

STRAT > FORWARD

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to the Shakespeare's Birthday Special Edition

SHAKESPEARE'S
CELEBRATIONS
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

The spotlight will shine on Stratford this weekend for Shakespeare's 453rd Birthday celebrations. The Bard's official birthday falls on Sunday but Stratford is home to a whole weekend of celebrations, guaranteed to attract tens of thousands of people to the town.



The big birthday celebrations officially start with the traditional Birthday Parade on Saturday, including the handing over of the Quill representing Shakespeare's legacy.

The parade is just the start of the birthday fun, with key organisations including the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), Stratforward BID and the Stratford Town Trust all contributing as part of the Shakespeare's Celebrations initiative, led by Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council and Stratford District Council.

The result is a weekend of family entertainment and activities, most of which are free of charge. From family-friendly events at the RSC to circus fun outside Shakespeare's Birthplace and the annual Shakespeare Birthday Luncheon, there is plenty on offer for a range of ages and interests.

Ahead of the weekend, long-serving and much-loved drama critic Michael Billington will present The Shakespeare Birthday Lecture on Friday (April 21st) in conversation with Professor Michael Dobson (University of Birmingham).

Visitors are also invited to celebrate the first anniversary of Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall, which opened its doors, exactly 400 years after the death of its former pupil, William Shakespeare. The Schoolroom will be giving out hundreds of balloons throughout the day on Saturday, each with the chance to win one of 10 family tickets to visit the attraction.

Check out our special Shakespeare's Birthday edition for more details on some of the great events on offer in Stratford, or visit www.shakespearescelebrations.com for more information on the birthday celebrations.



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Birthday Parade Bangs The Drum For Shakespeare



Saturday sees the return of the traditional Birthday Parade with thousands of people descending on Stratford to mark Shakespeare's birthday.

Crowds will line the streets of Stratford to watch a procession of dignitaries and VIPs, brass bands, community groups and schoolchildren make their way through the town centre from the Great Garden at New Place to Holy Trinity Church.

As spectators gather, musical entertainment will be provided by West Midlands Fire Service Band and Coventry And Warwickshire Rock Choir and free flags will be given for people to wave.

Some 10,000 scrolls bearing some of Shakespeare's 154 sonnets will also be distributed to the crowds - with one lucky person set to receive a 'Golden Sonnet' and a great prize.

A newly-discovered 'Mr Shakespeare' will collect the Quill from Shakespeare's Birthplace and carry it along Henley Street, where he will hand it over to the Head Boy of King Edward's School for the traditional birthday ceremonies at 11am.

For the ceremony, the traditional placing of the commemorative wreath is followed by the unfurling of the Big Birthday Banner and the simultaneous Unfurling of Flags along Bridge Street, High Street and Henley Street, while the Beadle and Town Criers from neighbouring towns call for 'Three Cheers for William Shakespeare' as cannon streamers shower the crowds.

The parade will then make its way to Holy Trinity Church, Shakespeare's final resting place, where it will conclude.

Town Clerk Sarah Summers said: "The team is already working to build on the foundations of our success with ambitious plans for a new and bigger event in 2018. We hope to introduce carnival floats and walking literary pageants which will process through town.

"It promises to be a great weekend which should have something in store for everyone. We'll be unveiling more detail in the coming months!"

To find out more about the Birthday Parade, and what's on where throughout Shakespeare's Celebrations visit www.shakespearescelebrations.com

Here is the latest brief guide to what happens and when on 22nd April:

Muster of Guests and Participants from 10:40 – 10:55 Primary school children, staff and students of King Edward's School led by the Head Boy, invited diplomats, civic dignitaries and guests of the Town and District Councils follow the traditional route to take up their positions for the main ceremonies in Bridge Street.

Birthday Commemoration 11:00 – 11:20 The traditional placing of the commemorative wreath is followed by the unfurling of the Big Birthday Banner and the Unfurling of Flags along Bridge Street, High Street and Henley Street. The Beadle and Town Criers from neighbouring towns call for 'Three Cheers for William Shakespeare' as cannon streamers shower the crowds.

Parade to Holy Trinity Church 11:20 Accompanied by the ATC Band, Coventry Corps of Drums and the West Midlands Fire Service Band, the procession makes its way to Holy Trinity Church where participants and public can bring their floral tributes to Shakespeare's grave.

Once the Procession is over there are community festivities and street entertainment taking place across town throughout the day, organised by the [Shakespeare Birthplace Trust](#), the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#), and others.

The Annual Birthday Luncheon starts directly after the Parade and is a ticketed event, held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The event is sold out now.

Circus Fun At Birthplace For Shakespeare's Birthday Celebrations



The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust's birthday celebrations will include all the fun of the circus this Saturday.

Professional entertainers and local community groups will entertain crowds of visitors in Henley Street with a free programme of performances.

Shakespeare's Circus, compered by American showman Barnum, will feature rope walks, hoola-hooping and juggling by professional entertainers from Fool's Paradise, with performances and workshops running all day outside Shakespeare's Birthplace.

There will also be song, dance and theatre performed by local community groups including Morris dancing and country dancing.

As well as all this, there will be theatrical promenade performances in the garden at Shakespeare's New Place; the annual Knights and Nymphs Children's Garden Party will take place at Hall's Croft and Harvard House will open its doors to the public free of charge to mark the Bard's Birthday.



Stratford (CV37) residents will also be able to enjoy free entry to the Shakespeare houses and a slice of birthday cake, whilst stocks last.

And don't forget the Shakespeare Birthday Lecture this Friday at 4pm when theatre reviewer Michael Billington will be in conversation with Professor Michael Dobson from the University of Birmingham about Shakespeare in the theatre then, now, and in the future.

For more information on events organised by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, visit www.shakespeare.org.uk

RSC Joins In Celebrations of 'Special Time' in Stratford's Calendar

The RSC is celebrating Shakespeare's birthday with a packed weekend of events for the whole family.

The celebrations will include the return of two showings of Wondrous Strange, presented by Mimbre, an outdoor acrobatic Shakespeare-themed performance, while the Shakespeare Birthday performance will be Julius Caesar in the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and a range of free activities for the family.

There will also be live music, poetry reading by RSC actors on the chain ferry, and a range of free activities at The Other Place, as well as the chance to visit two current exhibitions, one at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and one at the Swan Theatre.

Geraldine Collinge, Director of Events and Exhibitions at the RSC said: "The Birthday Weekend is such a special time in Stratford's calendar. We're delighted to be celebrating Shakespeare's birthday with the return of Mimbre's Wondrous Strange, a delightful acrobatic piece of theatre that went down so well last year.

"What better way to enjoy Shakespeare than by seeing some of his most famous characters come to life as part of this visually stunning performance. And, as always, we'll also be offering people the chance to find out more about a range of theatre skills from theatre design to stage fighting."

For more information on the RSC's celebrations for Shakespeare's birthday, visit www.rsc.org.uk/events/shakespeares-birthday-celebrations



Don't Forget Road Closures During Birthday Celebrations

Businesses are reminded that road closures will be in place for the weekend of the Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations, which may affect access and deliveries.

- ◆ Waterside will be closed from Bridge Street junction to the Chapel Street junction and Sheep Street from 3.30pm to 6.30pm on Friday.
- ◆ **Closures for Saturday's birthday parade will be in place from 7am to 1.30pm on Windsor Street, part of Market Square, Henley Street, Meer Street, Bridge Street, High Street, Union Street, Wood Street, Waterside, Sheep Street, Chapel Street, Chapel Lane, Church Street, Southern Lane and Old Town.**
- ◆ **Henley Street will also be closed in front of Shakespeare's Birthplace from 9am to 7pm as entertainment takes place throughout the day.**
- ◆ And on Sunday, there will be closures on Sheep Street, Chapel Street, Church Street and Old Town from 10.30am to 11.15am and 12.15pm to 1.30pm for the Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations and Sunday Sermon.
- ◆ For a full list of road closures, please visit the [district council's website](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/news/news.cfm/current/1/item/136246) on www.stratford.gov.uk/news/news.cfm/current/1/item/136246



Literary Festival Returns For 10th Anniversary

Stratford Literary Festival starts this Sunday, bringing a week of top authors and speakers to the town.

The popular festival, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, runs until April 30th and boasts its largest programme yet, guaranteed to bring crowds to Stratford.

Headline speakers include baking queen Mary Berry, journalist and writer Andrew Marr, historians and former politicians Paddy Ashdown and Roy Hattersley, former Mayor of London Ken Livingstone, former head of the British Army Richard Dannatt, and Beirut hostage Terry Waite.

There will be poetry, music and workshops on offer, as well as a programme of events for children, while keen singers can join a scratch choir and quizzers can pit their wits at the Lit Fest's annual General Knowledge Quiz.

For a full programme of events or more information visit www.stratlitfest.co.uk.



Top Brands On Show With Listers at Motor Festival



Stratford Festival of Motoring sponsor Listers is showcasing its range of brands at this year's event, with Audi, Honda, Lexus, Volkswagen and Toyota all on show.

There are just a couple of weeks to go until this year's festival, which is sponsored by Listers for the second year running.

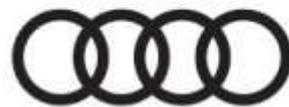
The festival, which takes place on Sunday, April 30th and Monday, May 1st, attracts tens of thousands of motor enthusiasts to Stratford.

It features organised 'runs' into the Warwickshire and Gloucestershire countryside followed by 300 cars parked up on the town centre streets.

As part of that display, Listers will showcase its own state-of-the-art range, displaying cars from five dealerships on Waterside and Bridge Street.

Motor fans will also be able to lay their eyes on a selection of new models, including the new Volkswagen Golf, Honda Civic, Toyota Yaris and new Lexus RX and RC.

Listers will also have a dedicated Motability section in its stand opposite The Encore.



Volkswagen



TOYOTA



Toni Dunk, Group Marketing Manager at Listers, said: "We are delighted to be back supporting The Stratford Festival of Motoring and are looking forward to dazzling visitors to the event with our range of brands, as well as the exciting sight of a range of new models that most people won't have seen yet."



Dates for your diary!

If you have an event you would like us to list here please email Sandi - sandi@stratforward.co.uk

April

8th to 23rd	Coventry & Warks schools Easter holidays (Also Oxon, B'ham & Leicestershire)
10th to 23rd	Shakespeare Hospice Forget Me Not display outside RSC
21st	Birthday Lecture
21st	Bards Night at Stratford Artshouse
22nd	Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations 10:40 Muster for the Parade 11:00 Birthday Commemorations Laying of Wreath Unfurling of Birthday Banner Unfurling of Bridge Street Flags Three Cheers for William 11:20 Parade to Holy Trinity Church 12:30 Annual Birthday Luncheon at The Crowne Plaza
23rd	St Georges Day
23rd - 30th	Stratford Literary Festival
30th & 1st May	Stratford Festival of Motoring

May

1st	May Day
4th	Local Elections
7th	Stratford Marathon
9th	BID Members Networking Session
13th	Let it Glow Moonlit Walk
8th & 21st	Stratford Races
27th	FA Cup Final
26th to 24th June	Ramadan
29th	Spring Bank Holiday

June

2nd to 4th	Stratford Folk Festival
8th	General Election



30th April & 1st May 2017

www.stratfordfestivalofmotoring.co.uk



1st & 2nd July 2017

www.stratfordriverfestival.co.uk



23rd to 24th September 2017

www.stratfordtowncentrefoodfestival.co.uk

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