

ROCHESTER

# DICKENSIAN CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL



SAT, 2  
AND SUN, 3  
DECEMBER  
10AM-6PM



  CHRISTMASINMEDWAY  
VISITMEDWAY.ORG

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# FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

NEW  
FOR  
2023

## Psst! Are you ready for a musical journey back in time?

Look out for a stunning 19th century Victorian musical instrument that will be serenading the festival-goers all day long outside the Guildhall. Meet the Celestina, a true gem that will transport you to the whimsical world of Victorian celebrations.



**EASTGATE HOUSE 10am – 5pm**  
(Last admission 4.15pm)

## A VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS

Come and explore Rochester's beautiful 16th century mansion – a building that features in two of Dickens' novels. The house will be decorated for a Victorian Christmas throughout!

## VICTORIAN CIRCUS SKILLS

**Step right up to our Victorian and Modern Circus Skills Workshop!**

Come and have a go at juggling, stilt walking, plate spinning, ribbon twirling, diabolos and balancing with a range of both period and contemporary circus equipment. We're located right outside The Crown Public House, so come and join in the fun!

## STEAMPUNK TALK

**An Introduction to Steampunk in Rochester Library**

Great Kentspectations will be giving a talk about the history of Steampunk and a fashion show illustrating their alternate style.



## VICTORIAN COMEDY JUGGLER

*Get ready to feast your eyes on the ultimate family entertainment!*

Dan the Hat is here to blow your mind with his hilarious wit and jaw-dropping skills. You won't be able to resist his on-the-spot silly antics that are sure to leave you in stitches. This is one family show that's simply unmissable!



## WALKING TOURS of Historic Rochester

10.45am (Duration 45 minutes) & 2.15pm (Duration 90 minutes)  
Walking tours of Rochester, led by expert guides from The City of Rochester Society.

The tours commence from the Visitor Information Centre and include the many links to Charles Dickens, as well as stories from the last 2000 years.

*Donations to the registered charity are always welcome.*

## VICTORIAN STATUES

Hidden amongst the festivities, see if you can find our beautiful gilded Victorian statues.



## WET PLATE PHOTOGRAPHY TALK - TIN TYPES:

### THE VICTORIAN POLAROID

Medway-based photographer Rikard Österlund gives a talk and live demonstration of the techniques used by the early Victorian photographers known as the wet plate collodion process, through which unique photographs are made by hand on metal or glass plates.

**1-2pm, Saturday, 2 December**  
**Guildhall Museum**

**Wet Plate Photography** - Heritage Portrait Session, Guildhall Museum  
10am-4pm, Saturday, 2 December (Talk 1-2pm)  
10am-3pm, Sunday, 3 December  
Book a portrait with Rikard - a 5"x4" tintype for 1-2 people during 'Christmas Dickens Festival'. 20mins slots. Portraits £50 each & extra £5 for digital copy too.  
To book visit [www.rikard.co.uk](http://www.rikard.co.uk)

Disclaimer: - If you have epilepsy or are sensitive to sudden noises/lights (flash) or strong smells (chemistry), please take caution.  
Please note, you will have your photograph posted to you or available to collect at a later date.



# PARADES AND CAROLS

**11am**

## SEVEN POOR TRAVELLERS' PROCESSION

Led from outside The Victoria & Bull Hotel, by the Town Crier, the procession will move along the High Street and conclude outside The Six Poor Travellers' House, where the story will unfold.



**12noon**

## MAIN PARADE

Led by the Mayor of Medway, the parade of costume characters and performers will start in the High Street by Almon Place. It will move along the High Street, turning left at Northgate into Boley Hill and finishing on the Boley Hill Stage.



## Rochester Cathedral Bell Ringers (Sat Only)

Come and have a go at bell ringing on our mini ring of bells next to the war memorial, in the shadow of the Cathedral bell tower.

**4.45pm**

## CANDLELIT PARADE

Led by the Mayor of Medway, the parade will start on the High Street by Almon Place. It will move along the High Street, turning left at Northgate into Boley Hill to join the carol service on the open-air stage.

**5pm**

## CAROLS FOR CHRISTMAS

This year we welcome the Rochester Choral Society Choir as they lead the magical concert. Join BAE Systems Brass Band and all the festival performers in a selection of popular Christmas carols outside Rochester's magnificent cathedral on Boley Hill, under a guaranteed snowfall.



Readings in the Adult Library of Rochester Library & Hub throughout the day (check timetable for details)

## GILLINGHAM LIONS TEA TENT

Located in a castle moat opposite the cathedral will be a place where you can rest your feet from all the exploring and grab a cup of tea and a slice of cake.

## FESTIVE FOOD, DRINK AND GIFTS

**10am - 7pm**

Boley Hill & Kings Head car park  
This Festive fair will run during the Dickensian Christmas festival, offering an abundant assortment of locally sourced seasonal and festive treats and gifts.

## Rochester Library & Hub

**10am - 4pm**

## Kent Costume Trust Exhibition

## "A VICTORIAN FAMILY CHRISTMAS"

In the time of Charles Dickens, people would have made their own decorations at home rather than buying them. Come and see how they were made and how they used to decorate The Tree, a new introduction brought from Germany by Prince Albert when he married the Queen.

**11am - 4pm**

**Rochester Baptist Church** will be performing live street theatre in Victorian costume throughout the festival in the form of an adaptation of the classic Dickens novel "Scrooge", starting from 11am.

## The Rochester Corn Exchange

**Princes Hall - 10.30am - 4pm**

## GRAHAM SAGE'S RECORD FAIR

Set just off the High Street, (Princes Hall is located on the High Street) in the Princes Hall located under the clock, is an ideal escape to the hustle and bustle of the festival. Warm up and recharge in our Grade I listed building before exploring more delights of the Dickensian Christmas Festival.

## Churches & Cathedrals

## ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL

## Saturday, 2 December

8.30 - 8.45	Silent Prayer
8.45 - 9.00	Morning Prayer
9.00 - 9.30	Holy Communion
10.00 - 16.00	Café Opens
11.00 - 11.10	The Royal Marines
12.30 - 13.00	Christmas Carol service
15.00 - 15.30	Christmas Carol Service
16.00	Cathedral Closes

## Sunday, 3 December

9.30 - 10.30	The Cathedral Eucharist
12.00 - 16.00	Café Opens
12.30 - 13.00	Christmas Carol Service
15.00 - 15.30	Christmas Carol Service
16.00	Cathedral Closes
18.30 - 19.30	Advent Carol Service

**10am - 4pm**

**St Margaret's Church** and its 15th Century tower will be open both days of the Dickensian Christmas Festival. Come and explore our beautiful church, climb to the top of the tower and wonder at the amazing view of Rochester and the Medway Valley. Light refreshments and a gift stall will be available.

# DICKENSIAN CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL



- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>A</b> Coach pick-up points         | First Aid point                                   |
| Toilets, all have disabled facilities | <b>P&amp;R</b> Park & Ride drop-off/pick-up point |
| Festive food, drink and gifts         | Stage   |
|                                       | Cash point  |
|                                       | <b>P</b> Parking                                  |
|                                       | Disabled parking                                  |

- 1** BLUE BOAR LANE PERFORMANCE AREA
- 2** LA PROVIDENCE
- 3** VICTORIAN CIRCUS SKILLS

START OF MAIN PARADE, 12NOON, CANDLELIT PARADE 4.45PM



10.00-16.00	Open	Rochester Library & Hub
10.00-16.00	Kent Costume Trust Display	Rochester Library & Hub
10.00-16.00	Rochester Cathedral Bell Ringers - mini bells have a go	St Marys Meadow (War Memorial)
10.00	Circus Skills	Outside The Crown Public House
10.00	Celestina Demonstration	Guildhall Forecourt
10.00	Dickensian Ding Dong	Bottom of Crow Lane (Sun Only)
10.00-17.00	A Victorian Christmas	Eastgate House
10.00-17.00	Look out for Scrooge!	Eastgate House (Sat only)
10.05	Pauline Quirke Academy	Main Stage Boley Hill (Sat Only)
10.05	Gad's Hill School - Great Expectations The Musical	Main Stage Boley Hill (Sun Only)
10.15	Dance Alley	Blue Boar Lane Performance Area
10.30	Punch & Judy	Guildhall Forecourt
10.30	Big Sing	Main Stage Boley Hill (Sat Only)
10.30	Miss Havisham's Ladies Photo Opportunity	St Mary's Meadow (War Memorial)
10.30	Steampunk Morris	Outside La Providence (Sat Only)
10.30	The Chatham & Rochester Dickens Fellowship Photo Opportunity	Outside Eastgate House
10.30	Inominata	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sat Only)
10.30	Tilly Pantlin	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sun Only)
10.45	Maidstone Voices	Main Stage Boley Hill (Sun Only)
10.45	City of Rochester Walking Tour	From outside The Visitor Information Centre (45Mins)
11.00	Seven Poor Traveller Procession	Starting from outside the Victoria & Bull Hotel
11.00	Victorian Juggler	Outside The Crown Public House
11.00	Sundown Solstice	City Wall Wine Bar Stage (Sat Only)
11.00	LKG Trio	City Wall Wine Bar Stage (Sun Only)
11.00	Fagin Photo Opportunity	St Mary's Meadow (War Memorial)
11.00	The City of Rochester Pipe Band	Blue Boar Lane Performance Area
11.00	Readings from Dickens' Novel - Oliver Twist	Rochester Library & Hub
11.00	Pauline Quirke Academy Solo Singers	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sat Only)
11.00	Victorian Statues	Bottom of Crow Lane
11.05	Seven Poor Traveller Theatrical Piece	Six Poor Traveller House
11.05	Pickwick Club Interview by Graham Woodward	Main Stage Boley Hill (Sat Only)
11.15	Celestina Demonstration	Guildhall Forecourt
11.15	Medway Social Singers	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sun Only)
11.20	Waldersalde Sings	Main Stage Boley Hill (Sat Only)
11.20	Pickwick Club Interview by Graham Woodward	Main Stage Boley Hill (Sun Only)
11.30	Knights Academy of Music & Performing Arts	Main Stage Boley Hill (Sun Only)
11.30	Mini Bell Demonstrations	St Mary's Meadow (War Memorial)
12.00	Main Parade	Starting from Star Hill, along the High Street and into Boley Hill.
12.30	Dani Baker	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sat Only)
12.30	Marshall Connection	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sun Only)
12.30	Great Kentspectation Steampunk Interview by Graham Woodward	Main Stage Boley Hill (Sat Only)
13.00	Pickwick Club Photo Opportunity	Guildhall Forecourt
13.00	BAE Systems Brass Band	Main Stage Boley Hill
13.00	Victorian Statues	Outside La Providence
13.00	Steampunk Morris	Blue Boar Lane Performance Area (Sat Only)
13.00	Zac Schulze Gand	City Wall Wine Bar Stage (Sat Only)
13.00	Celestina Demonstration	Guildhall Forecourt

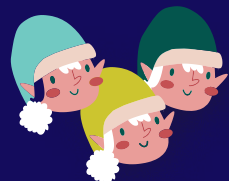
13.15	We Can Sing	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sat Only)
13.15	Tilly Pantlin	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sun Only)
13.30	Punch & Judy	Guildhall Forecourt
13.30	Fagin Photo Opportunity	St Mary's Meadow (War Memorial)
13.30	Dance Alley	Blue Boar Lane Performance Area
13.30	Readings from Dickens; Novel - Oliver Twist	Rochester Library & Hub
13.30	Circus Skills	Outside the Crown Public House
13.30	Mini Bell Demonstration	St Mary's Meadow (War Memorial)
14.00	Sound City	City Wall Wine Bar Stage (Sun only)
14.00	Victorian Statues	Guildhall Forecourt
14.00	Miss Havisham's Ladies Photo Opportunity	St Mary's Meadow (War Memorial)
14.00	Interview with The Chatham & Rochester Dickens Fellowship by Graham Woodward	Main Stage Boley Hill
14.00	The City of Rochester Pipe Band	Blue Boar Lane Performance Area
14.00	Dickensian Ding Dong	Bottom of Crow Lane (Sun Only)
14.00	Vocademy Students	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sat Only)
14.00	UK Soul Choir	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sun Only)
14.15	City of Rochester Walking Tour	From outside the Visitor Information Centre (90Mins)
14.20	Pretending People	Main Stage Boley Hill
14.30	Victorian Juggler	Outside The Crown Public House
14.30	Punch & Judy	Guildhall Forecourt
14.30	Steampunk Morris	Outside La Providence (Sat Only)
14.30	Great Kentspectations Tea Duelling & Fashion Show	Rochester Library & Hub
14.30	Mini Bell Demonstration	St Mary's Meadow (War Memorial)
14.45	Gad's Hill School	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sun Only)
14.45	Rainham Ladies	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sat Only)
14.50	Victorian Strollers Interview by Graham Woodward	Main Stage Boley Hill
15.00	Tin Can Valley	City Wall Wine Bar Stage (Sat Only)
15.30	Mini Bell Demonstration	St Mary's Meadow (War Memorial)
15.00	Celestina Demonstration	Guildhall Forecourt
15.00	Pretending People	Main Stage Boley Hill
15.00	Salvation Army	Blue Boar Lane Performance Area
15.00	Victorian Statues	Bottom of Crow Lane
15.00	Pickwick Club Photo Opportunity	Outside Eastgate House
15.30	Circus Skills	Outside The Crown Public House
15.30	The Rochester & Chatham Dickens Fellowship Photo Opportunity	Guildhall Forecourt
15.30	Victorian Juggler	Outside La Providence
15.30	Rochester Choral Society	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sun Only)
15.35	Rochester Propers Interview by Graham Woodward	Main Stage Boley Hill
15.45	BAE Systems Brass Band	Main Stage Boley Hill
15.45	Rochester Choral Society	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sat Only)
16.00	Steampunk Morris	Blue Boar Lane Performance Area (Sat Only)
16.15	Katie Dante	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sun Only)
16.30	Katie Dante	Eastgate Christmas Village Stage (Sat Only)
16.45	Candlelit Procession	Starting from Star Hill, along the High Street and into Boley Hill.
17.15	Carol Concert with BAE Systems Brass Band & Rochester Choral Society	Main Stage Boley Hill

# NEW CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS VILLAGE



Hidden away in the Christmas Market, Mrs Claus and the mystical elves are waiting to take you on a truly magical adventure...

...first you'll visit the cosy snug and listen to a wonderful story read by Mrs Claus. The elves will then take you into their workshop where you can create your own Christmas tree decoration, and finally be whisked off into Mrs Claus' kitchen to decorate your very own gingerbread treat\*



**Tickets selling fast**  
£10 per child and up to 2 adults go free.  
[MedwayTicketsLive.co.uk](http://MedwayTicketsLive.co.uk)



## CHRISTMAS

AT EASTGATE HOUSE, ROCHESTER



**CHARLES DICKENS' A CHRISTMAS CAROL**

SUN 10, SAT, 16 AND SUN, 17 DEC  
TICKETS £12

**STORYTELLING WITH VICTORIAN FATHER CHRISTMAS**

MON, 18 - SAT, 23 DEC  
£6 ADULTS/SENIORS AND £4 FOR CHILDREN (AGE TWO TO 17), UNDER TWOS FREE.



Facebook icon @CHRISTMASINMEDWAY

FIND OUT EVERYTHING - VISITMEDWAY.ORG



## VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

9am - 6pm

The ideal port of call for all visitors to the area. It is wheelchair accessible and offers a full tourist information service.

Phone 01634 338141

Email [visitorcentre@medway.gov.uk](mailto:visitorcentre@medway.gov.uk)

Web [www.visitmedway.org](http://www.visitmedway.org)

## ROCHESTER CASTLE 10am - 4pm

(Last admission is 3.15pm)

Get a birds-eye view of the Dickensian Christmas Festival from the top of Rochester Castle Keep! Built in 1127, the Keep stands proudly on the banks of the River Medway. Having survived three sieges, the castle has many tales to tell and offers a fantastic view of the festival (view of the Christmas Market). Admission fees apply.

## GUILDHALL MUSEUM 10am - 5pm

### The Making of Mr Dickens

An exciting new permanent exhibition on Charles Dickens. Visitors can enjoy an immersive journey through Dickens' life in Medway, while exploring the people and places that shaped his complex personal and public life and inspired him to create some of the best-loved stories in English literature. Free entry.

## EASTGATE CHRISTMAS VILLAGE

Visit the Eastgate Christmas Village, where you'll find live musical performances and Santa's Grotto! There will be a variety of local shops selling festive gifts, produce and refreshments for all to enjoy. Santa's Grotto places are pre-booked, although some may be available on a turn-up basis. Check availability here: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/santas-grotto-rochester](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/santas-grotto-rochester).

## TRAVEL INFORMATION

### BUS

Travel by bus  
[www.arrivabus.co.uk](http://www.arrivabus.co.uk)

### SOUTHEASTERN TRAINS

Come by train to Rochester or Strood stations.  
[www.southeasternrailway.gov.uk](http://www.southeasternrailway.gov.uk)

### PARK & RIDE

Town centre parking will be extremely limited during the festival. We strongly advise visitors to use the park and ride service, which will operate from the University of Greenwich Medway Campus, Central Avenue, Chatham Maritime, Chatham, ME4 4TB

- Operating between 9am-6pm on both days of the festival.
- Follow the anchor signs (Dockyard symbol), then the yellow park and ride directional signs
- Return pick up point: Corporation Street bus stop outside the Adult Education Centre, Strood-bound carriageway
- Last bus leaves Rochester at 6pm
- £1.50 per adult for a return trip (under 16s free)
- Contactless payments accepted





# Rochester CHRISTMAS MARKET

Browse over 80 stalls for unique gift ideas and unusual stocking fillers. There's even a guaranteed snowfall, all framed by Rochester's fairy-tale cathedral and castle.



**Sat, 25 and Sun, 26 Nov 10am - 6pm**

**Fri, 1 Dec 12noon - 8pm**

**Sat, 2 and Sun, 3 Dec 10am-7pm**

(also part of The Rochester Dickensian Christmas Festival)

**Fri, 8 Dec 12noon - 8pm**

**Sat, 9 and Sun, 10 Dec 10am - 6pm**

— ◆ —  
**Learn more: [VisitMedway.org/Christmas2023](https://www.visitmedway.org/Christmas2023)**

