and Pleasure Grounds. Pose for photos, join in with activities and learn more about your favourite Halloween characters. Continue into the Flower Garden to admire a rainbow of homemade pumpkins and gourds on the auricula theatre.

The Children's Country House at Sudbury

The Children's Country House at Sudbury is a place to have fun with history. This half term, crunch through leaves in the Bluebell Wood, identify different trees with a leaf spotter trail, available from Visitor Services and, take part in garden games such as pumpkin tic tac toe, bean bag toss and broomstick racing. Throughout the half-term week, a variety of activities are taking place across the property each day, including a Ghoul School, Spooky Storytelling to an autumnal tea light jar workshop (booking essential). Learn about the escapades and challenges of childhood through the ages in the museum and head over to the Hall to discover the 16th century home of the Vernon family. During this time, the café is open daily, offering a delightful choice of hot and cold drinks and snacks to fill those rumbling tummies. Wheelchairs are available from

Visitor Services, the Museum, and the Hall. Dogs welcome in the gardens, stableyard and first floor of the café.

Foremark

From adventures in the playground to walks through the woodland, there's plenty of ways to enjoy a great family day out at Foremark. Enjoy some spooky fun around the Nature Reserve this half term. Put your problem-solving skills to the test and solve all 14 Halloween-themed riddles around Foremark. However, it might not be as easy as you think, as a few squirrels have spooked them into hiding in the grass. Hunt down the riddles, take note of your answers and then head back to the kiosk to find out if you're right. Finish the day with a treat from the kiosk and a visit to the playground to burn off any extra energy before heading home.

Hardwick Hall

Hardwick Hall will be hosting an Elizabethan celebration of Hallowtide in the lead up to Halloween. Enjoy spooky tales, after-hours visits, family-friendly tours, and half term adventures, and get set for spooktacular films as Adventure Cinema makes a return visit with a programme that includes Hocus Pocus. There will also be a Dark Stories tour where families can learn more about the grisly tales behind some of the characters featured in the famous Hardwick tapestries in a private tour through the hall on 2 November. This family-friendly tour is suitable for children over the age of 8. Throughout the half term holidays, there will also be Halloween-themed activities including witches hat hoopla, broomstick barefoot walk and welly wanging, among others in the Stableyard area. In the meantime, Apple Day celebrations take place between 20-21 October, where there will be orchard tours, apple day trails, natural dye demonstrations, and storytelling sessions.

Ilam Park, Peak District

This half term as part of the Halloween in Enchanted Ilam events, children are invited to join the Magical Creatures Trail at Ilam Park between 26 October and 3 November. They can creep down the spiral staircases, along the bubbling river and through misty woodlands, spotting Peak District wildlife stations along the way. At each stop children spin the wheels to build a new and wonderful creature inspired by real life animals. Fancy dress is encouraged, and it's hoped to fill the park with young witches, wizards, ghouls goblins and spooky creatures of all kinds. For budding young witches and wizards, a magical Broom Making Workshop has been organised. Under the guidance of our experienced ranger, children will be able to create their own broomstick using natural materials sourced from the estate. Other activities include a Spooky Lantern Walk for ages 5-10 and a Spooky Nature Walk for older children.

Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire

Bring the family to Kedleston Hall to admire the landscape views and kick through the leaves along the short walk – it's the perfect time to take part in the Autumn leaf challenge (get your free spotter sheet from visitor reception on arrival).

Explore the wider parkland at Kedleston this autumn with our orienteering course available daily and no booking needed. Buy your orienteering map for £1.50 from visitor reception and explore at your own pace. Choose from a 1.6 mile route or a 3 mile route. Suitable for families, friends, dog walkers and ideal for complete beginners.

You can also enjoy the Diwali celebrations at Kedleston Hall and see traditional decorations hundreds of handcrafted marigolds and light installations throughout the Hall creating a joyful experience of light and togetherness. The Dining Room will be set for Diwali celebrations, as well as the opportunity to entertain friends and family with traditional oversized board games in the historic setting of the Saloon.

Staunton Harold

Nestled in Derbyshire countryside, Staunton Harold offers the chance to escape into nature with wildflower meadows, woodland walks and spectacular views. Stomp over to Staunton Harold this half term to appreciate autumn's spectacular show during a giant leaf hunt. Pick up your trail sheet from the café or on our website and then set off to discover what different leaves you can find around Staunton Harold. Enjoy crunching through leaves and shades of crimson and gold all around. At the end of your adventure, head to the dog-friendly café for a warming cup of tea or a hot chocolate with all the toppings.

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[October Half Term](#)

Notes to editors

About the National Trust

The National Trust is an independent conservation charity founded in 1895 by three people: Octavia Hill, Sir Robert Hunter and Hardwicke Rawnsley, who saw the importance of the nation's heritage and open spaces and wanted to preserve them for everyone to enjoy. Today, across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the charity continues to look after places so people and nature can thrive.

The National Trust care for more than 250,000 hectares of countryside, 780 miles of coastline, 1 million collection items and 500 historic properties, gardens and nature reserves. In 2022/23 they received 24 million visitors to our pay for entry sites. The National Trust is for everyone - founded for the benefit of the whole nation, and 5.7 million members, funders and donors, and tens of thousands of volunteers support their work to care for nature, beauty, history for everyone, for ever.