

Heritage Open Days

Rugby 2026

FREE TO
EXPLORE

Rugby



heritage open days

Welcome to this year's programme of Heritage Open Days events in Rugby, its borough and surrounding areas. Thank you to all venues that have planned events, and the volunteers supporting them.

All events are free, some require advanced booking. Unless differently indicated in the event description, bookings can be made at www.therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or by calling Rugby Visitor Centre on 01788 533217.



Art at the Alex: Sheep to Shawl Challenge

Date: Wednesday 17 – Sunday 20 September

Time: 11:00 – 16:00

Venue: Art at the Alex, Alexandra Arts, 72–73 James Street, Rugby, CV21 2SL.

Fibre artists (spinners, weavers, knitters and crocheters) will combine forces across four days to transform woollen fleeces into fabrics, starting with sheep and ending in wearable shawl(s). From preparation to finishing will be demonstrated.

Suitable for all. Booking not required

Art at the Alex: Tudors and Textiles

Date: Friday 11 – Sunday 13 September

Time: 11:00 – 16:00

Venue: Art at the Alex, Alexandra Arts, 72–73 James Street, Rugby, CV21 2SL.

At this quirky art centre in Rugby town, textile artist and Tudor re-enactor Tamsen Flack, will be joined by friends in Tudor dress, and they will demonstrate textile crafts, prepare Tudor food and (Sunday only) entertain with some Tudor music.

Suitable for all. Booking not required.



Bilton Heritage Walking Tour

Date: Saturday 12 September

Time: 14:00 – 15:30

Venue: Meet by St Mark's Church car park, Church Walk, Bilton, Rugby, CV22 7LX.

Join our volunteer Town Guides for this Heritage Open Days walking tour of Bilton. Explore historical sites and learn about Bilton's heritage.

Suitable for all audiences. Recommended age for children: 12+.

We kindly ask tour attendees not to use the Church's car park, as this may be needed for events and ceremonies.

Booking required. Please visit therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or call **01788 533217**.

Talk and Tea with the Mayor of Rugby

Date: Monday 14 September

Time: 12:00 – 13:00

Venue: Rugby Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby, CV21 2RR.

The Mayor of Rugby, Councillor Nooria Sayani, welcomes visitors to a tour of the Council Chamber, followed by tea in the Mayor's Parlour. Children are welcome but must be supervised.

Booking required. Please visit therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or call **01788 533217**.



Celebrate Everyday Histories at Rugby Art Gallery and Museum

Venue: Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, Little Elborow Street, Rugby, CV21 3BZ.

Join us as we celebrate local history, people, and sights at Rugby Art Gallery with our three Everyday Histories events:

Object Handling: Get up close with museum objects reflecting domestic life and local industry from Rugby's past. Suitable for all ages – **Saturday 12 September, 13:00–15:30**

Express Arts: Celebrate the timeless joy of sending postcards by creating your own personalized keepsake of Rugby. Accessible for all, including adults with additional needs – **Thursday 17 September, 11:30–12:30**

The Good Times: Celebrate the nostalgic joy of sending postcards in a safe, gentle, and accessible environment tailored for adults living with dementia and their carers **Thursday 17 September, 13:30–15:00**. Booking required, please call **01788 533217**





Rugby Town Centre Walking Tours

Venue: Meet at Rugby Visitor Centre, Little Elborow Street, Rugby, CV21 3BZ.

History and Heritage: Our volunteer Rugby Town Guides take residents and visitors on a journey of discovery through the town centre, revealing fascinating facts.

Saturday 12, Saturday 19 September,
11:00 – 12:30

Sporting heritage: Join a walking tour of Rugby, focusing on its sporting heritage, from birthplace of the game to the development of the rugby ball and beyond.

Friday 11 September, 11:00 – 12:30

Public Art Trail: Find out about the history of public artwork in Rugby town centre, the artists involved and the idea behind each piece.

Friday 18 September, 11:00 – 12:30

The walks are fully accessible.
Recommended age for children: 12+.



Booking required. Please visit
therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or call 01788
533217.

Rugby Family History Group

Date: Saturday 12 and Sunday 13
September

Time: Saturday 10:00–16:00,
Sunday 12:00–16:00

Venue: Saturday: in the Foyer of
Rugby Art Gallery and Museum.
Sunday: Rugby Library
Little Elborow St., Rugby, CV21 3BZ

Meet a member of the Rugby Family History
Group for information and help with family
history research. Suitable for all.

No booking required. For information please
contact: secretary.rfhg@gmail.com



St. Peter's Church, Wolfhampcote

Date: Saturday 12 September

Time: 13:00 – 16:00

Venue: St. Peter's Church,
Wolfhampcote, Rugby CV23 8AR.

This stunning 14th century church is the sole survivor of the lost village of Wolfhampcote. Its tough exterior of crooked windows, stout buttresses and multi-coloured patchwork stone conceals an orderly and serene interior.

There is one step down to an uneven porch and a further step down to the nave. As a medieval church, St. Peter's has poor wheelchair access. There is limited parking available next to the churchyard.

No booking required. We are asking for donations for refreshments.

Midland Red Bus and St. Mary's Tour

Date: Wednesday 16 September

Time: 11:00 – 13:00 (trip 1)
14:00 – 16:00 (trip 2)

Venue: The bus departs from
Rugby Visitor Centre, Little Elborow
Street, Rugby, CV21 3BZ.

Climb on board a 1968 vintage Midland Red bus. The bus will be stopping at Clifton-upon-Dunsmore for a brief tour of St. Mary's Church and refreshments. The tour will last approximately two hours.

Booking required. Please visit
therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or call 01788
533217.

Rugby School Gardens Tour

Date: Tuesday 15 September

Time: 10:30 – 12:00

Venue: Meet at the School Shop,
Barby Rd, Rugby, CV22 5DP.

Meet a member of the Rugby School Gardens team and enjoy a walk through areas not usually open to the public. The tour will last approximately 90 minutes, weather dependent.

Not suitable for children under 5s. Please wear weather appropriate footwear. Not suitable for wheelchair or scooter users.

Booking required. Please visit
therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or call 01788
533217.



St. Andrew's Parish Church

Venue: St. Andrew's Church, Rugby, CV21 3PT.

Walk the Windows: Come to our beautiful church in the heart of Rugby and discover the stories told through the stained-glass windows. Our guided tours will uncover the history of these remarkable artworks. Tours last 45 minutes.

Saturday 12 September from 12:30–16:15, Monday 14, Wednesday 16 and Thursday 17 September from 14:00 – 16:15. Suitable for adults, limited accessibility for wheelchair users.

Tour the Tower: Step inside our historic church tower for a unique behind the scenes experience. A rare opportunity to explore an area of the church that is not usually open to the public.

Saturday 12 September, tours last 30 minutes from 09:30–12:00. Children aged 10+ may attend with an adult. Not accessible for wheelchair users.

Vestments Exhibition: Step into our church and discover the beauty and history of our

vestments. Come and see the garments and learn about their symbolism and stories they tell. All welcome.

Saturday 12 – Sunday 20 September.
Monday – Friday, 09:30 – 14:00. Saturday, 09:30 – 12:00 (closed on Sundays).

Booking required for Walk the Windows and Tour of the Tower.

Please visit therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or call 01788 533217.

St. Edith's Church, Monks Kirby

Date: Saturday 12, Sunday 13 and 20 September

Time: Sat 12 13:00 – 14:00
(Tours)

Sun 13 13:00 – 16:00 (Tours)

Sun 13 13:00 – 14:00 (Tower and Bell Ringing)

Sun 20 13:00 – 14:30 (Tours)

Venue: St. Edith's Church, Millers Lane, Monks Kirby, Rugby, CV23 0QX.

St Edith's Church is a Grade I listed building, located in Monks Kirby. It dates from 1077 and is the largest parish church in Warwickshire. Come along for free guided tours (duration 30 minutes), or climb the tower and have a go at bell-ringing!

No booking required. Visitors requiring ramp access will need to contact the church warden on **01788 832887**.





St. Mark's Church

Date: Wednesday 16 September

Time: 14:00–15:30

Venue: St Mark's Church, Church Walk, Bilton, Rugby, CV22 7LT.

Explore St Mark's Church, Bilton with a very informative guided tour, including refreshments. St Mark's Church is designated at Grade II* with many fine examples of C14 to C21 architecture, fittings, stained glass and is noted for its expression of High Victorian piety.

During your visit you will see how the original building, started in about 1320, has been changed and adapted to deal with the growth of the village.

Refreshments will be available after the tour. There may be time, weather permitting, for a tour of the churchyard. A booklet explaining the history of St Mark's will be available, for those interested, at a cost of £2.50

Booking required. Please visit therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or call 01788 533217.

Rugby Gin Distillery

Date: Tuesday 15 and Wednesday 16 September

Time: 11:00 – 12:30

Venue: Home Farm, Pailton Rd, Harborough Magna, Rugby CV23 0HG.

We look forward to welcoming you to Rugby Distillery for a tour, talk and tasting, where we will share our story and how we make Rugby Gin. You will also be able to taste sample all of our delicious gins.

Suitable for 16 years and over, with tasting for participants aged 18+

Booking required. Please visit therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or call 01788 533217.

Marton Museum of Country Bygones

Date: Saturday 19, Sunday 20 September

Time: 10:30 – 16:30

Venue: Marton Museum of Country Bygones, Louisa Ward Close, Marton, Rugby, CV23 9SA.

Marton Museum of Country Bygones is a museum of local rural artefacts. There will be a blacksmith demonstration, a spinning wheel in action, corn dollies, a diorama, activities and trails for children. We will also be open all day with displays of farming tools, dairy, sheep and needlecraft. Suitable for all.

No booking required.





Cemex Plant Tour

Date: Thursday 17 and Friday 18 September

Time: 10:30–12:30, 13:30–15:30, 16:30–18:30 (Thursday)
10:30–12:30 and 13:30–15:30 (Friday)

Venue: CEMEX Rugby Cement Plant, Lawford Rd, Rugby, CV21 2RY.

Enjoy a tour, presentation and film of the UK's largest cement plant. The tour includes a trip up the pre-heater tower, which has spectacular views over Rugby and Warwickshire.

Please wear sensible footwear, flat, no open toes. Suitable for adults and children aged 8+ (must be accompanied by an adult).

Access information to the plant will be given at the time of booking.

Booking required. Please visit therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or call 01788 533217.

Rugby School Tour

Date: Wednesday 16 September

Time: 13:00 – 15:00

Venue: Rugby School Shop, Barby Rd, Rugby, CV22 5DP.

This guided walking tour around Rugby School includes the School Museum, The Close, Chapel and other historical areas.

Not suitable for children under 5s.

Advance notice required for ramps to be placed.

Booking required. Please visit therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or call 01788 533217.

Meet the Rugby School Archivist

Date: Wednesday 16 September

Time: 10:30 – 11:30

Venue: Rugby Library and Information Centre, Little Elborow St, Rugby CV21 3BZ.

Rugby School was founded by the will of Lawrence Sheriff in 1567. Its nearly 460-year history is captured in hundreds of documents in the School Archives all cared for by the Rugby School Archives Team. This session is an opportunity to find out what is in the school's collections, how to access them for research and to ask questions about the collections. Suitable for ages 16+.

Booking required. Please visit Rugby Library's Eventbrite to book or call 0300 5558171.

Rugby Theatre Backstage Tour

Date: Saturday 12 September

Time: 9:00 – 17:00 tours running every hour (last tour at 16:00)

Venue: Rugby Theatre, Henry Street, Rugby, CV21 2QA.

Go behind the scenes in your local theatre, see what goes into putting a show on stage.

No wheelchair access to backstage areas or workshops. Suitable for families.

Booking required. Please visit therugbytown.co.uk/HODs or call 01788 533217.

Coombe Abbey Hotel

Date: Friday 18 to Sunday 20 September

Time: 11:00, 13:00 and 15:00 each day.

Venue: Coombe Abbey Hotel, Brinklow Road, Binley, Coventry, CV3 2AB.

Come and find out more about Coombe Abbey's History, starting where it all began as a monastery, right up to the present day! Enjoy a scone and a pot of tea too.

Please call 02476 430536 to book your place.



Princethorpe College

Date: 20 September

Time: 13:30 – 16:00

Tours: 13:30, 14:15, 15:00

Venue: Princethorpe College
Leamington Road, Princethorpe,
Rugby, CV23 9PX.

Founded in 1833, St Mary's Priory was one of the first priories to be built in England after the Reformation. Join us for a tour to discover some of the fascinating everyday histories of those who lived and worked here. Each tour will last approximately 1 hour.

Parts of the building, such as the library and cellar, are only accessible by stairs. Please also note that the floor may be uneven in some parts of the tour. Please advise us if you have any accessibility requirements and we will do our best to assist you.

Places must be booked in advance via princethorpe-college-HOD2026.eventbrite.co.uk. Please contact archives@princethorpe.co.uk for assistance.



Coombe Abbey Park

Date: Friday 11 to Thursday 20 September (Photographic and Infographic display)
Wednesday 19 September (guided walk)

Time: 10:00 – 16:00 (Photographic and Infographic display)
10:00 – 12:00, 13:00 – 15:00
(Guided walks)

Venue: Coombe Abbey Park,
Brinklow Rd, Coventry CV3 2AB.

Discover the fascinating people who helped shape the park we see today. Through our photo and information display, explore how generations of people have shaped and transformed the Abbey and its grounds.

From the influence of Cistercian monks and Royal connections to visionary designers and landowners, the landscape has evolved over centuries in response to fashion, necessity, ambition and changing ways of life.

Booking essential. Please visit
www.coventry.gov.uk/events.

Rugby Baptist Church

Date: Saturday 19 September

Time: 11:00 – 14:00

Venue: Rugby Baptist Church,
Regent Place, Rugby, CV21 2PJ.

This fine 1905 church with stunning curved pews and Art Deco stained glass will be open to the public, with guides and displays explaining its history.

No booking required. For information, please call **Rev David James Fleming** on
07725302765

Cotesbach Educational Trust

Date: Friday 11, Saturday 12 September

Time: 10:30 – 15:30

Venue: Cotesbach Educational Trust,
Main Street, Cotesbach,
Lutterworth, LE17 4HX.

Discover the stories, people and traditions that have shaped Cotesbach through the centuries. Explore heritage displays, family history activities, guided walks and traditional crafts.

Guided tours will assemble by the Glasshouse, leaving at 11:00 and 13.30.

If you have not booked in advance, please ask our volunteers who will advise as to whether there is still space available

Tours can be booked via Eventbrite or by emailing
hello@cotesbacheducationaltrust.org.uk



St. Marie's RC Church

Date: Friday 11 to Saturday 12 September

Time: 10:00 – 16:00

Venue: St. Marie's RC Church, Gentili House, Oak Street, Rugby, CV22 5EL.

We will have a number of volunteer run stalls appropriate to the theme, as well as all areas of the church open with personnel on hand to assist with information and help. Join us at St Maries RC Church, for children friendly activities (e.g. treasure hunt) in the church; refreshments by the UCM; interactive tour of the church using QR codes; amongst other fun and informational theme-oriented activities.

Mass at 10:00 on Friday and 09.30 on Saturday.

Wheelchair accessible

No booking required.

History of Brinklow Village

Date: Saturday 12, Sunday 13 September

Time: 11:00 – 15:00

Venue: Brinklow Community Hall, The Church Room, 43 Broad Street, Brinklow, Rugby, CV23 0LS.

Brinklow is a small village on the Roman Fosse Way. This exhibition presents materials about the Motte and Bailey, Norman Church, Victorian School, re-routed Canal and much more.

Brinklow Community Hall is located opposite The White Lion Pub. Main parking can be found at the bottom of Barr Lane. Tea/coffee and cakes will be on sale.

No booking required.

Bournville in Rugby

Date: 12 and 19 September

Time: 11:00 – 16:00

Venue: Rugby Meeting House, 28 Regent Place, Rugby, CV21 2PN.

A little bit of Bournville in the centre of Rugby. In 1909 a dual purpose adult school and meeting house was built for Rugby Quakers in what was then Moat Street. Designed and built by Bedford Tyler, the architect of the Bournville Estate.

Partial wheelchair access. Refreshments available

No booking required.

Please note. All information correct at the time of print. Please visit therugbytown.co.uk/HODs for up-to-date information before visiting, or call Rugby Visitor Centre on **01788 533217**.



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