

FREE TO
EXPLORE

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS IN READING

12-21 September 2025



ARCHITECTURE

heritageopendays.org
whatsonreading.com



HERITAGE OPEN DAYS IN READING

Explore Reading's heritage as part of England's annual heritage festival. All Heritage Open Days events are FREE to attend, but charity donations are accepted at some events.

This programme lists nearly 40 events in and around Reading that showcase the rich stories that make Reading such a unique place to work, live or visit.

A number of these events must be pre-booked due to limited capacities. Check the individual event listing to see if you need to book.

Please check **heritageopendays.org** before travelling to check accessibility. Many of these heritage sites have limited wheelchair accessibility and there is full detail of access arrangements on the **heritageopendays.org** website. The website also provides information on travel options.

Look out for events that celebrate Reading's amazing buildings as part of this year's theme of architecture.

All the events are listed in date order.

Key:



Events celebrating architecture



Online events only



1 Kendrick Conservation Area Walkabout



This Conservation Area Walkabout will take you back over 150 years to when the Kendrick area of Reading looked very different. You'll discover lost swimming baths, Kendrick Court, Albion Terrace, the original University campus, impressive Listed buildings, lovely mature trees and the stories of the people who lived there.

**Fri 12 Sep, 10:30 &
Wed 17 Sep, 10:30**

Corner of South & East Street, RG1 4GP
Pre-booking required: [Eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

Collection on behalf of local charities (optional)

2 Architecture at Reading Library



Reading Library's Local Studies Collection holds all sorts of resources relating to architecture in the town. This film will look at examples of estate catalogues, maps, street directories and photographs and how they might help in finding out more about the buildings - and the people who lived in them.

Fri 12 - Sun 21 Sep

Watch anytime
whatsonreading.com

3 Reading's Milling Heritage Walk



A two-hour guided walk around Central Reading showcasing the town's renewable energy history. Margaret Simons, Mills Archive Trustee and historian, will guide attendees, narrating Reading's milling heritage, associated structures and town history along the way. The walk starts at Watlington House, home to the Mills Archive Trust, who have developed the route.

**Fri 12 Sep, 10:30 &
Wed 17 Sep, 10:30**

Watlington House, 44 Watlington Street,
RG1 4RJ

Pre-booking required:
outreach@millsarchive.org / 0118 9502052



4 Berkshire Churches Talk



Find out more about the historical, unusual and sometimes hidden churches and churchyards in and around Berkshire and the people associated with them. Delve into the social history and associated stories, including the marriage of Anne Seymour and a death which rocked the Court of Queen Elizabeth I. Expect lots of photographs!



Fri 12 Sep, 19:30 - 20:30

Pre-booking required:
Zoom link will be sent after booking
<https://berksfhs.org>



Fri 12 Sep, 16:30 - 18:30
(tour, public talk and exhibition)
Sun 14 Sep, 12:00
(tour and exhibition only)

5 Architecture Up Close – The Making of One Station Hill

Explore the story behind One Station Hill through an architectural tour, public talk and a visual exhibition showcasing the building's development. Discover how this landmark was designed and built and enjoy panoramic views from Level 15.

One Station Hill, RG1 1NB
Pre-booking required: [Eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

6 17 Castle Street



Discover this 16th century house and the rooms not normally open to the public which boast interesting beam construction, Diamond chimneys, carriage mounting block and a Victorian staircase. It has been used as an inn, a doctor's residence and surgery. Once owned by a Reading Mayor, the building has been used as a solicitor's practice since 1971.



Sat 13 Sep, 10:00 - 16:30

17 Castle Street, RG1 7SB
No booking required

7 St Mary's Episcopal Chapel



Explore this interesting building which was first opened for worship in 1798. Self-guided tours of the chapel and displays of pots and glassware found in a pit under the floor during renovations.



Sat 13 Sep, 09:30 - 17:30 & Thurs 18 Sep, 10:00 - 14:00

14 Castle Street, RG1 7RD
No booking required

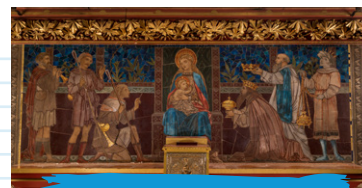
8 Renewable energy family art workshop

Join Jelly and the Mills Archive Trust for a hands-on, drop-in arts workshop exploring renewable energy through creativity, history and imagination.

Watlington House, 44 Watlington Street, RG1 4RJ
Pre-booking preferred: 0118 9502052 or friends@millsarchive.org



Sat 13 Sep, 11:30 - 13:30



Sat 13 Sep, 10:00 - 16:00 & Sat 20 Sep, 10:00 - 16:00

Southampton Street, RG1 2QP
No booking required

10 St Michael's Tilehurst Photography Exhibition



An exhibition of photographs set in a beautiful and historic church, with self-guided tours of the building and churchyard. Parts of St Michael's date back to the 12th century and it was extensively remodelled in the mid-Victorian era. It boasts a fine Arts and Crafts-stained glass window by William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones. Refreshments will be available.



Sat 13 Sep, 10:00 - 16:00

New Lane Hill, Tilehurst, RG30 4JX
No booking required



Sat 13 Sep, 10:00 - 12:30

Reading Town Hall, Blagrove Street, RG1 1QH
Pre-booking required: [Eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

11 Exploring the Architecture of Georgian Reading



An architectural walking tour of Reading's extensive Georgian architecture by Dr Stephen Gage, Lecturer in Architecture at University of Reading. Reading has over 400 listed buildings from the Georgian period, representing a substantial part of its built heritage, from early C18 houses on Castle Street and London Street to the Royal Berkshire Hospital and Eldon Square in the 1830s.



Sat 13 Sep, 10:00 - 16:00
Sun 14 Sep, 10:00 - 14:00
Sun 21 Sep, 10:00 - 14:00

Chain Street, RG1 2HX
 No booking required

12 Reading Minster Church of St Mary the Virgin

Reading Minster blends Norman foundations, Gothic features and Victorian restorations, reflecting over 900 years of architectural history. It stands as a testament to the town's rich ecclesiastical and cultural heritage.

13 Hear and play Reading's famous organ

Hear and play the famous 'Father' Willis Organ as part of the Royal College of Organists' "Play the Organ Year 2025". Spend the whole day or drop in any time and enjoy a variety of Organ events from an illustrated introductory talk, a lunchtime recital, the chance for non-players to have-a-go and a masterclass with organist, Tom Bell.

Sat 13 Sep, 10:30 - 16:30

Blagrove Street, RG1 1QH
 No booking required



14 Tour of the University of Reading's Great Hall

The Grade II listed Great Hall on the University's London Road campus was designed by William Ravenscroft and Charles Steward Smith in 1905. It was built for use as an assembly hall for the University College, as it was then known. The impressive hall is used for degree congregations, concerts, examinations, lectures and receptions. The guided tour is led by members of The Friends of the University of Reading.

Sat 13 Sep, 11:00 & 12:30

London Road, RG1 5AQ
 Pre-booking required:
brenda@morrisandfamily.co.uk

15 Royal Berkshire Archives Tour

Behind the scenes tour with displays connected to the architecture, people and places of Berkshire. Conservation staff will provide details on the work that they do and show people round the conservation studio. You'll discover more about the services they offer, the collections and how to visit to use the archives yourself.



Sat 13 Sep, 10:30

9 Coley Avenue, RG1 6AF
 Pre-booking required: 0118 9375132
archives@reading.gov.uk



Three talks are being held in Caversham Baptist Church on Saturday 13 September as part of the Heritage Open Days programme for 2025, organised by Caversham and District Residents' Association. There is also a tour of the Waterhouse-designed church itself.

Donations towards the cost of the venue would be welcome. Each talk must be booked separately.



16 Tours of Caversham Baptist Church

A chance to visit and hear more about the church designed by the well-known architect Alfred Waterhouse, known for his design of the Natural History Museum and Manchester Town Hall, as well as a number of buildings in his home of Reading. The church is built in red brick in the Gothic style and is Grade II listed.

Sat 13 Sep, 12:00. No booking required



17 Crossing the Thames at Caversham talk

A richly illustrated talk from Helen Lambert of Caversham and District Residents Association telling the story of Reading Bridge and the old and new Caversham Bridges. The current Caversham Bridge celebrates its centenary in 2026 but its earlier bridges date back to the 13th century. In 1911, a new crossing point, Reading Bridge, was built to create what was in 1923 the longest single span in the UK.

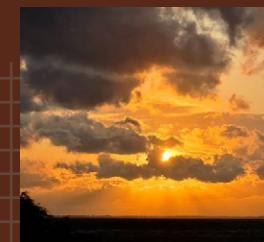
Sat 13 Sep, 13:30. Pre-booking required: [Eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)



18 The Royal Meteorological Society look back over 175 years and forwards

The Royal Meteorological Society, which is based in Reading, has long been a pioneer in the field of meteorology and this year celebrates its 175th year! The RMS's Eleanor Pinches will take the opportunity to look back over 175 years of history, picking out key advances and milestones and take a look forward to the opportunities and challenges that await us.

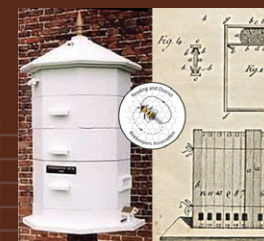
Sat 13 Sep, 14:30. Pre-booking required: [Eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)



19 Beehives Through Time

Travel through time with us as we explore the fascinating history of beekeeping and beehives in this talk. Jenny Morgan, Master Beekeeper, will explore beehive development and indicate how, as beekeepers understood more about the biology and behaviour of bees, hives were modified. She will also examine how beehive designs are still developing or reverting to earlier methods.

Sat 13 Sep, 15:45. Pre-booking required: [Eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)





**Sat 13 Sep, 11:00 - 13:00
& 14:00 - 16:00**

Caversham Court Gardens,
Church Road, Caversham,
RG4 7AD

No booking required

20 Look, Draw, Build in Caversham Court



A fun, creative drop-in workshop for families! Explore, sketch and build inspired by nature and architecture. There are three interactive activities: LOOK – Discover hidden shapes and patterns in the gardens. DRAW your favourite view, frame it, sketch it! BUILD imaginative structures inspired by what you have seen. Suitable for children aged 5+, but all are welcome.



Sat 13 Sep, 14:30 - 15:30

The Forbury, RG1 3DH
No booking required



Sun 14 Sep, 11:30 - 19:00

Christchurch Road, RG2 7AR
No booking required

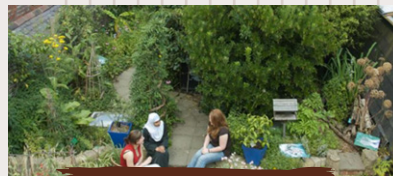
22 Christ Church Open Day and Festival Evensong



Christ Church will be open to the public with guided tours together with a Church/Christian Quiz for the children during the day followed by a Festival Evensong at 6pm with drinks and nibbles after.

23 RISC Rooftop Garden Open Day

The RISC Roof Garden is a small edible roof forest garden developed to demonstrate sustainability and our dependence on plants. All plants in the garden have an economic use for food, clothing, medicine etc, and come from all over the world. Can fruit and nut trees grow in soil 30cm deep? How does a roof structure take the weight of an actual forest? Find out the answers to these questions and more at our award-winning sustainable garden. Accessed via an external staircase (no wheelchair access).



Sun 14 Sep, 12:00 - 16:00

Reading International Solidarity
Centre (RISC), 35-39 London
Street, RG1 4PS
No booking required



**Sun 14 Sep,
Tours 11:00 & 12:30**

Foxhill House, Whiteknights
Campus, RG6 6EP
Pre-booking required:
brenda@morrisandfamily.co.uk

25 Reading Synagogue



View and hear about a traditional synagogue from the guides who will be present on the day. There will also be a Jewish Living Exhibition which has been prepared by the Board of Deputies of British Jews. The Grade II listed building has undergone a complete restoration of the roof and cupola as a result of a substantial grant. Reading Synagogue is a traditional synagogue in a Moorish Style dating from 1900 and still in regular use.



Sun 14 Sep, 14:30 - 17:00

7 Goldsmid Road, RG1 7YB
No booking required



Mon 15 Sep, 17:00 - 19:00

Reading Town Hall,
Blagrove Street, RG1 1QH
Pre-booking required:
Eventbrite.co.uk

26 The Architecture of Alfred Waterhouse



A walking tour of prolific Victorian architect Alfred Waterhouse's works in Reading, led by Waterhouse expert Dr Stephen Gage, Lecturer in Architecture at University of Reading. Waterhouse lived for a time in Reading and designed some of its key landmarks including Reading Town Hall (1876), Reading School (1868-74), St Batholomew's Church (1880) and Waterhouse's own house at Whiteknights, Foxhill (1867). Please note the walk will finish at Whiteknights campus! Buses are available to return to the town centre.



27 Basildon Park (National Trust)



Basildon Park is a cinematic property featuring stunning Palladian architecture and rolling landscapes. Discover 400 acres of historic parkland and gardens with an 18th-century house at its heart. The impressive mansion and picturesque pleasure grounds will be open to explore. The tearoom will be open for refreshments.

Mon 15 – Thurs 18 Sep, 10:00 – 17:00

Lower Basildon, RG8 9NR
No booking required

28 Reading Museum Store Tours

Behind the scenes tour at the Museum store in Whitley, looking at architectural and other large objects not on display. Tours are in small groups (up to 6) led by Museum staff and last about an hour. Adults and children over 12.



**Wed 17 Sep,
11:00, 12:15,
14:00 & 15:15**

Address in South Reading will be sent out 5 days before the tour
Pre-booking required:
readingmuseum.org.uk



**Thurs 18 Sep, 10:30 &
Sat 20 Sep, 10:00**

Reading Minister Church,
St Mary's Butts, RG1 2LG
Pre-booking required:
Eventbrite.co.uk

29 Medieval Reading Walkabout



A walk bringing to life a time when Reading was a bustling medieval hub. From Viking invasions to trials by combat, this walk reveals the captivating stories, landmarks and events that shaped the town's history. Highlights include iconic landmarks like Reading Minster, the Abbey, the Forbury and Caversham Park as well as an examination of how Reading became the 10th wealthiest town in England by the reign of Henry VIII! Collection for local charities (optional).

30 Reading in the time of Jane Austen

Jane Austen spent 18 months at Mrs Latournelle's school within the ruins of Reading Abbey and she also had connections to the area. Our walk around central Reading will include contemporary opinions on Reading, and some of the sights with which an 18th century visitor or inhabitant would have been familiar.



Fri 19 Sep, 10:30

St Laurence Church, Town Hall Square,
RG1 3EJ
Pre-booking required: EventBrite.co.uk

31 Planning in Reading: From Sleepy Town to Neo City. Reflections on Successes and Failures over 50 years by Tony Page



Tony Page had served Reading for 51 years until he stepped down as a local councillor in 2024. He will share his years of experience in this talk which will range across the planning schemes he saw, including The Oracle where the talk takes place, during his time as a Councillor in his different roles.



Fri 19 Sep, 14:00

Oracle Management Suite,
access from Gun Street entrance/
lift to 1st floor, RG1 2AG
Pre-booking required:
Eventbrite.co.uk



Sat 20 Sep, 10:00 – 16:30

2 Church Street, RG1 2SB
No booking required

32 Reading Quaker Meeting House – Buildings We Love



Simple Quaker architecture, a peaceful garden and burial ground – and an exhibition on buildings we love. Visitors to the Meeting House (1835) find a strikingly spacious and peaceful interior with the emphasis on functionality over ostentation. The Huntley and Palmer families and Waterhouse family are buried here. There will be a talk at 11:00 on Quakers in Reading, and at 14:00 on Alfred Waterhouse.

33 Ukrainian Wonders



A special event celebrating the rich heritage of Ukraine, from the golden domes of Kyiv to the intricate wooden churches of the Carpathians. Held at the Ukrainian Community Centre, this special day invites the British public to discover Ukraine's architectural marvels, deep-rooted history, and vibrant cultural traditions. Expect talks, art & creativity, meet members of the Ukrainian community and experience the flavours of Ukraine with a selection of delicious traditional dishes.



Sat 20 Sep, 12:00 – 16:00

21 Sidmouth Street, RG1 4QZ
No booking required



Sat 20 Sep, 13:00 – 14:00

Green Park, South Oak Way, RG2 6UG
Pre-booking preferred:
greeneducation@hotmail.co.uk

34 Green Park Wind Turbine Tour



See the landmark Green Park wind turbine up close and personal, find out what it is, what it does and how it works. Suitable for all age ranges. Meet the experts who will explain all about the Turbine. Outdoor event.



**Sat 20 Sep, 14:00 - 16:30 &
Sun 21 Sep, 14:00 - 16:30**

London Road, RG1 5AN
No booking required

35 Royal Berkshire Hospital Medical Museum

A collection relating to the history of the Royal Berkshire Hospital, which opened in 1839, as well as of medicine, surgery and nursing in general. As well as providing a consistently high standard of health care to the local community for the last 186 years, find out about the important contributions to the development of clinical practice the hospital has made.

36 Views and Vistas



A unique chance to view pop-up displays of items from the University of Reading's Special Collections and Art Collections celebrating how people and ideas have moved around and come together throughout history.

**Sun 21 Sep,
11:00 & 12:00**



Museum of English Rural Life (MERL),
6 Redlands Road, RG1 5EX
Pre-booking required: merl.reading.ac.uk



Sun 21 Sep, 12:30 & 14:00

Reading Old Cemetery, Cemetery Junction, London Road, RG1 3AQ
Pre-booking preferred:
tinyurl.com/readingcem2025

37 Written in Stone at Reading Old Cemetery

A family-friendly guided walk of Reading Old Cemetery. Find out about the history of the site, some of the monuments and the life stories of people buried there. Dressing up optional but fun! Join the best outfit competition and win an exciting Victorian-style prize!

heritageopendays.org
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Reading's Economy & Destination Agency