



heritage open days

IMPACT REPORT 2015



Historic England



National
Trust



OUR MISSION

Heritage Open Days empowers local people throughout England to celebrate the history on their doorstep. It is an annual invitation to engage with local stories, uncover secret sides of familiar and unfamiliar spaces and explore special places of historic and cultural significance, completely free of charge.

4,855 sites and
events
opening up free
of charge



820 cities, towns and
villages putting on
at least one event



Heritage Open Days 2015 10-13 September

Over four days, thousands of buildings of every age, style and function opened their doors to the public, free of charge. Stories were told, traditions explored and histories brought to life.



Making ripples

15.4 million
in Britain aware of the event

3.4 million
visitors

40K
volunteers

1,684 registering
organisers

WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT...

The commitment of those who make Heritage Open Days happen in their communities, registering, organising, promoting and funding local events with the support of thousands of staff and volunteers.

1,684 local
organisers



2/3 of organisers involved in
a voluntary capacity

39,608 volunteer
helpers

6,586 staff
helpers



521,134
volunteer hours spent
on creating special
experiences

Claire's and Nigel's story

The Control Tower near Walsingham was one of 134 residential sites whose doors opened as part of Heritage Open Days 2015.

Built towards the end of World War II to control flights for one of the RAF bomber airfields in North Norfolk, the Control Tower is now a lovingly converted home and B&B. For the owners, Claire Nugent and Nigel Morter, it was the third time that they shared their home with throngs of curious strangers attracted by the chance of seeing something that is normally private.

Claire sums up their experience: "Opening for Heritage Open Days has been a wonderful experience for us, both for our B&B business and for our interest in the history of our Control Tower; every time we host a tour we learn something new from our visitors as, we hope, they learn something new from us."

In 2015, they even offered a free night's stay over the weekend to the lucky winner of a competition run in partnership with Heritage Open Days.



SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR EVERYONE

2015 saw several new clusters springing up across the country. Northwich in Cheshire for example made its Heritage Open Days debut by celebrating its salty past with the grand opening of the newly restored Anderton Toll Buildings alongside many other free events. What's more though, this year's event was also the most creative yet. "Do something new" was our motto that inspired many organisers to create experiences out of the ordinary or take innovative approaches to interpretation.



“ The children loved dressing up. They can't wait to come back!

“ Lived locally for a long time but have never been 'behind' the scenes.



“ I loved this chance to visit interesting and beautiful places which you may walk by but never have a chance to explore.



DO
SOMETHING
NEW

WE'VE MADE A DIFFERENCE

Our visitor study and feedback from participants show that Heritage Open Days has the power to change people's perceptions, behaviours and tangibly benefits the places and communities hosting an event.

Boosting communities

86% of festival visitors felt more pride in their local areas and 80% were inspired to explore them further.

£15+

million

added
to local
economies



Of **3.4 million** visitors
2 million were new to
the event, and **half** had visited
a heritage site rarely or not at all
in the past year.

85% of visitors felt encouraged
to visit other cultural
sites in the future.

Participation in Heritage Open Days makes us happy!

85% of visitors see their **well-being**
enhanced as visiting the festival either helped
them to relax, keep active and healthy or made
them feel better about themselves.



OUR CAMPAIGN

From PR and marketing, insurance to training and networking forums, we have worked hard to provide best possible support to our organisers. New partnerships helped add value to the festival's programme and raise our profile. For example, working closely with RIBA's public engagement campaign, Love Architecture, yielded a range of Architect-led events as well as new resources for participants.

499,465
Website users



15,400 Twitter followers

Interviews covering all local BBC radio stations plus extensive press coverage



7 BBC Get Creative features



3 organiser fairs offering a varied menu of workshops and talks in Bristol, Leeds and London, attracting 129 delegates from across the country



14 organisers honing their writing and interview skills at our media workshop

3 videos by three talented young film makers captured key moments in 2015 and the festival's spirit



125 A1 interpretation boards in partnership with RIBA

500 free welcome banners

2,000 free lengths of bunting



YOUR FEEDBACK

The overwhelmingly positive feedback we received from organisers, volunteers and visitors spurs us to do even better in the future.



Heritage Open Days brought us more visitors than usual. This was a boost to our visitor numbers and a big boost to the enjoyment of all our volunteers who took part.

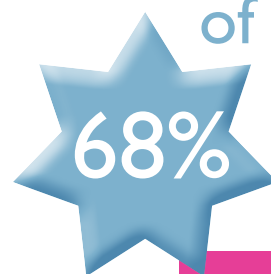


The British Schools Museum, Hitchin

Volunteer
enjoyment



Organiser
satisfaction



of visitors rated their festival experience as “very enjoyable”

“ I always appreciated Haslar hospital where I have been treated many times. Haslar’s history and mystique have enthralled me and my visit has fulfilled so many of my questions. How wonderful and proud I feel. Thank you for helping preserve our heritage. The gardens are wonderful. I’m very happy, sublime, chuffed.”

Former marine Martin Webb’s feedback following his visit to the Memorial Gardens at RH Haslar in Gosport



I love meeting new people and also renewing friendships with people I’ve met before. I also like to teach people about my culture.



Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group, Two Dales, Matlock



A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Heritage Open Days is now managed and supported wholly by the National Trust and in 2015, received external funding from Historic England and players of People's Postcode Lottery. We are grateful for this generous support, which enabled our festival to continue to flourish.



£150,000

I'm absolutely delighted that players of People's Postcode Lottery have been able to provide £150,000 to support this unique initiative. People's Postcode Lottery supported Heritage Open Days because it embodies and shares our values: Bringing people and communities together to make a meaningful and lasting contribution to public life.

Jo Bucci, Managing Director, People's Postcode Lottery, at Heritage Open Days Launch 2015



We are thrilled about the success of Heritage Open Days in the first year since the National Trust took over the coordinating role. Heritage Open Days are a wonderful way of connecting people with historic buildings of all kinds in the places where they live.

I am delighted that properties around the

country have opened their doors to 3.4 million people, with two million visitors enjoying the festival for the first time, inspiring them to care about their local heritage.



National Trust

Helen Ghosh, Director-General, National Trust



£122,000



Heritage Open Days opens up the historic places that belong to everybody, and that's what Historic England is here to champion. We're proud to support such an important movement that celebrates local heritage, culture and architecture.

Chris Smith, Director of Planning, Historic England



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