

Farnham Town of Craft

England's Craft Town

From the [University for the Creative Arts](#) to major museum, exhibition and specialist retail outlets and craft-related businesses, Farnham is home to both world renowned craft artists and to the next generation of emerging makers. Craft sits at the heart of Farnham's distinctiveness and this special feature was acknowledged in 2013 when Farnham was designated as England's Craft Town.

The roots of Farnham's engagement with craft can be dated back to the time when Farnham exported white clay to the Romans. In the 16th century, potteries in Farnham were major suppliers of pottery to London. But its real emergence as a town with a special leaning towards craft is in the Victorian era and the establishment and great success of [The Farnham Pottery](#), Wreclesham, with its reputation for the distinctive style of work known as Greenware (so called because of the copper-green glaze).

The establishment of The Farnham School of Art in 1880 strongly promoted the education in craft subjects as part of its curriculum, and a powerful reputation was developed that has lasted throughout the 20th century and to the present day especially in courses in textiles and ceramics. Craft courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels are offered at the [University for the Creative Arts at Farnham](#), the successor institution to the Art School. Craft courses in jewellery, metalwork, glass as well as in textiles and ceramics offer today's emerging craft makers unrivalled opportunities in some of the best equipped studios and workshops in any specialist university in the country.

The opportunity to exhibit, sell and present contemporary crafts in Farnham is a significant feature of the town's creative programme. The emergence of the [Farnham Maltings](#) as an arts centre in the 1970s has been of especial importance to the cultural life of Farnham, and the crafts have very strongly featured in its contemporary programme: right at the heart of its diverse cultural offer. There are year-round exhibitions featuring young as well as world class craft makers. There is a particular focus on the craft fair, with an unrivalled series of events featuring everything from textiles to sugarcraft, drawing international audiences to the town and having a powerful and positive effect on the creative economy. Craft studios are established in the [Farnham Maltings](#) to sustain the craft infrastructure.

Craft across the centuries can be seen and researched from Farnham Greenware in the town's museum through to the unrivalled collections of the [Crafts Study Centre](#). [The New Ashgate Gallery](#) offers a diverse range of craft work for sale and is especially focused on creating opportunities for emerging makers.

Craft is embedded into the fabric, the homes as well as the cultural life of Farnham.

October Craft Month

Each October, Farnham hosts a celebration of craft with well over a hundred events taking place throughout the town. This is your chance to see makers in action; take a craft walk; get making and buy work from local designer makers.

During October you will have the opportunity to experience Farnham's craft heritage with events at the [Museum of Farnham](#), engage with the present day craft community with events at the [Crafts Study Centre](#), [Farnham Maltings](#) and the [New Ashgate Gallery](#) and look to the future of craft at the [University for the Creative Arts](#).

Farnham's rich crafting culture can be experienced all year round and we encourage you to return in every season to explore craft in England's Craft Town.

Directory of Craft Organisations

[318 Ceramics Adult pottery Classes](#)

Based at Farnham Pottery, 318 Ceramics Adult Pottery Classes is a creative organisation which promotes excellence in ceramics by providing education and support to all makers from complete beginners through to professional designer makers.

[Adult Learning Centre](#)

Farnham's Adult Learning Centre boasts a professionally equipped arts and crafts studio at its premises in West Street, Farnham and offers a wide range of creative workshops and courses.

[Crafts Study Centre](#)

The Crafts Study Centre is a specialist university museum open to the public as well as a research centre.

[Farnham Library](#)

Farnham Library is free to join for anybody who lives, works or studies in Surrey. The library runs a programme of activities, including craft workshops and events, for families and individuals throughout the year.

[Farnham Maltings](#)

Set in the heart of Farnham, this collection of buildings hosts a wide range of craft events, festivals and workshops and hosts over 25 craft-makers in its East Wing Studios.

[Museum of Farnham](#)

The Museum is situated in a beautiful Georgian town house with many original features and a delightful walled garden. Discover Farnham's history, from its prehistoric roots to its hop growing boom and arts and crafts traditions.

[Farnham Pottery](#)

The Farnham Pottery is a community-based centre of excellence for ceramics and provides opportunities to learn ancient and contemporary craft techniques. The Victorian kiln has supported local ceramic craft for five generations of potters, a tradition it keeps alive while also promoting new, complementary creative businesses.

[Farnham Sculptors](#)

A friendly group of wood and stone carvers, working in an attractive, well

equipped studio at Farnham Pottery.

Lace Research Network

The Lace Research Network is a centre of excellence for the study and research of lace and the lace-like, based at UCA Farnham. The remit of the Lace Research Network is wide and covers all types and aspects of lace from the historical to the contemporary including hand and machine made, the digital and the conceptual.

New Ashgate Gallery

For over 50 years, the New Ashgate has championed emerging artists and provided a destination to view and buy high quality, affordable contemporary art and craft.

Pugmill Bakehouse

The Pugmill Bakehouse is a wood-fired, community kitchen where handmade food is shared. It enables groups to enjoy the art, craft and science of making and sharing food using traditional methods, in a community setting.

Royal School of Needlework

The Royal School of Needlework offers hand embroidery courses for all levels; conservation, restoration and repair of antique embroideries and creation of new commissions in their Embroidery Studio. It also offers a BA (Hons) Hand Embroidery validated by UCA, the only hand embroidery degree in Europe.

Rural Life Centre

The Rural Life Centre is a country life museum, run by a charitable trust, located within ten acres of field, woodland and barns. Its exhibits feature aspects of village life including rural crafts such as smithing, wheelwrighting, brick carving and charcoal burning.

West Street Potters

West Street Potters is an independently run membership-based organisation, set up to provide learning opportunities for people wanting to discover ceramics and clay. Members range from complete beginners through to semi-professionals and anyone interested in ceramics is welcome.

University for the Creative Arts

A hub of creativity, UCA Farnham has over 2,000 students studying a wide range of creative arts subjects including fine art, photography, textiles, crafts, film, graphics, journalism and advertising.

Steering Group

Farnham Craft Town celebrates the role of craft at the heart of the town and the following organisations sit on a steering group which aims to embed craft into the everyday life of the town by encouraging new audiences and visitors to Farnham; supporting a vibrant marketplace of craft-makers and promoting the role of craft in improving health and well-being:

Crafts Study Centre

Farnham Maltings

Museum of Farnham

Farnham Pottery includes [318 Ceramics](#) , [Farnham Sculptors](#) , [Pugmill Bakehouse](#) and [West Street Potters](#)

[Farnham Town Council](#)

[New Ashgate Gallery](#)

[Surrey Cultural Services](#) includes [Adult Learning](#) , [Library](#) , [Heritage](#) and [Arts](#)

[University for the Creative Arts](#)

[Waverley Borough Council](#)

Other Craft organisations and venues in and around Farnham

The Sculpture Park

Established in 2003, the [Sculpture Park](#) specialises in the sale of 20th century modern and contemporary sculpture in a superb natural setting. It aims to boost the careers of some of the world's most talented artists in an environment that is sculpted and adapted to suit.

Watts Gallery and Watts Chapel

The [Watts Gallery](#) is dedicated to the work of the Victorian era painter and sculptor George Frederic Watts OM RA. With over 100 paintings and sculptures on permanent display, visitors can experience the Watts' collection in the historic galleries with its original decorative schemes.

The Surrey Guild of Craftsmen

[Surrey Guild of Craftsmen](#) members are selected professional craftsmen and designer makers of contemporary and traditional applied arts. Their work is distinguished by fine craftsmanship and innovative design.

Farnham Art Society

Records of an 'Art Club' in Farnham survive from the 1860s. In 1948, James Hockey formed the [Farnham Art Society](#) and arranged meetings and demonstrations as well as the high quality annual exhibition showing work from the prestigious membership. Among its membership of highly gifted amateur and professional artists, many are also members of the Wapping Group, the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolour, the Royal Institute of Oil Painters, the Society of Graphic Fine Art, the Society of Women Artists, the Pastel Society, the Society of Floral Painters , the Chartered Society of Designers and are Fellows of the Royal Society of Arts, keeping the standard of work exhibited at an annual exhibition to a high standard. A selection panel of professionals ensures the annual exhibition, held in the James Hockey & Foyer Galleries of the UCA, reflects the vitality and diverse ambitions of its membership. Around 4,000 visitors view the 400 paintings, ceramics and sculpture exhibited, giving them a great opportunity to access unique affordable art.