

National Trust Press Release

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IMAGES CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#)

Celebrate culture and history with free entry for Heritage Open Days

- **Enjoy a free day out at participating National Trust places as part of Heritage Open Days 2026**
- **The Heritage Open Days Festival returns from 11 – 20 September 2026**
- **Heritage Open Days provides everyone with free access to a whole host of experiences and events across England**

England's largest festival of history and culture, Heritage Open Days is back for 2026, from 11 – 20 September. Presented by the National Trust, supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery and run by thousands of local organisations and volunteers, Heritage Open Days gives everyone the opportunity to enjoy free access to experiences and events across England.

The festival brings people together to celebrate their heritage, community and history. Each year places across the country, including many National Trusts sites, throw open their doors to give people the chance to explore, see hidden places and try new experiences for free.

This year's theme is Everyday Histories, exploring daily working life through the ages. The butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker - what did your ancestors do, and what was their daily life like?

Here's a round-up of the best National Trust events happening near you for Heritage Open Days:

Calke Abbey, Ticknall, Derbyshire

With peeling paintwork and overgrown courtyards, Calke Abbey tells the story of the dramatic decline of a country house estate. The house and stables are little restored, with many abandoned areas vividly portraying a period in the 20th century when numerous country houses did not survive to tell their story.

Discover powerful stories of a family who amassed a vast collection of hidden treasures. Visit the beautiful, yet faded walled gardens and explore the orangery,

auricula theatre and the kitchen gardens. Escape into the ancient and fragile habitats of Calke Park and its National Nature Reserve.

Enjoy free entry to the estate on Saturday 19 September. Visit [Calke Abbey | Derbyshire | National Trust](#) to find out more.

Stoneywell, Markfield, Leicestershire

Zigzagging from its rocky outcrop, Stoneywell is straight from the pages of a children's story book. The cottage is a rare surviving example of an Arts and Crafts home in its entirety, with quirky rooms and original furniture, and is nestled within a gently sloping garden full of heather, rhododendrons, and memories of long summer holidays.

As part of this year's Heritage Open Day's Festival, Stoneywell will be hosting a free after-hours scrapbooking event from 4-7pm on Thursday 17 September.

With a mountain of materials to delve into, visitors can get creative and be inspired by the cottage and garden. Free mocktails will be served, and visitors can bring along snacks or an evening picnic to enjoy while they create.

The cottage and the garden will be fully open for visitors to explore; take a seat in the cosy sitting room, wander up spiral staircases, follow meandering paths through the garden, and discover the many nooks and quirks of this unique property.

This event is part of the New Wave project, working with people aged 18-30 to co-create innovative events for this year's Heritage Open Days festival.

As Stoneywell is a small property, spaces are limited and pre-booking is essential. For full details, visit [Heritage Open Day: Collage at the Cottage | National Trust](#) to find out more.

Hardwick Hall & Stainsby Mill, Chesterfield, Derbyshire,

Explore the magnificent Hardwick Estate, from the Elizabethan mansion set in 2,500 acres of parkland to the Victorian water mill at Stainsby. With various tours, craft displays and demonstrations to engage with, there's something new to discover about Hardwick.

There will be *Specialist Craft displays* in the Stableyard between 11am and 3pm on Saturday 12 September. Drop by at the East Stables between 11am and 3pm for the *Discover With Us* craft activities with dye demonstrations.

Join one of the *Architecture Tours*, which take place on Saturday 12 September and Sunday 13 September at 11am and 1.30pm. Hear more about the buildings in the Stableyard, the Old Hall and Hardwick Hall and learn more about its architect, Robert Smythson. The tours are free but booking is essential.

A series of *Introduction to Hardwick* talks will also be held throughout the weekend in the West Court at the front of Hardwick Hall, offering the opportunity to learn more about Hardwick and its history.

Meanwhile, there will also be free entry at Stainsby Mill throughout the weekend between 11am and 3pm.

For full details see the website at: [Hardwick | Derbyshire | National Trust](#)]

Kedleston Hall, near Quarndon, Derby, Derbyshire,

Designed as a temple of the arts, with spectacular landscaped surroundings, 18th century interiors, paintings and sculptures, plus a Museum collection housing over 1000 objects from across Asia, a visit to Kedleston Hall offers endless opportunities to discover history, art and nature.

Proudly welcoming visitors for Heritage Open Days this year, explore Kedleston Hall, its vast garden and meadow filled parkland for free from 14 until 20 September.

For an unmissable property highlight, uncover Kedleston's major house exhibition, *How Did We Get Here?* which spotlights intricate objects from its Museum collection through powerful personal stories told by the Tibetan community living in Britain.

To find out more and to discover exhibition insights visit the website: [Kedleston Hall | Derbyshire | National Trust](#)

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For further media information please contact:

meemarcomms@nationaltrust.org.uk

For images:

[Media Assets - Heritage Open Days - All Documents](#)

Notes to editors

About the National Trust

The National Trust is an independent conservation charity founded in 1895 to preserve historic and natural places in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and

open them up for everyone to enjoy. 131 years later and that mission is still at the heart of what we do.

Over the next decade, our cause will be delivered through our [People & Nature Thriving strategy](#). We have three ambitious goals: to restore nature - not just on National Trust land, but everywhere; to end unequal access to nature, beauty and history; and to inspire millions more people to care and take action.

With our 5.3m members, 40,000 volunteers, and our supporters, partners and communities, we collectively represent a cause that's bigger than just ourselves: it's about caring for nature and heritage everywhere, for everyone, for ever.