Heritage Open Days celebrate our outstanding architecture and culture by allowing free access to properties, many of which are normally closed to the public or charge an admission fee.

Throughout the country, thousands of historic buildings and sites will open their doors and local people will organise countless events and activities to promote their community’s heritage. For more information see www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Wirral’s Heritage Open Days is Wirral’s biggest heritage event and is organised by the volunteers of the Wirral History and Heritage Association in partnership with numerous voluntary groups and individuals.

The nine day programme lasts from September 5th – 13th. Wirral’s heritage is second to none and Heritage Open Days give the chance to explore and enjoy its wealth of history and architecture. To find out more visit the Wirral History and Heritage Association website www.wirralhistoryandheritage.org.uk

Downloadable copies of this programme are available on visitwirral.com. Information about Heritage Open Days regionally and nationally is available on www.visitwirral.com

Whilst most events take place within Wirral Borough, we are delighted to publicise activities in south Wirral. For further information about Heritage Open Days in West Cheshire contact Chester History and Heritage on 01244 972210 or email chh@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of information in this brochure, which has been supplied by individual events organisers. However, Wirral History and Heritage Association cannot be responsible for any discrepancies or last minute changes to the programme. Any updates will be shown on our website.

As Wirral’s Heritage Champion, I am delighted to introduce Wirral Heritage Open Days 2015. The programme offers a wide range of tours, events and activities organised by voluntary groups and individuals, all aimed at providing both local residents and visitors with a unique opportunity to discover more about Wirral’s remarkable history and heritage.

As always, I have been impressed by the energy, commitment, knowledge and professionalism of those who have put the programme together and I have no hesitation in assuring visitors to Wirral Heritage Open Days that there will be something of interest for everyone.

Many of Wirral’s heritage attractions are open to the public throughout the year, so do please come back again and explore the wealth of wonderful heritage Wirral has to offer.

Councillor Jerry Williams
Wirral Heritage Champion

Heritage Open Days is a national event to which Wirral is proud to contribute. Over the years visitor numbers have increased and our local open days now draw in people from outside Wirral as well as from the peninsula itself. Admission to all events is free.

This year’s programme has been organised by the partnership of the Wirral History and Heritage Association and numerous dedicated people who open up buildings, put on displays and organise heritage walks and talks.

I should like to thank all those who have contributed to the programme and the many individuals who give of their time so freely to make Heritage Open Days a success.

Do please use the nine days to see and do as much as you can. Wirral has a long and significant history... it belongs to us all!

Elizabeth Davey
Chairman
Wirral History & Heritage Association

## Events Calendar:
### Buildings Open to View

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## Events Calendar:
### Walks, Talks and Activities

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Buildings Open to View

Though sometimes overshadowed by its neighbours, Liverpool and Chester, the Borough of Wirral can nevertheless boast that it has a wealth of historic buildings. There are 9 Scheduled Monuments and Birkenhead Priory is included in Heritage Open Days. We have over 700 Listed Buildings, the most outstanding of which have been awarded Grade I or Grade II* status. A selection of these will be open to view during Heritage Open Days.

Bidston Lighthouse
Wilding Way, Bidston, CH43 7RA
Sat 5th & Sat 12th September
Guided tours start promptly at 12.30pm, 1.30pm and 2.30pm both days. Doors open at 12 noon and close at 4pm

The first Bidston Lighthouse was built in 1771, further from the shore than any other lighthouse in Britain. The present Grade II listed Lighthouse was built by Mersey Docks and Harbour Board in 1873. Guided tours and heritage displays. Fantastic views from the lamp room. Large selection of second-hand books on sale.

Children must be 1.06 metres (42 inches) or taller to go up to the lamp room.

Limited parking. Disabled access to ground floor only. Limited supplies of soft drinks, sandwiches and snacks will be available for purchase.

Pre-booking required, book online at bidstonlighthouse.org.uk/events/whod or call Amanda on 0151 653 7816

Bidston Lighthouse is open to the public on selected weekends during the warmer months. Admission to the ground floor is free and there is a small admission charge for guided tours to signals and lamp rooms. Further information about Bidston Lighthouse, its history and opening times can be found online at www.bidstonlighthouse.org.uk

Birkenhead Park
Grand Entrance Lodge
Birkenhead Park, Park Drive, Birkenhead, CH41 4HD
Sat 5th & Sun 6th September
12 noon to 4pm

An opportunity to look inside the Grand Entrance and see one of its hidden courtyards, and to learn about the families who lived in the lodges. The Grand Entrance with its North and South Lodges was designed by the young architect Lewis Hornblower, who also designed the boathouse and bridges in the Park, together with John Robinson. Bees are now being kept in the courtyard under secure conditions and bee suits are available for all ages if you would like to inspect them more closely.

No disabled access; unfortunately, there are steps leading up to the front door and fairly steep steps inside. Refreshments available.

No pre-booking required.
Email wrl4@talktalk.net
Bidston Windmill
Access via path from Tam O’Shanter Farm Car Park, CH43 7PD
Sat 5th September
10am to 12 noon

A brick built tower mill, erected to replace a wooden peg mill, destroyed by fire in 1791 and used for grinding corn until 1875. Restored by Wirral Borough Council. Minimum height restriction for upper floors (110cms). Children under 11 years must be accompanied by an adult at all times. Dogs can be minded.

No booking required. First come first served. Disabled access to ground floor only. Uneven ground unsuitable for wheelchairs. Refreshments available at Tam O’Shanter Farm café.

The windmill is open on the first Saturday of each month, April to September (bats permitting), 10am to 12 noon. See www.bidstonhill.org.uk for more information.

Call the Ranger at Tam O’Shanter Farm on 0151 653 9332 or email Friends of Bidston Hill info@bidstonhill.org.uk

Birkenhead: 47 - 48 Hamilton Square
Birkenhead, CH41 5AR
Mon 7th, Tue 8th & Wed 9th September
9am to 3pm; guided tour of full buildings at 10.30am, 11.30am & 2.30pm

Two Grade I listed town houses, together with courtyard gardens and outbuildings, designed by the Scottish architect James Gillespie Graham. Sensitivey refurbished in 2013 as a wedding venue, business centre and café. A rare opportunity to see inside one of Birkenhead’s outstanding historic buildings.

Pre-booking required for tours. Disabled access via steep ramp to ground floor only. Refreshments available in basement café.

Call 0151 601 9479 or email david@4748.co.uk

Birkenhead Quaker Meeting House
83 Park Road South, Birkenhead, CH43 4UU
Fri 11th September 2pm to 4pm
Sat 12th September 10.30am to 3pm

A late Victorian purpose-built Quaker Meeting House (1892), with several original features e.g. pine panelling and benches; parts of the original hot air heating system and a magnificent water closet with blue and white patterned chinaware. The lay-out of the meeting room is little changed since Victorian times.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available.

Call Mary Green on 0151 653 9602 or email cox.green@btinternet.com

Birkenhead Priory
Priory Street, Birkenhead, CH41 5JH
Open to the public
Wed to Fri 1pm to 5pm
Sat & Sun 10am to 5pm

Guided Tours
Wed 9th to Fri 11th September 2pm
Sat 5th & Sun 6th September 12 noon & 2pm
Sat 12th & Sun 13th September 12 noon & 2pm

Birkenhead Priory is the oldest standing building on Merseyside and an Ancient Monument. Founded in the mid 12th century as a Benedictine monastery, it was granted the right to ferry travellers across the Mersey in the 14th century. It was dissolved by Henry VIII and the Priory Church demolished. Adjacent is the tower of St Mary’s, Birkenhead’s first parish church, consecrated in 1821 and now dedicated as a memorial to those who died in the submarine Thetis disaster. The former chapter house is consecrated as a place of worship and there is a chapel dedicated to the training ship, HMS Conway.

Birkenhead Priory Volunteers Week-End
Sat 5th & Sun 6th September 10am to 5pm

The Birkenhead Priory volunteer team will be sharing the recent developments at the Priory, including a variety of family friendly drop in activities celebrating the site and their work. Our team of enthusiastic Volunteers will be available to give guided tours, gardening demonstrations, interpretative trails, arts and crafts activities and demonstrations of our new digital trails.

Birkenhead Priory Volunteers Week-End
Sat 5th & Sun 6th September 10am to 5pm

No booking required. Partial accessibility. Refreshments available.

Email birkenheadpriory@wirral.gov.uk

Medieval History Weekend: Big Heritage
Sat 12th & Sun 13th September
10am to 5pm

Over the weekend Big Heritage will be hosting a range of activities at the Priory exploring medieval history. Come along to this family friendly event to meet a medieval knight and explore the history of Wirral with a team of real archaeologists.

No booking required for any of the above events. Partial accessibility. Refreshments available.

Email birkenheadpriory@wirral.gov.uk
**Birkenhead Central Library**  
Borough Road, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH41 2XB  
Thu 10th September  
2.15pm for talk and behind the scenes tour

Birkenhead has a long history of library provision, its first library dating from 1856. The present Central Library was opened by King George V in 1934, when it replaced the Carnegie Library in Market Street, itself opened in 1909, but demolished to make way for the first Mersey Road Tunnel. See the stained glass window, commemorating Wilfred Owen. Talk and tour at 2.15 pm. Meet in the foyer.  

No pre-booking required. Limited disabled access. Refreshments available from vending machine.  

Call 0151 606 2149 (ask for Birkenhead Reference Library)

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**Christ Church United Reformed Church, Port Sunlight**  
Church Drive, Port Sunlight  
Village, CH62 5EF  
Mon 7th to Fri 11th September (inclusive)  
11am to 4pm

Christ Church URC, Port Sunlight was built by the building department of the Lever Organisation in 1902 and completed in 1904. It was the gift of William Hesketh Lever (later 1st Viscount Leverhulme) to the village of Port Sunlight. His wish was that the church be undenominational and open to all who chose to worship there. Gothic in style, the church is a Grade II Listed Building.  

No pre-booking required. There are ramps to the main entrance. Several cafes and restaurants are nearby.  

Call Edward Austin on 0151 334 6027 or Christ Church on 0151 645 3870

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**HMS Conway Chapel and Museum**  
The Scriptorium, Birkenhead Priory, Priory Street, Birkenhead, CH41 5JH  
Sat 5th, Sun 6th & Wed 9th to Sun 13th September  
12 noon to 5pm

The Priory Scriptorium is dedicated to the memory of HMS Conway, a training ship anchored off Rock Ferry from 1859 to 1941, before moving to the Menai Straits. It contains many Conway artefacts, stained glass and painted windows and honour boards recording four Naval Officers who were awarded the Victoria Cross.  

No pre-booking required. Parking is available in the Priory car park. Accessible via ‘walking chair’ up external staircase.  

Call David Holbert on 07742382904 or email davidandsue09@talktalk.net

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**Christ Church, Oxton**  
Bessborough Road, Oxton, CH43 5RW  
Sat 5th September  
1pm to 4pm

A listed Anglican Church, housing a famous Willis organ. It has two First World War memorials, one wall mounted and the other an elaborately carved pulpit. The poet Wilfred Owen worshipped here. Heritage displays. Guides available. Organ recital.  

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available.  

Call Rev Karen Freeman on 0151 652 3990 (church office)

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**‘The Dome of Home’**  
Ss Peter, Paul & Philomena Church /ICKSP  
7 Atherton Street, New Brighton, CH45 9LT  
Open daily 8am - 8pm  
Guided tours:  
Sat 5th September 2pm to 5pm  
Sun 6th September 3pm to 5pm  
Wed 9th September 2pm to 5pm  
Sat 12th September 2pm to 5pm  
Sun 13th September 3pm to 5pm

Welcome to the ‘Dome of Home’, architecturally ambitious and little altered Catholic Church of 1935; monumental in scale, baroque in its spatial conception, its dome can be seen from afar. This well-loved, familiar landmark, established as a Shrine Church in 2012, has organised Guided Tours, a Guide Book and a new webcam showing views of the river from the roof. For further information visit www.domeofhome.org or to organise a tour for groups throughout the year phone 07743235946  

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available.  

Call on 07743235046 or email contactus@domeofhome.org
Holy Apostles and Martyrs’ Parish Church
St George’s Road, Wallasey, CH45 6TU
Sat 12th September
2pm to 5pm

Holy Name of Jesus RC Church
60 Beresford Road, Oxton, CH43 2JD
Wed 9th September
10.30am to 4.30pm

One of the many churches designed by local architect, Edmund Kirby (1838 – 1920) and erected in the orchard of his own home, Overdale, 1899 – 1900. Thanks in part to the use of natural materials such as the soft rose-coloured brickwork, the woodblock flooring and oak bench pews, the building retains a peaceful intimate character.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access via ramp at side entrance.

Call Hugh Lappin on 0151 652 4937 or email hughlappin@ntlworld.com

Mayer Hall and Park
Mayer Hall, The Village, Lower Bebington, CH63 9PL
Sat 5th & Sun 6th September
1pm to 4pm

A chance to see Mayer Hall, a gift to the people of Bebington from Joseph Mayer. Together with his other legacies, Mayer Park and the old Free Library, the Hall is a reminder of this generous Victorian philanthropist. Tours of the Hall and Park. Special activities. Displays by local groups.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access to ground floor. Refreshments available.

Call Dennis Boyd on 0151 609 0257 or email dennis.boyd1@outlook.com

Ness Gardens
Neston Road, Ness, Cheshire, CH64 4AY
Sun 13th September
10am to 5pm

Set in the Wirral peninsula, overlooking the Dee estuary and North Wales, with plants from all over the world, displayed in a 64-acre oasis of gardens. An inspiration for gardeners and an exciting introduction to the natural world for families and a great day out for visitors.

No pre-booking required. Mobility scooters available, bookable in advance. Refreshments available.

Call Zoe Chapman on 0845 030 4063

Check www.nessgardens.org.uk for general opening hours
New Brighton Heritage Centre
Inside St James Church, Victoria Road, New Brighton, CH45 9LF
Weekdays 11am to 4pm
Sun 11am to 3pm

The Heritage Centre is now situated within St James Church. Staffed by volunteers every day, it provides a wealth of local history information. Come and have a cup of tea, look at the information we have displayed and perhaps, watch one of our local history DVDs Talk on Wednesday 9th September 2.30pm, ‘Wallasey in 1961’. See page 23 for details of St James Church.

Call Rusty Keane on 0151 639 5798 or email rustyk92@sky.com

Our Lady of The Immaculate Conception RC Church
Cavendish Street, Birkenhead, CH41 8AQ
Sat 5th September 11am to 4pm
Sat 12th September 11am to 4pm

This Grade II listed church, designed by EW Pugin in 1857, was completed by Pugin & Pugin in 1895. After bomb damage in 1941, it was sympathetically restored with all original features remaining. Photographs of Holy Cross RC Church, designed by FX Velarde, will be on display.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access (entry at the side of the church). Refreshments available.

Call the Parish Priest, Church Office, 0151 652 1074 or email olhc.sp@btinternet.com

Outwood House
St Anselm’s College, Manor Hill, Prenton, Birkenhead, CH43 1UQ
Sat 5th & Sun 6th September 11am to 3pm
Sat 12th & Sun 13th September 11am to 3pm

Outwood is a Grade II Listed building erected in 1862. The original owners were the Segar family. Purchased in 1872, three generations of the Heap family (rice merchants) lived there. Heap’s Rice Mill in Liverpool’s Baltic triangle is Grade II listed. This event includes a building tour and an update on the Heritage and Historical Research project which has been supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Pre-booking not essential, but would be much appreciated, especially for wheelchair users. Separate assisted wheelchair access to basement and ground floor only.

Light refreshments provided.

Call Bill Iveson on 07747115450 or email billiveson@ntlworld.com

Port Sunlight:
Bridge Cottage
Bridge Cottage, 23 Park Road, Port Sunlight, CH62 4US
Sat 5th to Sun 13th September 11am to 5pm

The first opportunity to visit Bridge Cottage, the largest house in Port Sunlight and once the home of William Hesketh Lever founder of the village. A rare chance to meet a range of local artists and craftspeople who will be demonstrating and selling their bespoke artwork and crafts.

Pre-booking not required. There is disabled access; please contact Port Sunlight Museum for more information. Refreshments.

Call 0151 644 6466 or email info@portsunlightvillage.com
**Prenton United Reformed Church**
Prenton Road West, Prenton, CH42 9PX  
Wed 9th September  
9am to 12 noon  
Prenton Congregational Church began in 1887 and amalgamated with St Paul’s Presbyterian Church in 1972 to form the present United Reformed Church. There is a place of quiet remembrance near the 1908 foundation stone, laid by Mrs WH Lever. In the church is a brass plaque commemorating those of the congregation killed in the First World War.

The church is by the traffic lights at the junction of Prenton Road West and Storeton Road.

No pre-booking required. There is disabled access. Refreshments available.

Call Mrs Marian Davies on 0151 645 4802 or email marian.davies154@btinternet.com

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**Rake Lane Chapel and Cemetery Guided Walks**

The Chapel, Rake Lane Cemetery, Wallasey, CH45 5DE  
Sun 6th September 2pm to 4pm  
Wed 9th September 2pm to 4pm  

The Chapel was originally opened in 1882 and, in recent years fell into disrepair. In 2009 it became the church of St Elizabeth the New Martyr. It has been beautifully renovated and is now a Russian Orthodox Church. It is available for inter-denominational burials and is also licensed for weddings.

Short selected half-hour walks around the cemetery will also be available. Topics covered will be major sea disasters, e.g. Titanic, Lusitania and the ‘Forgotten Empress’ and War Walks, including WWI, WWII and the Crimean War.

No booking required. There is disabled access.

Call Diane Robinson on 0151 639 4231

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**Sir Frederick Lister House**
Park Road East, Birkenhead, CH41 4BB  
Sat 5th to Sun 13th September  

The Headquarters of the founding branch of The Royal British Legion, co-founded by Sir Frederick Lister in 1921. Office and workspace where welfare work has been taking place since then and carries on to date.

No pre-booking required. No disabled access. Refreshments available.

Email Tanya.cawood@btopenworld.com

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**St Andrew’s Church, Bebington**
Church Road, Bebington, CH63 3EX  
Tue 8th September  
10am to 3.30pm  

Guided tours lasting approximately 45 minutes at 10.30am, 12.30pm & 2.30pm

The church is a Grade I Listed Building and the architectural historian Raymond Richards considered it to be the finest parish church in Wirral. It is an active Anglican parish church which has historical records from 1093.

No pre-booking required. There is disabled access to the church but no wheelchair access to toilets. Tea and biscuits available.

Call Mrs Karen Davies on 0151 645 6478 or email office@standrewsbebington.org.uk
St Andrew’s United Church, Wallasey
Rowson Street, Wallasey, CH45 2LY
Sun 13th September
2pm to 4.30pm
Built in 1870 in the shape of a Greek cross. The church and tower have been altered since then. Some of the woodwork has been recovered from Ennerdale Road and Liscard Congregational churches and includes a ‘self-carved’ pulpit. The stained glass windows suffered some bomb damage during the war and depict memorials to the lives of past members of the church. Guided tours can be arranged.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available.

Email Peter Purland
petepurland@btopenworld.com

St Barnabas Church, Bromborough
Church Square, Bromborough, CH62 2AA
Sun 6th September
2pm to 4pm
St Barnabas is a Grade II Listed Building, built 1862 – 1864, to a design of Sir George Gilbert Scott. Outside are three fragments of Anglo-Norse sculptured stones, re-assembled to form a cross. The churchyard contains an 18th century sundial and a war memorial. There will be short tours of the church and its immediate environs.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available.

Call Parish Office on
0151 334 4155 or email
ros.wood@stbarnabasbromborough.org.uk

St Bridget’s Church, St Hilary’s Church, Wallasey
West Kirby
St Bridget Lane, West Kirby, CH48 3JT
Sat 5th & 12th September
10am to 4pm
An Anglican church with a history of worship dating back 1000 years. Home to a rare Norse Hogback stone.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments in church centre. 10 minutes walk from West Kirby station.

Call Malcolm Taylor on 0151 625 2481 or email Malcolm.j.taylor@hotmail.co.uk

St Mary’s Church, Liscard Withens Way
Withens Lane, Liscard, Wallasey, CH45 7LU
Sat 12th & Sun 13th September
12 noon to 4pm
Built in 1876 by EW Nobbs, the Church is a fine example of mid-Victorian architecture, with perpendicular tracery and west tower. Broad interior without aisles, good arts & crafts and stained glass windows in Whall style. Ring of 9 bells in use. Church registers dating from 1925 will be available for inspection before being deposited Cheshire Archives.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available.

Call David Harvey on 0151 639 8093 or email davidharvey@hotmail.com

St Anne’s RC Church, Rock Ferry
Highfield Road, Rock Ferry, CH42 2BY
Sat 12th September
1:30pm to 3.30pm
Designed by EW Pugin in the Early Gothic style. The principal stone is Storeton faced with Welsh Pierrepoint of a bluish tint. Outstanding Rose Window and many other devotional features.

Access from car park at rear (Ruskin Avenue). There is a ramp. Within 100 yards of Rock Ferry train station. No pre-booking required. Tea/coffee, biscuits and cakes available.

Call Parish Secretary on 0151 645 3996 (mornings only) or email st.anneis@hotmail.co.uk

St Hilary’s Church, Wallasey
Claremont Road, Wallasey, CH45 3NH
Sat 5th September
10.30am to 4pm Tours up to Bell Platform and top of Church Tower on the hour from 11am until 3pm
Sun 6th September
1pm to 4pm Tours on the hour from 1pm until 3pm
The old Tudor Tower dates from the 1530s, although Christian worship has taken place here for over 1,000 years. The old church burned down in February 1857. The present church was designed by Hay Bros. The clock was added in 1893. The organ was built by Henry Willis organ builders and in 2009 the 150th anniversary of service was reached. The organ recently had a full restoration and you will be able to hear it being played during Saturday and Sunday. The original Norman Font was returned back to us in 2014 and is now on show in the Old Tower.

No pre-booking required. No disabled access to the Tower in the main church. Refreshments will be available in the main church on both days and bacon rolls will be on sale in the Old Tower from 11am to 2.30pm.

Call Mr Geoffrey Prince on 0151 639 7416 or 07725134300 or Mr James Houghton on 07731898288
St Mary’s Church, Eastham Antiques Quiz and Road Show

Stanley Lane, Eastham, CH62 0Ag
Fri 11th & Sat 12th September 10am to 4pm
Sunday 13th September 1pm to 4pm

The Grade II listed church is hosting a range of family events, including Eastham Antiques Quiz and Road Show, and local produce competition. Organ and instrumental recital in the church, Sunday 3pm to 4pm. There will be an art exhibition by local artists and a unique exhibition of the life of Emma, Lady Hamilton.

No pre-booking required. There is level access to the church via the lychgate; refreshments available.

Call Sue Abraham on 0151 334 9216 or email s.r.abraham@btinternet.com

St Mary and St Helen Parish Church, Neston
High Street, Neston, CH64 9TZ
Thu 10th - Sat 12th September 10am to 3.30pm
Sun 13th September 12 noon to 3.30pm

The church has many attractions, including stained glass windows by Kempe, Hardman, Norris and Burne-Jones. The Falklands Chapel was rescued from HMS Plymouth. The font was used for the christening of Lady Hamilton and there is a display of rare Viking Stones. Guides will be available to show visitors around during opening times.

Pre-booking required for tours. Disabled access. Refreshments available for pre-booked tours.

Call Peter Rossiter on 0151 336 5503 or email peter@rossiterjan.freeserve.gov.uk

St Michael’s & All Angels RC Church
New Hey Road, Woodchurch, CH49 5LE
Sat 5th & Sat 12th September 11am to 4pm

Opened in 1965, the church was designed by Richard O’Mahoney, partner in charge at FX Velarde Partnership. The high, tent-like roof, aluminium outside and timber inside, is a landmark on the M53. The furnishings and fittings in the open plan interior remain largely as designed.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available.

Call the Parish Priest on 0151 652 5767

St Oswald’s Church, Bidston
Bidston Village Road, Bidston, CH43 7QT
Tue 8th September 10am to 4pm

St Oswald’s has been part of a tradition of worship on this site stretching back to at least the 8th century. The tower dates from the 16th century and the existing church was rebuilt in 1856. There are numerous beautiful and significant stained glass windows, including one crafted by William Morris to a Burne-Jones design. A wreath within the church was given to Sir Edward and Lady Cust by Queen Victoria on the death of their son, who was a page boy to the Queen. Look for the hand crafted mosaic Reredos of the ‘Last Supper’, by the Italian artist Salviati.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available.

Call Ron Iveson on 0151 652 4852 or email roniveson@hotmail.com

St James’ Parish Church, New Brighton
Albion Street, New Brighton, CH45 9FL
Sat 5th & Sat 12th September 10am to 4pm (Churchwardens will be around for most of the day to answer questions). The building will also be open on other days as it now houses the New Brighton Heritage Centre.

Grade II Listed Building designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and built 1854 –1856, in the Victorian Gothic Revival style. The chancel has wall paintings by the famous Victorian artist Hemmings and some of the stained glass is by the Camm family of Smethwick. The rare example of an early 19th century Bewsher and Fleetwood organ, now restored, was originally in St John’s Church, Egremont.

No pre-booking required. South public entrance is level access; accessible toilet and baby changing facilities. Refreshments.

Call John Timms on 07740 719 185 or email john.timms1@virgin.net
St Thomas’ Church, Parkgate
Mostyn Square, Parkgate,
Neston, CH64 6SL
Sat 12th September 1pm to 4pm
Sun 13th 11.30am to 4pm
This newly refurbished church was closed for 16 years and reopened in 2010. Local community projects, in support of ‘The Bishop’s Trust’ raised the money for the renovation and the ‘Fisherman’s Church’, as it is known locally, is a testament to their sterling efforts. Financial assistance was also given by English Heritage. Photographs and documents relating to the history of Parkgate will be displayed in the church. Members of the church will be available to welcome visitors and talk about the building.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available nearby.
Call Valerie M Johnson on 0151 336 7838 or email stthomasparkgate@hotmail.com

Trinity With Palm Grove (URC/Methodist) Church
63 Alton Road, Oxton, CH43 1UZ
Sat 5th September 1pm to 4pm
Sat 12th September 1pm to 4pm
An opportunity to explore this fine Victorian gothic style Grade II Listed building. With the help of our guide books, follow the Church’s ‘History Trail’ and ‘Stained Glass Windows Trail’. Knowledgeable Church members will be on hand to answer your questions. Guided tours can be arranged for interested parties by mutual arrangement. Children’s activities will be available linked to the Church ‘yesterday and today’.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available in coffee bar.
Call Ken Tasker on 0151 652 6667 or email kenoxtonwirral@yahoo.co.uk

Wallasey Town Hall
Brighton Street, Wallasey, Wirral, CH44 8ED
Fri 11th September 2pm to 4pm
Dating from the early 20th century, the Town Hall is a Listed Building and the administrative headquarters of Wirral Borough Council. This event is hosted by the Mayor of Wirral and includes a tour of the principal accessible rooms: the Council Chamber, Civic Hall and Round Room. The afternoon includes tea with the Mayor in his Parlour and a talk on the history of the building by Wallasey Civic Society.

Pre-booking essential as numbers are limited. Visitors should arrive by 1.55pm and wait in the Town Hall Reception Area.
Call Chris Morris on 0151 608 5050

The Wallaseyans’ Club
140–142 Grove Road, Wallasey, CH45 0JF
Saturday 5th September 2pm to 5pm
Originally owned by the Billington family and later became private schools; the buildings housed service personnel during WWII and are now the Wallaseyans’ Club. The Wallasey Grammar School Archives are stored here. These and material relating to Wallasey in general will be on display during the event which will also include tours of the building.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access (ramp to side of building, reserved disabled parking spaces). Refreshments available.
Call Hon. Secretary, The Wallaseyans’ Club on 0151 639 2832 or email wallaseyansmail@gmail.com

Wilfred Owen Story
34 Argyle Street, Birkenhead, CH41 6A4
Tue 8th to Fri 11th September 11am to 2pm
The Wilfred Owen Story and Gallery is the first permanent exhibition to commemorate Wilfred Owen, who is one of the most celebrated war poets of all time. He spent his formative years in Birkenhead. The gallery follows his life and honours the genius of the town’s famous adopted son. There will be different activities throughout the week, including poetry readings.

Pre-booking required for groups (15 max). There is access to the exhibition, but no disabled toilets. Tea and biscuits.
Call Janet Holmes on 07903337995 or email info@wilfredowenstory.com

West Kirby Museum
St Bridget’s Centre, St Bridget’s Lane, West Kirby, CH43 3JT
Sat 5th & Sat 12th September 10am to 4pm
Founded in 1892 and newly refurbished, the museum collection covers 1000 years of local history. Pre-Norman and medieval sculptured stones; the story of St Bridget’s Church and West Kirby Parish schools. Special displays by the Museum Research Group.

No booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments.
Call Christine Longworth on 0151 632 3949
Walks, Talks and Activities

The Wirral peninsula is blessed with a wealth of man-made landscapes of great historical interest and beauty. Within the Borough of Wirral alone there are 26 Conservation Areas, including Port Sunlight and Hamilton Square, both deemed of national importance. In addition, the borough has several landscapes included on the National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, including Birkenhead Park, Playbrick Memorial Gardens and Port Sunlight which all feature in our Heritage Open Days programme.

‘All Around the Vale’
Meet outside Vale House Tea Rooms, Vale Park, Magazine Lane, New Brighton, CH45 1LZ
Thu 10th September
11am to 12.30pm & 1.30pm to 3pm
This guided walk is around Vale Park and the Magazine Conservation Area, pointing out various points of historical interest. The talk will span several centuries, but this year we are especially commemorating the life and work of Edith Eskrigge, who lived in what is now the park 100 years ago.

Pre-booking required. Disabled access (a small set of shallow steps – but there is an alternative route.) Refreshments from Vale House Tea Rooms.

Call Therese Irving on 0151 638 0069 or email t.irving36@btinternet.com

American Civil War Wirral
Meet at the gates of Birkenhead Priory, Priory Street, Birkenhead, CH41 5JH
Sat 12th September 2pm
This guided walk explores the sites and amazing stories of the local impact of the American Civil War (1861 – 1865), when a ‘Le Carre’ style espionage battle of epic proportions took place on the streets of Birkenhead and Liverpool. This would have international repercussions. The tour takes about 1.5 hours and includes climbing to the top of St. Mary’s Church tower.

Pre-booking essential. No disabled access to tower.

Call Jerry Williams on 0151 608 3769

Ashton Park Walk
Meet outside St Bridget’s Centre, St Bridget’s Lane, West Kirby, CH48 3JT
Sat 5th September
10.30am to 11.30am & 12.45pm to 1.45pm
‘West Kirby Park’ opened in 1901 without ceremony, its development was characterised by delays and overspend. The original park was only half the size of the present area. Later to become known as ‘Ashton Park’, it changed significantly over the years. This guided walk explores the history, design and development of the park, including the story of the Ashton family, after whom the park is now named.

Pre-booking required. Access along paths without steps or steep slopes. Refreshments in St Bridget’s Centre.

Call Martin Harrison on 0151 625 8535 or email martin@harrison5050.fsnet.co.uk

‘Behind The Scenes at Wirral Archives Service’
Wirral Archives Service, Lower Ground Floor, Cheshire Lines Building, Canning Street, Birkenhead, CH41 1ND
Thu 10th September 2pm & 3pm
Two talks and guided tours, lasting approximately 45 minutes, with an opportunity to see behind the scenes, including the Strong Room where the historic records of Wirral are protected and preserved.

Pre-booking required. Disabled access.

Call William Meredith on 0151 606 2929 or email williammeredith@wirral.gov.uk
Bidston Community Archaeology

Pig Field Site, Tam O’Shanter Urban Farm, Boundary Road, Bidston, CH43 7PD
Sat 5th September 11am to 3.30pm

The excavation aims to investigate evidence of the earliest date of occupancy on this site. The earliest evidence so far is in the form of pottery dating from the 17th century. There is also potential prehistoric use, indicated by pieces of worked flint. The team will be happy to escort visitors around the site.

No booking required. Uneven ground, unsuitable for wheelchairs. Visitors should wear appropriate footwear. Refreshments available at Tam O’Shanter cafe.

Email bidston-community-archaeology@hotmail.co.uk

Birkenhead Park Heritage & Landscape Walk

Meet at Birkenhead Park Visitor Centre, Park Drive, Birkenhead, CH41 4HY
Thu 10th to Sun 13th September 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Find out about the history of the world’s first publicly funded park; the role of Joseph Paxton in its design and its influence on Central Park New York and other parks, national and international. The walk will follow the places of interest, including the Swiss Bridge, Roman Boathouse and the park lodges. The tour is approximately 2 miles long and takes about two hours.

Pre-booking required for groups only. Steps in one location but an alternative accessible route available. Refreshments available in the Visitor Centre.

Email Birkenhead Park Rangers birkenheadpark@wirral.gov.uk

610 (County Of Chester Squadron)

Hooton Park Airfield, Hooton Park, Ellesmere Port, CH63 1BR
Sat 5th & Sun 13th September 12 noon

The talk on 610 (County of Chester Squadron) covers the history of the Squadron from its inception in 1936 to its disbandment in 1957 and covers the work of the Squadron during WWII, when the Squadron was one of the most effective fighter units in the RAF.

Pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments.

Call Michael Lewis on 01244 373551 or email Michael-lewis@zen.co.uk

Bromborough Village Pool Walk

Meet outside the Village Hotel, Pool Lane, Bromborough
Sat 5th & Sat 12th September 11am

A walk starting at the Village Hotel in Bromborough. The village of Bromborough Pool is the third oldest industrial village in Britain, laying the foundation for a ‘garden village’, but overshadowed by Port Sunlight which it pre-dates by over 35 years.

No pre-booking required. Refreshments available at café in village.

Call Glynn D Parry on 0151 334 4762

Eastham Village Walk

Meet at the church lychgate in village centre, CH62 0AE
Sat 5th, Wed 9th & Thu 10th September 10.30am to 11.30pm

A short walk around the historic features of Eastham village with a look at the church, the cottages, the pubs, the farm and the ‘big’ houses and the village under the guidance of village historian, John Brown.

Pre-booking required. No disabled access. Refreshments available.

Call 0151 327 3576 or email david.allan132@ntlworld.com

Neston Town Trail

Meet outside Neston Parish Church, High Street, Neston, CH64 9TZ
Thu 10th September 11am to 1pm
Sat 12th September 2pm to 4pm

A walk around Neston town centre, exploring the town’s historic buildings and some of its history.

Pre-booking required. Disabled Access. Refreshments available in local cafés.

Call Janet Griffiths on 0151 336 5478 or email janetgriffiths.ncs@gmail.com

Flaybrick Military History Walk

Flaybrick Memorial Gardens, Tollemache Road, Bidston
Meet at Tam O’Shanter Urban Farm, CH43 7PD
Sat 12th September 11pm to 1pm

Flaybrick is an outstanding Victorian cemetery, dating back to 1864. It contains hundreds of military related burials and family commemorations of those who gave their lives in wars across the world. This walk will emphasise the graves relating to the Boer War, Zulu Wars, World Wars and other conflicts.

Pre–booking not required. Please note that paths are uneven in parts. Refreshments available at the Farm.

Call 0151 488 5406
Heswall Historic Walk
Meet at car park behind Heswall Hall (access from Mount Avenue, CH60 4RH)
Sun 6th September 2pm
A circular walk through the historic heart of Heswall, highlighting the many old sandstone buildings which make the Heswall Lower village Conservation Area so attractive.
Pre-booking required.
Call Roger Lane on 0151 342 9269 or email roger.m.lane@btinternet.com

Hilbre Walk:
Archaeology and History
Hilbre Island, West Kirby
Sat 12th September 3.30pm
Those attending must make their own way across to the island from West Kirby; it is safe to cross over the recommended route after 2.30pm for this event. Visitors are asked to leave by 8.00pm.
Hilbre has a wealth of hidden history dating from prehistoric times to the 20th century. This walk around the island will include areas not normally accessible to the visiting public. We will look at what remains of the island’s early occupation plus its maritime and industrial history, finishing with its wartime and leisure involvement. Duration of walk will be approximately 1.5 hours not including travelling time across to the island, which is about 1 hour each direction. Meet in the Day Room opposite the toilets.
Booking required. Access is limited for certain disabilities and the walk will include flights of steps. No refreshments (bring your own) but there are toilets.
Call Chris Morris on 0151 608 5050

Hooton Park Tour
The Hangars, Airfield Way (was known as South Road), Hooton, CH65 1BQ
Access via Junction 6 M53, second exit off roundabout.
Sat 12th & Sun 13th September Tours at 11am & 2pm
The second Hooton Hall, built for the Stanley family in 1778 was demolished in 1925. The war department requisitioned its park in 1914 for the Liverpool Pals. Three Belfast hangars, now listed Grade II were built in 1917. In the 1930s, Hooton was used as Liverpool airport and during WWII, its aircraft patrolled the Irish Sea and around 10,000 aircraft were assembled. Also on the site are The Aeroplane Collection (TAC), who restore aircraft and aero engines and the Griffin Trust who restore transport vehicles.
No booking required. Limited disabled access.
Call Colin Schroeder on 0151 678 7798

Hoylake: Old Hoose
Meet at the Ship Inn, Market Street, Hoylake, CH47 3BB
Mon 7th September 11am
A walk lasting about 90 minutes, seeking out the haunts of local fishermen along the back lanes; see the first and latest RNLI stations; walk by the sea.
Pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available locally.
Call Helen Penny on 07914685099 or email wirraltours@gmail.com

Lower Bebington Walk
Meet outside Mayer Hall, Lower Bebington, CH63 7PL
Sat 12th September 2pm
This walk around Lower Bebington, will trace its roots from medieval times. The village became noteworthy in the 19th century, when it was the residence of the celebrated antiquarian and benefactor Joseph Mayer. The free library he introduced was one of the first in the country.
Pre-booking required. The pathways can be uneven in places. Refreshments available in village.
Email Mattcrook_23@yahoo.com

New Ferry Historic Walk
Meet at Bebington Station, CH63 7LA
Fri 11th September 9.30am to 12.30pm approx
A leisurely walk through New Ferry on a winding route of about 1 mile, to finish at Port Sunlight River Park. Hear about the fascinating history of the area. Learn about the origins and development of New Ferry, its long-forgotten history as a tourist resort, its role in making the bricks that built nearby Birkenhead and Liverpool, and its relationship with the river.
No pre-booking required. There are two flights of steep steps towards the end of the walk and parts are on grass which may compromise access for wheelchairs.
Call Mark Anthony Craig on 0151 513 6681 or email newferryonline@gmail.com

New Ferry Butterfly Park Walk
Meet at park entrance, Howell Road, New Ferry CH62 5BJ (approach road to Bebington Station car park – access between Aldi, CH62 5BG and the railway over-bridge)
Sun 13th September 2pm to 3.30pm approx
The walk will explore the industrial history of this former railway goods yard (brick-making and railway operation) and how this has contributed to the wildlife diversity of the park. A short distance of only about 600m. Pond dipping and other children’s activities will be available.
No pre-booking required. The lower half of the park is disabled accessible. Some parking on site. Refreshments available nearby in Port Sunlight and New Ferry.
Call Hilary J Ash on 0151 327 5923, Paul Loughnane on 0151 645 8937 or visit cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk or wirralwildlife.co.uk
Oxton Guided History Walk
Meet centre of Oxton village
by the postbox, CH43 5SF
Sat 5th September 11am – East Walk
Sat 12th September 12.30pm – West Walk

There is history around every corner of Oxton and you can explore it in the company of an Oxton Guide, who will inform and entertain you with facts and stories about the area. We offer 2 walks, one to the east of Oxton and one to the west. Each lasts approximately 90 minutes.

Pre-booking required. The walks go along some unmade roads, but we do try to support anyone with physical disabilities to enjoy the walk, or arrange a personally tailored walk on another date. Refreshments available in village.

Call Bob Knowles on 07976321322 or email history@oxton.org.uk

Port Sunlight ‘Open Village’
Trail starts from Port Sunlight Museum, 23 King George’s Drive, CH62 5DX
Sun 13th September
12 noon to 4pm

Now in its second year, ‘Open Village’ provides a rare and special opportunity to see inside some of the houses and principal buildings in the beautiful village of Port Sunlight and to meet village residents. Pick up a trail leaflet from Port Sunlight Museum.

No pre-booking required. Most of the buildings are accessible. For more information contact Port Sunlight Museum. Refreshments available from the Port Sunlight Museum Tea Room.

Call on 0151 644 6466 or email info@portsunlightvillage.com

Port Sunlight War Memorial
War Memorial, Causeway, Port Sunlight
Wed 9th September
9am to 12.30pm & 1.30pm to 4.30pm (weather permitting)

Observe the cleaning and waxing of the bronze statues and plaques at the Grade I listed Port Sunlight War Memorial. This work is required to maintain and preserve the magnificent bronze statuary designed by Sir William Goscombe John and completed in 1921.

No pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments in Museum Tea Room.

Call on 0151 644 6466 or email info@portsunlightvillage.com

Port Sunlight River Park Walk
Meet Dock Road North Car Park, Bromborough, CH62 4TQ
Wed 9th September
1.30pm to 3.30pm

This vibrant new park with stunning views over Wirral, North Wales and Merseyside is a former landfill site overlooking the River Dibbin, Price’s Candle works and Bromborough Dock. This 2 mile long guided walk will look at the history of the site: Port Sunlight, the links with Unilever, Biffa, the Land Trust; and present day management.

No pre-booking. Disabled parking. Footpaths suitable for wheelchairs but some slopes – please call to check suitability. Refreshments available.

Call Anne Litherland on 07587550060 or email Anne.Litherland@wirral.autistic.org

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St Bridget’s Church Tour
Meet at North Porch, St Bridget’s Church, St Bridget’s Lane, West Kirby, CH48 3JT
Sat 5th September
10.30am & 2.30pm

A guided tour around the interior of the church, looking at architectural features, including wrought iron chancel screen and stained glass, mainly by Charles Kempe. Historic inscriptions.

Pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available.

Call Menai Dillon on 07778391919

Rock Park Walk
Meet at the New Ferry Pier Terminal at the junction of the Dell and New Ferry Road, New Ferry, CH62 1DA
Tue 8th September
10.30am & 1.30pm approx

Rock Park was designated a Conservation Area in February 1979. The estate was laid out by Joseph Bennison in 1837 and now comprises 36 houses of different styles, all of which are Grade II listed. Also surviving are the old Rock Ferry pier and the listed stone slipway. The New Ferry – Rock Ferry coast is designated a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). The training ships ‘Conway’ and ‘Indefatigable’ and the reform ships ‘Akbar’ and ‘Clarence’ were once moored in the Mersey here.

Pre-booking essential. The route is accessible. Tour ends at the Refreshment Rooms.

Call Su Thompson on 0151 645 1088

St Bridget’s Church Tour
Meet at North Porch, St Bridget’s Church, St Bridget’s Lane, West Kirby, CH48 3JT
Sat 5th September
10.30am & 2.30pm

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Pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available.

Call Menai Dillon on 07778391919
Thornton Hough
Guided Walk
Meet outside The Seven Stars, Church Road, Thornton Hough, CH63 1JW
Thu 10th September
10.30am to 12 noon (approx)

The village as it appears today is principally due to the efforts of two philanthropic landlords: Joseph Hirst, a textile manufacturer from Huddersfield and William Hesketh Lever, later Lord Leverhulme, founder of Port Sunlight. Hear all about the history of the buildings, the men who created them and the people who lived there.

Pre-booking required. Parking available on Smithy Hill. Refreshments available in the Village Café or The Seven Stars.

Call Gavin Hunter on 0151 336 2761

Walk Around The Williamson
Williamson Art Gallery & Museum, Slaty Road, Birkenhead, CH43 4UE
Wed 9th September
2pm to 3.30pm
Fri 11th September
2pm to 3.30pm

A look at the building, history and collections of the Williamson with Colin Simpson, Wirral’s Principal Museums Officer, including how and why collections are formed and a glimpse behind the scenes at the work of an active museum.

Pre-booking required. Disabled access. Refreshments available.

Call Gallery Reception on 0151 652 4177

Wellington Road Conservation Area
Meet outside the Pilot House, 28 Atherton Street, New Brighton, CH45 2NY
Sat 5th September 10.30am

A guided walk, with a talk beforehand, exploring the historic villas and surroundings of old New Brighton. Duration approximately 2 hours.

Pre-booking required. The route is accessible and refreshments are available.

Call Joy Hockey on 0151 639 2412

West Kirby Old Village Walk
Meet at St Bridget’s Church lychgate, Church Road, West Kirby, CH48 3JT
Wed 9th & Sat 12th September
10.30am

A short circular walk through the old village of West Kirby, once a bustling community with farms, inns and shops. Some buildings survive from the 17th century.

Pre-booking required. No disabled access. Refreshments available on 12th Sept on Church centre.

Call Heather Chapman on 0151 625 7013 or email thechappies@btinternet.com

Walks in Woodside
Woodside Industry Plus:
Port, Poetry, Pottery, Pubs and People
Meet at Woodside Ferry Terminal by the ‘Beatle Penguins’
Sun 13th September
10.30am to 12.30pm (approx)

This guided stroll takes us from the waterfront docks to ambitious plans to lay out a Regency new town, to the creative heart of the area and to see the original transport links.

Pre-booking required. Wheelchair accessible with only slight slopes. Refreshments available at the Woodside ferry terminal.

Call Helen Penny on 07914685099 or email wirraltours@gmail.com
Thank You!

Wirral Heritage Open days are organised through a partnership of many local voluntary groups and individuals. Wirral History and Heritage Association is the umbrella organisation for Wirral’s local history and heritage societies and aims to bring together everyone with an interest in the peninsula’s unique past. For more information, please email contact@wirralhistoryandheritage.org.uk

We would like to say a big thank you to everyone involved in Wirral Heritage Open Days:


St Andrew’s Church, Bebington; St Andrew’s UC, Wallasey; St Anne’s R.C. Church, Rock Ferry; St Barnabas Church, Bromborough; Birkenhead Quaker Meeting House; St Bridget’s, West Kirby; St Mary’s Eastham; Christ Church, Oxton; Christ Church URC, Port Sunlight; St Hilary’s, Wallasey; Holy Apostles & Martyrs Parish Church Wallasey; St James’ Parish Church, New Brighton; St Oswalds Church, Bidston, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception R.C. Church, Birkenhead; Prenton URC; St Mary and St Helen, Neston; Ss Peter, Paul & Philomena Church/ICKSP, New Brighton; St Thomas’ Church, Parkgate; Trinity with Palm Grove (URC/Methodist) Church.


And not forgetting all the individual speakers and walk leaders!