

# BUCKS CULTURE OPEN WEEKEND

28<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> August 2025

Join in the fifth year of this vibrant, Bucks-wide event full of creative activities.

## Step-by-Step Guide



*One World Mosaic Event, Feedback – image credit Michelle Gerrard*

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### 1. About the Guide

This guide has been written to help organisations taking part in Open Weekend 2025. It explains how to

- Register an event,
- Apply for a Micro Grant,
- Join the county-wide marketing campaign
- Monitor events and

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- Submit evaluation following the Open Weekend.

We want to enable lots of organisations, no matter how big or small, to take part. At the end of the guide there are answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's). If you do not find the answers you need please contact Lallie Davis, Buckinghamshire Culture Director at [Lallie@buckinghamshireculture.org](mailto:Lallie@buckinghamshireculture.org)

We will be sending regular communications to contributing organisations with reminders of deadlines, but we urge you to add the dates in this guide to your calendars.

We hope this gives you everything you need to join in with Open Weekend 2025.

## **2. About Open Weekend 2025 – Stories and Nature**

Thank you for your interest in taking part in Open Weekend 2025. This event is an opportunity to work together to raise awareness of creativity and culture in Bucks and increase reach. It is a collective endeavour to build a stronger creative and cultural offer together, showcasing and celebrating an array of fabulous creative activities and events in Buckinghamshire.

### **Background**

Open Weekend is coordinated by Buckinghamshire Culture with contributing organisations delivering events across the county. Established in 2021 the event continues to develop and grow each year with more organisations taking part and attracting greater numbers of people to events and activities.

Open Weekend began as an initiative designed to showcase the range and breadth of creative and cultural activities taking place in Bucks. It offers an opportunity to organisations, businesses, groups and individual artists or practitioners to put on a creative activity and become part of something bigger. By working together to share Open Weekend and each other's events, we are able to build a bigger buzz and reach more people than we can on our own, so it is also an invitation to collaborate and help raise awareness of creativity in our county. For residents, it is an opportunity to get involved and have a go, try something new or go somewhere they have not been before.

Bucks Open Weekend has attracted more than 23,000 people both in-person and online in attendance at all manner of creative events from 2021-2024.

Over the last four years we have seen many different arts and heritage disciplines showcased as part of Open Weekend, and a diverse array of organisations from museums, theatres, galleries, community centres, creative and outdoor spaces taking part – and we are always keen to see new people join in. Event contributors can use the Open Weekend to test new activities or explore working with new audiences, which may go on to inspire new connections with communities or new programming ideas. Contributors benefit from cross-promotion and visitors and participants who would not usually visit their venues or spaces, and the public benefits from having opportunities to try out new activities and experiences.

Bucks Open Weekend 2024 successfully engaged local communities, with organisers noting the importance of welcoming first-time visitors. Popular events such as community walks and creative workshops were praised for their ability to combine educational and engaging experiences.

### **Bucks Open Weekend 2024 – Where Stories and Nature Come To Life**

This year, creative organisations from across the County are invited to use nature as inspiration in response to our theme of 'stories and nature'. We encourage contributors to celebrate Buck's gorgeous green spaces and champion the role the arts play in sustainability as we work towards a greener future for all.

*Every tree has a tale. Every landscape holds a legend. Every moment spent in nature is a story waiting to be told.*



Creative businesses, cultural organisations and independent artists across Bucks are invited to explore the powerful connection between storytelling and the natural world. From ancient folklore and myth to personal reflections and artistic expressions, stories shape the way we experience nature, and nature, in turn, fuels our imagination and creativity.

At a time when we need to come together to protect nature and preserve our natural heritage for future generations, we can't wait to see the cross-art form translation of this brief. We have no doubt that organisations and businesses across Bucks will bring their best ideas to the table and support participants to engage in creative activities that explore and celebrate our natural world.



*History of Sound Performance, Vache Baroque – image credit Michelle Gerrard*

In the run-up to Open Weekend we are planning a **networking event** as part of our sector development programme. Join us to hear from leaders from the outdoor arts sector and share your ideas for future development and collaboration. All Open Weekend contributors, funders and press are invited to attend with an extended invitation to the wider creative community to help elevate the profile of this work and make connections. Look out for an invitation closer to the time, but please save this **date: 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2025** and we will update you once we have the venue and date confirmed.

### What are the criteria for inclusion in Open Weekend 2025?

Your events must:

- Take place in Buckinghamshire (or online but be delivered by a group, business, individual or organisation based in Buckinghamshire).
- Include creative and/or cultural activity (including arts, crafts, heritage, music, performance, dance, cooking, baking, writing, spoken word and poetry)
- Align to the theme of *Stories and Nature*.

### In need of a space?

This year we are able to provide a space-matching service for spaces in Libraries. If you need a space/venue to hold an Open Weekend event or activity, please email [Lallie](mailto:Lallie@bucks-culture.org) to request the use of one of the spaces/times listed below. These will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis.

Library	Date		Time
Aylesbury	FRI	29	10.30 AM to 12.30 PM
Aylesbury	SAT	30	10.30 AM to 12.30 PM
Beaconsfield	FRI	29	10.30 AM to 12.30 PM
Bourne End	THU	28	10.30 AM to 12.30 PM
Buckingham	THU	28	2:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Burnham	FRI	29	10.30 AM to 12.30 PM
High Wycombe	SAT	30	1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Wendover	THU	28	2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

### 3. Key Open Weekend dates and deadlines for your diaries:

- Open Weekend 2025: Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> August – Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> of August
- Open Networking event themed to outdoor art and Open Weekend: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025
- Registration Opens: **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> of May**. Please complete online form (See link below) – information will be used to advertise your event.
- Registration Deadline: **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> of June** – Final date for information about your event.
- Micro-Grant Opens: **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> of May**. Please complete online form (See link below)
- Micro-Grant Deadline: **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> of June**
- Micro-Grant applicants notified: Monday 21<sup>st</sup> of July (Invoice for payments received by 3rd June)
- Micro-Grants paid to successful applicants: **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> of August**
- Deadline for completion of Evaluation Forms: **Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October**

### 4. How to Register Your Event/s?

Registration for inclusion in Open Weekend is simple. We have created an easy to complete online Microsoft Teams form\*. The form collects information such as contact details, planned event activities, date/s, time and place, event description and asks you to upload an image that represents your activity. Please have this information ready before you complete the form.

The online form allows us to quickly collate information for marketing your events. Please make sure you include as much information about your event and notify us by email of any changes to the content or timings.

Click on link to Register Your Event/s:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=TmyRG5LE8kS06YRP4zoSOqVQpUMJDdFHqe2wKR5KPpJUMEFUWVNGS1JaWEpaOEVRzVQM0xRQzZQSC4u>

\*If you are unable to use the Microsoft Teams form, please contact Lallie Davis (Contact details at the end of this document). Lallie will send you a form to print, please complete and return via email along with your event image.

## 5. Applying for a micro-grant?

Buckinghamshire Culture runs an Open Weekend Micro-Grant Scheme to enable as many organisations to take part as possible. The amount you can apply for is up to £300. With an additional amount in 2025 of £150 intended to support additional access measures to assist in making your event or activity inclusive.

The funds can support the following aspects of your event:

- Payment of an artist, creative or freelancer required for the event.
- Payment of access workers such as BSL interpreters or Audio Describers

There are limited micro-grants of £300 available. Additional Access grants of £150 are limited to 10.

Our funding priorities for allocating grants are:

- New and exciting activities
- Variety across Open Weekend
- Supporting smaller organisations or groups

To apply for a Micro-Grant, click on the link:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=TmyRG5LE8kS06YRP4zoSOqVQpUMJDdFHqe2wKR5KPpJUMUZWjVRNIRGRjFDRFBLQzJRQjZVODhGNi4u>

The Microsoft Teams form is quick to complete. If you require a downloadable form to be sent, please contact Lallie Davis (Please see contact details at the bottom of this guide).



*One Earth, One Family workshop, Harsha Basu – image credit Michelle Gerrard*

### Alternative sources of funding

Heart of Bucks Community Foundation: <https://heartofbucks.org>



## 6. Join the County-wide Marketing Campaign

Buckinghamshire Culture are producing digital assets to help you create your own website and social media event information:

- Open Weekend 2025 Logo
- Open Weekend Poster Template to insert your event details
- Open Weekend social media templates and framed to uploaded into Canva.

Digital assets will be available on the website – link to be shared when assets are published towards the end of May.

Social Media Links – Let's Get Connected!

**Buckinghamshire Culture** is on Instagram [@bucks\\_culture](https://www.instagram.com/bucks_culture)

And on Facebook [@BuckinghamshireCulture](https://www.facebook.com/BuckinghamshireCulture)

**Buckinghamshire Council** is on Twitter [@BucksCouncil](https://twitter.com/BucksCouncil)

And on Instagram [@BucksCouncil](https://www.instagram.com/BucksCouncil)

**Open Weekend 2025 Hashtags:**

#BucksOpenWeekend #StoriesandNature

For Open Weekend we want to encourage as much sharing of your own and other fellow Open Weekend contributors' activities. Cross-promotion is a key way to increase the reach of your own, and other organisations', events and posts.

Buckinghamshire Culture is currently creating a social media schedule which we encourage you to follow and share as often as possible. You are also very welcome and encouraged to post information about your events and your excitement about the Open Weekend programme. We will share the collaborative social media schedule with all contributors in due course.

### Merchandise and printed materials

We provide sticker sheets to enable you to count attendees and participants, and printed flyers and posters for Open Weekend 2025. Your contributor pack will be available to collect from your local Library or the Bucks Culture office.

Please indicate on the registration form which library you will collect your pack from.

## 7. Monitoring and Evaluation

We have created a simple to complete Microsoft Teams form to upload your data following your Open Weekend 2024 event or activity. The form will need the following information:

- Numbers of active workshop participants
- Numbers of visitors & attendees who were not actively participating but attended your venue on that day.
- Postcodes from attendees and participants
- Up to 3 quotes from participants, visitors or attendees
- Up to 5 images of your events.

We are grateful for your time in collecting monitoring data from attendees and completing the online google form. Evaluation is important to help us understand the reach of the events and in continuing to make the case for funding to support Open Weekend.

**Link to Evaluation Google form: [tbc](#)**

Deadline for completion of Evaluation Forms: Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025.

If you require a downloadable PDF version, please contact Lallie (Please see contact details at the bottom of this guide).



*Sculpture Workshop, Chiltern Open Air Museum – image credit Michelle Gerrard*

## 8. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### **Can I contact Buckinghamshire Culture to discuss plans for my Open Weekend event?**

Yes, please get in touch with Lallie Davis (Director) contact details at the bottom of this guide. Please allow plenty of time before deadlines.

### **Does my event/activity need to be free to access?**

The Open Weekend is part of our work to encourage and broaden access to creativity and culture, so if you are able to offer a free activity that is preferable. However, we recognise that organisations may need to charge a small fee to participate, which is fine. We are unlikely to support or include solely profit-making activity as part of the Open Weekend.

### **Do I have to apply for the Micro-Grant?**

No, you can Register and be part of Open Weekend whether you apply for a grant or not.

### **Do events/activities need to be pre-booked?**

It is entirely down to each individual / organisation if you would like to invite your audiences to pre-book or just turn up on the day.

### **What are my responsibilities?**

You are responsible for the smooth running of your event, including ensuring you have the correct permissions, insurance, risk assessments and policies in place, as well as adhering to any public health regulations (similar to Covid 19) that may be in place at the time of the event. If you have any concerns and would like advice please get in touch and we will help either by providing direct advice or signposting you to other organisations who may be able to assist you.

## **9. Contact details for assistance and further information**

**Lallie Davis** (Director)

Buckinghamshire Culture

Email: [lallie@buckinghamshireculture.org](mailto:lallie@buckinghamshireculture.org)

**Thank you for taking the time to read this guide.**

**We look forward to hearing about your planned events and activities.**