

## **Celebrate the fascinating history of Milton Keynes as the city hosts more Heritage Open Days than ever before**

Milton Keynes is throwing open its doors with more events than ever before for Heritage Open Days. Taking place over two weekends, 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> September and 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> September, there is something for everyone as the city celebrates its fascinating and exciting heritage with [workshops, craft events, open days, exhibitions, performances and film screenings](#) – all completely free to attend.

This year also marks 100 years since many women gained the right to vote, and a number of events across the city will focus on the stories and contributions of extraordinary women of Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire.

Key attractions opening their doors for free include Milton Keynes Museum, Stadium MK, Great Linford Manor Park, Bletchley Park (limited tickets, booking essential), MK Arts Centre, Milton Keynes Theatre, Cowper and Newton Museum in Olney and, in the wider area, Stowe Gardens, Claydon House, and The Old Gaol in Buckingham.

Also open for this year's programme will be a wide range of historic sites, community buildings and spaces, hosting activities and craft days, dance and family fun days, tours, film screenings, exhibitions and much more.

Free events for Heritage Open Days this year include:

**Not normally open:** see inside the magical world of Festive Road in Kiln Farm where amazing things are created with scrap metal; tour MK Magistrates' Court with working magistrates; peer inside the intriguing world of the Freemasons at Freemason's Lodge in Wolverton; find out more about how black sack waste is sustainably dealt with at the new Milton Keynes Waste Recovery Park; and take a backstage tour at Milton Keynes Theatre.

**Extraordinary women:** Visit Milton Keynes Central Library to learn about the women who made Milton Keynes and see also what life was like for women in 1918 – the year many women gained the vote. At Living Archive MK's exhibition at Discover MK you can find out more about women from Milton Keynes who have made change; and visit North Crawley for an exhibition of the role of local women and local field walk.

**Get crafting!** MK Arts Centre is hosting a day of craft workshops in their studios and art room; visit Milton Keynes Central Library and make protest signs like the suffragettes of last century; learn how to mend and patch pre-loved clothes at a pop-up café at The Old Bath House in Wolverton.

Pete Marland, Leader of Milton Keynes Council and Cabinet Member for Culture, said: "Heritage Open Days in Milton Keynes is bigger than ever before. The number of attractions and groups that have joined us this year to open their doors and put on free events across the city is astonishing and testament to the fantastic history, culture and community of our city and the surrounding area.

"We are particularly thrilled to be celebrating 100 years since many women secured the right to vote. We're marking the anniversary with many events focusing on the extraordinary women in Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire who helped make our city and country the place it is today."

Mel Jeavons, Living Archive MK, said: "2018 is a big year for Heritage Open Days in Milton Keynes. We started with just 15 free events in 2006, and have grown to more than 90 this year over two weekends. This year we are also celebrating the European Year of Cultural

Heritage. 2018 promises to be one of the best years yet for bringing heritage to life in Milton Keynes. There really is something for everyone to enjoy.”

For full details of the many activities and events happening in and around Milton Keynes between Thursday 6th and Sunday 9th September and Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September to Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> September, go to: [www.mkheritageopendays.com](http://www.mkheritageopendays.com).

You can also follow Milton Keynes Heritage Open Days on Twitter using #MKHODs, and share your own pictures.

### **About Heritage Open Days**

Heritage Open Days is the largest festival of culture and history in the UK. As part of the national event across the country, MK Heritage Open Days is organised by Living Archive MK with support from Milton Keynes Council, MK Heritage Association and other partners, and is an annual celebration of the city’s heritage, art and culture.

### **Notes to editors**

Photos attached for use if needed:

- 1) Discover Deanshanger, Deanshanger Memorial Community Centre. Image credit: DVHS
- 2) St Lawrence's Church, Broughton Village. Organised by Friends of St Lawrence (FOSL). Image credit: Church Conservation Trust
- 3) Women who made Milton Keynes at MK Central Library. Organised MK Fawcett Group and MK Libraries

Living Archive MK is part of Heritage MK, a partnership of five museums and heritage organisations – Living Archive MK, Bletchley Park, City Discovery Centre, Cowper and Newton Museum and Milton Keynes Museum.

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