

# FUN PALACES

Who, what, where, why and how...



## What is a Fun Palace?

A Fun Palace is a free, local event made by people for their own community. At Fun Palaces people share their skills, passions and interests, and show the world just how brilliant and packed full of genius their community is.

## Where can they happen?

**Anywhere!** Libraries, theatres, pubs, community centres, gardens, swimming pools, sports centres, allotments, museums, National Trust properties, across whole town centres...

## Why do people make Fun Palaces?

Lots of reasons. Some people want to feel more connected to their local community. Some want the chance to do something fun together. Some people want to be a part of the nationwide campaign and do it the same time as everyone else; when we all do it together and show the brilliance that exists in our community, it can often feel more powerful.

You can read more about the Fun Palaces campaign and its history on our website.

[www.funpalaces.co.uk](http://www.funpalaces.co.uk)



## Who can make one?

**Absolutely anyone** (yes – that means you!)  
No experience needed. (We can help.)

## What happens at a Fun Palace?

**Whatever you want!** Past activities have included origami, photography, edible sculpting, gardening, recipe sharing, science and ecology talks, kayaking, chapati making, forensic investigation, cheerleading and battle rap, to name but a few.

Your Fun Palace may be completely different, and that is absolutely fine!

## How do I get started?

Sign up and get yourself on the map, on the website. Even if you don't quite know what you're doing, once you are on the map, people can find you to join in and help out. Check out the Getting Started toolkit on our website for more ideas and look at our free workshops, or just get in touch and we can help.



## Fun Palaces ARE:

**Free** Free to enter, free to take part.

**Local** A Fun Palace is by local people for local people – perhaps a group of neighbours, a residents' association or friends. If you're a venue, or organisation, we'd say don't 'deliver' to those communities, instead hand your space over and let them decide what happens.

**For all ages** It's often easier to think up activities for children, but what about the 17-year-old who doesn't consider themselves a child or the 75-year-old who never gets to play?

**Inclusive** How can you include as many people as possible in your Fun Palace? There is a toolkit about Accessibility on the Fun Palaces website.

In 2022:

**97%**  
of makers agreed that their Fun Palace made people feel happier.

**88%**  
of makers agreed that their Fun Palace is helping their local area be a better place to live.

## A Fun Palace IS NOT:

A fête or an Open Day

**Doing your job for free at the weekend**

If you are a professional actor, don't run a theatre workshop – find another of your passions to focus on.

**(ordinary) Facepainting**

Fun Palaces are about turning the ordinary upside down – so let the kids paint the adults' faces.

*I want to confound and amaze the people who say nothing ever happens in this town.*

**Fun Palace Maker, 2018**

**Yours** We don't know where you live, your workplace, or your local community. You do. You know how to make YOUR local Fun Palace.

**Part of a Campaign** What you do will showcase the brilliant things that you and your neighbours can do, be they tiny or huge.

**Hands-on** Fun Palaces bring people together to get stuck in and try something new.

**Process as much as product** Of course the event matters, but the real Fun Palace is what you and your community do to make it happen, the meetings, the cups of tea, the organising, the conversations.





Fun Palaces supports local people to create their own cultural and community events, sharing and celebrating the genius in everyone.



## Useful Links and Resources

If you have any questions, want to talk through ideas for your Fun Palace or just fancy a chat, then drop us an email: [hello@funpalaces.co.uk](mailto:hello@funpalaces.co.uk) or call the office phone and leave a message: 0208 692 4446, ext 203.

**90%**

of makers agreed that people involved in their Fun Palace are doing something positive in their local community together.

[www.funpalaces.co.uk](http://www.funpalaces.co.uk)



## Unearthing people's secret skills:

Fun Palaces believe in the genius in everyone. That we all have something to contribute. That the world is a better place when we connect and learn things from one another. If you're struggling to think of what you could offer - ask yourself these questions...

### Questions to ask:

What do people ring me up for advice on?

What's my passion?



What do I do for fun?



What do I like to do on a Sunday?

What are my favourite non-fiction books?

What's the thing I always wanted to learn, but never have? (Could now be the time, could I learn it with someone?)

(And once you've worked out your secret skill, perhaps you can help others to figure theirs out too...)

*"Say yes and work out the details later."*  
Miriam, Library Manager, Eltham.

- Celebrate people's unique specialisms! Eg. Ask a Scientist.
- Embrace the chaos – you can't control everything, and joy will come from surprise.
- Be realistic about your capacity – this is supposed to be fun! And if you're finding anything difficult, give the Fun Palaces team a call – that's what they're there for. They will also provide posters, advice and support (all for FREE).



## Welcome

Fun Palaces is both an ongoing campaign for cultural democracy and an invitation to make a Fun Palace.

Lots of people choose to make their Fun Palace on the Weekend of Celebration which takes place on the first weekend of October every year (and if this doesn't work for you, then you can make it at another time).

The ongoing campaign aims to shift power so that communities can create, shape and share the culture that matters to them. A starting place for doing this, for many, is by making a Fun Palace.

Our workshops and our Ambassadors Programme support communities to create by and for themselves; developing local networks, encouraging venues to co-create with local people, and helping small groups to shout about their value as grassroots community activists.



*"Offering residents and families first class cultural opportunities for free on their own doorstep has become even more important... in this cost of living crisis"*

Fun Palace Maker, 2022