

Nature and heritage focus of weekend event

This year the theme for European Heritage Open Days (9 & 10 September), is 'Heritage and Nature: A Landscape of Possibilities'. Many events have been organised to show Northern Ireland's natural landscape and biodiversity.

Antrim

Greenmount campus nature trails and walled garden

Greenmount campus includes over 18 hectares of landscaped grounds. Walking tours of the nature trail will take you through woodland and past:

- the walled garden dating from 1801
- an ice house
- summer house
- stone arch
- lakes, ponds and a constructed wetland

Armagh

The Palace Demesne Public Park

Palace Demesne Park, set in 300 acres, is the creation of Archbishop Richard Robinson and includes walks that vary in distance and a play park for children. There's a restaurant and coffee shop in the picturesque Georgian stables and courtyard.

Belfast

Carnegie Oldpark Library

The library has been recently purchased and there are exciting plans to restore this 1906 building to its former glory.

There will be a book sale, film show, refreshments, and a small tree will be given to visitors as part of the 'Heritage and Nature' theme to enhance the local environment and encourage children to plant and grow them.

Derry/ Londonderry

Seamus Heaney's HomePlace

The Seamus Heaney HomePlace features an interactive exhibition over two floors, filled with personal stories, images, and the voice of the poet himself.

His first major work, 'Death of a Naturalist', was published in 1966. Throughout his life, Heaney continued to explore the theme of nature and the landscape of his 'homeplace'.

The centre also features a recreation of Heaney's Dublin study, a gift shop, a Creative Learning Zone for children and a café.

Down

Bangor Castle walled garden

Designed by the Ward family of Castle Ward in the 1840s, the walled garden was considered a secret garden until it was restored and opened to the public in 2009.

The gardeners will be onsite providing tours of this exquisite garden and to answer questions about the restoration and the four separate horticultural personalities of the garden.

Fermanagh

Guided bus tour of Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark

Take a guided tour of some of the major sites within the UNESCO Global Geopark, including the Cavan Burren, Cornagee Viewpoint, Blacklion, Hanging Rock, and Claddagh Glen, with optional nature walk, and guided tour of Marble Arch Caves.

European Heritage Open Days

If you want to find out more about what and when properties are opening, what events are on, and if you need to book, you can get information and download the brochure at the following link:

Keep up-to-date with European Heritage Open Days on [Facebook](#) and on [Twitter \(@ehodni\)](#).

The weekend promises to have something for everyone so why not come along and enjoy a little bit of history right on your doorstep?

More useful links

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Buildings and events open for heritage weekend

European Heritage Open Days (EHOD) promises to be exciting this year, with nearly 400 properties opening their doors to visitors for free this weekend (Saturday 9 to Sunday 10 September).

20th anniversary

This year marks the 20th year of European Heritage Open Days in Northern Ireland – a special celebration of our built heritage. The event provides a great chance for the public to see behind closed doors and experience the magic of our historic environment.

To mark this milestone many buildings which were part of the original EHOD in 1997 are opening again. There are also special conservation area walks for you to enjoy. Highlights include:

Andrew Jackson Cottage and US Rangers Museum, Carrickfergus

An 18th century thatched stone cottage restored as a tribute to seventh President of the USA Andrew Jackson, whose parents lived nearby.

The Redoubt in Enniskillen

A hidden historic gem, this stoned-walled redoubt sits on Windmill Hill. It was built in 1796, with walls 142 foot long, 20 feet high, 15 feet thick, and a moat 10 foot deep as a fortification to the town's West Bridge and to Enniskillen Castle.

Armagh Observatory and Planetarium

Enjoy a guided tour of the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium's grounds and gardens – the Astropark. Enjoy a scale model of the solar system, the Hill of Infinity, the Around North exhibit, and the natural environment of our woodland walk.

Newtownstewart Guided Walk

The village, located on the River Mourne, was once a centre for the linen industry, now a focal point for agricultural hinterland. The walk and guided tour by architect Manus Deery will feature buildings of architectural and historical interest.

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[Recognise signs of stroke and act FAST](#)

Date published: 14 February 2019

Stroke is a common cause of death and disability. It happens when the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off and brain cells are damaged or die. You should 'act FAST' and call 999 if you think someone is having a stroke. It could save their life.

Signs and symptoms

If someone has a stroke, knowing the signs and symptoms and acting FAST can:

- improve their chances of survival
- reduce the level of disability that results from a stroke

The most common symptoms to look out for are blurred vision, slurred speech or muscle weakness when otherwise feeling well.

Check for the following:

- face – has their face fallen on one side? Can they smile?
- arms – can they raise both arms and keep them there?
- speech – is their speech slurred?
- time – time to call 999 if you see any single one of these signs

A full-blown stroke could include:

- numbness or weakness in face, arm, hand or leg on just one side of the body
- confusion or difficulty speaking or understanding what someone is saying
- difficulty swallowing

- sudden dimness, blurring or loss of vision in one or both eyes
- trouble walking and dizziness
- loss of balance or co-ordination
- severe headache, sudden vomiting or unconsciousness

With a stroke it's important to act immediately, as early treatment is vital. You should either:

- dial 999
- or go to a hospital Accident and Emergency department

When 999 is called they will be brought by ambulance to the nearest acute stroke centre.

You can find further information on this page:

Preventing strokes

Your chances of having a stroke reduce if you understand the risks and take action to prevent a stroke happening.

You can reduce your risk of having a stroke by:

- knowing and managing your personal risk factors such as high blood pressure, diabetes, an irregular heartbeat (for example, atrial fibrillation) and high blood cholesterol
- exercising regularly and maintaining a healthy weight
- reducing the amount of alcohol you drink
- stopping smoking

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[NI Direct phone line currently not working](#)

We are experiencing difficulties presently with the NI Direct phone line.

This is being worked on and we hope it will be fixed shortly.

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ICT apprenticeship scheme offers opportunities

If you're interested in a career in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), opportunities are available on the new ICT apprenticeship scheme. The closing date for applications is 5.00 pm on 8 September.

How to apply

The scheme has more than 30 apprenticeships available in various software development and IT infrastructure roles.

This innovative apprenticeship scheme, involving government and a number of ICT employers, is an excellent opportunity to start a career in ICT.

It will make sure that, when you're seeking employment, you'll have the necessary skills to take advantage of potential opportunities.

Details on how to apply can be found on this page:

If you're successful in being recruited as an apprentice, you will be given the opportunity to develop skills, achieve qualifications and enhance your career prospects.

More useful links

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