

On the trail

Family trails offer the perfect way to explore our sites and discover something new along the way. Here is a selection of some of our newest and most popular trails to transport you back in time

WORDS KELLY RAY

ACCESS DETAILS

To check accessibility information for each trail, go to www.english-heritage.org.uk/magazine



Dover Castle's 80 acres of grounds are perfect for a day's exploration

OLIVER EDWARDS

DOVER CASTLE TRAIL

DOVER CASTLE, KENT

This walk around the grounds at Henry II's mighty fortress will transport you on an adventure back in time. Your journey starts with a walk down from the visitor centre to the castle's First World War Fire Command Post, where you will learn how to spot enemy ships. Keep an eye out for the aviary built to house rare red-billed choughs nearby. Then, you'll descend into the Secret Wartime Tunnels, where you'll experience the sounds and smells of the Second World War as you follow the journey

of a wounded pilot in the underground hospital. Your time in the Middle Ages will begin as you journey through the medieval tunnels, before ascending the castle's Great Tower, where vividly recreated rooms bring Henry II's medieval palace to life. Finally, make time to admire the Roman pharos – the oldest surviving lighthouse in the country – once used to guide Romans across the Channel. There's much more to discover throughout the castle's 80 acres of grounds. www.english-heritage.org.uk/dover

'Follow a wounded pilot's journey in the Secret Wartime Tunnels'

WITLEY COURT TRAILS

WITLEY COURT, WORCESTERSHIRE

This Easter, four new mini trails – each with an activity to complete – will be available to guide you around the vast grounds of one of England’s most magnificent country houses, now a spectacular ruin. Built in the 17th century, this Italianate mansion was remodelled in Victorian times before being ravaged by fire in 1937. Choose your trail and get acquainted with characters from Witley’s past, who will help guide you

round the mansion’s glorious grounds as you discover their stories. Two of the trails will take you through the mansion’s recreated gardens, with their ornate terraces, intricate parterres and vivid flower beds. At the heart of the South Parterre is the Perseus and Andromeda fountain, one of the grandest in Europe. While here, don’t miss the wilderness play area near the visitor centre. www.english-heritage.org.uk/witley



Left The wyvern was the emblem of the de Grey family, who once owned Wrest Park, and is the star of a new trail

Below The grounds are full of intriguing features to discover, including the Chinese bridge



WYVERN TRAIL

WREST PARK, BEDFORDSHIRE

The wyvern – a winged, dragon-like creature – was the emblem of the de Grey family, who owned the magnificent Wrest Park estate for over 680 years. The site’s French chateau-style house, which was built in the 19th century, is set amid an outstanding restored garden landscape blending three centuries of English garden design. Your challenge on this new

trail is to try to spot the many images and sculptures depicting wyverns in the house and gardens. Only the keenest pairs of eyes will be able to spot the tiny wyverns hiding in unexpected places. For those who want to take a deeper dive into the story of the gardens and the people behind them, there are also three new interactive outdoor trails, offering visitors the chance to

explore the landscape. Along the way, you’ll discover the iconic Archer Pavilion as well as some hidden garden gems – there’s the ornate marble fountain, the Chinese temple and bridge, and the 18th-century bowling green house. On top of all that, ‘ghost’ building viewers bring Wrest Park’s past back to life. www.english-heritage.org.uk/wrest

‘Only the keenest pairs of eyes will be able to spot the tiny wyverns hiding in unexpected places’

Four new trails at Witley Court guide visitors around the grounds

Coming in late April



Richborough in Kent witnessed the beginning of Roman rule in Britain



START EXPLORING

For more information and to download the trail maps, go to www.english-heritage.org.uk/magazine



Coming in spring 2023

RICHBOROUGH FAMILY TRAIL

RICHBOROUGH ROMAN FORT AND AMPHITHEATRE, KENT

From the spring, this new trail, created as part of our Gateway to Britannia project to retell Richborough’s story, offers young adventurers the chance to step into the shoes of a Roman citizen, while discovering this historic site on a quest through time. As the landing place

of the Roman invasion of Britain in AD 43, Richborough is among the most symbolically important of all Roman sites in Britain. The settlement became a bustling port town that served as the gateway to Britain, later giving rise to one of the most important Saxon Shore forts, whose formidable

walls still stand tall today. Romans from all over the globe lived and worked here, probably well into the 5th century – making Richborough one of the last Roman forts to be occupied. As part of the trail, you’ll be armed with your very own ‘time machine’ to find your way back to the present day.

As you explore the fort’s huge stone walls and encircling defensive ditches, you’ll hear the varied tales of characters from across history, which will bring Richborough’s rich story to life and help you to imagine it in its heyday. www.english-heritage.org.uk/richborough

FAMILY TREE TRAIL

OSBORNE, ISLE OF WIGHT

Tree planting has long been used to mark special occasions or events, and Queen Victoria's Isle of Wight home is teeming with interesting trees that were planted by the royals and their visitors. From cork oaks and common limes to enormous coastal redwoods and giant sequoias, this new trail reveals the stories behind these special trees, with mini challenges to complete while exploring this royal residence. The trail takes you beyond the main house into the wider parkland leading down to Queen Victoria's private beach. On

your way back up towards the house, you'll pass the Swiss Cottage – a little Alpine-style chalet created by Prince Albert as a playhouse and museum for his children. Outside are the princes and princesses' kitchen garden and play fort, along with a modern play area for 21st-century kids. Don't forget to look out for the animal sculptures along the path between the beach and Swiss Cottage, and keep your eyes peeled for red squirrels as you amble through the woodland. www.english-heritage.org.uk/osborne



Take a look around the Swiss Cottage while on the Family Tree Trail



Explore medieval life with the trails in and around Warkworth Castle

Coming in spring 2023

WARKWORTH CASTLE TRAIL

WARKWORTH CASTLE AND HERMITAGE, NORTHUMBERLAND

Once home to the powerful Earls of Northumberland, the Percys, this now-ruined castle offers five new interactive trails, each based around a different figure from the castle's history. From fish farmer Widow Nawton to

teenage hero Henry Percy of Atholl, you'll learn about the daily life of your chosen character as you follow them around the castle on a quest. Will you help find the earl's missing robe with John del Wardrobe, or assist William Stowe

in patrolling the castle as it faces attack? The trails will lead you inside the castle's magnificent keep – where you'll explore wine cellars, kitchens and the great hall via hidden stairways – and around the grounds contained within the still-complete circuit of towered walls. The question is, who will you choose to follow first? www.english-heritage.org.uk/warkworth

CHESTERS FORT TAKEOVER TRAIL

CHESTERS ROMAN FORT AND MUSEUM, NORTHUMBERLAND

Embark on a family adventure at Britain's best-preserved Roman cavalry fort. Positioned to guard a vulnerable section of Hadrian's Wall where it crossed the River Tyne, Roman soldiers and cavalrymen guarded Chesters Fort for hundreds of years – and now, it's your turn. Pick up a copy of the Takeover Trail and choose your characters – will you

be the commander, messenger, musician, guard or even the commander's dog? The whole family can explore the ruins together to find the rubbing stones hidden among the buildings, each revealing a tip to help you run the fort. Your quest will take you on an adventure to the barracks, the headquarters, the commander's house and the spectacular

bathhouse. While you're here, inspire your inner archaeologist with a stop at the unique Clayton Museum, home to hundreds of Roman artefacts. www.english-heritage.org.uk/chesters



Above Uncover one of the Roman Empire's most northerly outposts

'Queen Victoria's home is teeming with trees planted by the royals'