



NEWS RELEASE

The annual Heritage Open Days festival takes place from Friday 6 to Sunday 15 September for 2024. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the festival and to celebrate, more than 30 local venues and experiences are participating in the national scheme with opportunities to discover Thanet's rich history, architecture and culture, free of charge.

This year's theme is 'Routes, Networks and Connections'. People are invited to delve into the rich tapestry of history through the movement of people and ideas. In Thanet, the Festival includes:

- **A Guided Walk in Margate:** Discover the fascinating architecture of six historic squares and learn about the notable residents who lived and worked there.
- **The Palace Cinema in Broadstairs:** Explore the unique story of this iconic cinema and delve into local film heritage.
- **Historic Ramsgate:** Visit Ramsgate's oldest street, Paradise, home to retired sea captains in the early 18th century, and enjoy sea shanties and characters in period costume.
- **An Augustine Camino Mini Pilgrimage:** Walk from Minster Abbey to the Shrine of St. Augustine in Ramsgate, uncovering stories of saints, scholars, Vikings, and powerful princesses along the way.

Heritage Open Days provides an opportunity to experience lesser-known venues and those that are not generally open to members of the public, including India House in Margate and St. Edward's Presbytery in Ramsgate. Thanet's local history will be explored during engaging talks, including two relating to Ramsgate's Royal Harbour and its new Heritage Harbour status, in addition to a special guided Dickens Town Trail in Broadstairs.

New venues are participating in the Heritage Open Days programme for 2024, including Holy Trinity Church, Radford House and Paradise in Ramsgate, and the Walpole Bay Hotel and Museum in Margate.

Free entry will be offered on specific dates during the festival at the Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House and Gardens in Birchington; the Margate Caves and The Wonderworks in Margate; the Dickens House Museum in Broadstairs; and the Italianate Glasshouse and The Grange in Ramsgate.

Councillor Ruth Duckworth, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Property, said:

"Heritage Open Days is England's largest festival of history and culture, running for 10 days every September. The festival offers members of the public free access to heritage venues, events and activities and I'm delighted that there are so many opportunities for local people and visitors to enjoy many of the area's unique places, free of charge."

“I am grateful to the The Ramsgate Society, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year, and to the Margate Civic Society, for the time they have given to help to coordinate Thanet’s Heritage Open Days this year. The festival’s success relies on the support of the participating venues and their staff, many of whom are volunteers.

“The council works hard to promote Thanet’s heritage buildings and local history and I hope that this festival will encourage and inspire more people to get involved.”

Francesca Baker-Brooker, Heritage Open Days, says, “What makes this event so special is the sheer breadth of what’s on offer. With more than 100,000 events and over 39 million visits across 30 years, it has grown from just 700 events in its first year to over 5,250 in 2023. Here in Kent, we’re anticipating well over 200 openings, all for free. It’s great to see over 30 events in Thanet and the range is terrific - everything from a guided tour and talk about the history of The Walpole Bay Hotel and Museum, to unique places like the extraordinary Paradise in Ramsgate and the unique Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House and Gardens in Birchington. There really is something for everyone.”

Further information on the venues that are taking part across Thanet, including opening times and how to book and, is available at www.visitthanet.co.uk/heritageopendays.

Notes to Editor

About Heritage Open Days

- Heritage Open Days is England’s largest festival of history and culture. Running for ten days every September, the festival offers free access to heritage events and activities across England.
- Heritage Open Days is brought to you by the National Trust with support from players of People’s Postcode Lottery, and delivered 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.
- For further details about the festival, visit www.heritageopendays.org.uk

[Link to images](#) - credit listed on individual photos

[Link](#) to full list of participating venues and experiences in Thanet.

For more information, please contact communications@thanet.gov.uk