

Heritage Open Days

REVIEW
2025



norfolkheritageopendays.co.uk

#NorfolkHODs

Coordinated by

the
forum



heritage open days



Heritage Open Days (HODs) is England's largest community led festival of history and culture. Run by hundreds of local organisations and volunteers, you can discover unique stories, fascinating places, hidden gems and have experiences to remember by visiting amazing free events across the country.

Norfolk HODs is coordinated by The Forum and 2025 enabled visitors to explore our local history, traditions, community and cultural heritage over the ten-day festival.



22%

family friendly
events



6385
TICKETS

397
EVENTS



32% NEW
sites / events



**Where are
our visitors
from?**

51%
Norwich

41%
Norfolk

8%
Outside Norfolk

A festival for everyone

Norfolk HODs is a much-loved festival that gives curious locals and visiting tourists a fun, free way to explore the county's fascinating history and traditions. With a rich programme of events from guided walks and hands-on workshops to exhibitions and talks, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

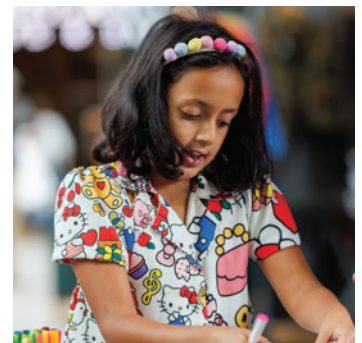
It's a great chance to discover what makes Norfolk so special and feel more connected to the stories and heritage that shape our communities.

"I loved every minute of it and would have gone to more events if I could! Thanks so much for organising such a brilliant programme."

HODs VISITOR

"We are so lucky to have HODs. There are so many choices, plus the volunteers are always so welcoming and enthusiastic."

HODs VISITOR



98%

agreed
their HODs
experience
was enjoyable

89%

felt events made
them appreciate
local heritage
and culture

67%

said events
inspired them
to discover more
local heritage

56%

felt the events
made them
feel connected
to Norfolk



100%
would recommend
other organisations
take part in HODs

97%
would organise
an event for
future HODs
festivals

97%
were very
satisfied with
their event

Festival champions

Over 200 organisations and voluntary groups across Norfolk delivered events that celebrated the county's rich history and brought communities together. The festival's ability to engage partners from the voluntary, community, arts, culture, and business sectors enabled us to reach a broad audience, strengthening connections to local heritage.

The festival's success reflects the passion and hard work of the organisers and volunteers whose efforts resulted in tangible benefits, including increased footfall and public engagement, and a boost in donations.



"Pleased to be part of the wider event, as the publicity gives us visibility."

HODs ORGANISER

"We love to get involved with HODs! The events reach an audience that would otherwise not know about our walks and talks."

HODs ORGANISER

"We had a wonderful day, it was a steady flow of people, and we had some great conversations."

HODs ORGANISER

80%
estimated at
least half of their
visitors were new
to their site/event

68%
welcomed
more visitors
than a normal
day of opening

65%
received an uptick
in donations





Silver Wings

80 years after the end of World War Two, a new project took flight to honour wartime history and the impact of the US Army Air Forces (USAAF) in Norfolk.

Presented by The Forum in partnership with the American Library, Silver Wings launched in Spring 2025 with a free programme of community workshops. Work from creative writing courses, research sessions and school and young people's outreach was developed and fed directly into the final stage of the project – a free ten-day exhibition and event series held at The Forum in Norwich during HODs.

"The contributions from the children and young people makes me feel encouraged for the future-that the memories and legacy will continue."

SILVER WINGS VISITOR

"Taking part in the Silver Wings exhibition was a huge honour for me and my family."

SILVER WINGS CONTRIBUTOR

"A fabulous exhibition and a wonderful talk. A real event for the community."

SILVER WINGS VISITOR

"I am making a video game inspired by my grandad's life during and after the war."

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

59k
visits

84%
of visitors said their knowledge about this heritage was increased

41%
felt it broadened their view of what heritage can include

63%
came to the area because of Silver Wings events

Reach and impact

Our wide-reaching marketing and PR campaign with 25,000 printed brochures, website, social media channels, and strong partnerships with local networks ensured broad visibility and encouraged widespread participation in the festival.

Norfolk HODs not only increased public engagement with free events but also contributed to the local economy and boosted off-season tourism across the county.

67k

website page views



59%

open rate for email newsletter



78%

of visitors spent an average of £24 in the local economy during their visit

13.2k

followers and subscribers



A community collaboration



Norfolk HODs is a collaboration between all the sites, organisers, community partners and volunteers who work to bring this festival to life for thousands of residents and visitors.

The Forum Trust funds the coordination and promotion of Norfolk HODs each year as part of its charitable purpose and is proud to be coordinating such an important festival, which makes heritage accessible to the whole community.

The HODs programme is coordinated nationally by the National Trust with support from players of People's Postcode Lottery.

The Forum Trust is a registered charity, number 1074619. Statistics in this report are based on data from the 2025 Norfolk HODs and Silver Wings visitor and organiser surveys and Ticketsolve. Photos: Keiron Tovell, Luke Witcomb, Beth Moseley and Sam Harland.

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SAVE THE DATE!
11-20 September 2026

