



All properties are open at the kindness and discretion of their owners and guardians.

Opening times are restricted to the hours stated and may be subject to alterations.

FREE TO EXPLORE



Heritage Open Days is your chance to explore thousands of buildings and places across England which are usually closed to the public or charge for admission. To find out what's on in your region go to www.heritageopendays.org


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The Dover Society
Dover Heritage Open Days
8 & 9 September 2018



NEW THIS YEAR:

- **Bronze Age Boat Family Day at Dover Museum**
- **Pop-Art Event at the Town Hall**

For more local information contact:
Derek Leach on 01304 823926
 or email: derekrivervdale@btinternet.com

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS IN DOVER – FREE! Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 September 2018

Once again The Dover Society is coordinating arrangements in Dover for Heritage Open Days, organised by National Trust nationally every year. This event celebrates England's fantastic architectural heritage by encouraging free access to buildings that are usually closed to the public or would normally charge an admission fee. Dover has a great wealth of historic buildings, but few are normally open to the public such as Dover Castle and are not free. This year 10 buildings will be open to the public free of charge.

1 **Maison Dieu House:**

this fine Jacobean house in Biggin Street is the oldest domestic building in Dover. It was built in 1665 as the Agent Victualler's residence close to the Maison Dieu, which Henry VIII had requisitioned as a naval store following the Dissolution. In 1834 it became a private residence. Bought by the Corporation in 1899, it house became council offices until after the Second World War when it became the public library. Following the move of the library to the Discovery Centre, the premises were purchased and beautifully restored by Dover Town Council for its use. The town's regalia will also be on show.



2 **St. Edmund's Chapel:** this tiny cemetery chapel in Priory Road was consecrated by St Richard of Chichester in 1253 in memory of his friend, St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury 1234-45, and was probably used as a cemetery chapel for the Maison Dieu close by. Hidden for many years by development around it and used as a workshop, it was revealed again following war damage to the surrounding buildings. The chapel was restored and reconsecrated in 1968.

3 **Dover College:**

the remains of St. Martin's Priory: built in the 12th century, it was suppressed in 1535 as part of Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries. It became a farm and most of the buildings fell into disrepair. Fortunately, the grand Norman refectory was used as a barn and survives today. Dover College opened on the site in 1871 when the refectory and gatehouse were restored and the king's hall became the college chapel. Part of the cloister also survives. The entrance is from Effingham Crescent.



4 **Church of St. Mary the Virgin:** this prominent building in Biggin Street, dating from Saxon times, was built originally by the secular canons of St. Martin Le Grand, but was rebuilt by the Normans. At the Dissolution it was saved from demolition when Henry VIII granted it for use as a parish and civic church. Unfortunately, because of its weak foundations, it was rebuilt in 1843, although its original arches and columns were reinstated. The magnificent tower survived this restoration.

4a **Bell Tower of St. Mary the Virgin:** in the gallery of this Norman tower visitors will see how the bellringers operate and in the clock chamber they will see the clock workings and various artefacts.

5 **Unitarian Church:** this brick-built octagonal church sitting above York Street was constructed in 1820. The origins of the church go back to 1643 to Baptists who established a meeting house in 1655, but were persecuted following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. Freedom of belief and form of worship as a Unitarian Church was agreed by members in 1916. Following Second World War damage, the chapel reopened in 1952. There will be an art exhibition as well as refreshments.

6 **Grand Shaft Staircase:** this unique triple staircase was started in 1804 and finished in 1807. It connected the barracks and fortifications on the Western Heights through the 250 foot high cliff to sea level, enabling troops to move quickly up or down its 140 steps within the cliff plus another 59 into the barrack yard. In 1812 a Mr Leith of Walmer rode a horse up the staircase for a bet. The entrance is in Snargate Street.

7 **Dover Town Hall formerly the Maison Dieu:**

Founded by Hubert de Burgh, then Constable of Dover Castle, in 1203, its primary purpose was to provide board and lodging for pilgrims on their way to the shrine of Thomas Becket at Canterbury and later to care for the elderly poor and sick of Dover. A chapel was added in 1227, which was adapted in the 19th century as a court. In 1536 the religious house was suppressed by Henry VIII and became a victualling depot for the navy. Put up for auction in 1834 it was bought by the Dover Corporation. Restoration and adaptation of the impressive 13th century Stone Hall took place between 1852 and 1862. The 19th century stained glass windows in the Stone Hall depict episodes in the history of the town. The Council Chamber was added in 1868 and the adjoining Connaught Hall was opened in 1883.



7a **Dover Town Hall:** Drop in between 10.30 and 2pm on Saturday and help create a pop-art Dover Heritage canvas.

8 **Western Heights North Entrance Road Tunnel:** built in the 1860s, it provided vehicular and pedestrian access to the military defences from the town of Dover. It was closed around 1967 when a new road was cut through the ramparts. Places are strictly limited on these guided tours that will allow you to explore the tunnel, see the huge tanks that fed water to the nearby barracks, view the drawbridge and descend into the gunrooms and casemates that housed guns to fire along the moats 150 years ago. Due to the terrain the tours are unsuitable for prams, wheelchairs and young children; the tour covers uneven ground with low levels of lighting so sturdy footwear should be worn. Limited parking will be available on nearby Drop Redoubt Road. Booking details will be available through Eventbrite with booking details from 1 September and publicised via the Western Heights Preservation Society website, Facebook: <http://www.doverwesternheights.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/WesternHeights>

9 **St. Radegund's Abbey:** this premonstratensian abbey founded in 1191 was visited by several monarchs. Following its Dissolution in 1538, the great abbey church was demolished and the remaining buildings with its lands were leased to tenant farmers. Today the refectory is the farmhouse surrounded by abbey ruins. A gatehouse and a guest house survive.

10 **Dover Museum Family Day with Bronze Age Boat theme:** the world's oldest surviving boat, Dover's Bronze Age Boat, which was used to cross the Channel 3500 years ago, was found in 1992 20 feet underground. Eight metres were removed successfully and are now on display in a special gallery. The Family Day will have a cross Channel theme. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Opening times:

- 1 Maison Dieu House – Saturday 10am to 4pm
- 2 St. Edmund's Chapel – Saturday 10am to 4pm
- 3 Dover College – Guided tours only at 11am and 2pm on Saturday and Sunday
- 4 St. Mary the Virgin Church – Saturday 10am to 4pm
- 4a Bell Tower of St. Mary the Virgin – Saturday 1.30pm to 4pm
- 5 Unitarian Church – Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm
- 6 Grand Shaft Staircase – Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm
- 7 Town Hall/Maison Dieu – Guided tours Saturday 10am to 4pm
- 7a Town Hall/Maison Dieu – Drop in pop-art Saturday between 1030 and 2pm
- 8 Western Heights North Entrance tunnel – Prebooked tours Saturday and Sunday 10am to 3pm.
- 9 St. Radegund's Abbey – Guided tours on Sunday 10.30 to noon and 2.30pm to 4pm
- 10 Dover Museum Family Day Saturday 10.30 to 3pm

To find out about other buildings open in the region visit
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