



25 YEARS OF
PEOPLE POWER
1994 - 2019

25

The First Festival

In the year the Channel Tunnel opened, Heritage Open Days was launched as England's contribution to a European festival that had been inspired by a French event, *Journée de Patrimoine*. Armed with an Amstrad computer, a phone and several hefty directories, the first HODs coordinator encouraged 380 local organisers to open 701 sites. The internet still being in its infancy, a telephone line was set up to provide regional event summaries, while 1,000 directories were printed and distributed, drawing in 250,000 visitors. From this initial success, the festival has grown and flourished; through three organisational changes and immense societal change, its founding principles - offering free access and being community led - remain at its heart.

Coordinated By The Civic Trust

"The Civic Trust is the leading environmental charity whose motto is 'Caring for places where people live and work.' The Trust welcomes Heritage Open Days '94 as an exciting means of promoting new local partnerships and fostering community pride."

Funded By The Department Of Heritage

"Heritage Open Days fully complements the wider role of the Department by helping broaden opportunities for people to enjoy the benefits of our heritage and culture. Heritage Open Days also serves a valuable purpose by bringing together local communities to share an interest in, and increase awareness of, their local heritage and history."

The First Pioneers

1991 - Council of Europe launches European Heritage Days

1992 - Encouraged by The Civic Trust, Gosport and Berwick Upon Tweed run the first pilot events in England

1993 - More places join to pilot the concept further. 40 properties open, attracting over 10,000 visitors

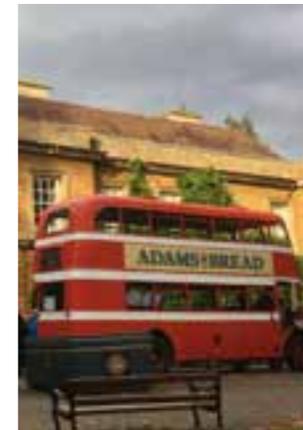
The Regency Town House

An early pioneer, The Regency Town House in Brighton first opened its doors in 1993 and has gone on to coordinate one of the festival's most vibrant programmes. Never afraid to test boundaries or try new things, their collaborative community project, MyHouseMyStreet, won our 'Creativity & Innovation' award in 2014.



Northampton Borough Council

Northampton Borough Council has published a HODs brochure for the area since 1994. Showcasing a range of buildings and linked by a fleet of classic buses offering town tours, Northampton Transport Heritage led calls earlier this year for a special party to honour and celebrate the work of local volunteers. The event was attended by local MP Michael Ellis, who presided over the cake cutting.



Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire

From the very beginning, the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire has led a county-wide festival offer. In 1994 they were known as Heritage Lincolnshire and worked with Lincolnshire & South Humberside Tourism to coordinate nearly 70 events. Their success continues today with the programme more than doubled in size, using annual themes to inspire new events.



1994 A Year To Remember

England joins European Heritage Days

The world's first smartphone goes on sale

The National Lottery is launched

Shops are allowed to open on Sundays

Tony Blair elected Labour Party Leader

Yahoo & Amazon are founded

Oasis and Blur fight it out for the top of the charts

The Lion King is the biggest grossing film

The first Sony Playstation games console is launched

Sitcom 'Friends' airs on C4

The National Trust and Us

The National Trust has been involved with Heritage Open Days since the 2006 History Matters campaign, which focused on the contribution of heritage to our quality of life. The Trust took on national coordination of the festival in 2011, with hundreds of properties opening for free over the years and showcasing their places in diverse ways.

New perspectives have been offered through rare opportunities. Visitors have climbed towers usually closed to the public at Buckland Estate, Devon, and met conservation experts at The Textile Conservation Studio, Norfolk. The crew of the Steam Yacht Gondola, on Coniston Water in the Lake District have welcomed people aboard to view its inner workings and uncover more of its history through seldom-seen

archive material. Long-standing festival participants, Clandon Park, Surrey, didn't miss a year even after a devastating fire – using Heritage Open Days to launch their next chapter of public openings, with the first special tours of the building site.

Wider community links have been explored through partnership projects. Guides from the Colourful Coast Partnership have taken visitors the extra mile (or 8) on a walk exploring the industrial heritage of the stunning Cumbrian coastline, including a look inside St Bees Head Fog Signal Station. At the other end of the country, Petworth House & Park, Surrey worked with local groups to offer historical guided walks of the town. In Cornwall, Tintagel Old Post Office co-hosted an exhibition with their neighbouring WI, while the team at 575 Wandsworth Road, London are working with local families to create new tours.



“Over the last twenty five years, Heritage Open Days has inspired millions of people to connect with amazing historic places on their doorstep. More than that, it has inspired people to stand up for these valued local spaces and look after them. HODs is driven entirely by passionate local volunteers and rooted firmly in local communities, which helps them grow into heritage festivals and week-long celebrations of our shared history. The National Trust is proud to be a part of this people powered movement.”

Hilary McGrady, Director-General, National Trust

“Heritage Open Days is unique in that it empowers local communities, groups and individuals to come together and breathe life into their local heritage sites and stories. We are delighted that our players support an organisation that reaches into every corner of England, supporting and encouraging those who want to share the history of their town, village or landscape.”

Laura Chow, Head of Charities, People's Postcode Lottery

Dr Claudia Sternberg
Senior Lecturer, Cultural Studies
University of Leeds

It is not surprising that VisitBritain, the national tourism agency, used the slogan 'Heritage is GREAT' in their 2011-2016 promotional campaign. The wealth of British art, architecture and archaeology not only makes heritage a key trigger for travel to Britain, it also accounts for the variety and success of the Heritage Open Days festival. But what is heritage and who gets to decide?

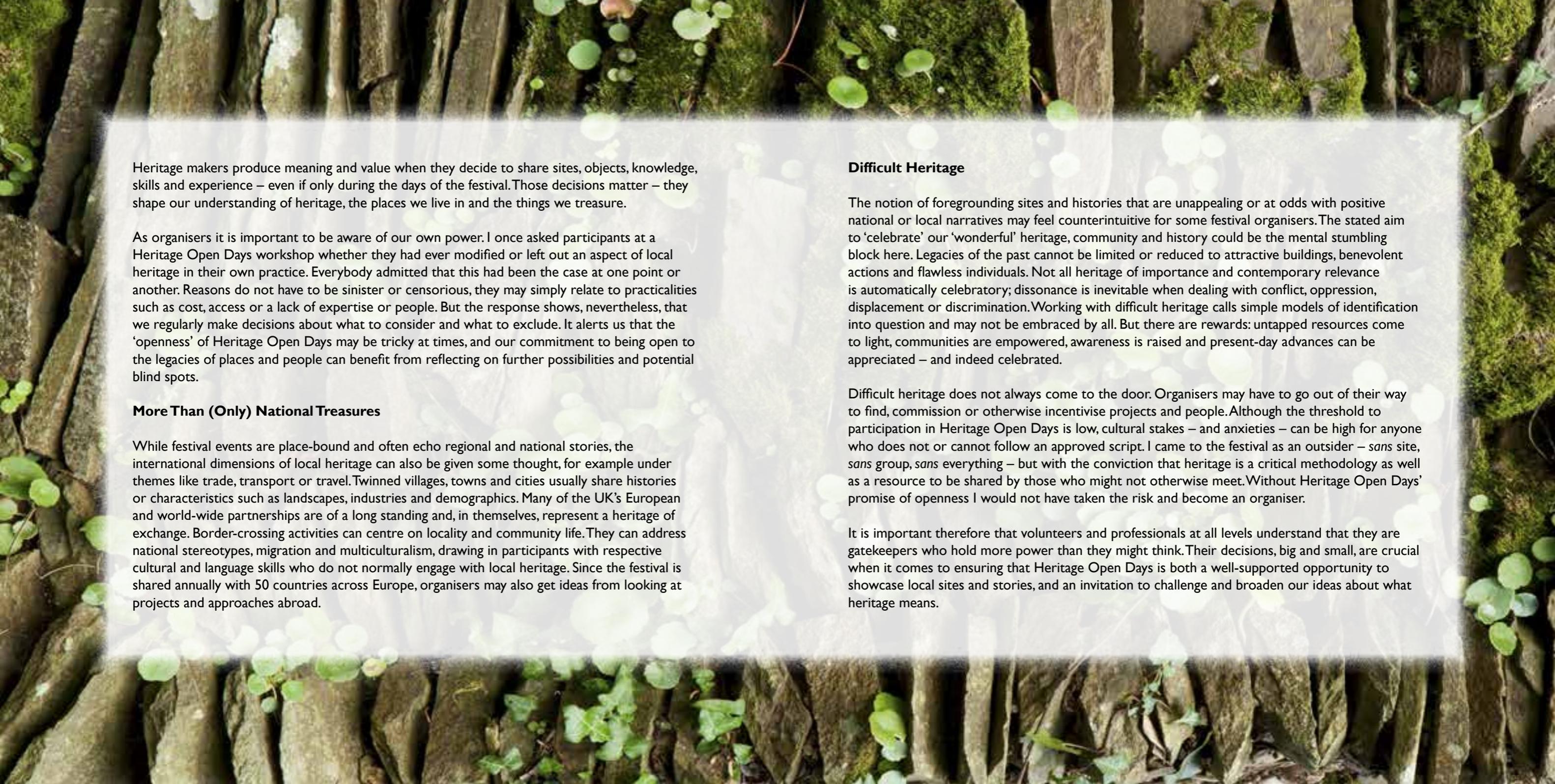
The Hidden, the Forgotten and the Intangible

While tried-and-tested material culture delights tourists year on year, local communities may find it rewarding to turn to the less obvious – to something hidden, forgotten or 'intangible'. This wider understanding of heritage is something Heritage Open Days, with its unique grass-roots network, is well placed to encourage and showcase.

Recovering such heritage takes different forms; a forgotten event or unusual occurrence can be reconstructed from old newspapers or public records. A vanished site or transient population may be returned to local memory by exploring archives and creating information panels or digital markers. A once vibrant workplace, school or club can be brought back to life through reunions, collection days and interviews.

Intangible heritage, as defined by UNESCO, refers to rituals, performing arts, languages, festivals, skills and crafts. Displaying certain traditions can be challenging, but may also lead to new alliances, for example with artists, academics or technology experts. Locally held knowledge also counts as intangible heritage. 'Knowing it all' ourselves, however, is not a precondition for planning activities. 'Open' can mean to frame an event as an enquiry: what do local people have in their possession? What do they know about their communities or ancestry?

Ideas come easily to charismatic locations with evocative names, buildings and narratives. But many towns, boroughs and estates do not enjoy the privilege of being 'rich' places. They lack deep histories and stable communities; identities can be looser and the built environment nondescript. A further rethink may be helpful here; heritage should not be understood as an entity waiting to be identified and labelled. Rather it is something that is brought to attention through action.



Heritage makers produce meaning and value when they decide to share sites, objects, knowledge, skills and experience – even if only during the days of the festival. Those decisions matter – they shape our understanding of heritage, the places we live in and the things we treasure.

As organisers it is important to be aware of our own power. I once asked participants at a Heritage Open Days workshop whether they had ever modified or left out an aspect of local heritage in their own practice. Everybody admitted that this had been the case at one point or another. Reasons do not have to be sinister or censorious, they may simply relate to practicalities such as cost, access or a lack of expertise or people. But the response shows, nevertheless, that we regularly make decisions about what to consider and what to exclude. It alerts us that the ‘openness’ of Heritage Open Days may be tricky at times, and our commitment to being open to the legacies of places and people can benefit from reflecting on further possibilities and potential blind spots.

More Than (Only) National Treasures

While festival events are place-bound and often echo regional and national stories, the international dimensions of local heritage can also be given some thought, for example under themes like trade, transport or travel. Twinned villages, towns and cities usually share histories or characteristics such as landscapes, industries and demographics. Many of the UK’s European and world-wide partnerships are of a long standing and, in themselves, represent a heritage of exchange. Border-crossing activities can centre on locality and community life. They can address national stereotypes, migration and multiculturalism, drawing in participants with respective cultural and language skills who do not normally engage with local heritage. Since the festival is shared annually with 50 countries across Europe, organisers may also get ideas from looking at projects and approaches abroad.

Difficult Heritage

The notion of foregrounding sites and histories that are unappealing or at odds with positive national or local narratives may feel counterintuitive for some festival organisers. The stated aim to ‘celebrate’ our ‘wonderful’ heritage, community and history could be the mental stumbling block here. Legacies of the past cannot be limited or reduced to attractive buildings, benevolent actions and flawless individuals. Not all heritage of importance and contemporary relevance is automatically celebratory; dissonance is inevitable when dealing with conflict, oppression, displacement or discrimination. Working with difficult heritage calls simple models of identification into question and may not be embraced by all. But there are rewards: untapped resources come to light, communities are empowered, awareness is raised and present-day advances can be appreciated – and indeed celebrated.

Difficult heritage does not always come to the door. Organisers may have to go out of their way to find, commission or otherwise incentivise projects and people. Although the threshold to participation in Heritage Open Days is low, cultural stakes – and anxieties – can be high for anyone who does not or cannot follow an approved script. I came to the festival as an outsider – *sans* site, *sans* group, *sans* everything – but with the conviction that heritage is a critical methodology as well as a resource to be shared by those who might not otherwise meet. Without Heritage Open Days’ promise of openness I would not have taken the risk and become an organiser.

It is important therefore that volunteers and professionals at all levels understand that they are gatekeepers who hold more power than they might think. Their decisions, big and small, are crucial when it comes to ensuring that Heritage Open Days is both a well-supported opportunity to showcase local sites and stories, and an invitation to challenge and broaden our ideas about what heritage means.



What began as a weekend dedicated to revealing buildings not normally open to the general public has exploded into a ten-day festival, celebrating myriad different aspects of our history and culture.

Opening Gates As Well As Doors

Ever walked along a 'Sweet Track'? Seen a 'duck decoy'? Strolled through the grounds of a garden that is never usually glimpsed by the eyes of the public?

These unique opportunities to discover hidden corners of our natural landscapes are an integral part of Heritage Open Days, from guided tours along the ancient trackways of the Somerset Marshes to exploring the stunning gardens of the Cadland Estate, which opened to the public for the first time as part of HODs 2016. Partnerships with the Capability Brown Festival and Natural England have increased the part the natural world plays in the festival, from the wild corners of Dartmoor to the tranquil lakes of the Lower Derwent Valley, offering walks, talks and guided tours.

Images: (top) The stark beauty of Ingleborough National Nature Reserve in North Yorkshire. This was one of seven Reserves to hold an event as part of our partnership with Natural England in 2017. Image taken by Neil Pike (right) Exploring 'The Depths of Reflection', an exhibition by Russian Artist Anya Mokhova, in the cellar at 10 Brunswick Square, Brighton. Her art involves casting parts of her body in wax, soap and sometimes even jelly.

Celebrating Cultural Traditions

Bloomer, challah, barm cake, cob – who knew there were so many words for bread? A Dialect Discovery Day in Leeds explored how different phrases, colloquialisms and slang define the region we live in, while concerts of traditional sea shanties are sung from the Kent Coast down to Cornwall. Church bells ring out across towns and villages, morris dancers take to the streets and culinary events such as the Framlingham Food Trail showcase our quirky food heritage, from butter-making to cheese-rolling.

Looking For The Lost

Many organisers say that hearing the stories of visitors who have a personal connection with their site is one of the best parts of participating. Increasingly, oral history projects created over the HODs festival are contributing to our national archive. In Reading, a project was created to record the town's 'vanished streets', whilst at Lofthouse Park in Wakefield a WWI prisoner of war camp was discovered, lying hidden beneath a housing estate.





Gosport HODs Committee

Gosport, Hampshire, South East
Joined Heritage Open Days in 1992 & 2010



One of HODs' earliest participants, events have run in Gosport since 1992, as the town pioneered the concept before the national festival was launched. Events cover all aspects of the town's history, from wartime stories at Fort Brockhurst and Grange Airfield, to family-friendly workshops and heritage quizzes at local pubs. In 2010, the Creative Landscapes project, run by English Heritage & Accentuate, established a new voluntary steering group for the town, which has grown from strength to strength, coordinating the most accessible programme in the country.

All the town's organisers are encouraged to consider access issues, and several events are aimed specifically at disabled visitors, from 'quiet time' exhibition visits and object handling sessions, to accessible bus tours and the chance to participate in a deaf awareness choir. Furthermore, true to the spirit of the festival's community network, the committee's work hasn't stopped at the town's boundaries; they have participated in multiple regional workshops to inspire other local organisers to make events more accessible.

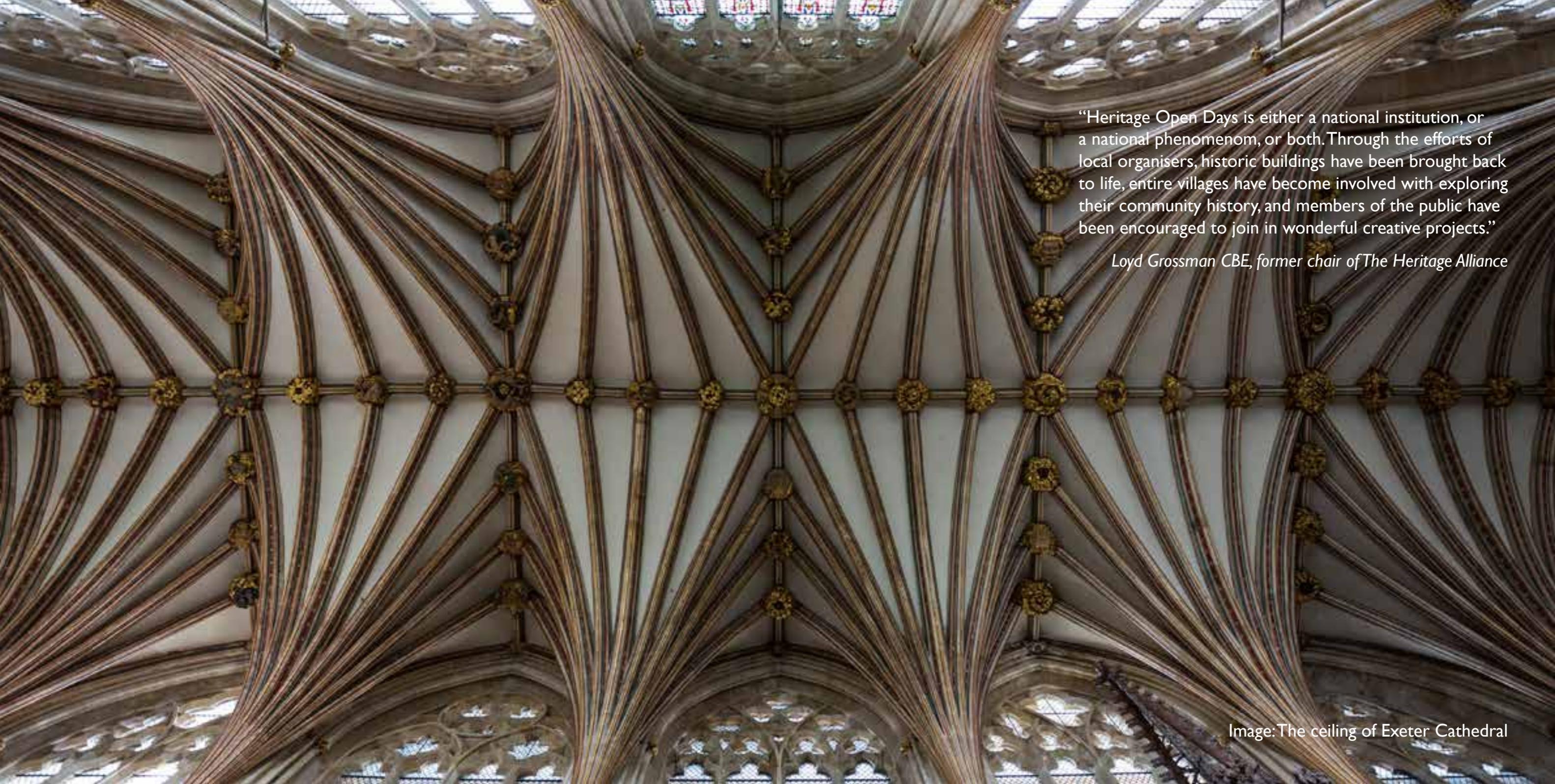
“ Thank you for offering us a chance to experience these places. It was a real treat to find out more about our local area, especially the places not normally open to the public. It's a fantastic project! ”

Gosport HODs visitor, 2015

Images clockwise: (1) The entrance to the Diving Museum in Gosport (2, 3) Shots of the interior of the former Royal Hospital Haslar. Images taken by Jason Brodie-Browne, winner of our 2018 photography competition (3) The Wildgrounds Nature Reserve. Image taken by Andrew Whitmarsh (4) HMS Alliance at sunset, free to explore during HODs. Image courtesy of National Historic Ships UK



Gosport



“Heritage Open Days is either a national institution, or a national phenomenon, or both. Through the efforts of local organisers, historic buildings have been brought back to life, entire villages have become involved with exploring their community history, and members of the public have been encouraged to join in wonderful creative projects.”

Lloyd Grossman CBE, former chair of The Heritage Alliance

Image: The ceiling of Exeter Cathedral

One of the greatest shifts in Heritage Open Days over recent years has been its gradual repositioning as an increasingly family-friendly festival. Hundreds of workshops, re-enactment days and nature trails guarantee a fantastic day out for all the family – and best of all, it's all free!

Get Your Hands Dirty

There's nothing kids like more than getting their hands into things, and HODs offers a wide range of family-friendly activities that offer the chance to get hands-on and really feel involved. At archaeological digs from Kent to Masham in North Yorkshire, kids can get up close with historic artefacts and try sand-box excavations, while factories and mills offer the chance to try out machinery and tools, such as the Victorian Finch Foundry in Devon. And natural history has a part to play too – nature reserves such as Alney Island in Gloucestershire offer the chance for kids to become nature detectives and join bug hunts.

All The World's A Stage

Whatever your age, the chance to peek backstage at a theatre, rummage through the props or even stand under the footlights is an extraordinary experience. Dozens of theatres take part in HODs, with many offering workshops for kids or the chance to watch live rehearsals, including the RSC in Stratford, the City Varieties Music Hall in Leeds and the Groundlings Theatre in Portsmouth, famed for its sword-fighting lessons. For those who like to strut their stuff on the dance floor, a Silent Disco on Hastings Pier offered the chance for some shimmying by the sea.

Learning Is Fun

HODs shows that learning about history doesn't have to be dry and dull – as proved by the 'Stinky Tudors' – a hugely popular event at Worcester's Tudor House Museum, exploring the rather less-than-sanitary side of 16th century life. Fans of Monopoly took to the streets of St Albans to play a life-size version of the game, with a trail around the town's historical sites, including the chance to try jousting and circus skills. And at Sevington Victorian School in Chippenham, kids had the chance to dress up in 19th century school-dress, and take a lesson with the starchy schoolmistress, Miss Squire.

Images from left to right: (1) A family leaves St John the Baptist Chapel in Matlock Bath, Derbyshire (2) Painting the landscape at a family friendly multicultural day at Catton Park, Norfolk, part of the Sharing Repton project (3) Taking a dino for a walk at Weston Museum, North Somerset (4) Knights in T-shirts and shorts at The Great Hall in Winchester



HODs is...family friendly



Oswestry & Beyond

Shropshire, West Midlands
Joined Heritage Open Days in 2011

In 2014 Shropshire Council's Local Community Action Officer, Corrie Davies, was highly commended in the Community Champions category for establishing and supporting the Oswestry & Beyond programme. The spark recognised then has burnt ever brighter and led to the town opening a museum and creating a Heritage Forum whose members support each other year round.

As well as these achievements locally, few people better exemplify the community spirit of Heritage Open Days, than Chair of the Oswestry Heritage Forum, Mark Hignett. He tirelessly volunteers his time to talk with other organisers across the country, both individually and through the wider platform of speaking at multiple regional organiser workshops and the national coordinators conference. In 2017, Oswestry was the location for one of our four LGBTQ events; If All the World Could See How in Love We Are – an intensely moving story of a love affair between two WWII soldiers.

“ Taking part in HODs has made a massive difference to myself, the events and venues that I work with, the way I interact with visitors and the way I think about researching heritage in our local area. ”

Mark Hignett, Oswestry Town Museum

Images: (top) The Royal Warwick's living history group brought the horrors of The Great War to life in an incredibly detailed reconstruction of a WWI trench system at Park Hall Countryside Experience (bottom) Riding the Tanat Valley monorail through the Shropshire countryside.



Sharing stories – all our stories – is at the heart of HODs. We support and empower organisers to shine a light on the lives and achievements of those who conventional history may have overlooked, or forgotten. Since 2017, our creative arts strand ‘Unsung Stories’, made possible by support from players of People’s Postcode Lottery, has explored some of these through new artistic commissions, which sit alongside our wider programme of revelatory events.

LGBTQ+ Stories

2017 marked the 50th anniversary of the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality, a milestone in LGBTQ+ history. It provided the focus for our first *Unsung Stories* commissions. Working with a range of artists, four moving stories were told; the courtroom trial of Alan Turing in Knutsford, the shocking story of record producer Joe Meek in London, the extraordinary lives of Richard Chopping and Denis Wirth-Miller in Wivenhoe and the moving love story between two WWII soldiers, Gilbert and Gordon, in Oswestry. These stories have gone on to inspire further events and the development of a Rainbow Plaque Trail in Leeds.

Extraordinary Women

In 2018, we told the stories of hundreds of Extraordinary Women from artists to airship engineers, medics and social reformers. In the East Riding of Yorkshire, Beverley Civic Society held a series of talks featuring remarkable women



throughout history with connections to the area. Sold out within 48 hours a book has since been published (and reprinted). The achievements of contemporary women were recognised through our second *Unsung Stories* project, *put her forward*. As a response to the imbalance between the number of female and male statues in the UK, interactive theatre-makers non zero one collated over 200 nominations, with 25 women, from a diverse range of backgrounds, selected and replicated as small, 3D-figures, unveiled across England over the festival.

People Power

In 2019, we are exploring People Power in all its forms, including the chance to stage or join a workshop, created by award-winning activist and founder of the Craftivist Collective, Sarah Corbett. *Dare to Dream* is a project inspired by change-makers of the past, offering participants the opportunity to think of the future they want and help create it. Alongside *Dare to Dream*, hundreds of events will celebrate the ability of local communities, groups and individuals to evoke change.



Images clockwise: (1) A letter is cast into a flaming memorial postbox in Oswestry, Shropshire (2) The figure of anti-FGM activist Leyla Hussein is unveiled at Sutton House in London (3) Craftivist Sarah Corbett holds up a cloud for our 2019 Dare to Dream project (4) A digital projection onto the former home studio of 60s songwriter, Joe Meek in Holloway, London (5) An opportunity to experience the trial of Alan Turing using VR in Knutsford, Cheshire (6) Artists Nando Messias, La John Joseph and Mem Morrison recollect the lives of two of Essex’s finest queers, Richard Chopping and Denis Wirth-Miller in Wivenhoe, Essex.

HODs is...a storyteller



Hull Civic Society

*East Riding of Yorkshire, Yorkshire & the Humber
Joined Heritage Open Days in 2006*

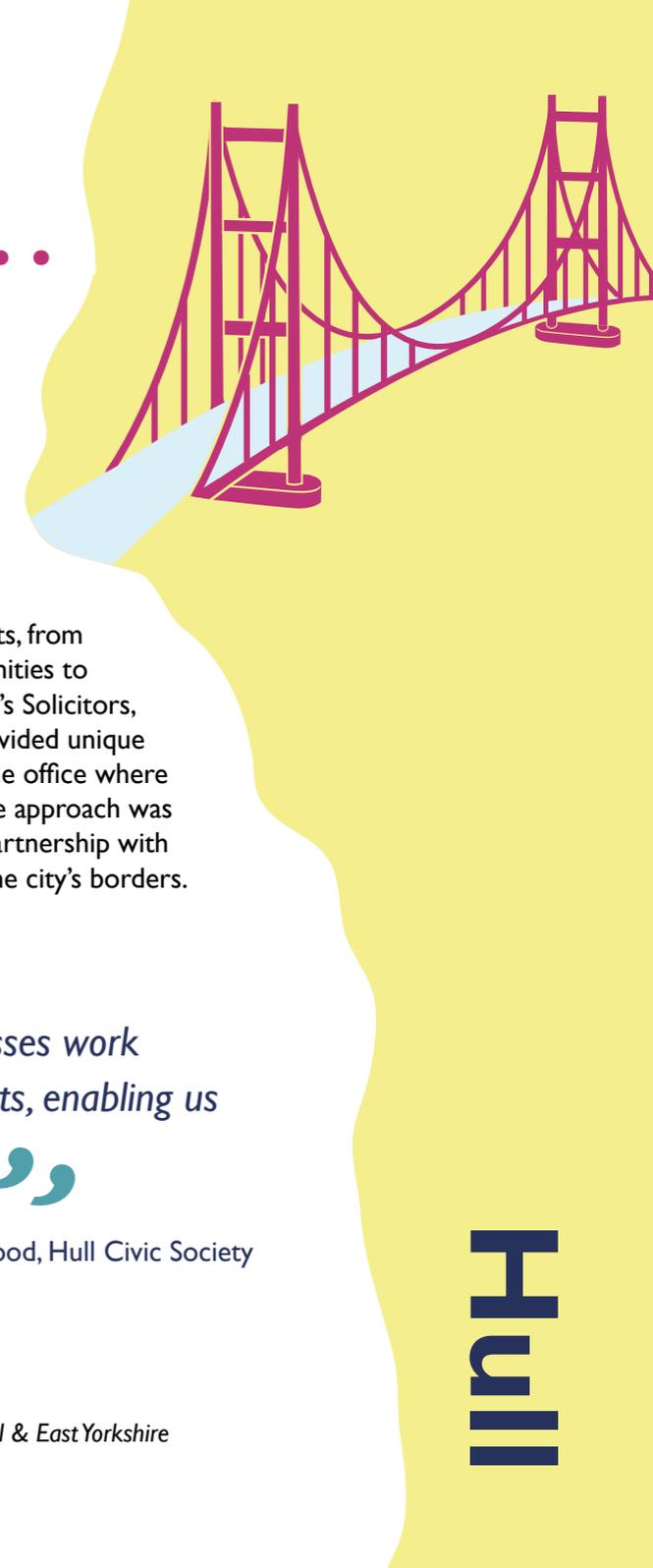
Already well experienced in running 'Open House' style events, Hull Civic Society joined HODs in 2006, diversifying their programme into a spectacular showcase for the city. Now a significant moment in the local calendar, it formed part of their bid to be City of Culture in 2017. Their events guide, printed by Hull Daily Mail and featuring over 90 events, has become a unique magazine, featuring in-depth articles exploring the city's stories as well as listing events.

Every year, there's a rich array of walks, talks and interactive events, from the Old Town Ale Trail to the Town Cryer's masterclass. Opportunities to see behind the scenes of established city businesses include Rollit's Solicitors, Intertech and the Port of Hull. Links with the University have provided unique opportunities to see their botanical gardens, art collection, and the office where renowned poet, Philip Larkin worked as a librarian. This innovative approach was recognised with our 'Creative Minds' award in 2014, and a new partnership with Beverley Civic Society has further expanded their offer beyond the city's borders.

“ Over 400 volunteers and fifty local businesses work together to create our Heritage Open Days events, enabling us to tell the often unrecognised stories of our city. ”

John & Christine Netherwood, Hull Civic Society

Images clockwise: (1) The historic harbour of Hull. Image courtesy of Visit Hull & East Yorkshire (2) Looking over the parapet of Hull Cathedral (3) Hull City Hall



Hull

1994 - 2018

25 Years of Impact



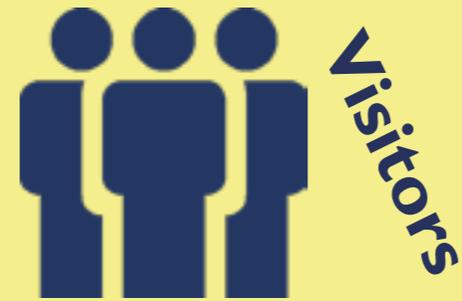
“The more you learn, the more you want to see”

1/3

of visitors have not been to a heritage site in the past 12 months



From
250,000
to



Visitors

3,100,000



From
701
Events
To



5,517



“When there seems to be so much wrong with the world, this was a breath of fresh air”

“You all do a wonderful job for the community”

From
380
to



2,046

Organisers



£20,000,000

added to local economies in 2018





Liskeard Unlocked

Liskeard, Cornwall
Joined Heritage Open Days in 2017

By opening more than just doors for Heritage Open Days, Liskeard Town Council has highlighted and shared some wonderful local stories, honouring the vibrant heritage and traditions of the South West. Participation is actively encouraged at events including a heritage quiz and traditional Cornish pub singalong, where guests have the opportunity to learn some of the local dialect.

One of the biggest stories was unlocking the gates of the Pipewell, a watersource fed by a pure spring, said to be the reason for the town's existence. For HODs, visitors were given a rare glimpse of the stonework inside, while costumed guides shared tales of its past. Some of the best stories came from visitors themselves though, including that elephants used it for drinking water when the circus came to town!



“ I think festivals like HODs are important for getting people who don't usually do 'heritage' involved in a fun and accessible way, and this is one of the priorities of our project. I love my local area and it is great to be involved in something which 'opens doors' for other people to discover what is great in our area in many different ways. ”

Yvonne Hayward, Liskeard Town Council

Image: A selection of the unusual doors around the town of Liskeard, used as the cover artwork of the Liskeard Unlocked brochure.

Liskeard

Once a year, HODs offers visitors a VIP pass to thousands of places, giving unique opportunities to see behind closed doors, access hidden corners of an estate, or gain unique insights into familiar buildings from curators, gardeners and other experts.

Homes And Hotels

History is everywhere, if you know where to look – and HODs is made up of thousands of people, including B&B owners, publicans and private home owners, with amazing knowledge to share. The Control Tower B&B in Norfolk joined HODs to reveal its past as a part of Bomber Command in WWII, while the former Black Eagle pub in Halesworth - now a private home - shone a light on 'witchmarks'; historic carvings above doorframes, fireplaces and windows thought to ward off witches. HODs offers the chance to discover some of the Landmark Trust's incredible portfolio of holiday cottages, including the gothic Banqueting House in Gateshead. And, proving even the newest buildings have their stories, tickets to the futuristic mansion, Swinhay House in Gloucestershire, were snapped up last year after featuring in the BBC's Sherlock.

Business, Industry And Beyond

HODs is a fantastic opportunity to get a unique glimpse behind the doors of some of our most famous brands, from the M&S archive in Leeds, to the British Film Institute in Berkhamsted. Gieves and Hawkes in Winchester, whose elegant suits have been dressing the Royal Family for over 200 years, also opens for HODs. Our events prove that office life doesn't have to be dull, with the chance to ride the

three-storey helter-skelter at the Electric Works in Sheffield, while even the most seemingly mundane places have stories to share – pumping stations in Bristol and Lyme Regis give insights into how we manage our water. Even icons we all recognise – such as the Blackpool Illuminations – offer a chance to peek behind the curtain, with tours of the Illuminations Depot.

One-Off Opportunities

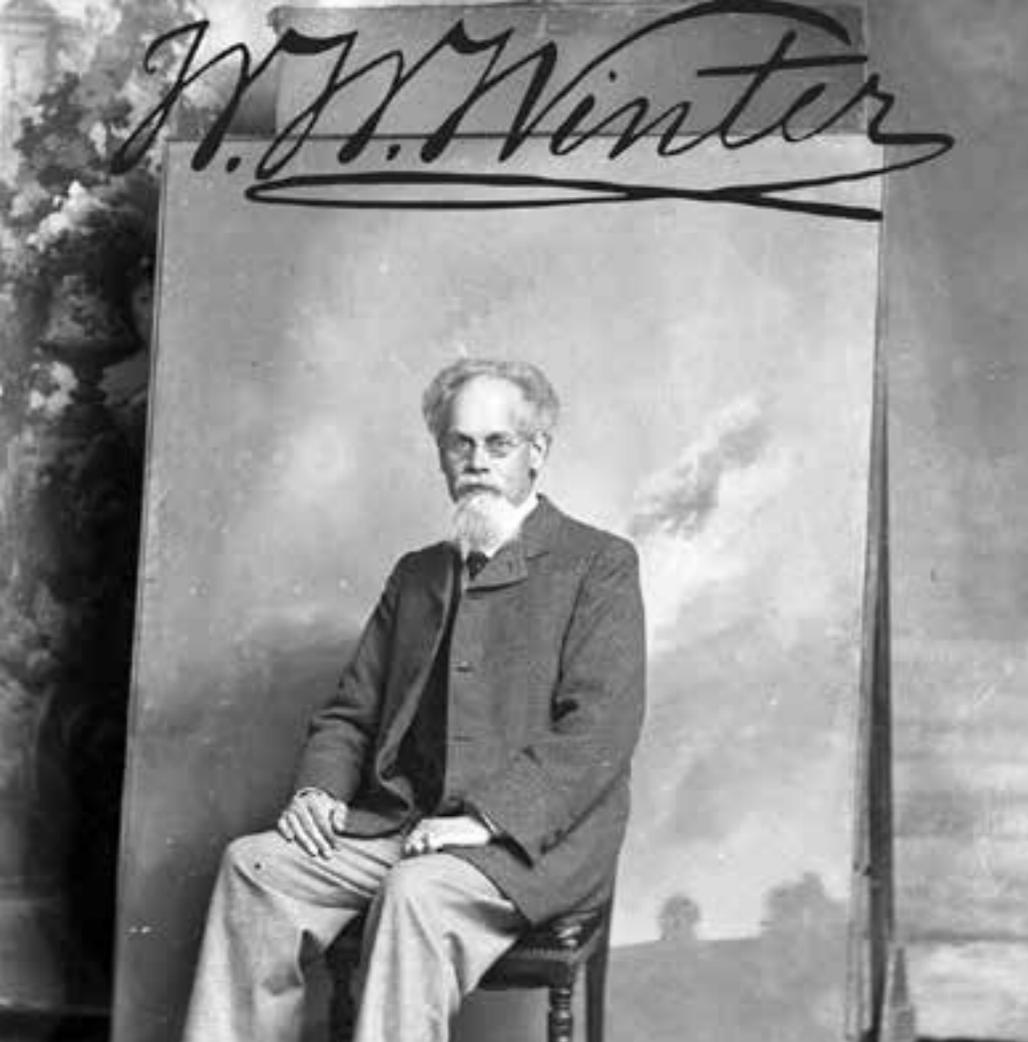
Every year, HODs offers some opportunities that really are once in a lifetime. In 2017, fans of Joy Division, 10cc and The Smiths had the chance to visit Strawberry Recording Studios in Stockport, where hundreds of artists recorded hits over fifty years. When the Ministry of Justice decommissioned five prisons in 2013, all opened for hugely popular tours during HODs, before being sold for redevelopment. One, the Dana Prison in Shrewsbury, proved so popular it is now a visitor attraction. And no site has ever generated as much interest as the iconic Liver Building in Liverpool. For years it was only publicly accessible through special tours for HODs, and this has now developed into a continuous paid attraction.

“ I have lived here for 25 years, but saw things that I had no idea were there! ”

Image: The Lovelace Mausoleum in Surrey. Open almost exclusively for Heritage Open Days, it was built and probably also designed by William King-Noel (1st Earl of Lovelace). This photoshoot was organised as part of our ongoing collaboration with award-winning photographer, Forgotten Heritage.



HODs is...a magic pass



W.W.Winter Photographic Studio

Derby, Derbyshire, East Midlands
Joined Heritage Open Days in 2013

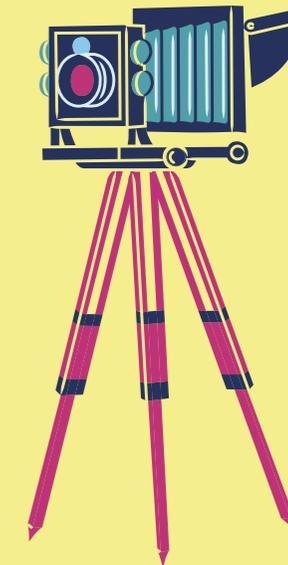
W.W.Winter is that rare thing; a 19th century business and site that is still in its original commercial use. Built in 1867 for artist and photographer Walter William Winter, a visit to the studio offers the chance to discover both personal and town histories. Although the owner had previously given talks on the company's history, it wasn't until a customer suggested they participate in Heritage Open Days that the studio was open for people to simply have a look around.

The success of that opening helped them win National Lottery Heritage Funding to conserve the extraordinary archive of historic glass plate negatives stacked up in their cellar, and reveal lost images of the city and its people. Over the last 170 years, Winter photographers have recorded Derby and the people, places and things that were important and commonplace as the city grew, creating a unique and in-depth archive.

“ The heritage side of the business has opened up the thrill of learning about staff from the Victorian era who have walked the same corridors, doing the same jobs as today. It has even led to meeting their great-grandchildren! The studio is truly alive with stories. ”

Hannah Maddix, W.W.Winter Ltd

Images clockwise courtesy of W.W.Winter Ltd: (1) W.W.Winter in his studio (2, 3, 4) Various pieces of antique photographic equipment on display (5) Samuel Wain and his staff in a group photo



W.W.Winter

“The power and fascination of history is all around and Heritage Open Days is the most brilliant way of turning this wealth into shared treasure.”

Bettany Hughes, historian, author & broadcaster



Image: Magpie Mine, Derbyshire



Lowestoft in Suffolk

Suffolk, Eastern
Joined Heritage Open Days in 2017

At England's most easterly point lies Lowestoft, the latest bubble in a burgeoning map of Suffolk festival hubs. Announced as a Heritage Coastal Action Zone shortly after its first coordinated offer for the festival, the town has skyrocketed from having just a few 'outlier' events to over 60 last year, highlighting the wealth of heritage gems in the area.

Sites such as the extraordinary Old Chemist Shop with its original labels, fittings and adverts and the Fishermen's cottages, preserved in the cellar of Dunx Cycles, had visitors queuing round the block. Elsewhere, events highlighted the town's history and customs through demonstrations at L & G Roberts Fish Merchants, talks on the herring industry by a fisheries scientist, while piano recitals and concerts reveal the town's strong musical links.



“ HODs has been a fantastic boost for the town. It's joined up the whole heritage sector into a strong and united group, and opened up the massive heritage potential that was just waiting to be discovered. ”

Paul King, HODs Lowestoft Steering Group

Images clockwise: (1) Viking reenactors in front of Lowestoft Museum (2) The old chemist shop in Lowestoft (3) John Ward Trio at Our Lady Star of the Sea Church. Image taken by Adam Barnes (4) High Street Haberdashery offers tours of the building.

Heritage Open Days is unlike any other cultural organisation or festival, in that we exist to support and empower local people, groups and communities to tell the stories that matter to them, in whatever way they choose. Plays, recitals, concerts, spoken word events and poetry nights – including many new and original works – are bringing an increasingly innovative edge to many events.

The Play's The Thing

Sometimes it's not just the stories we tell, but how we tell them, and HODs organisers are constantly finding new ways to bring their histories to life. Last year, *Station to Station* in Knutsford was a new play, performed in different locations including a train

and a station, focusing on a conversation between the authors Elizabeth Gaskell and Alison Uttley. Elsewhere, the Bicycle Ballet Company in Milton Keynes created *Blazing Saddles*, exploring how the invention of the bicycle affected women's lives, while in 2017 a brand new work *Forest, River & Royals* was performed as a *son et lumière* tale of Bewdley's growth into a flourishing Midlands town, through narration, music and song.

Walking And Talking

Exploring on foot is always the best way to discover a place, and HODs offers hundreds of innovative, one-off tours with expert guides, passionate about their local history. Across the country, a huge array of subjects have been covered, from 'drainspotting' tours in Sheffield to Stoke's iconic bottle ovens. In 2014, residents of Redhill got the chance to follow in Charles Dickens' footsteps on a guided walking tour using the author's own words to describe his visit in

1852, while in 2017, *Fabulous!* was an LGBTQ walking tour of Newcastle-upon-Tyne using performance, recordings and film to chart gay, lesbian and queer history in the city.

Bringing The Past To Life

A huge draw for families, experiential events and re-enactments are a fantastic way for children and parents to become absorbed into their local history. Visitors to Henley Fort in Guildford – usually closed to the public – have the chance to witness nail-biting battles, while re-enactors at the Norman Cross Prison Depot in Cambridgeshire give visitors an insight into the life of soldiers during the Napoleonic Wars. In 2014, the Leigh for All event in Lancashire created an Edwardian family history fair, with the chance to find out what happened to local families during the conflict, and sample food and drink of the period.



Images left to right: (1) Storytelling on a historic tug boat in Liverpool (2) A chance to have a go at stone carving in Durham (3) Street performers take over the city in Gloucester



Mole Valley HODs Committee

Surrey, South East
Joined Heritage Open Days in 1994

Mole Valley District Council has led the local steering committee for Heritage Open Days since the festival's first year. Their exemplary partnership work, particularly with voluntary groups was recognised in 2014 when they were awarded 'Star Organiser' at the 20th anniversary celebrations. Together they consistently stage around 70 events, with rooftop gardens and medieval undercrofts opening above and below the streets of Dorking, along with guided walks of the beautiful North Downs, vineyard tours and a wide-ranging programme of talks and lectures at historic buildings throughout the region.

In 2018, Mole Valley hosted a series of 'Extraordinary People' events', including historian and journalist Siân Evans' talk about Mrs Maggie Greville of Polesden Lacey. This year, 'Mole Valley on the Map' will see events taking place across all ten days of the festival.

“ An excellent heritage weekend programme. We were positively spoilt for choice and everything I went to see was better than I could have expected. How fortunate we are to live here. How fortunate we are with all the people and organisations who made it possible. ”

Mole Valley visitor, 2016

Images clockwise: (1) St Peter's Newdigate. Image taken by CES Lighting (2) Buckland Windmill taken by Duncan Ferns (3) The Hope Mausoleum, courtesy of Dorking Museum (4) The front of National Trust property, Polesden Lacey

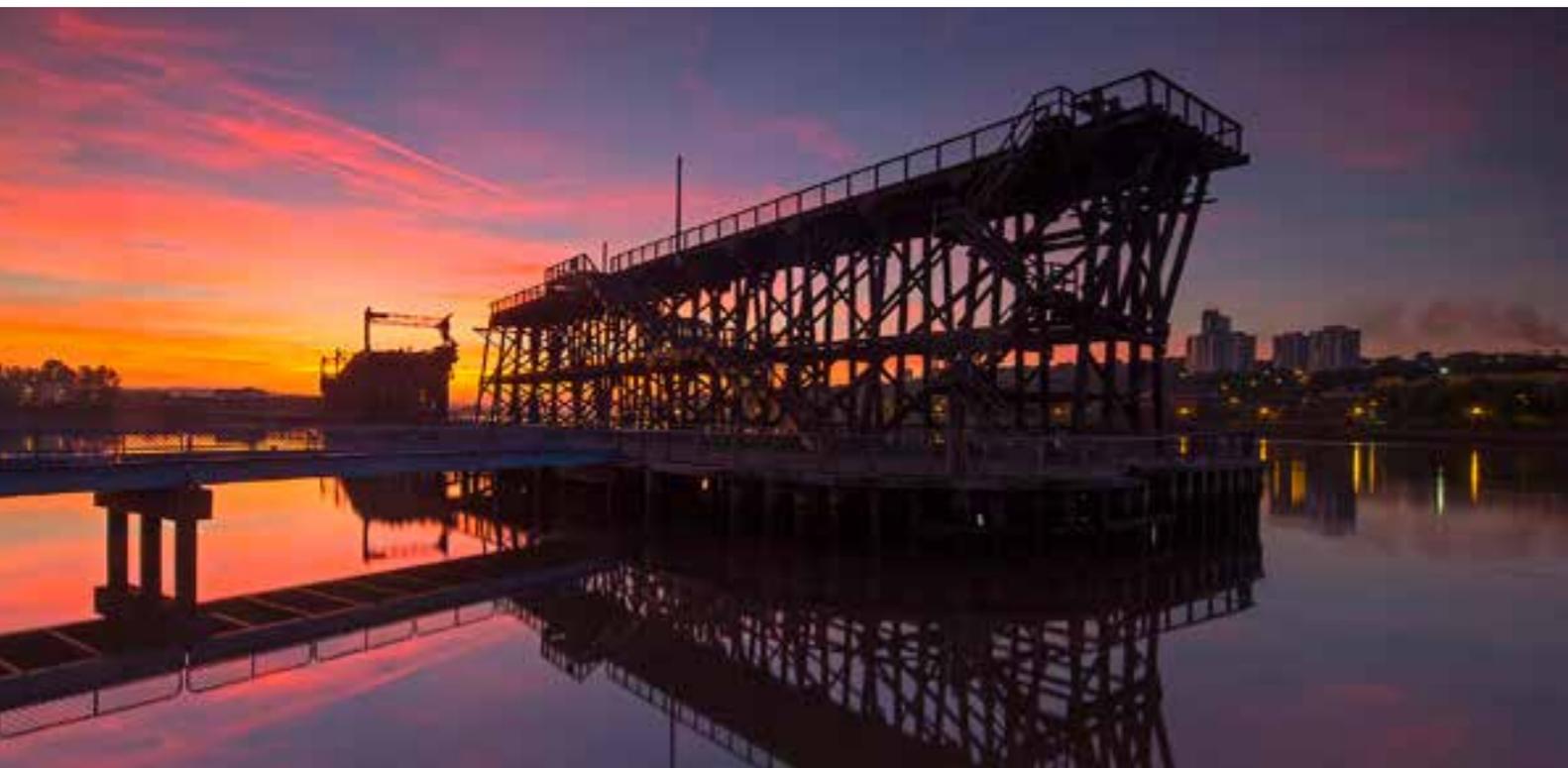


Mole Valley



“Heritage Open Days - a key part of our Gloucester History Festival - is a fantastic way to know more about where we live; both our great buildings, and how our predecessors in cities, towns and villages across the country did what they did - inspiring us to innovate today. Bringing heritage alive is such an important goal; it makes communities more sensitive to each other and brings us together.”

Richard Graham, MP for Gloucester and Chair of the Gloucester History Trust



Tyne & Wear HODs Committee

Tyne & Wear, North East
Joined Heritage Open Days in 2002

Since 2002 the five councils of the Tyne & Wear region have worked together to coordinate one of the largest programmes in the country. Working in partnership with other local groups, their festival offer has grown from 84 events in their first year to over 200 in recent years, and made them co-winners of 2014's 'Star Organisers' award.

Their glossy brochure highlights the huge range of sites and places that open up their doors for HODs and stage one-off and unique events. Icons such as the Swing Bridge in Newcastle, Dove Marine Laboratory in North Tyneside and Dunston Staiths - the largest timber structure in Europe, designed for loading coal from the coalfields straight onto waiting ships – all take part. The coast has a part to play too, with seafront geology tours of Sunderland and talks on local seafaring history, while in 2018, lovers of language had a unique opportunity to meet an artist from the popular Word Bank of Lost Dialects, South Tyneside, arriving by vintage bus tour.

“ Over the last 17 years, HODs has had a huge impact across Tyne and Wear. A total of 695,000 people have visited over 3,000 sites. It's often easy to take for granted what's on your doorstep. HODs is unique in that it gives a reason and the opportunity to experience and enjoy the rich heritage and culture of our region. ”

Fiona Cullen, Tyne & Wear HODs Committee

Images clockwise: (1) Looking out across Newcastle from the top of Grey's Monument (2) The Banqueting House at Gibside Estate. Image courtesy of The Landmark Trust. (3) Dunston Staiths, said to be the largest wooden structure in Europe.



Tyne & Wear

England's heritage is a reflection of the diverse faiths and cultures that knit our country together, creating our vibrant, multicultural society. Hundreds of events across the festival invite visitors to explore and celebrate these connections.

Discovering Different Faiths

Places of worship are inextricably linked to cultural heritage, with temples, mosques, churches, gurdwaras and synagogues all welcome visitors over HODs. Some towns, including Leicester, Peterborough and Kingston upon Thames offer multi-faith trails, linking the communities that meld together to form their town. In Derby, the Open Centre takes visitors to four religious sites, with talks on each of the faiths as well as the opportunity to ask questions, taste traditional foods and gain insights into different forms of worship.

Exploring Different Cultures

Integral to HODs' ethos is the belief that all stories should and must be told, and many of our events have a multicultural feel. In 2013, a tour of Exeter explored the roots of the city by discovering the stories of migrants from the past 2,000 years, from the Romans to today. Last year, Catton Park attracted over 500 visitors to a Multicultural Day, featuring Egyptian dance, calligraphy and henna painting. And every year, the streets of Coventry witness a vibrant fusion of cultures and ethnicities when Dame Goodyver's Day highlights heroines from different ethnic and religious communities in the city.

Forging European Links

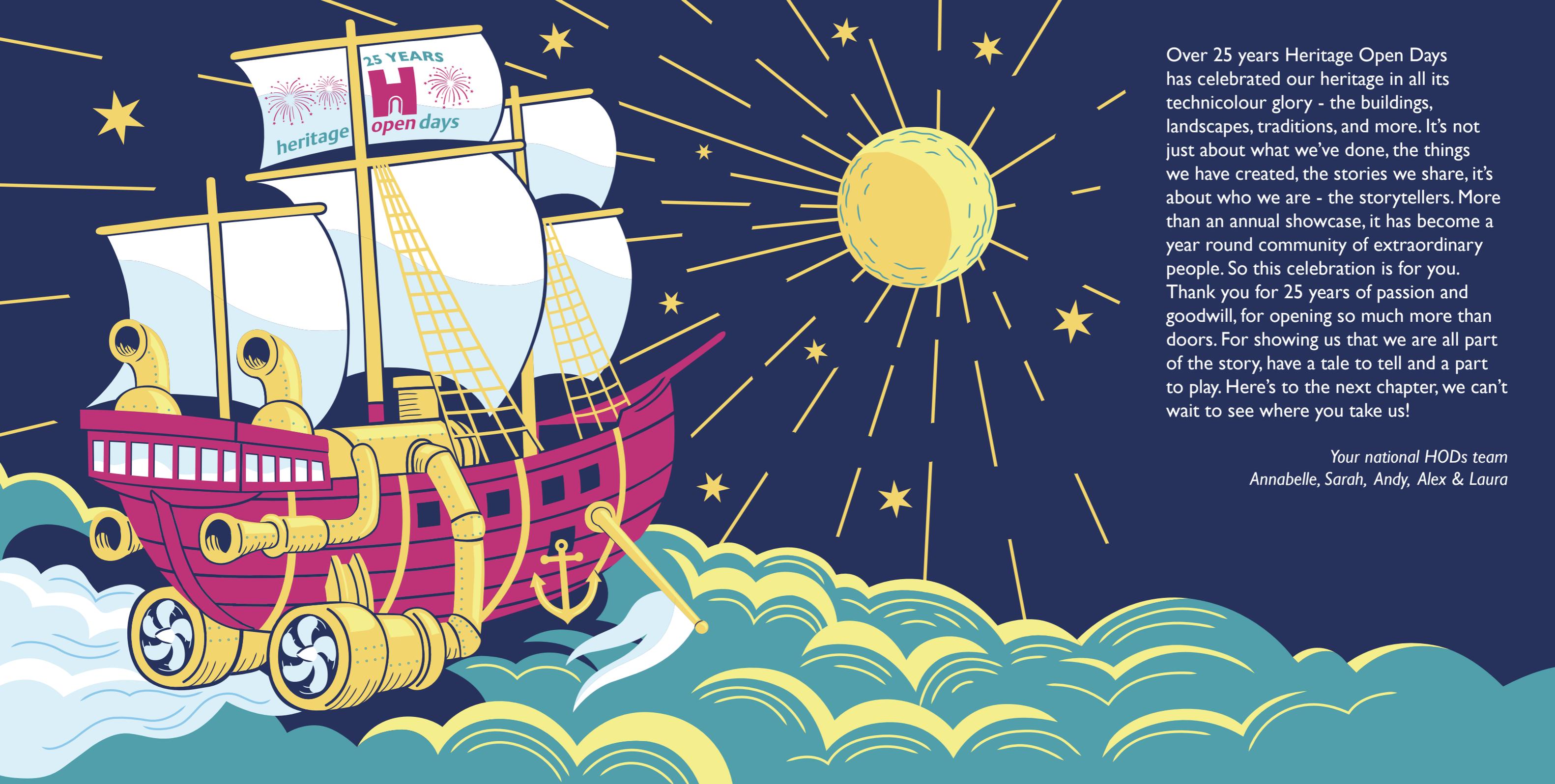
As part of European Heritage Days, highlighting cross-border links and connections is an important part of HODs. Elegant, glamorous – and usually wholly off-limits – several European ambassadors' residences opened up for tours during 2016's festival, giving an insight into the world of diplomacy and our relationship with foreign powers. In Dorking, Surrey, the success of an exhibition of Bernard Ireland Macalpine's 1915 war relief work in France, led to a trip across the Channel to forge a more lasting legacy. His records were digitised at the Archives at Chalons-en-Champagne.



Images clockwise: (1) Coventry celebrates female heroes from across the world in a city-wide event (2) A rainbow fire-engine on display in Knutsford, Cheshire as part of our 2017 LGBTQ+ theme (3) A re-enactment of the coronation of Henry III in Gloucester Cathedral (4) The European Heritage Days logo



HODs is...open to all



Over 25 years Heritage Open Days has celebrated our heritage in all its technicolour glory - the buildings, landscapes, traditions, and more. It's not just about what we've done, the things we have created, the stories we share, it's about who we are - the storytellers. More than an annual showcase, it has become a year round community of extraordinary people. So this celebration is for you. Thank you for 25 years of passion and goodwill, for opening so much more than doors. For showing us that we are all part of the story, have a tale to tell and a part to play. Here's to the next chapter, we can't wait to see where you take us!

*Your national HODs team
Annabelle, Sarah, Andy, Alex & Laura*

Heritage Open Days

20 Grosvenor Gardens,

London SW1W 0DH

+44 (0)20 7824 7180

info@heritageopendays.org.uk

heritageopendays.org.uk

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