

October 2026 at the Willis Museum

Talks/Meetings

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

15 Oct, 7.30pm: AGM with “Victorian Refreshments”

Annual General Meeting for all Members.

Doors open 7.10pm, raffle and refreshments available.

Looking Ahead:

Nov 19: Thomas Burberry by Chelsey Lewington

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

25 Oct, 2pm: Medieval & Tudor Food by Jenny Stevens

During arguably the most turbulent time in our history, food was often in scarce supply due to poor harvests, war and pestilence, but as with other periods, our knowledge of what the poorer members of society were eating is sadly lacking. We know more about the wealthier members of society who undoubtedly fared better and would have enjoyed a more varied diet, including new foods being introduced from further afield, including the arrival of new tastes from the Americas. This talk looks at what people were eating and drinking, how things were changing and dispels a few myths about table manners!

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

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/sunday-tea-talk-medieval-tudor-food-pottage-peacocks-jenny-stevens>

Looking Ahead:

Nov 29: The Role of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps in the care of animals by David Wiggins

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.

Following the success of “Basingstoke in the 90s” over the summer holidays elements of that exhibition have been introduced to give a local angle on the decade, covering memories, videos, photos and events – these can be found in the hive within “I Grew up Nineties”.

Looking ahead:

14 Nov – Wonders of the Night Open Art Exhibition (see below)

Open Call for Hampshire Artists

For the first time in years, the Sainsbury Gallery will host an exhibition (14 Nov 2026 – 7 Mar 2027) that invites artists living and working in Hampshire to be part of it. Share work inspired by the wonder of the night and exhibit alongside objects from our collections. Submissions close 25 October 2026.

Wonders of the Night will bring together curious objects from Hampshire Cultural Trust's collections, from an eighteenth-century painting of astronomers marvelling through a telescope, to an Anglo-Saxon brooch etched with crescent moons and an antique celestial globe mapping the constellations, each capturing our age-old fascination with the skies above.

Themes you might explore...

- **The night sky:** The moon, stars, constellations, planets and the cosmos.
- **Wonder and curiosity:** Astronomy, astrology, exploration and our place in the universe.
- **Nature after dark:** The changing light of dusk, twilight skies, nocturnal wildlife, moonlit landscapes, campfires and the glow of towns and cities after dark.
- **Stories of the night:** Dreams, imagination, folklore, mythology, grief, or even artwork created after dark.

Your interpretation is entirely your own. We welcome all mediums, including painting, drawing, pastels, photography, printmaking, textiles, sculpture, mixed media and film. Work does not need to have been created specifically for the exhibition but must not have previously been exhibited at the Willis Museum & Sainsbury Gallery.

The open call is for artists living or working in Hampshire. For a modest charge of £3 per item, you can submit your artwork to a judging panel for possible inclusion in this exhibition. Young people up to the age of 17 can submit their artwork free of charge. For further details please see:

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/wonders-night-open-call-artists>

Basingstoke Community Gallery (first floor)

Until 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

This project promoted an understanding of how the natural world can inspire product design. It encouraged students to look closely at the natural world. Students, aged 8-9, at St Bede's Catholic School began by studying repeating designs by William Morris and used this knowledge to develop designs of their own, based on natural forms. Textile Artist, Vanessa Rolf and volunteers from the Arts Society, helped students to create their own printing blocks to print their designs onto tote bags.

Soft Sculptures – Winklebury Junior School

This project encouraged children to express themselves through artistic experiences that build basic skills in drawing, printing, and working with fabric to create three-dimensional sculptures. This project was also led by Vanessa Rolf and supported by volunteers from The Arts Society.

Sewing – Winklebury School

Members of the Arts Society helped children to develop their sewing skills – year 3 created bookmarks and year 5 cushions.

Art @ The Station

A selection of artwork from some of the schools and colleges who exhibit their work at the waiting rooms and subway at Basingstoke Railway Station. These exhibitions have been provided by The Arts Society for the past 3 years and provide a pleasant environment for passengers together with an opportunity to celebrate the work of young artists.

10 Oct – 15 Nov: Edge of the Wild Exhibition by Basingstoke Art Club

Basingstoke Art Club will be showing pictures of creatures in their natural environment. This exhibition of artwork will take visitors on a journey from the mysterious ocean's depth to soaring the skies.

October Half-Term Activities

26 October: 90s Remix Craft Workshop

10am, 11am, 1pm, 2pm (duration 1 hour)
£5/person.

29 October: Willis Museum by Torchlight

Explore the Museum by torchlight – follow trails, collect clues and take part in fun games.

5.30pm, 6.00pm, 6.30pm

Suitable for ages 5+, children to be accompanied by an adult

£6/child, please book:

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/willis-museum-torchlight-1>

31 October: Make a Card Tamagotchi

Make your own 90s digi-pet out of card!

10.30am-12 and 2-3.30pm

Children to be accompanied by an adult

£3/person, booking not required.