Half-Term Horrors in the Ghoulish Garden of England

The nights are drawing in, the mist is settling, the spirits are restless…it must be time for some spectacularly spooky adventures in Kent for October half-term!

The Garden of England will become a spider’s web of spine-tingling activities from 24th October to 1st November.

Visit Kent has plenty of spooky suggestions for things to see and do this half-term, from creepy castles and macabre manor house to jitters in the jungle and nautical nightmares. In addition to exciting family outings for tiny terrors, there are also fully immersive horror experiences for the very brave and events for grown-ups who don’t want to miss out on the frightening fun.

And with great 2 FOR 1 deals available for visitors using public transport, including Southeastern trains, and fantastic accommodation offers, you can enjoy a fun-packed, thrill-filled half-term in the Garden of England for less.

Take a look at some of the spooky treats on offer…

Visit the individual attraction websites for full price details and times, or go to www.visitkent.co.uk for more inspiration and www.visitkentoffers.co.uk for 2FOR1 deals.

CREEPSY CASTLES

The Haunted Castle
24th October to 1st November
Dover Castle
Feeling brave enough to take on Kent’s most haunted castle? Prepare to be scared stiff as a frighteningly great day out awaits you. Enter the Tunnel of Terror or say boo to a ghost, have a go at creating creepy crafts and see if you can scare the castle staff enough to win a prize for the best Halloween costume. www.english-heritage.org.uk/dover-castle
Witches and Wizards Academy  
24th October to 31st October  
Leeds Castle  
Youngsters won’t want to miss the chance to join Leeds Castle’s Witches and Wizard Academy this half-term. Visitors can explore the grounds with a quest card that will lead you to ghoulish characters hiding special spells in the gardens, from potion making to broomstick riding. The spooky woodland walk is ideal for younger visitors and includes a chocolate prize at the end. Dress to scare for the daily fancy dress competition near the maze at 2pm. www.leeds-castle.com

Haunted Halloween Half-Term Fun  
24th October to 1st November  
Hever Castle  
A spine-tingling week of ghostly goings-on is in store at Hever Castle and Gardens. There will be a Halloween-themed craft workshop, scary tales in the haunted house, a spooky trail through the gardens, a castle quiz on ghosts and ghouls, and prizes for the best Halloween costume each day. www.hevercastle.co.uk

Horrible Halloween  
24th October to 1st November  
Upnor Castle, Medway  
Join in the spooky fun at Upnor Castle this half-term by creating ghoulish crafts, join the spooky family trail and learning about some of the ghostly tales from the castle itself. www.english-heritage.org.uk/upnorcastle

JITTERS IN THE JUNGLE

Port Lympne Reserve and Howletts Wild Animal Park  
24th October to 1st November  
Visitors to Port Lympne Reserve and Howletts are guaranteed a frighteningly fun time during October half term with a host of free activities and fact-filled talks and feeds running every day.

Try to conquer the spooky maze at Port Lympne for the chance to win a Junior Ranger or Keeper Academy Experience Day, and make your own monsters at the craft workshop. Howletts, near Canterbury, will hold a fancy dress competition and give visitors the chance to make a bug hotel for creepy crawlies. There will be pumpkin carving on Saturday 31st October at both parks, and the animals will be tearing to into some truly tasty Halloween themed treats on the day.

You can double your fun during half-term as day visitors to Howletts or Port Lympne can enjoy another frighteningly fun family day out at either sister park for just £5 per person. Or why not make a week of it with a stay at Elephant Lodge’s family glamping site at Port Lympne? For further information or to book a short break please visit www.aspinallfoundation.org
IMMERSIVE HORROR EXPERIENCES
For a unique Halloween experience that older kids are sure to enjoy, try some of these immersive experiences that put you right at the heart of the horror – but with plenty of fun thrown in!

Screamland
16th October to 31st October
Dreamland Margate
Brace yourself for a scare festival like no other, as Dreamland becomes Screamland, with a range of scare mazes, ghoulish experiences and sideshows ranging from scare factor 2 to scare factor 5! Take a starring role in The Final Cut, get lost in the macabre mirror maze, visit the B&B from hell, flee from Festino’s forgotten funhouse, or try to out-scream the Scream Machine. There will be plenty of creepy entertainers and stalls to chill your bones throughout the festival. www.dreamland.co.uk/screamland

Hellgate
27th October 31st October
Margate Winter Gardens
The deadly virus that caused last year’s zombie mayhem in Margate has been contained… but there are fears of a dreadful mutation… After the huge sell-out success of Zombie Apocalypse, Fright Nights have returned to ‘Hellgate’ Winter Gardens with three new fully immersive scare experiences for 2015. Expect roaming characters, themed food and drink and stalls on the Bloody Boulevard, in addition to the terrifying experiences of Quarantine, Buried Alive, and Dead Meat. Bring your nerves of steel… www.halloweenmargate.com

Contagious
Every Friday and Saturday evening in October
The Canterbury Tales, Canterbury
Plague has swept across medieval England and terrified citizens are evacuating London – dare you take the dangerous road to Canterbury is dangerous, with contagious citizens everywhere? The Canterbury Tales brings a touch of horror to Chaucer’s best-loved stories this Halloween, with plague-ridden characters weaving through the medieval attraction. Step back in time and experience the sights, smells, sounds - and screams - of medieval times! Suitable for those aged 14 or over. www.canterburytales.org.uk

TERROR AT THE NATIONAL TRUST
Kent’s mysterious National Trust properties will be a hive of activity for brave visitors from 24th October to 1st November. From eerie trails, pumpkin activities, wild art or simply playing in the crunchy autumn leaves, there’s something to give the whole family the jitters.
Head to Chartwell, Scotney Castle Emmetts Garden or Ightham Mote to try one of their spooky pumpkin trails through the grounds throughout half-term – or why not give them all a go! For a less spooky but equally atmospheric experience, try the South Foreland Lighthouse keeper trail, where you can see what it was like to be a lighthouse keeper and use your new skills to solve clues and help save a troubled ship in the bay.

Over at Knole a night of mischief is in store on Friday 30th October, when the estate celebrates a pagan festival that predates Halloween with a spoken word event inside the Great Hall. And Ightham Mote is also offering Halloween themed crafts and wild art for the little ones during the day on Saturday 31st October, while Smallhythe Place is laying on scary stories and horrible hauntings after dark.

For full details, visit www.nationaltrust.co.uk/southeast

**GHOLULISH GAMES FOR GROWN UPS**

For big kids looking for some extra chills this Halloween, plenty of creepy activities for grown-ups in some of the county’s most beautiful properties...

**Ghost & Gourmet Evening**
**Saturday 24th October and Saturday 31st October**
Ightham Mote
With only the flickering of candlelight to guide you, walk through this stunning 14th century house and listen to the stories of its past inhabitants, but watch out...the spirits maybe closer than you think. Guests will enjoy a two course supper in the tea room and can enjoy this beautiful home after dark. Booking is essential on 01732 811314

**Murder on the Dancefloor**
**Saturday 31st October**
Quex Park
Dig out your flares and platforms because the 1970’s are coming to Quex Park...and there's been a murder on the dancefloor! Join the Perfectly Dreadful Murder Company for a very special murder mystery dinner at the Powell-Cotton Museum. Fancy dress is encouraged, and tickets include a light 1970s style supper. Tickets are on sale now, to book call the museum 01843 842168.

**MACABRE MANORS & HAUNTED HOMES**

**Pumpkin Carving**
**27th October to 31st October**
Down House
Grab your cloaks and pick out your pumpkin at the former home of Charles Darwin for a full-filled day of creepy crafts. Visitors can carve pumpkins and listen
to shocking stories in this beautiful North Kent estate.

**www.english-heritage.org.uk/downhouse**

**Halloween Half Term**  
**Monday 26th to Friday 30th October**  
**Quex Park**

A week of spook-tacular events are in store for bold and brave visitors to the Birchington estate this half term, as intrepid explorers can to travel to the haunt of the infamous White Lady. Create and decorate a lantern to light your way and then trek in the footsteps of Percy Powell-Cotton to the dreaded tower hidden amongst the trees in the woodland of Quex Park. There you will hear the spine tingling tale of an ancient tomb, a terrible curse and discover the identity of the White Lady herself!  

**www.quexpark.co.uk**

**Wicked Witches**  
**Penshurst Place**  
**26th October to 31st October**

Spend a spooky half term at Penshurst Place with a variety of activities running every day. Brave visitors can venture into the wild wood to join the Wicked Witches for storytelling and marshmallow toasting around the camp fire, or join Penshurst’s head gardener on Thursday 29th October for a special children’s pumpkin carving workshop. There’s creepy cupcake decorating on Friday 30th October, and a thrilling Halloween extravaganza on Saturday 31st October with spooky stories and performances and a fancy dress competition – scary skeletons, young witches, warlocks and mini-vampires welcome!  

**www.penshurstplace.com**

**Autumn Week**  
**26th October to 30th October**  
**Godinton House, Ashford**

A week of autumnal activities for families to enjoy, with a treasure hunt, garden games, children’s crafts, spooky tales and a spot of pumpkin carving on select days.  

**www.godintonhouse.co.uk**

**NAUTICAL NIGHTMARES AND TERRIFYING TRAINS**

**Bats and Broomsticks**  
**24th October to 1st November**  
**The Historic Dockyard Chatham**

Try your hand at pumpkin carving, don your finest Halloween costume, and follow the bat trail through the Historic Dockyard this half term. Prizes will be handed out for the best fancy dress each day, and your ticket is valid for a year so you can return for more nautical seasonal delights in 2016.  

**www.thedockyard.co.uk**
Tuesday 27th to Saturday 31st October
Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Railway
The miniature railway will be spooking passengers over five days instead of their usual two. Leaving from Hythe Station the train whistles to New Romney, where passengers are greeted by the Ghoulish Butler, can make friends with Wanda the Witch and enter the Spider’s Cave. There will be Blood Red Hot Chocolate, Witch Finger Hot dogs and a Frightful Dessert Buffet, along with plenty of mini games and a prize for the best fancy dress! www.rhdr.org.uk

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Halloween images from a range of attractions are available on our Flickr account: https://flic.kr/s/aHsk5xJBqZ

For further media information on Visit Kent, please contact PR Manager Sinead Hanna at Sinead.Hanna@visitkent.co.uk or call 01227 812914.

About Visit Kent
Visit Kent Ltd is the Destination Management Organisation for Kent (the Garden of England), championing the county’s £3.4 billion tourism industry and supporting more than 67,000 jobs. It is recognised as one of the country’s leading DMOs, targeting UK and overseas markets to raise Kent’s profile as a premier destination, improving quality and skills within the industry, and growing investment in tourism. Visit Kent is a public/private sector partnership supported by Kent County Council, Medway Council, district and borough councils, and the leading sector tourism businesses in Kent.

For further information visit www.visitkent.co.uk (consumer) or www.visitkentbusiness.co.uk (business), or tweet @visitkent.