



# Arts, boats and culture at the Old Royal Naval College this September

Old Royal Naval College, King William Walk, Greenwich, SE10 9NN

This September, the Old Royal Naval College will host a month of exciting events in Greenwich, from Open House and London Design Festival to Totally Thames and the finish line of the first ever *Regatta London*.

**London Design Festival** celebrates London as the design capital of the world, recognising the city's artistic strengths with artworks installed in multiple London institutions from 14<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September. Drawing inspiration from the rich artistic history of the Old Royal Naval College itself, local Greenwich artists and makers will showcase their creations across the beautiful riverside grounds and inside Sir Christopher Wren's iconic buildings.

The featured artworks will offer contemporary interpretations of the architectural and decorative elements of the Old Royal Naval College, such as Sir Christopher Wren's landmark domed design and Sir James Thornhill's magnificent Painted Hall, recently re-opened after an award-winning renovation. Works include a storytelling chair made from recycled wood in the Victorian Skittle Alley, itself made from upcycled ships, as well as fascinating 3D scans of the Painted Hall, showing the labour and care that went into creating the room in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the 21<sup>st</sup> century conservation efforts.

Visitors will be able to access the London Design Festival in the Old Royal Naval College Visitor Centre during regular opening hours, with additional exhibits for Painted Hall ticketholders. The week will culminate in **Open House**, London's largest architectural festival, on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> and Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September which grants visitors access to tour awe-inspiring hidden spaces in the buildings and grounds.

In addition to this great celebration of local artists, the Old Royal Naval College will also host three events as part of **Totally Thames**, the biggest annual celebration of London's river.

In the grand Chapel of St Peter and St Paul, visitors can enjoy an atmospheric concert of **Choral Evensong** on 23<sup>rd</sup> September. This 470-year-old musical tradition is brought gloriously to life in an evening of choral music allowing the audience, regardless of faith or belief, time for restful contemplation and to soak in their beautiful surroundings.

Bringing escapology to the riverside as part of Totally Thames festival, **Thames 1745** sees escapologists Dave Diamond and Alice Mrozek tell the true story of the last known use of the ducking stool. Audiences will breathlessly witness a struggle for freedom from a water tank in this theatrical and exhilarating escape act.

The newest and biggest sports challenge in the city, **Regatta London**, takes to the River Thames on 29<sup>th</sup> September. Hundreds of boaters, kayakers and paddleboarders will follow one of two routes past the capital's riverside landmarks before reaching the finish line at Old Royal Naval College at the stunning water gates. Visitors are invited to head to the Old Royal Naval College to cheer on participants as they cross the finish line, raising money for local and national environmental causes, whilst enjoying the Painted Hall and spectacular grounds with pop-up stalls and special offers for Regatta participants.

With these incredible events, and easy access by boat, Old Royal Naval College is a must-see arts, boats and cultural destination in Greenwich this September.

## Notes to Editors

Title	Old Royal Naval College	
Events	London Design Festival Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> – Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> September, all day Drop-in	Free
	Open House Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> – Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> September, all day Booking recommended	Free

*Choral Evensong*

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 5.30pm – 6.30pm Free  
Drop-in

*Thames 1745*

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2.30pm & 4.30pm Free  
Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> – Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2.30pm & 4.30pm Free  
Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2.30pm & 4.30pm Free  
Drop-in

*Regatta London*

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September, all day Free  
Drop-in

Social Media

#OldRoyalNavalCollege #PaintedHall  
#TotallyThames #RegattaLondon #Thames1745 #ChoralEvensong  
#OpenHouseLondon #OHL19  
#LondonDesignFestival #LDF19  
Twitter @orncgreenwich  
Facebook and Instagram @oldroyalnavalcollege

Website

[www.ornc.org](http://www.ornc.org)

Location

King William Walk, Greenwich, London, SE10 9NN

Tickets

Old Royal Naval College and events tickets available online at  
[www.ornc.org/booktickets](http://www.ornc.org/booktickets)

Totally Thames tickets available online at  
[totallythames.org/whats-on](http://totallythames.org/whats-on)

## Old Royal Naval College

Old Royal Naval College is the centrepiece of Maritime Greenwich, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with a long and celebrated 500-year history. Today it is a diverse cultural destination and one of

London's most popular venues and visitor attractions, a site that attracts over 1.2 million visitors every year.

The classical buildings that adorn the site today were built as the Royal Hospital for Seamen between 1696 and 1751. Designed by England's greatest architects, including Sir Christopher Wren, the buildings are considered amongst the finest in Europe, featuring the sumptuous Painted Hall and the neo-classical Chapel. Prior to that the site was home to the celebrated Greenwich Palace, the favoured Royal residence of Henry VIII. A small part of the excavated palace, revealed during recent conservation works, can be viewed in The Sackler Gallery in the King William Undercroft.

The rich maritime history of the site continued after the departure of the Royal Hospital in the 1860s. From 1873 to 1997 the buildings housed the Royal Naval College, one of the world's foremost naval training establishments. After the departure of the Naval College an independent charity was established in 1997 to conserve the magnificent baroque buildings and grounds for present and future generations and to provide opportunities for wide and diverse audiences to enjoy and share their significance. Today this historic landmark is open to the public.

The Painted Hall, built as a ceremonial dining room, has the greatest grand-scale decorative painting in England and has been described as 'Britain's Sistine Chapel'. The abundant and complex painting scheme covers some 4,000 square metres and was designed and executed by Sir James Thornhill between 1707 and 1726. An extensive National Lottery Funded renovation project was completed in 2019. The Chapel of St Peter and St Paul is a neo-classical masterpiece by James 'Athenian' Stuart. Featuring a Samuel Green organ and an altarpiece painted by Benjamin West, it is one of the country's finest 18th-century interiors.

All enquiries, high res images and further information:

Isobel Jaffray, Chloé Nelkin Consulting

E: [isobel@chloenelkinconsulting.com](mailto:isobel@chloenelkinconsulting.com), M: 07772 643 959

W: [www.chloenelkinconsulting.com](http://www.chloenelkinconsulting.com)