

#FESTIVAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY

Event information and ideas

The Festival of Archaeology is coordinated by the Council for British Archaeology, a UK-wide archaeology charity whose aim is to enable people to protect and celebrate their archaeological heritage.

The aim of the Festival is to make archaeology as accessible as possible, by providing hundreds of opportunities, to people of all ages and abilities. The Festival creates a higher profile for archaeology, promotes understanding of the past, and increases public engagement. We want everyone to understand, appreciate, and celebrate archaeology in the UK.

Feedback from organisers shows that the Festival has helped them to diversify and increase visitor numbers.

Comments from previous Festivals include:

- I think the Festival of Archaeology is an excellent way to promote archaeology and am a keen supporter...
- We enjoyed participating. For a small community, we had people come quite some distance to participate. We had some enthusiastic young people who were very keen on archaeology so it's good to be able to hold events to be inclusive of all ages.
- Thank you for your support and information throughout the festival and the year.
- Cover by event insurance an excellent idea for participation by individuals/small groups without funding - a good contribution by CBA.
- It was a great success and brought in a large new audience
- We are very grateful to the Festival for publicising our event, and for providing a focus. It is one of the most successful days in the year for our museum.

Who can participate?

All organisations are welcome to register an event for the Festival of Archaeology! You can put on any archaeologically or historically themed event you like – family fun days, lectures, guided tours, training excavations, open days, hands-on activities, re-enactments, demonstrations, finds identification days – it is entirely up to you to decide how you would like to get people involved and thinking about archaeology and the wider historic environment.

Council for
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Historic England

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Why should you participate?

Holding an event as part of the Festival is an excellent way to encourage people to visit your site, to find out about archaeology in your local area or further afield, to learn about why our historic environment is so important and to find out more about the work your organisation does. It could help you to attract new members or encourage people to participate in local archaeological projects. Being part of such a large UK-wide programme of events helps to raise the profile of your event and details of your event will reach a huge new potential audience. A UK-wide PR campaign ensures excellent public awareness of the events programme across the UK.

Event ideas

To browse previous Festival events, please go to: <http://www.archaeologyfestival.org.uk/pastevents>

Themed Days

You may want to focus on a specific historical period. Ideas include re-enactments or dressing-up, making armour, tasting food, craft making, games, quizzes etc.

Activity Days

Hands-on public participation is the main aim of these events. This could be archaeology-based, e.g. excavation in a sandpit, sieving, stratigraphy, geophysics, recording and drawing artefacts or finds washing. Alternatively, it could be craft-based, e.g. pottery making, weaving, mosaic making, wattle and daub wall building, corn-grinding.

Tours

For sites with limited staff resources simply opening your doors to the public free of charge and being on hand to answer questions or offering a pre-booked guided tour can be a way of participating without stretching a limited staff resource.

Guided Walks

Along heritage trails, across archaeological landscapes, coastal environments, National Parks, industrial landscapes or around buildings. Help people discover secrets of the past.

Demonstrations

Experts demonstrating ancient crafts such as flint knapping, metal working, tile making etc. or modern archaeological techniques such as interactive geophysical sessions.

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Public Talks/Lectures

On any archaeologically related subject Finds/Identification Days Including road shows and artefact handling sessions from any historical period of your choice. Get your PAS Finds Liaison Officer involved.

Excavation open days

Invite the public to see an excavation in progress and to meet and quiz real archaeologists about their jobs. You could even invite them to take part in the excavations.

Regional events

Why not consider linking up with other museums, heritage sites, archaeological / historical groups, country parks and universities around your region to pull together a 'Regional Archaeology Festival' to promote archaeology in your region? The Festival of Leicestershire Archaeology has been a great success over the last few years - 50 Festival events were organised in 2010 by many small and large bodies, and promoted jointly across the region to showcase the regions wonderful heritage resources. Similarly, the Mendip Hills Festival of Archaeology was formed in 2010 and 23 events were held and jointly promoted by organisations across the area.

Working together helps create a higher profile for your event, makes the marketing and promotion of your event a lot easier, and makes it a more attractive event for your local and regional press to cover. It also helps you reach a much wider and larger audience, as your promotional material will potentially be distributed further across your region. Most importantly, it helps us to bring archaeology to everyone. It doesn't take much to get people thinking about something to do. Send out a few emails, organise some meetings, pull together the local archaeological community, and get them working together on this joint project. A joint leaflet, contributed to by all parties, covering all the events in the area and distributed widely will have a huge impact.

Admissions Fees

Admission charge is entirely in the hands of the event organisers but as it is 'THE' special fortnight of the year targeted at encouraging people to become involved, we ask that admission prices are kept to a minimum and that members of the Young Archaeologists' Club be allowed FREE admission.

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