

August 2026 at the Willis Museum

Special Exhibitions

Weds to Sats, 1000 – 1700, Suns 1000-1600

Sainsbury Gallery (ground floor)

18 Jul – 1 Nov: I Grew up Nineties

The Willis Museum & Sainsbury Gallery brings together more than 200 objects and artworks to take visitors on a journey back to the decade of Britpop, Cool Britannia, Pokémon, Power Rangers and dial-up internet. The Nineties are back to life - as if!

From Teletubbies to Trainspotting, Lara Croft to The Spice Girls, "I Grew Up 90s" celebrates a decade defined by creativity, optimism and unforgettable pop culture moments. Visitors can revisit toys, games, fashion, films, music and television shows that shaped a generation, and even test their skills on a retro arcade machine featuring classics like Tetris, Tekken, Street Fighter, and Sonic the Hedgehog.

The exhibition is curated by cultural historian and curator Matt Fox, capturing the sights, sounds and spirit of the 1990s.

Basingstoke Community Gallery (first floor)

18 Jul – 23 Aug: Basingstoke in the 90s

The 1990s was a time of transformation. The mobile phone became mainstream, and Britpop was taking over the radio. It was the era of Cool Britannia, New Labour and Spice Girl Mania. But what was going on in Basingstoke?



Basingstoke in the 90s is a nostalgic look over the decade through the eyes of our town. From dancing the night away at Martines, to mornings spent shopping in New Market

Square, this exhibition interweaves stories and photographs from people living and working within the area.

Journey through the decade that saw the opening of the Anvil, the final years of the Basingstoke Carnival, and Tour de France tearing through the town. Let us take you down memory lane to relive the Basingstoke of the (not too distant) past.

This exhibition was co-curated by Willis Museum staff and created with support from the Newbury Building Society.

Review by Jenny Fairweather

This celebratory exhibition of Basingstoke in the 90s is great! It has very many interesting posters, artefacts and personal memories from residents. It's been put together in an entertaining and colourful way showing lots of big news stories and changes that occurred in this decade in our town.

Events and news are covered from the Tour de France coming through in 1994, Get Real, a film about coming out as gay, shot in Basingstoke with lots of local extras, Basingstoke Town F.C. news, shopping memories and much more to the 1999 Solar Eclipse and 1990s teenagers and how they spent their free time.

There is a lively mix of original photos, reportage, comments by members of the public and objects from Hampshire Cultural Trust and the public. It shows in an engaging way how the changing world in the 90s affected those living and growing up in Basingstoke and I encourage you to go along and enjoy comparing your memories with those on show, even if you didn't live in Basingstoke in the 90s.

29 Aug – 4 Oct: Art for Wellbeing – Projects developed with the Arts Society Basingstoke

A collection of artwork produced by schools working with the Arts Society Basingstoke:

- *Printing Like William Morris - St Bede's Catholic School*
- *Soft Sculptures – Winklebury Junior School*
- *Sewing – Winklebury School*
- *Art @ The Station*

Talks

Hosted by the Friends of the Willis Museum (Archaeology Gallery, second floor)

The next Friends' Talk is in September:

17 Sep, 7.30pm: "Wolsey's Wife" by Nicola Turton

Local historian Nicola Turton inspired by the time she spent researching the Tudor ruins of Basing House tells the story of Joan Larke who "married" Thomas Wolsey, Cardinal, and Lord Chancellor to King Henry VIII, using the ancient, informal "Handfasting" ceremony and what is known about Joan's life.

Doors open 7.10pm, raffle and refreshments available. Free to members, visitors £5 at the door. Some "first come, first served" seats have been reserved for non-members, booking essential. Call in to the Museum or phone 01256 465902.

Hosted by the Museum Management (Archaeology Gallery, second floor)

The next Sunday Tea and Talk is in September:

27 Sep, 2pm: Hinton Ampner & Ralph Dutton by John Holden

John Holden, cultural historian, traces the life of Ralph Dutton, 8th and last Baron Sherborne, who created the gardens at Hinton Ampner and on his death bequeathed the house and gardens to the National Trust.

£7 (£6 for Friends) including tea, coffee and cake. If able, please book online at:

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/sunday-tea-talk-ralph-dutton-hinton-ampner-john-holden>

Summer Holiday Activities

Workshop Wednesdays

5 August: 90s Accessories Workshop

10am, 11am, 1pm, 2pm (duration 1 hour)

£5/person, please book:

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/workshop-wednesdays-90s-accessories-workshop>

12 August: 90s Luminary Jars Kids Workshop

10am, 11am, 1pm, 2pm (duration 1 hour)

£5/person, please book:

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/workshop-wednesdays-luminary-jars-kids-workshop>

19 August: 90s Remix Craft Workshop

10am, 11am, 1pm, 2pm (duration 1 hour)

£5/person, please book:

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/workshop-wednesdays-90s-remix-craft-workshop>

26 August: 90s Weave Your Own Check Workshop

10am, 11am, 1pm, 2pm (duration 1 hour)

£5/person, please book:

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/workshop-wednesdays-weave-your-own-check-workshop>

Time Detective Agency: Mission Control, Willis Museum Branch

Sat 25 Jul - Sun 30 Aug

Time-travelling adventures at 10 museums across Hampshire! Step into history and explore a different era each week as you train to become an official Time Detective Agent.

Take part in free family trails, hands-on crafts, and exciting challenges designed for curious minds of all ages! (Please check individual venue opening days in advance).

Become a Time Detective!

- Start your journey by completing your first activity and receive your very own TDA Trainee ID Card
- Earn Mission Complete stickers at any participating venue
- Collect 4 stickers to unlock an exclusive Time Detective Agency badge!

Free, no booking required.