



Department for
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An Roinn
Pobal

Department fur
Commonities



EUROPEAN HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2022

SATURDAY 10 &
SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

  /loveheritageni  @loveheritageni



European Heritage Open Days 2022 Report



European Heritage Open Days are held in Northern Ireland as part of the annual European wide festival. Historic Environment Division within the Department for Communities co-ordinates this event. The purpose is to promote public interest in built heritage and to raise awareness of its cultural significance and benefit to the community.

Foreward



Northern Ireland has a rich and diverse historic environment which is all around us, in our cities, towns, villages and countryside, shaping the places in which we live, work, visit and enjoy. It embodies our past, it enriches our present and is our legacy for future generations. This historic

environment supports our prosperity, strengthens our society and shapes our character. Which means that by treasuring our past, we can enrich our future.

European Heritage Open Days (EHOD) is a key event in our calendar that provides a taste of the value of our historic environment. By understanding the value and benefits that our historic environment and heritage can bring to everyone, it helps to ensure that it is protected and treasured now and for our children's children.

The theme for EHOD this year was "Sustainable Heritage: Learn, Use, Enjoy" which encourages us to look at how to protect and preserve our rich and diverse cultural heritage for new generations, as well as its role now in building a more sustainable and resilient future for communities and the natural environment.

This year, the 25th EHOD in Northern Ireland, took place on 10 and 11 September with over 200 heritage buildings and events opening free of charge during the weekend. This coincided with a period of national mourning however, events proceeded with some cancellations and adjustments whilst still upholding the deepest respect for Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The Open Days are a success due to the efforts of a wide range of communities which help deliver a largely volunteer led programme. This involves strong partnerships with a range of organisations such as Tourism NI, Museums NI, Irish Landmark Trust, National Trust NI and other government and voluntary bodies and individuals. Such partnerships are key if we are to make the most of our historic environment.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank the many individual owners, groups and volunteers who allowed access to these wonderful places which capture our heritage. Without that enthusiasm and generosity these weekend events would not be possible.

Iain Greenway

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Iain Greenway". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Director Historic Environment Division
Department For Communities**



Statistics* **43,073** in person visitors

Each year we collect statistics to measure the success of EHOD. Here is a snapshot of the main statistics gathered from Organisers and marketing programmes. This year we had another successful year albeit a different experience as on the eve of EHOD the country entered a period of national mourning.

Events Organised



257
properties and events



9
Digital, online only



248
Physical open Doors

Tourism NI Website



79,386
EHOD Page Views

The most popular landing page over the weekend of EHOD!

- Average time per visit **6m6s** was well over the average for the site **2m26s**,
- Bounce rate was excellent at **39%** (users)
- Searching and viewing this single page.

New EHOD APP



4,655 Views

This year saw the launch of an exciting new web App. This App digitally showcased all that the events had to offer along with providing a list of participants, and allowing users to search for events by location to help plan their day out.

DFC EHOD Web Page



1,704 Unique Views
Registration period: Feb 1 - Jun 30 2022



11,991 Unique Views
Promotion of event: Jun 1 - Sept 11 2022

* Event number taken from the eve of the festival, before the news of the period of National Mourning was known. Whilst many places did have to cancel or adjust their plans, over 80% went ahead in some form.



Statistics*

Press Office Statistics



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Interview bids and Media Enquiries:

- **22/08/22** - BBC Your Place or Mine - European Heritage Open Days
- **22/08/22** - BBC News -
- **06/09/22** - Radio Ulster- European Heritage Open Days (EHOD)
- **07/09/22** - Belfast Live European Heritage Open Days

DFC Twitter



280

Total engagements

98

Total media engagements

17

Total retweets

10

Regional press articles

10

Online coverage articles

Love HeritageNI Social Media Stats



46

Posts

241,383

Reach



29

Posts

8,723

Reach



46

Posts

24,555

Reach

EUROPEAN HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2022
SATURDAY 10 & SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

REGISTER NOW!

Register now to take part

Love HERITAGE* | Department for Communities | An Roinn Pobal | Department for Communities

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Support for the event

The EHOD team provided some marketing materials, both printed and digital, to support event organisers. We provided guidance on delivering events, information on the theme, how to promote events through social media and how to complete risk assessments and general promotion of events. It also included advice on promoting the Open days on national media platforms.

The team developed an App to support visitors to easily see what was on in an area. The Web App proved to be a great resource as it was easily accessed on a mobile, and presented all events on a map enabling visitors to see what was on in an area very quickly and easily.

Organiser quotes



Thank you for all your assistance and patience in doing the bookings and managing queries this year. I first opened the Origami House to EHOD in 2011 - I believe it was the first contemporary house in NI to be included. This year was our tenth year (due to the Covid break). It was a great day, the weather was idyllic, and the house looked amazing and everyone thoroughly enjoyed their visit.

We always really enjoy the EHODs and being part of the programme.

All visitors were interested in our listed buildings and how they have been used during the years and to know that today all 25 houses are occupied by people who have been in some sort of need. All visitors were very complimentary of the way in which the site is kept and of course the gardens were looking quite good. I think most of the visitors took time to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee following the guided tour of the site, especially on Sunday when it was raining.

Some of our visitors stated that they miss the brochure for EHOD.

We were delighted to have been part of the European Heritage Open Days. We really enjoyed the experience and meeting all the visitors that came to see our old mill.



Programme highlights

With 257 events registered for European Heritage Open Days 2022 it is difficult to showcase all of these fantastic events, so we have selected a very small snapshot from across the region showing the variety of the type of events that are organised for EHOD annually by our wonderful volunteers.



Sheils buildings Carrickfergus

The Charles Sheils Community offered guided tours of the grounds of the Charles Sheils Houses in Carrickfergus which allowed visitors to view the B2 listed buildings dating back to 1868. In keeping with the Sustainable Heritage theme 'using what is there' for European Heritage Open Days 2022, the grounds show conservation, bio diversity and recycling at work in the setting of a Victorian demesne. As well as the kitchen garden, there is an allotment style area, wildlife pond, fruit bush enclosure, compost area and a rare strawberry tree on site. A perimeter forest style path allows visitors a good view of the buildings along with access driveway and paths leading up to the houses.



Origami House

Award winning Architect, Jane Burnside, and author of Contemporary Design Secrets: The Art of Building a House in the Countryside welcomed visitors to her home and studio, The Origami House. As seen on BBC House of the Year, the Origami House is an extraordinary contemporary white and glass house, set in beautiful, landscaped gardens on the edge of the Glens of Antrim.



Greencastle Walks

Historic Environment Division, staff member Anthony Kirby provided his interesting, guided tour of this amazing castle and surrounding area. Greencastle is a Royal castle built in the mid-13th century by Hugh de Lacy to control the southern approach into Ulster. Greencastle was a key fortification for over 400 years and was repeatedly besieged, relieved and repaired before falling into ruins after bombardment by Cromwell's troops in 1652. The castle is prominently situated on rocky outcrop close to Greencastle Point.



Headhunters Barber Shop & Railway Museum

The Johnston family's decision to combine their traditional barbers skills with their interest in local railway history has led to one of the most unique and fascinating attractions. Headhunters Barber Shop & Railway Museum has one of the largest collections of small Irish railway artefacts on display, many kindly donated by former railway employees which were on display over European Heritage Open Days weekend.





Quotes from Visitors and Volunteers



First time in Kirkistown Castle. Fabulous.

Absolutely great events, look forward to it every year.

A fantastic initiative, thanks to all the team.

It's a brilliant day out. Also falls about my birthday, so get to spend a lovely day out. Some of the guides, absolutely fantastic this year.

Was absolutely brilliant this year. Thank you!

European Heritage Open Days lets people of all ages learn about aspects of local history and culture and to keep that knowledge 'alive' for future generations.

I love to find buildings that are not usually open to the public and see what's inside! My attention was attracted by the banner and flags outside and led me to take wander inside and see such a remarkable place!

I love meeting people and finding out things about the area I live in and its amazing history. It's a great weekend you can be a 'tourist' in your own city, learning about local places and stories from the past.

"Thank you, for the tour of your home, we really enjoyed it, particularly loved the sense of arrival over the bridge. Also, the fabulous way you are an ambassador for women in business and remaining true to your sense of yourself. Kind regards."

Volunteer

The places are worth visiting and I certainly gained a lot of information on the tours of both sites I volunteered at.



European Heritage Open Days has been celebrating heritage and built environment in Northern Ireland for **25 years**. It is delivered by the department for Communities' Historic Environment Division, and it involves strong partnerships with a range of organisations such as Tourism NI, Museums NI, National Trust, Libraries NI and other government and voluntary bodies and individuals.

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SAVE THE DATE!

EHOD 2023
9-10 SEPT

Are you interested in organizing an in person or online event or opening the doors of an interesting building in your community?

Contact the EHOD team:
ehod@communities-ni.gov.uk

Find out more:
European Heritage Open Days



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