Exploring Reading

Explore and celebrate Reading’s heritage across 10 days as the national Heritage Open Days festival marks its 25th anniversary.

Get involved in the jam-packed programme of talks, walks, activities and special openings.

Our Life is Love Art Exhibition

Reading Quakers have put together an exhibition about our “People Power” as a faith group and as part of our community. Through art, we hope to share with you the values, the people, the places and things that we love.

Reading Quaker Meeting, 2 Church Street, RG1 2SB
• Saturday 14th: 14:00-17:00

Basildon Park

Basildon Park invites you to celebrate its Indian heritage with a Festival of Light. Discover the history of the garden, enjoy a lantern parade and hear stories from people of all ages. Curator talks by expert team members, and Indian inspired treats in the tearoom.

National Trust, Basildon Park, Lower Basildon, RG8 9NR
• Saturday 14th: 10:00-17:00 last entry 16:15

Behind the Bookshelves

This event gives you a chance to see some of the hidden gems that the library holds in its stores in areas that aren’t usually accessible to the public. 80+ people.

Reading Central Library, Abbey Square, RG1 3QG
• Saturday 14th: 10:00-11:00

Berkshire Record Office

Come along and take a look behind the scenes at the Berkshire Record Office where you will be shown how we store and look after Berkshire’s historic documents.

Berkshire Record Office, 9 Caleys Avenue, RG1 6AF
• Saturday 14th: 10:30-11:30

Reading Museum

Our Life is Love Art Exhibition

A short talk followed by a guided tour of the gallery to see the artefacts that illustrate the history of Katesgrove from Roman to modern times. Adults only.

Reading Museum, Town Hall, Blagrave Street, RG1 1QH
• Saturday 21st: 11:00 & 14:00

Booking essential: 0118 937 3400
readingmuseum.org.uk

Oscar Wilde Walk

A walk from Reading Museum through the Abbey Quarter to the Riverside Museum for a pop-up exhibition including artists’ responses to The Ballad of Reading Gaol by Oscar Wilde. Adults only.

Reading Museum, Town Hall, Blagrave Street, RG1 1QH
• Saturday 21st: 14:00

Booking essential: 0118 937 3400
readingmuseum.org.uk

In Reading Gaol by Reading Town

Following his incarceration in Reading, Oscar Wilde wrote his dark and psychological poem about prison life and the execution of Charles Thomas Woollridge. A visual art exhibition featuring 20 local artists takes on “The Ballad of Reading Gaol”.

The Turbine House, Riverside Museum at Blake’s Lock, Kennsom Drive, RG1 3DH
• Friday 13th: 15:30-18:00

Industrial Reading – A History Tour

1½ to 2 hour tour of many industrial sites in central Reading, ranging from medieval to twentieth-century, particularly those along and near to the Kennet Navigation.

Town Hall, Blagrave Street, RG1 1QH
• Thursday 19th: 16:00
• Friday 20th: 16:00

Modern Development in Reading. What would Sir John Betjeman have thought?

Chair of Reading Civic Society, Richard Bennett DL, will give a talk about the coming 20+ development proposals, some 5,500+ homes, and their impact on central Reading’s skyline by 2025. (Max 45 people).

The Chyrsalis, 30 The Sidings, King’s Meadow Bathes, Napier Road, RG1 8FR
• Thursday 19th: 18:30-20:00

Booking essential: eventbrite.co.uk

Museum of English Rural Life and University Special Collections

Exclusive opportunities to see our Grade II listed building, designed by the Victorian architect Alfred Waterhouse, behind-the-scenes of The MERL and Special Collections archive stores and a new ‘People Power’ MERL gallery tour.

Tour ‘People Power’ gallery tour
• 18th: 19th: 10:00-11:00
• Tour 2: ‘People Power’ gallery tour
  • 13th: 14th: 15th: 16th 20th: 22nd: 14:00-14:45
  • 17th: 10:00-10:45

Museum of English Rural Life, 6 Redlands Road, RG1 5EX
Booking tours essential: 0118 378 8660 merlevents@reading.ac.uk
www.merl.reading.ac.uk/whats-on/

RGD Bayeux Tapestry

Join Kate Powell and Jilly’s Stitch Up group at Malmaison Reading to add to this contemporary reworking of the Bayeux Tapestry started in 2018. Malmaison will be offering a special afternoon tea (must be prebooked).

Malmaison Hotel, Great Western House, 16-20 Station Road, RG1 1XJ
• Friday 13th: 10:30-13:30

Reading Crown Court Open Day

Active tours will include mock trials and safe tours. All ages welcome particularly those interested in the law, crime and punishment. Various different organisations in the Criminal Justice System will be present.

The Court Service, Reading Crown Court, The Old Shrine Hall, The Forbury, RG1 3HR
• Saturday 21st: 10:00-14:00
exploring reading
13th - 22nd september 2019
reading thames festival

21 Reading Synagogue
Traditional synagogue in a Moorish style opened October 1900. The building has undergone complete restoration (roof andcupola). Exhibition “Jews of the South East of England”.

23 Royal Berkshire Hospital Medical Museum
Our collection includes a wide variety of historic instruments, equipment, documents and other objects representing the general and local history of the hospital from 1800 onwards, but with some from earlier periods.

24 Sonning: Architectural and Historical Walks
Guided walks around the village of Sonning exploring its architectural heritage and history through key buildings. The walks aim to engage visitors with the characteristics of vernacular architecture types within the historic heart of the village.

26 St John’s Church and Centre
Special opening of St John the Evangelist Church, the former primary school and head teacher’s cottage, with tours available. St. John’s parish church by Henry Woodyer dates from 1873. Refreshments available.

27 St Mary’s Church
Late 18th century chapel. Guides available. Selection of the extensive find of pots dating back to the 1700s on display. Display on how People Pastorals used to maintain its Biblical witness for 200+ years.

28 St Peter’s Church
An opportunity to visit the beautiful parish church of Caversham and learn about its interesting, and sometimes turbulent, history which stretches over 600 years. A guide available for information about the history of the church and the parish.

29 St. Giles Church
One of the three medieval churches in Reading. Built in the twelfth century to serve a large Parish with a small population in country including the River Kennet Bridge. In 1191 Pope Clement III gave the church to Reading Abbey. St. Giles Church, Southampton Street, RG1 2SP

30 Terry’s New – Reading’s Proud Photographic Heritage Walkabout
Special Walkabout for 2019. Terry, affine a photo album with photos from the world of repeatable photography which was originally started in Reading up to more contemporary photographers & artists, including Sandy Gilmour. Meet by Queen Victoria’s statue, Friar Street, RG1 1DB

31 Terry’s New Reading’s Architecture Walkabout
This guided walk, a special Walkabout for 2019 features ‘Old, New, Missing, Good, Bad and the Downright Ugly’ buildings, some designed by 5 of the most famous architects including Alfred-Waterhouse. Meet outside The Three Guineas Pub.

32 RISC Edible Roof Garden
Small edible roof forest garden developed to demonstrate sustainability and our dependence on plants. All the plants in the garden have an economic use for food, clothing, medicine etc. and come from all over the world.

33 Woburn House
One of Reading’s oldest buildings dating back to 1500. An opportunity to see parts of the house & private garden (renovated 2015). Exhibitions; The Mills Archive with ‘Gems of the Archive’ (2019 COAVS award winner); garden refurbishment; and rear of the house repairs (2019) including display of wall repairs using lime.

34 Reading Hebrew Congregation, 7 Goldsmid Road, RG1 7YB
Guide tours available. Entrance to the Congregation is in the basement and comes from the street. Exhibition “Jews of the South East of England”. Guided tours available. Entrance to the Congregation is in the basement and comes from the street.

35 The Centre for Heritage and Family History
Recently opened, The Centre for Heritage and Family History can help you discover who your ancestors were, whenever in the world they came from. Let our friendly experts help you begin or further your journey.

36 The Forbury
History of the Forbury at the Hexagon Open Day. This guided walk, a special Walkabout for 2019 features ‘Old, New, Missing, Good, Bad and the Downright Ugly’ buildings, some designed by 5 of the most famous architects including Alfred-Waterhouse. Meet outside The Three Guineas Pub.

37 Junction Arch
A rare chance to take a look inside the iconic Junction Arch at Cemetery Junction. Built in 1940, it was originally a grand ornamental gateway to Reading Old Cemetery, today it is currently vacant.

38 Waterlins
One of Reading’s oldest buildings dating back to 1500. An opportunity to see parts of the house & private garden (renovated 2015). Exhibitions; The Mills Archive with ‘Gems of the Archive’ (2019 COAVS award winner); garden refurbishment; and rear of the house repairs (2019) including display of wall repairs using lime.

39 History of the Forbury at the Roseate Hotel
The Forbury has been at the heart of Reading for around 900 years. A special talk by Reading Museum in the unique cinema rooms of the historic Roseate Hotel. Learn the influence family tragedy, warfare and royalty had on the Forbury. Adults only.

40 The Hexagon Open Day
Peep backstage and delve into fascinating archives to learn about the history of the venue and some of the amazing performers who have graced the stage. Refreshments available. Backstage tours subject to availability (12yrs + check with venue for accessibility). The Hexagon, Queen’s Place, RG1 1UA

41 Caversham Court Gardens Tours and Family Architecture Trail
Guided tours of the riverside gardens, history of the site and the families who used to live there. Architectural trail for families (4hildren 4+) based on the listed 17th summer house. Sensory tours available.

42 Waterstones Reading presents
An evening of local village history with Tom Fort. Join us for an evening with Tom Fort, intrepid historian and bestselling travel writer of Channel Shore and The ASOS Highway to the Sun, Tom Fort, talking about his new book The Village News. Followed by a book signing.

43 Waterstones Bookshops Ltd, 89A Broad Street, RG1 2AP
• Friday 13 September: 19:30

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