

Heritage Open Days

17–20 September
2026



FREE DAYS OUT

Blackpool and the Fylde Coast



Blackpool Council

H
heritage open days

Welcome to Heritage Open Days 2026

Thursday 17 – Sunday 20 September

Heritage Open Days is England's biggest celebration of history and culture, when places across the country throw open their doors and invite you to explore their venues, stories and histories. And the best part? It's completely free!

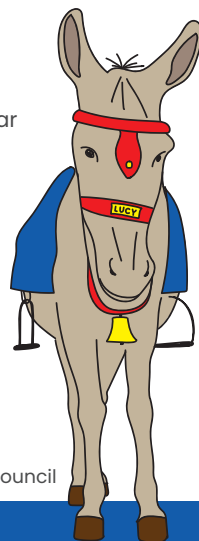
This year's theme, **Everyday Histories**, celebrates the small moments, familiar objects and local quirks that quietly shape our lives.

Showtown is excited to share a lively programme that uncovers Blackpool's past through the lens of daily life. With venues, community groups and brilliant volunteers joining in, expect surprising stories, quirky discoveries and plenty of 'I never knew that' moments.

All event details are correct at the time of printing...
but hey, things can change! Check our website for the most up-to-date information.



Front cover: Winter Gardens 1928 ©Blackpool Council



How to book tickets...

Get ready! Tickets go live on
**Wednesday 19 August 2026 at
10am** (unless otherwise stated).

Book online at:
www.showtownblackpool.co.uk/hod

Prefer to book by phone?
You can call Showtown History
Centre on **01253 478090**. Our lines
are open **Wednesday to Friday,
10am–4pm**, we'll be happy to help!



Symbols Key

- Fully wheelchair accessible
- Partially wheelchair accessible
- Parking
- Accessible parking
- Toilets
- Baby change
- Breastfeeding friendly spaces
- Accessible toilets
- Changing places toilet
- Hearing loop
- Audio description
- Sign language interpretation
- Family activity



These tours are in high demand...

...and because everyone wants in, we're running a ballot! Register your interest from **Wednesday 19 August at 10am**, and if your name is picked from the Ringmaster's hat, we'll let you know you've been selected on Friday 4 September.

BLACKPOOL TOWER TOUR

Promenade Main Entrance, FY1 4BJ

Your chance to experience a guided tour of the iconic Blackpool Tower. Explore the stunning ballroom, captivating circus and uncover the history and colourful characters that have shaped the past of Blackpool's tallest landmark.

Sat 19 Sept 11am
Sun 20 Sept 11am

Duration: 90mins

To Book: Showtown History Centre



Organised by Showtown in partnership with Blackpool Tower

LIGHTWORKS ILLUMINATIONS DEPOT

Amy Johnson Way, Blackpool, FY4 2RL

Discover the magic behind Blackpool's world-famous Illuminations on this guided heritage tour. View the workshop, learn the story of the lights, and see original designs up close.

Thur 17 Sept 1pm

Duration: 90mins

To Book: Showtown History Centre



Organised by Showtown in partnership with Blackpool Council

WINTER GARDENS TOUR

Church Street, Blackpool, FY1 1HL

This tour of the magnificent Winter Gardens gives you the opportunity to see the Opera House, Empress Ballroom and Spanish Suite in a new light. Go behind-the-scenes and discover the rich heritage of this iconic Blackpool venue.

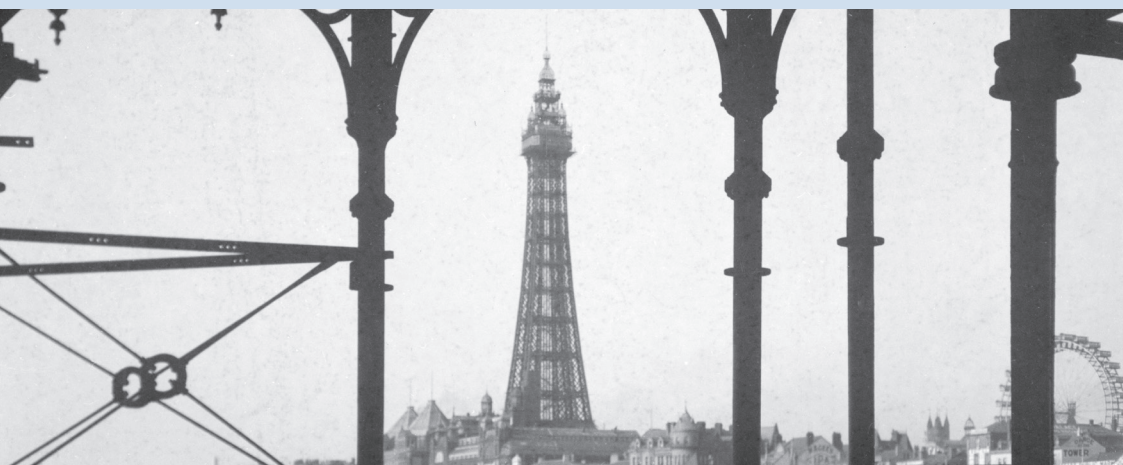
Fri 18 Sept 10.30am & 12pm

Duration: 90mins

To Book: Showtown History Centre



Organised by The Winter Gardens Trust



BLACKPOOL & BEYOND – Book in Advance

To make sure there's room for everyone, the events in this section need to be booked ahead of time.



BELLE VUE STRAWBERRY GARDENS

72 Newcastle Avenue, Blackpool, FY3 9DHX

NEW

Take a guided tour of Blackpool's hidden Belle Vue Strawberry Gardens and uncover their extraordinary past as a Victorian entertainment venue, brought to life by the passionate community that cares for them today.

Sun 20 Sept 11am & 1pm

Duration: 60mins

To Book: E Showtown History Centre



Organised by Belle Vue Strawberry Gardens Community Group

ALL HALLOWS CHURCHYARD WALK

All Hallows Road, Blackpool, FY2 0AY

Join a short, guided churchyard walk and uncover the stories of the people who helped shape Blackpool's early days. Explore hidden histories, local legends and fascinating characters on this engaging tour.

Thur 17 Sept 12pm

Fri 18 Sept 12pm

Sat 19 Sept 12pm

Sun 20 Sept 12pm

Duration: 60mins

To Book: Email:

office@bisphamchurch.co.uk
or Tel 01253 274172. Office open
Tuesday-Friday 10am-12.30pm.



Organised by All Hallows Church

CENTRAL LIBRARY TOUR

Central Library, Queen Street,
Blackpool, FY1 1PX

Come and learn about the establishment of Central Library in 1911 and discover more about how the printed word became available to everyday people. Explore its historic features, step behind the scenes, and see how its services have evolved over more than a century. Oh, and you may even hear a tale or two about the library's resident ghosts!

Thur 17 Sept 10am & 2pm

Fri 18 Sept 10am & 2pm

Sat 19 Sept 10am & 2pm

Duration: 60mins

To Book: Showtown History Centre



Organised by Blackpool
Libraries

CLEVELEYS COTTAGE EXHIBITION

Corner of Cleveleys Avenue and
West Drive, Cleveleys, FY5 2BL

A walking tour of 42 homes from the 1906 Cleveleys Cottage Exhibition. Explore a series of houses from the period showcasing cutting-edge building technology and discover what remains of this pioneering project.

Thur 17 Sept 12pm

Fri 18 Sept 12pm

Duration: 90mins

To Book: Showtown History Centre



Organised by Hidden Heritage
Tours

BLACKPOOL & BEYOND – Book in Advance

To make sure there's room for everyone, the events in this section need to be booked ahead of time.



A CENTURY OF ENTERTAINMENT: 1926 MUSEUM TOUR

Showtown, Bank Hey Street, Blackpool, FY1 4TQ

2026 ONLY

Celebrate 100 years of entertainment on this special guided tour. Explore five remarkable objects linked to 1926 and discover stories of Stan Laurel, Harry Houdini, Eric Morecambe and other entertainment icons.

Fri 18 Sept 3pm

Duration: 60mins

To Book: Showtown History Centre



Organised by Showtown



BLACKPOOL GHOST TOUR

Town Hall Steps, Talbot Square,
Blackpool, FY1 1AD

Dare to uncover the ghostly side of town on this walking tour covering some of Blackpool's most infamous sites of haunting and paranormal experiences. Hear tales of the White Lady, Cheeky Charlie, Little Ben and many more... If you dare!

Sat 19 Sept 3pm

Duration: 90mins

To Book: Showtown History Centre



Organised by Hidden Heritage Tours

GRAND THEATRE HERITAGE TOUR

33 Church St, Blackpool, FY1 1HT

Have you always wanted to peek inside Blackpool's hidden gem? Discover this Grade II* listed building and explore Frank Matcham's masterpiece in these short tours. It's a unique chance to admire the ornate auditorium and learn more about the rich history of this architectural treasure.

Sun 20 Sept 10am, 11am & 12pm

Duration: 30mins

To Book: blackpoolgrand.co.uk



Organised by Blackpool Grand Theatre

THE IMPERIAL HOTEL

North Promenade, Blackpool, FY1 2HB

Discover the heritage of one of Blackpool's iconic Victorian landmarks on this guided tour of the venues most historically significant spaces. Along the way, you'll hear vivid stories of royal visits, political moments, and the notable guests who shaped the building's rich history.

Sat 19 Sept 10am, 12pm & 2pm

Sun 20 Sept 10am, 12pm & 2pm

Duration: 45mins

To Book: Email events@imperialhotelblackpool.co.uk or call 01253 623971



Organised by The Imperial Hotel Blackpool

BLACKPOOL – Drop-In Events

All the events in this section are drop-in. No need to reserve a spot, just show up and enjoy!



AUNTY SOCIAL: YESTERDAY EVERYDAY: MINI MUSEUM OF RETRO TECH

28 Topping Street, Blackpool, FY1 3AQ

2026 ONLY

It's time to rewind to the past! Come and explore a selection of our favourite analogue and retro technology that was once part of everyday life. From vintage cameras to floppy disks and typewriters, you can touch, hold and try out a variety of gadgets which once seemed so indispensable. Suitable for 9+

Fri 18 Sept 11am–3pm
Sat 19 Sept 11am–3pm



Organised by Aunty Social



ALL HALLOWS CHURCH

All Hallows Road, Blackpool, FY2 0AY

A chance to explore this beautiful, historical ecclesiastical building including a short pre-recorded talk. It's believed that there has been a church on this site since 1189 and it was the only place of worship in Blackpool until 1821.

Thur 17 Sept 1pm–2pm
Fri 18 Sept 1pm–2pm
Sat 19 Sept 1pm–2pm
Sun 20 Sept 1pm–2pm



Organised by All Hallows Church

BLACKPOOL MASONIC HALL

83 – 85 Adelaide Street, Blackpool, FY1 4LU

Opened in 1899, this is your chance to explore Blackpool's historic Freemasons' Hall. Step inside this remarkable hidden heritage gem and discover its original features, rich Masonic heritage and beautifully preserved lodge room.

Sat 19 Sept 10am–2pm



Organised by Blackpool Masonic Hall

BLACKPOOL TOWN HALL

Talbot Square, Blackpool, FY1 1AD

Take a guided tour of the Town Hall, including the Mayor's Parlour and the impressive Council Chamber, featuring the Wragg Window, the history wall painting and four windows celebrating Blackpool's heritage. This unique opportunity will also give you the chance to view the Town Hall's collection of silverware, stained glass windows and historic artefacts.

Sat 19 Sept 10am–3.30pm



Organised by Blackpool Civic Trust

BLACKPOOL – Drop-In Events

All the events in this section are drop-in. No need to reserve a spot, just show up and enjoy!



GRUNDY ART GALLERY: SHARING MEMORIES

Queen Street, Blackpool, FY1 1PU

Celebrate 115 years of Grundy Art Gallery and join us to reflect, connect and share stories inspired by your visits to the gallery. Help honour its rich cultural history whilst creating wonderful, new memories.

Thur 17 Sept 10am–12pm

Fri 18 Sept 10am–12pm

Sat 19 Sept 10am–12pm



Organised by Grundy Art Gallery

GRAND THEATRE

33 Church St, Blackpool, FY1 1HT

Step inside Blackpool's Grand Theatre and explore its glorious Grade II* listed interior – an architectural masterpiece by Frank Matcham. Enjoy rare, self-guided access to the stunning auditorium, cantilevered tiers, and intricate design details. This is a unique chance to admire the breathtaking beauty of this theatre.

Thur 17 Sept 10am–12pm

Fri 18 Sept 10am–12pm

Sat 19 Sept 10am–12pm

Sun 20 Sept 10am–1pm



Organised by Blackpool Grand Theatre

FYLDE MEMORIAL ARBORETUM REMEMBRANCE WALK

Moor Park Ave, Bispham, Blackpool, FY2 0LZ

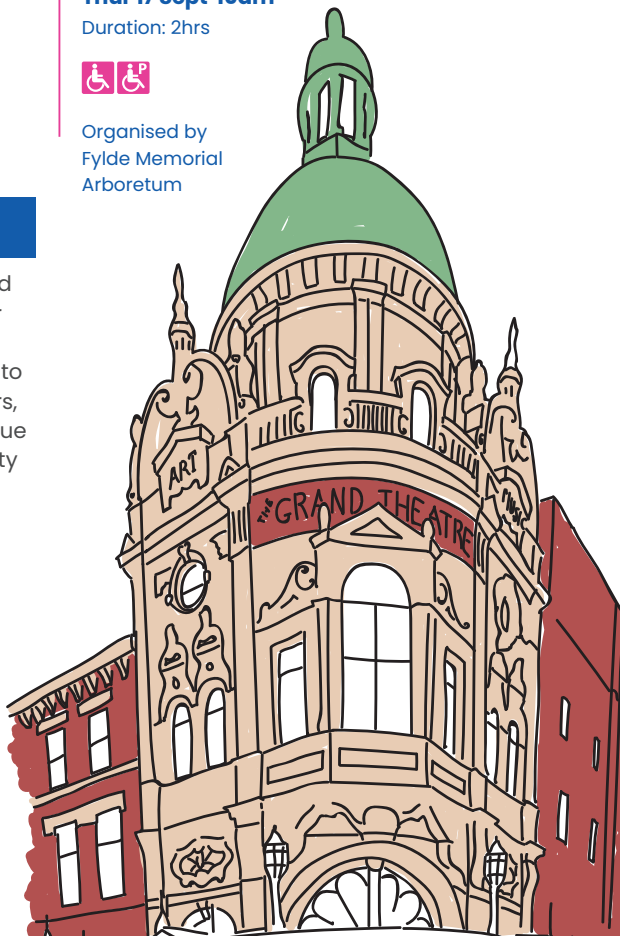
Explore the stories behind the memorials at the Fylde Memorial Arboretum on this guided remembrance walk. Discover the significance of the site and learn about Blackpool's role during both World Wars, with reflections on the people and events commemorated among the trees.

Thur 17 Sept 10am

Duration: 2hrs



Organised by
Fylde Memorial
Arboretum



BLACKPOOL – Drop-In Events

All the events in this section are drop-in. No need to reserve a spot, just show up and enjoy!



HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Dean St, South Shore, Blackpool, FY4 1BP

Take the opportunity to explore this impressive Grade II listed building with stunning stained-glass windows. This church has stood proud on the South Shore skyline for over 140 years and offers space for peace and contemplation.

Thur 17 Sept 10.30am–1pm

Fri 18 Sept 10.30am–1pm

Sat 19 Sept 10.30am–1pm

Sun 20 Sept 10.30am–1pm



Organised by Holy Trinity Church

LAYTON CEMETERY

Talbot Road, Blackpool, FY3 7BD

Explore Blackpool's historic Victorian burial ground, and discover the extraordinary stories of the people buried there. From performers and activists to mayors and unsung locals, their lives were anything but ordinary. Along the way, learn the hidden meanings of gravestone symbolism and the fascinating traditions of Victorian burial culture.

Sat 19 Sept 11am

Sun 20 Sept 11am

Duration: 2hrs



Organised by Friends of Layton Cemetery

LITTLE MARTON WINDMILL

Langdale Road, Blackpool, FY4 4PH

Step inside the Grade II listed Little Marton Windmill and enjoy guided heritage tours, model displays and stories of the Fylde's many windmills. Climb to the top and wander each floor to enjoy this beautifully preserved historic landmark. Families can also enjoy the mill's Kiddy Korner.

Sun 20 Sept 11am–4pm



Organised by Friends of Little Marton Windmill

ST PAUL'S NORTH SHORE

Egerton Road, Blackpool, FY1 2NP

Take this opportunity to learn the history of St Paul's, from its origins as a tin church in 1895 to its eventual demolition in 1992, and how worship still continues there to this day. On display will be some Mouseman furniture, as well as artefacts and photos dating back to the original opening more than 130 years ago.

Fri 18 Sept 10.30am–2.30pm

Sat 19 Sept 10.30am–2.30pm



Organised by The Parish Council, St Paul's North Shore

BACK FOR 2026

BLACKPOOL – Drop-In Events

All the events in this section are drop-in. No need to reserve a spot, just show up and enjoy!



STANLEY PARK: COCKER CLOCK

West Park Drive, Blackpool, FY3 9HU

Climb the steep steps of the 85 foot Cocker Clock Tower to see its working mechanisms and the sweeping views of the park and beyond. Built in 1927 in memoriam of Blackpool's first mayor, the Cocker Clock Tower has become an iconic Blackpool landmark.

Sun 20 Sept 11am-2pm



Organised by Friends of Stanley Park

SAINT STEPHEN'S ON THE CLIFFS: 100 YEARS OF BLACKPOOL VARIETY

Holmfield Road, Blackpool, FY29RB

St Stephen's Church, home of the world famous Actors' Chapel and the spiritual heart of Blackpool Variety, invites you to explore an exhibition celebrating 100 years of performance. On Sunday from 6pm, enjoy a Choral Evensong followed by a wine reception and a special performance by Anthony Mason as George Formby.

Fri 18 Sept 12.30am-5pm

Sat 19 Sept 10am-4pm

Sun 20 Sept 12pm-5pm

(Evening event from 6pm)



Organised by Saint Stephen's on the Cliffs

WAR MEMORIALS WALK

Blackpool Cenotaph, FY1 1RQ

A walk around Blackpool town centre taking in Blackpool's principal war memorials. The circuit starts at the Cenotaph and provides an insight into the contribution and sacrifice made by Blackpool citizens and organisations.

Fri 18 Sept 11am

Duration: 90 mins

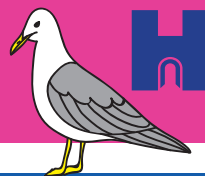


Organised by Mike Coyle



BEYOND BLACKPOOL – Drop-In Events

All the events in this section are drop-in. No need to reserve a spot, just show up and enjoy!



LYTHAM INSTITUTE

27 Clifton Street, Lytham FY8 5EP

Explore the Grade II listed Lytham Institute and meet the community groups who bring this historic town centre landmark to life. Learn more and get involved in the future vision of creating an art gallery and museum celebrating Lytham's heritage.

Sat 19 Sept 11am–3pm



Organised by
Lytham Institute

LYTHAM ST ANNES ART SOCIETY EXHIBITION

Lytham Heritage Centre,
2 Henry St, Lytham FY8 5LE

Explore artwork by talented local artists and discover history panels charting the TSB bank's transformation into Lytham Heritage Centre. Learn more about how the Heritage Centre came to be with a tribute to Audrey Kirby, whose vision made the gallery possible.

Thur 17 Sept 10am–4pm

Fri 18 Sept 10am–4pm

Sat 19 Sept 10am–4pm

Sun 20 Sept 10am–4pm



Organised by Lytham Heritage
Group

THE DITCHBURN JUKEBOX MUSEUM

19 Alexandria Drive,
St Annes on Sea, FY8 1JF

Take a trip back in time when jukebox music was in every coffee bar and milk bar in the UK, and discover the history of the first British jukebox, manufactured right here on the Fylde coast from 1947 onwards.

Thur 17 Sept 10am–4pm

Fri 18 Sept 10am–4pm

Sat 19 Sept 10am–4pm

Sun 20 Sept 10am–4pm



Organised by
The Ditchburn
Jukebox Museum

THE WHITE CHURCH

Fairhaven United Reform Church, 22A Clifton Drive, Lytham St Annes FY8 1AX

A chance to look around this distinctive Grade 2* listed building, recognisable due to its white Ceramo exterior and towers. Guides will be on hand to tell you more about features such as the beautiful stained-glass windows and the iconic Byzantine exterior design. Families can also enjoy a treasure trail quiz as they move around the church.

Thur 17 Sept 10.30am–3.30pm

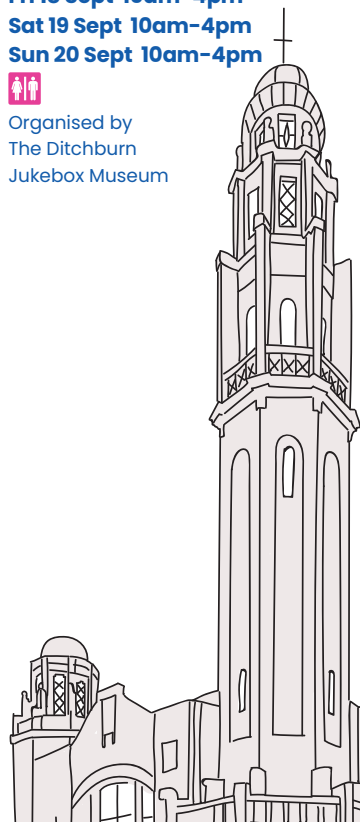
Fri 18 Sept 10.30am–3.30pm

Sat 19 Sept 10.30am–3.30pm

Sun 20 Sept 12.30pm–3.30pm (Service 10.45am–12.30pm)



Organised by Fairhaven United Reformed Church





The museum of fun
and entertainment

Now
open

Showtown presents

Happiness!

The Ken Dodd Exhibition

Until 3 Jan 2027



"The most thoughtful & wonderfully curated exhibition I've ever seen"

**WE'RE
STILL
HERE**



MAJOR EXHIBITION
COMING TO
SHOWTOWN &
GRUNDY ART GALLERY
FEBRUARY TO JUNE 2027

BE PART OF THE PROJECT:
We are looking for stories,
photos, memories and
ephemera showcasing
LGBTQIA+ life in Blackpool.

COLLECTING EVENTS
AT SHOWTOWN:

- 21st & 22nd August
- 4th & 5th September
- 16th & 17th October

SHARE YOUR STORY AND BE
PART OF MAKING HISTORY.



ABINGDON
STUDIOS



GRUNDY ART GALLERY

Photo: Stuart Linden Rhodes,
Blackpool 1992

Don't miss

DAVID BOWIE: On Tour at Showtown

30 June to 26 September 2027

Sign up to the Showtown newsletter for early updates on bookings for this strictly limited three-month run



Heritage Open Days celebrates local history, heritage, culture and arts and it's open to everyone. If you're a venue, group or organisation with an idea for an event for next year's festival, get in touch at

learning@showtownblackpool.co.uk

We'd love to hear from you!



www.showtownblackpool.co.uk



facebook.com/Showtownblackpool



instagram.com/showtownbpl



Blackpool Council


heritage open days