



The Farnham Society

Heritage Open Days 2021

Report to Annual General Meeting 2022.

As reported last year, our Heritage Open Days festival for 2020 was conducted under the constraints of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our planning for the 2021 festival started early in the year, at a time when Covid-19 restrictions were being lifted and the nation was emerging from a period of lockdown. We could not predict how the situation would develop during the lead up to the festival in September 2021. That motivated us towards organised outdoor guided walks and tours, with indoor events where suitable social distancing could be maintained. This philosophy was described by our theme of 'Farnham Out of Doors', promoted through our 2021 brochure, with a front cover view out of the doors of Farnham Castle across the town.

We managed numbers of visitors by an online booking system, operating on our newly updated website.

Our programme comprised some regular favourites and some new events. Guided walks in the town explored some of the well known streets and some lesser known courtyards and alleyways, also looking at how Farnham prospered with its brewing industry. Out of the town centre, visitors saw wildlife in The Bourne, Farnham Heath and Tice's Meadow. A major newcomer to our activities, St Mark's Church in Upper Hale opened for a presentation on the recently restored murals by the artist Kitty Milroy and dating from the early 20th century. The church subsequently received listed building status, the murals playing an important part.

The festival finished with the ever popular event at Farnham Castle. With no indoor activities, there was a guided tour of the grounds to view the magnificent trees, and a crowd pulling display by Civil War reenactors.

Our thanks to all our volunteer guides, stewards and helpers, without whom the festival could never happen.

Simon Bradbury

25 October 2022