



CHILTERN'S CHAIRS

FROM WOODLAND TO FACTORY

Events & family fun celebrating local chairmaking

Festival running July 2024



WYCOMBE
MUSEUM

CHILTERN'S
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP





The Art of the Chair

Free exhibition at Wycombe Museum | Until 2nd Feb 2025

An exhibition exploring and celebrating the design and marketing of High Wycombe chairs through the years, through drawings, prints, photographs and more.

CHILTERN'S CHAIRS FROM WOODLAND TO FACTORY

Chairs are key to Wycombe's history.

The Chilterns Chairs Festival takes place throughout July 2024 to recognise the unique chairmaking heritage of Wycombe and the local area.

With a varied programme of events, discover how the industry grew from the local landscape into thriving furniture production which proudly continues today. Join us to celebrate the stories, the chairs and the surroundings which make up our history.

There's something for everyone, so get involved!

The Chilterns Chairs Festival is being organised by Wycombe Museum and is funded by the Chalk, Cherries & Chairs (CCC) Landscape Partnership.

CCC is funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, and is hosted by Chilterns National Landscape.

With thanks to our festival event partners:

Amersham Museum, Chiltern Open Air Museum,
Chiltern Rangers, Dew Dance, Ercol, High Wycombe Library,
Harsha Basu Paintings, Hughenden Manor, Kraftirwood,
Sally Scagell, Stewart Linford, Stuart King, William Hands,
Wycombe Arts Centre, Wycombe Swan Theatre &
Wycombe Wanderers Football Club.

FESTIVAL EVENTS

Chilterns Chairs Festival Fun Day ●

Sun 28th Jul, 11am - 3pm

Location: Wycombe Museum, Priory Avenue, HP13 6PX

Join the fun and celebrate the chairmaking history of the local area with live demos, hands-on crafts and children's activities. Meet Wycombe Wanderers' mascot, Bodger, and find out how he got his name. Join a game of musical chairs, win prizes and watch craftspeople demonstrating traditional skills. You can even have a go yourself!

The Remarkable Story of our National Chair: The Windsor ●

Sunday 30th Jun | 2 - 3pm

Location: Wycombe Museum, Priory Avenue, HP13 6PX

To kick off the Chilterns Chairs Festival, chairmaker Stewart Linford entertains with his talk on the history of Wycombe's classic chair, the Windsor.

William Hands Factory Tour & Talk ●

Wednesday 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th Jul | 10 - 11.30am

Location: William Hands Factory, 36 Dashwood Avenue, HP12 3DX

Take a walk around a traditional furniture factory, where you will see furniture made to current designs. Speak to Hands' craftsmen and designers.

'Chair and Chair Alike' Cemetery Tour ●●

Sunday 7th Jul | 2.30 - 3.30pm

Location: High Wycombe Cemetery Gates, Priory Road, HP13 6PF

Walking tour of the chairmakers' graves in High Wycombe Cemetery. Telling the stories of both rich and poor, marriages and family conflicts, lavish homes & bankruptcy.

Cha Cha Chair ●

Tuesdays 9th, 16th, 23rd Jul | 3 - 4.45pm

Location: The Oak Room, Wycombe Swan Theatre, HP11 2XE

Looking for a relaxed, seated, movement workshop? Join us at the Wycombe Swan Theatre's Oak Room for 3 free chair-based fitness & mobility classes that will get you moving and improve your mobility!



Meet Bodger at
our Festival Fun Day!

All events are free unless otherwise specified.
Book tickets and find more festival info at wycombemuseum.org.uk or via the QR code.



AGE GUIDE

- For school children
- For adults
- For all

A Tour of the Ercol Factory ●

Thursday 11th & 18th Jul, 10.30am - 12.30pm

Location: Ercol, Summerleys Rd, Princes Risborough, HP27 9PX

A rare opportunity for the public to see inside Ercol's Princes Risborough factory. Join Chairman Henry Tadros, Lucian Ercolani's great-grandson, in a tour of machining, steam bending, assembling and finishing of the classic Ercol designs.

Glenister's: From Bar Stool to Coronation Stools ●

Tuesday 16th Jul, 2 - 3pm

Location: High Wycombe Library, 5 Eden Place, HP11 2DH

Join Wycombe Museum Curator, Catherine Grigg, for a talk exploring the history of Thomas Glenister's furniture factory. From humble beginnings in the 1830s as a pub's side-hustle, through making furniture for Royal occasions, to closure in 1990.

Chilterns Makers' Hub ●

Wednesday 17th Jul, 6 - 7.30pm

Location: Amersham Museum, 49 High Street, Old Amersham, HP7 0DP

Professional makers - join Amersham Museum's new monthly hub to network, socialise, find out about projects and collaborations, and enjoy behind the scenes access to museums.

Chilterns Chairs Festival Storytime and Craft ●

Saturday 20th Jul, 11 - 12pm

Location: Floor 1, High Wycombe Library, 5 Eden Place, HP11 2DH

Join High Wycombe Library for a family friendly, charmingly chair-themed story session, followed by a craft to celebrate the Chilterns Chairs Festival.

The Lost Art of Marquetry ●

Sunday 21st Jul, 2 - 3.30pm

Location: Wycombe Museum, Priory Avenue, HP13 6PX

Unlike High Wycombe's famous furniture trade, little is recorded about marquetry, the lost art of Wycombe. Marquetry is the craft of creating decorative inlays & panels using contrasting wood veneers. Talk, demonstration, & display by Stuart King.



A tour of the Ercol factory

FESTIVAL EVENTS

Seated Stories:

Exploring High Wycombe's Chairmaking Heritage through Dance ●

Sunday 21st Jul, 1 - 4pm

Location: Wycombe Museum, Priory Avenue, HP13 6PX

An experience of contemporary dance. Explore High Wycombe's chair-making legacy as a solo dancer uses a traditional chair prop. Livestream also available via @dewdanceuk on Youtube.

My Royal Chair Painting Workshop ●

Wednesday 24th Jul, 11am - 1pm

Location: Wycombe Museum, Priory Avenue, HP13 6PX

Be inspired by the colours and patterns of Madhubani art and paint a royal chair. Dive into creativity and tradition with colourful designs. Experience the joy of chair artistry with Harsha Basu Paintings.

Artful Bodgers ●

Saturday 27th Jul, 10 - 11.30am & 12 - 1.30pm

Location: Gomm's Wood. Meet at Cemetery Car Park on Cock Lane, HP10 8DS

Get creative with Chiltern Rangers in Gomm's Wood for a morning of woodland art activities using natural resources. Learn how bodgers worked in beech woodland turning chair legs for High Wycombe's furniture industry.



Join Chiltern Rangers in Gomm's Wood

Heritage Crafts Weekend @ Chiltern Open Air Museum ●

Saturday 27th & Sunday 28th Jul, 10am - 5pm

Location: Chiltern Open Air Museum, Chalfont St Peter, HP8 4AB

Visit Chiltern Open Air Museum's special weekend showcasing heritage craft demonstrations. Visitors will have the opportunity to step back in time & witness traditional crafts in action, including chair making, blacksmithing and straw plaiting. Admission to Chiltern Open Air Museum is charged. No additional fee will apply for this event.

All events are free unless otherwise specified.
Book tickets and find more festival info at
wycombemuseum.org.uk or via the QR code.



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AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT JULY

Furniture Galleries at Wycombe Museum ●

Location: Wycombe Museum, Priory Avenue, HP13 6PX

We're excited to be launching new, redisplayed chair galleries at Wycombe Museum for the Chilterns Chairs Festival, including our all-new interactive Chair Lab.

Museum closed Mondays & Saturdays. See www.wycombemuseum.org/visit for opening hours.

Here, Chair and Everywhere Trail (Self-guided) ●

Location: Starts from Wycombe Museum, around High Wycombe Town Centre

Discover places where Wycombe's chair heritage was made with this walking trail. The route is a 1.7 mile long circuit and takes around an hour on foot.

Get the map via the QR code or <https://bit.ly/ChairTrail>. Paper maps at Wycombe Museum.



Chair Bodgers Pub Tour (Self-guided) ●

Location: Suggested start point The Beech Tree, Hazlemere, HP13 5AJ

Explore the fascinating connections between Chilterns pubs and chair-making. Follow a route around local towns and villages on this 8-pub trail.

Scan the QR code to download the map, or go to <https://bit.ly/BodgersPubs>



Chairs of Wycombe at Hughenden Manor ●

Location: Hughenden Manor, National Trust, High Wycombe, HP14 4LA

Immerse yourself in Wycombe's chair-making legacy at Hughenden Manor. Uncover the intricate craftsmanship and historical significance of these influential seats.

Admission to Hughenden Manor is charged. No additional admission fee required for this event.

Kraftinwood ●

Location: Kraftinwood, Grafton St, High Wycombe, HP12 3AJ

Visit the Chair Making Museum at Kraftinwood for a guided tour. Includes demos on treadle, pole lathe and shave horse, and explanations of the tools used in the industry.

Open throughout the year, closed on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Full details: www.kraftinwood.com

Engage Your Creativity Exhibition ●

Location: Wycombe Arts Centre, Desborough Rd, High Wycombe HP11 2PU

Celebrating chairs and the essence of creativity. Showing works from Open Studio Art Club, Wycombe Life Drawing, Creative Writing Workshop Group, & Photography Club.

Opening times vary. Full details: <https://wycombeartscentre.com>

About Wycombe Museum

Wycombe Museum inspires learning and discovery through its furniture-making specialism, remarkable collections, and as a vital community charity. We tell the varied stories of High Wycombe and the surrounding areas through time, through art, photographs, and a wide range of artefacts. Known to many as The Chair Museum.

Entry to the museum and gardens is free.
Closed Mondays & Saturdays.

Want to support us?

Wycombe Museum is a charity which relies on donations from the community. To donate, go to wycombemuseum.org.uk/donate



About Chalk, Cherries & Chairs Landscape Partnership

Chalk, Cherries and Chairs is an ambitious Landscape Partnership that aims to connect local people to the wildlife and cultural heritage of the Central Chilterns. It focuses on three themes – wildlife, heritage and people. A whole host of interweaving projects fall under these three themes, designed with the Chilterns landscape in mind and sharing common threads, such as volunteering, learning and digital media.

The scheme is funded primarily by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and the HS2 Community & Environment Fund, and is hosted by Chilterns National Landscape. Learn more about the project at www.chilterns.org.uk/chalkcherrieschairs.



CHILTERNs
Landscape Partnership



Image: Nick Middleton