

Unlocking Warwick

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www.unlockingwarwick.org

The Volunteers

Unlocking Warwick' is the name of the volunteer group based in the Jury Street Court House, which was reopened in 2014 after a major restoration.



We aim to bring this lovely building at the central crossroads back to life as a hub of community activity, celebrating Warwick's social and cultural heritage.

We organise tours of the building and its surrounds, help in the Visitor Information Centre, research Warwick's social history, and stage dramatic reconstructions of court cases from the past.

The volunteers organise period dances such as the Christmas Regency Ball, musical performances in the ballroom, talks, and social gatherings for visitors and residents.

Unlocking Warwick also produces a long-term 'What's On in Warwick' which can be seen on our website and on the official Visit Warwick website.

Join us

Why not join our group to get involved in the life of the community, develop new skills, learn more about Warwick's past, and make new friends?

If you're interested in volunteering with Unlocking Warwick, just send a message to the group's secretary, Rick Thompson, by email at info@unlockingwarwick.org or by leaving your contact details at the Visitor Information Centre, and we'll get in touch with you. 01926 492212.

We meet every two months or so, and sub-groups organise activities such as the Court House Tours, Archive Research, and main events like the annual Regency Ball.



Oken's Chest

The name 'Unlocking Warwick' is taken from the 16th Century chest named after the town's benefactor Thomas Oken.



His chest, still in the Court House Information Centre, has nine locks and only when the nine key-holders came together could the town's valuable archives and treasures be unlocked.

The Court House

The Jury Street Court House stands at the central cross roads of Warwick, originally called High Cross, where all four entrance roads meet.



There's evidence of shops on the site in 1340, but there would have been a building there in Saxon times when Warwick was fortified against the Danes by Aethelflaed, Lady of the Mercians, in 914. In the mid-16th Century the Court House site became the administrative centre of the county town.

The medieval corporation building was damaged in the Great Fire of Warwick in 1694, and the present stone building, designed by Francis Smith, was opened in 1728. It immediately became the fashionable centre of Warwick life, with balls, assemblies, dinners and public meetings.

Restored and Reopened

The Grade 1 listed building was reopened in 2014 after a major restoration financed by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Town Council.

The old Court House contains the Visitor Information Centre, the Warwickshire Yeomanry Museum of military artefacts, the Town Council Chamber and Offices, and a magnificent Regency Ballroom.

Behind the building, the Pageant Garden is a haven of calm in the centre of town which can be used for outdoor events.

What we do

'Unlocking Warwick' is a not-for-profit association with officers elected each year and an organising committee. What we do:

- [**Free Tours of the building** and its surrounds during the summer, telling the history of the building and of Warwick itself.
- [**Research Warwick's past** at the County Record Office to post stories on our website and to stage themed talks.
- [**Dramatic reconstructions** of court cases heard in the building in earlier centuries.
- [**Help in the Visitor Information Centre** at busy times of the year
- [**Regency Balls**, reviving the grand assemblies of Jane Austen's time.
- [**Educational visits** for local schools.
- [**Community events** bringing local people together for talks, musical performances, period dances, or exhibitions. Give us your suggestions.
- [**What's On in Warwick** - compiling a comprehensive long-term list of local events updated each month, and we post news of our events on our website, Facebook and Twitter.



Website

www.unlockingwarwick.org

Contact us

Chair: Karen Parker

Secretary: Rick Thompson

Treasurer: Christine Shaw

email us at: info@unlockingwarwick.org

Or leave a message at the Visitor Information Centre in the Jury Street Court House
01926 492212

www.unlockingwarwick.org

Hire the Ballroom

The first floor Regency ballroom can be hired for private functions such as wedding receptions and anniversary dinners, or for corporate events.



It has a kitchen and an integrated sound system, and is licensed for drinks and music. There is full disabled access.

Contact the Visitor Information Centre

01926 492212

admin@visitwarwick.co.uk



The Court House Volunteers

Would you like to join us?



UnlockingWarwick



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