

Winchester Heritage Open Days

2023 Festival Review

The Festival

This year's eighth annual Winchester Heritage Open Days festival, organised by Hampshire History Trust, took place from Friday 8 - Sunday 17 September 2023.

The 2023 theme was 'Creativity Unwrapped' and venues and organisations across Hampshire celebrated the creative history and heritage of the county with tours, talks, workshops, music and dancing, and more.

120+ events took place over the 10 day period attracting a staggering 15,000+ attendees – an increase of 50% on 2022.



How did it go?

During this year's festival attendees engaged in the rich culture of Hampshire attending events throughout the county.

65% of events were mounted in the city of Winchester. However, other events and activities took place as far afield as Lymington, Alton and Basingstoke.

- Winchester College presented a range of 10 fascinating events attracting over 1,000 visitors
- Events at The Great Hall included poetry, dance, workshops and displays
- Courtlye Musick gave a wonderful performance at The Pilgrims School
- 170 people attended The Brickworks Museum over two days with many of them filling up the seats for two talks
- 2,000 people travelled to visit the stunning 17th Century Uppark House and Gardens

Behind the Scenes

During the run up to the festival, we had over 121,000 visits to our website illustrating the huge interest in Hampshire's history and heritage.

Our regular e-newsletter now has nearly 2,000 subscribers, an increase of 25% on 2022. Our e-newsletters keep our supporters up to date with all the latest festival news including forthcoming events, volunteering opportunities, and other activities.

This year our box office opened on the 8th August and over 800 tickets were booked in the first 4 days. Nearly 2,000 tickets were booked for the festival as a whole, and 15,000+ visitors enjoyed the wide range of "Just Turn Up" events.

WHODs 2023



121,000+

Website Hits
April - September 2023



1,900+

E-Newsletter Subscribers



800+

Tickets booked in first 4
days of the Box Office
Opening

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Social Media



2,205
Followers



741
Followers



2,341
Followers

Our Audience

36% of festival attendees were new to Heritage Open Days, while 64% of visitors had attended and enjoyed events in previous years.

The majority of attendees stated that they visited the festival to find out more about local history, to visit places that are not normally accessible and to learn or do something new or different.

Over 70% of visitors attended more than 2 events (40% attended 3 or more).

Visitors came from as far away as the USA though the vast majority of visitors were from closer to home, many stating that the opportunity to visit events and venues on their doorstep was valued highly.

Feedback

We received some wonderful feedback from attendees, highlighting events they liked in particular whether it was learning something new, touring places usually unavailable to the public or enjoying interesting activities with family and friends.

Some respondents were keen to learn more about becoming a Friend of Hampshire History Trust, which has just been launched.

"Rick Stein's Fishy Fun was great! The kids really enjoyed learning to make fish fingers and the two teachers were warm and friendly."

"This is definitely one of my favourite weeks of the year. A big thank you to the organisers."

"The Grange - the tour was amazing and the gentleman who led the tour was superb in both his knowledge and the way he shared the information."

"Behind the scenes at Theatre Royal. The tour was very relaxed and informative with a good mix of activities for both adults and children. The guides were also very friendly."

Supporters

Hampshire History Trust is grateful for the continuing support of our sponsors and founders, including our lead sponsor Winchester College.



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Charity Registration
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Friends Scheme

If you would like to find out more about our Hampshire History Trust Friends Scheme, please email info@winchesterheritageopendays.org or visit our website www.winchesterheritageopendays.org.