

Dover Heritage Open Days

12th to 21st September 2025

Paul Wells

After a successful 2024 event, bolstered by the reopening of the Roman Painted House, Dover is once again taking part in the national Heritage Open Days event which runs from Friday 12th to Sunday 21st September 2025, co-ordinated by Executive Committee member Paul Wells.

Now spearheaded by the National Trust, with funding by the People's Postcode Lottery, every September thousands of volunteers across England organise events to celebrate our fantastic history and culture. It's your chance to see hidden places and try out new experiences, all of which are FREE to explore.

Headlining the events again this year will be the Maison Dieu project, which is also assisting with the print and design of the glossy leaflet.

The Maison Dieu offering this year, back inside the reawakened building, will include an action-packed weekend of architecture-inspired activities for adults and children on Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th September, including special tours of the Maison Dieu

and of the Mayor's Parlour holiday let, in partnership with The Landmark Trust. In addition, the offer will also include specialist talks and a tour around the exterior of the building to investigate building details, building stones and geology.

The Western Heights Preservation Society will be partaking by opening the Grand Shaft and running tours of the North Entrance Road Tunnel on the Western Heights. The Land Trust, partnered by the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership, will be opening Fort Burgoyne. The National Trust at Wanstone Rediscovered will show their discoveries at the World War Two gun sites on the eastern cliffs.

Dover Harbour Board will be leading tours of the Marine Station and the recently restored Admiralty Generating Station – home to the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Company memorial. The building also saw use in the First and Second World Wars.

Once again, we have many churches taking part, many of them also taking part in Ride and Stride on Saturday 13th, St Peter and St Paul Charlton, Unitarian Church, St Paul's Roman Catholic Church, St Marys Church, St



Grand-Shaft Western Heights



Fort Burgoyne



St Edmund's Chapel

Edmunds Chapel, St Martin's Church and St Margaret of Antioch Church at St Margarets at Cliffe.

For the first time illustrated Teatime Talks will be included. Subjects on the "Lost Architecture" theme will cover:

- Dover Promenade Pier – Martin Easdown and Martyn Webster
- Dover's Lost Medieval buildings – Keith Partfitt
- Western Heights fortifications – Andy Rayner, Western Heights Preservation Society
- Shakespeare Colliery – Colin Varrall
- Past River Dour industries – Barry O'Brien

All will be held at the Dover Museum cinema in the Market Square from 15th to 19th September at 6pm and booking will be required.

Also, for the first time, a number of guided walks will be included. (Booking will be required so please check the full event listings):

- St James Cemetery – Martyn Webster,

Dover Society

- Dover's Brewers Distillers and Wine Heritage – Barry O'Brien
- Western Heights - Andy Rayner, Western Heights Preservation Society
- Samphire Hoe - White Cliffs Countryside Partnership
- White Cliffs – Melanie Wrigley, National Trust

Dover Transport Museum will be holding a session on the history of Old Park, from mansion to military barracks and how they developed and restored their buildings to become a popular tourist attraction. Dover College will be leading tours of the remains of the medieval priory. The Roman Painted House will also be open for extended hours during the duration of the events.

The events are still several months away and are subject to change, so please keep up to date with what is taking place on www.heritageopendays.org.uk. A glossy leaflet with full details should be available at Dover Regatta on 12th July.

Further details will appear in due course, along with booking details where required. Bookings will be available from Monday 25th August and more details can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/DoverHeritageOpenDays>
<https://thedoversociety.co.uk/heritage-open-days/>



Dover Transport Museum Interior