



Wonderful Well Dressings

During May to September in the Peak District & Derbyshire, the unique spectacle of Well Dressings takes place - a custom that celebrates water and the life it brings. Many villages have revived this ancient tradition and create living art installations to decorate their wells, often combining it with local carnivals and other festivities. Well Dressings are pictures made from growing things (wool, bark, cones, flower petals, berries, leaves, seeds and other natural materials), constructed on a bed of soft clay spread over a wooden board and erected at the site of the spring or well.

Well Dressings depict a wide range of themes from biblical stories, historic themes and natural history to Disney characters! Dressing a well can take a team of skilled people up to a week to produce. The finished well will only last a week or so, as the flowers fade and the clay dries out and cracks.

Visit a Well Dressing from May through to September each year and marvel at this age-old unique tradition and superb show of artistic creativity.



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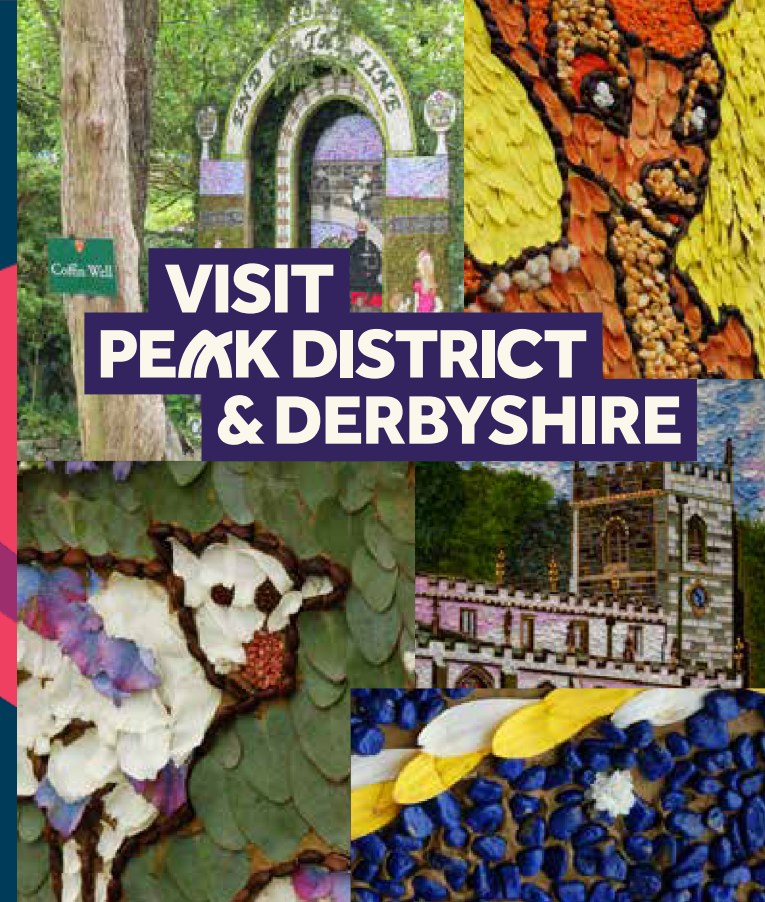
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Well Dressings 2024

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FOR THE BASE: A wooden frame with nails tacked onto the back board will give the clay something to grip to. Fresh red clay, water, damp towels, a bucket, plastic sheeting or newspaper, tracing paper, needle (optional) and wooden chip forks broken in half lengthways.

FOR THE TOPPING: Peppercorns Petals (gerbera are ideal. Avoid carnations) Egg shells, sheep wool, leaves, anything natural - go wild!

METHOD: Cover the working area with plastic or newspaper. 'Puddle' the clay (knead it so it is squishy and soft), add water if required. Smooth it into the frame so it is like a freshly plastered surface. Draw your design onto the clay (careful not to dig in), or needle prick your design through a version you may have put onto tracing paper. Lightly press the peppercorns along the outlines (remember they will swell slightly). 'Colour in' your design using your natural products, start from the base of your image or section when 'petalling' so they overlap. Use the chip fork to gently poke and slide the petal into the clay. Keep your fork and fingers clean with the damp towel. Keep the clay from drying out by occasionally spraying with water. Have fun - keep the ancient art alive! The dressing will last 5 days before the clay dries and cracks. Recycle your clay by soaking it in water!

Explore Further

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Month	Village	Dates
May	Tissington	9th to 15th May
	Waingroves	11th - 15th May
	Etwall	18th - 20th May
	Tintwistle	24th - 31st May
	Ashford in the Water	25th May - 1st June
	Monyash	25th May - 1st June
	Middleton By Youlgrave	25th - 31st May
	Brackenfield	25th - 27th May
	Endon	25th - 27th May
	Wirksworth	25th - 29th May
June	Biddulph Moor	15th - 22nd June
	Edlaston & Wyaston	15th - 22nd June
	Youlgrave	22nd - 27th June
	Litton	22nd - 29th June
	Hope	22nd - 30th June
	Over Haddon	22nd - 30th June
	Tideswell	22nd - 30th June
	Mellor	29th June - 5th July
	Rowsley	29th June - 6th July
	(on display at Rowsley School Peak Village)	29th June - 6th July
July	Bakewell	29th June - 7th July
	Whaley Bridge	30th June - 6th July
	Hayfield	30th June - 7th July
	Matlock	2nd - 9th July
	Aston on Trent	6th - 10th July
	Whitwell	6th - 12th July
	Chapel-en-le-Frith	6th - 13th July
	Coal Aston	6th - 13th July
	Crich	6th - 13th July
	Hathersage	6th - 13th July
Swanwick	6th - 13th July	
Dore	6th - 14th July	
Buxton	7th - 14th July	
Harthill	8th - 14th July	
Dronfield Woodhouse	12th - 18th July	
Brown Edge	13th - 20th July	
Great Longstone	13th - 20th July	

Pilsley	13th - 20th July	
West Hallam	13th - 20th July	
Bamford	13th - 21st July	
Little Longstone	13th - 21st July	
Gee Cross	14th - 21st July	
Clowne	20th - 27th July	
Heath Village	20th - 27th July	
Rowthorne	20th - 28th July	
Chadkirk Chapel	27th July - 4th August	
Stoney Middleton	27th July - 5th August	
August	Wingerworth	3rd - 10th August
Bradwell	4th - 12th August	
Great Hucklow	8th - 15th August	
Barlow	14th - 21st August	
Taddington	17th - 23rd August	
Saddleworth	24th - 31st August	
Holymoorside	23rd August - 8th September	
Eyam	24th August - 1st September	
Wormhill	24th August - 1st September	
Foolow	24th August - 2nd September	
September	Longnor	1st - 8th September
Hartington	7th - 13th September	
Chesterfield	7th - 15th September	
Spital Cemetery	7th - 15th September	

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