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For us all, to keep.



# Toolkit

Publicity & marketing advice for open doors Event organisers



Dathliad pensaerniaeth a  
threftadaeth fwyaf Cymru  
Wales' biggest celebration  
of architecture and heritage

# Introduction

Wales is one of 50 countries that takes part in Open Doors — an annual event, internationally known as European Heritage Days.

Funded and organised by Cadw, Open Doors is the largest, free celebration of architecture and heritage in Wales and the largest volunteer event in the heritage sector. The festival provides visitors with free entry to hundreds of historic sites across the country, complimented by a jam-packed programme of activities and special events, which all take place during the month of September.

The event is a huge success every year, helping to draw thousands of visitors from countries across the world to Wales, while encouraging Welsh communities to engage with their local heritage and culture.

If you're thinking about taking part this year and hosting an event at your site — you will need to consider event promotion.

Cadw will implement a national publicity and marketing campaign to promote the full Open Doors programme, however, a local, grass roots marketing approach is really effective in helping to promote your event and will ultimately help to drive more visitors to your site.

**This toolkit includes hints, tips and useful information to help you get the most out of your Open Doors event promotion.**



# Inform your local paper

As part of its national publicity and marketing campaign, Cadw will target media outlets across Wales and the wider UK with information about the full Open Doors events programme. The news and press articles generated will promote the festival as a whole and help to encourage visitors to attend a variety of Open Doors events across the country.

So, where do you come in? Local newspapers are ideal for making sure that your event is publicised in your local area — so make sure you tell them about it! They are always looking for stories, so local journalists will be very pleased to hear from you.

Here's a simple guide to help you secure an event-led article:

**Create a media list:** search the internet or look inside the paper for the contact details of your local newspaper. It's also handy to make a note of any specific journalists that you would like to get in touch with, so that you can request to speak with them by name.



**Write a press release:** pull together a one-page press release, detailing the date, time and location of your free event, as well as the activities that will be on offer.



**Ring your local paper:** send your press release via email first, but make sure you follow up with a phone call to invite them along to your event itself — they may want to send a photographer along to capture some press shots!



**Don't just concentrate on print media:** contact your local radio stations too — they might be interested in setting up an interview with you. Your local radio station is a fantastic way to publicise your event. Just think how many people listen to it during commuter hour each day.



**Consider issuing a post event press release:** local newspapers love to publish images of community focused events. Make sure you take lots of photographs on the day of your event and send them to press alongside some key highlights e.g. how many people attended and visitor anecdotes.



**In line with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation),** you will need to make sure that anyone featured in your photographs has given you consent to be able to send them to press.



**Need a hand with writing your press release?  
Use our template on pages 4 and 5 as a guide.**



If you secure an interview with a journalist, make sure you prepare a list of key messages so that the interviewee knows what to say. This should include information about what is happening at the event, why it was planned and some background information about the Open Doors festival.



**If a reporter promises to cover your event, don't rely on them to remember. Give them a follow up call about a week in advance to re-fresh their memory.**

# Post on social media

Join the #OpenDoors conversation on social media. Social media is a fantastic tool for promoting local events and activities. If your site or landmark has a dedicated Facebook, Twitter or Instagram page — use it to your advantage!

**Hint: If you don't have access to a dedicated page, get in touch with your local council and ask them if they'd be willing to promote the event for you.**

The idea of promoting an event on social media can be quite daunting if you haven't done it before, but it's actually really simple with a little bit of guidance. Here are some top tips to help you get the most out of your social media promotion:

## 5 top tips for social media

**Write a social media content schedule for your event** — it's always much easier to implement social posts if you plan your content in advance.



**Use eye-catching images and if possible, video to accompany all social media posts** — it's been proven that posts with an engaging visual perform better.



**Use relevant hashtags to tap into conversations.**

e.g.  
#OpenDoors  
#DrysauAgored  
#Wales  
#Cymru  
#FreeEntry



**Remember, the internet is permanent (even if you press delete!)** — so always think before posting.



**Use bit.ly to shorten long web links** — it will save you space, it looks a lot tidier and you can monitor how many people have clicked on it to view further information.





## 5 top tips for Facebook



Schedule posts to promote your event on evenings and weekends so you don't miss out on traffic.

Keep it short and sweet — when it comes to social media, less is more. You don't want your followers to have to click the 'see more' button.

Never post without a photo, video or web link preview accompaniment. If in doubt, all Open Doors events have a dedicated event page on the Cadw website, so you can always include a link to this in your post. The recommended Facebook photo size is 1200 x 628px and the recommended Facebook video size is an aspect ratio of 4:3 and 1.75GB max.

Create a Facebook event for your Open Doors event and invite your followers.

Always monitor and respond to comments and inbox messages about your event.

## 5 top tips for Twitter



Did you know that Tweets containing images generate more than 300% more engagement than those without? Make sure to include imagery in your tweets as much as possible — they are much more likely to be shared by other users.

The tweet image size that works best is 1024 x 512px.

Make use of @mentions to interact with other users — especially if you would like them to engage with your tweet. For example, tag @cadwwales and @cadwcymru so that it shows up in our notifications and Cadw will retweet your tweet to help promote your event further.

Use hashtags to join the #OpenDoors Twitter conversation and to get your posts noticed. But #don't #use #too #many #of #them — it can look messy.

Don't ignore users who give your tweets positive feedback — always respond or like their posts.

## 5 top tips for Instagram



Make sure you use high quality images that best show off your heritage site and the activities that you will be offering at your event.

Use Instagram's built-in editing tools and filters to make your content look even better — but be careful, too much editing can make an image or video look worse.

Include hashtags to tap into the #OpenDoors online conversation.

Use Instagram stories during your Open Doors event so that your followers can see what you're up to.

Make sure you respond to comments and direct messages about your event.



# Publicise with posters

Cadw has provided you with a range of posters to use to help publicise your event — these can be found at [cadw.gov.wales/open-doors/resources](https://www.cadw.gov.wales/open-doors/resources). Download, print, fill in the blanks and ask if they can be displayed in key community locations like cafes or libraries.

Alternatively, you can create your own poster:

Your poster should be eye-catching so that members of the public will stop and read it.

**BUT — make sure it's simple.** It should only include 1-2 basic points about your event alongside the date and time. Make sure you include the Open Doors logo on everything to make people aware that you're taking part in a large-scale, national and well-respected event!

You can easily design your poster on Microsoft Word or Paint, but for a professional finish — try a free online platform like Canva. You can use it on your PC or even download the free app for your phone.

Check and double check for errors before printing.

# Encourage others to talk

**Do your colleagues or site volunteers have their own social media channels?** If so, urge them to share posts about your involvement with Open Doors on their personal accounts to help spread the word about your upcoming event.

Also, word of mouth is a powerful tool. Make sure you tell your friends, family and people outside of your social circle about your event — news travels fast when people get talking!

What's more, press releases aren't just for journalists. Local schools, history societies and community groups may be interested in organising a group trip to your venue, so make sure you send them all of the event information well in advance.



# Press release template

## Press Release

[Insert date]

[Insert Open Doors logo and venue / site logo — if applicable]

[Headline to Capture Media Attention] e.g. Visitors offered free entry to newly re-opened South Wales Police Heritage Centre

[Event introduction] Held tightly under security and located in the basement of Police Headquarters in Bridgend, the newly re-opened South Wales Police Heritage Centre will be offering visitors a chance to discover the history of South Wales policing this September — for free.

[Insert description, dates and timings] e.g. the free entry event will take place on Friday 21 and Saturday 22 September from 11am – 3pm, with locals and tourists alike invited to enjoy a rare glimpse of one of the UK's latest police artefact collections, complete with a chance to step inside a Victorian police cell and criminal charge room.

[Insert further background information] Dating back from the Celtic age to present day, the collection boasts communication devices of years gone by, 19th century dress uniforms, extensive policing equipment and even a locked cabinet of criminal weapons, which have been confiscated from the modern-day streets of Wales.

[Insert information about Open Doors] The event is all part of Open Doors, an annual festival in celebration of Wales's rich heritage and culture. Organised and funded by Cadw, the annual and ever-popular Wales-wide event will see hundreds of historic sites, iconic buildings, landmarks and unusual premises offer free entry, activities and events to visitors throughout the month of September.

[Insert quote from member of staff / volunteer / event organiser]: South Wales Police's Chief Constable, Matt Jukes, expressed his delight at being able to share the Force's rich heritage with both locals and visitors to Wales.

He said, "Our own heritage is important, not just to the Force but to its communities. Our newly refurbished Heritage Centre reflects the role of policing across South Wales through times of war and periods of tremendous social upheaval."

"The tragedies and achievements of our communities are reflected in our history and we are proud to be part of an initiative that seeks to reveal the stories, places and people that connect us to our past."

[Insert information about how to attend the event] This event requires booking. For full event details and to book your place, visit [insert web link], follow @xxx on Twitter or 'Like' xxx on Facebook.

## Notes to editors

['Notes to editors' is a good place to include additional information about your event as well as those all-important contact details so journalists can get in touch].

For further information about the event, please contact [insert name] from [insert venue name] on [insert phone number] or [insert email address].

About

[Insert name of your event venue]:

[Insert further information about your venue and event]

e.g. The South Wales Police Heritage Centre, based at Police Headquarters in Bridgend is home to one of the UK's largest police artefact collections.

## About Open Doors

Wales is one of 50 countries taking part in Open Doors, which is internationally known as European Heritage Days.

The programme is the largest annual free celebration of architecture and heritage to be held in Wales and the wider UK, and the largest volunteer event in the sector. It gives members of the public free access to fresh aspects of the built heritage and draws visitors to Wales from countries throughout the world.

For further information about Open Doors, visit [cadw.gov.wales/opendoors](http://cadw.gov.wales/opendoors).

If you have any further questions about participating in the festival please email: [opendoors@gov.wales](mailto:opendoors@gov.wales) or call the Open Doors team on 03000 256000.