

## Hire Us - The English Civil War Society

We can present a spectacular weekend of Entertainment, Excitement, and Education as we portray your town while the English Civil War raged, when so many places endured battles and sieges, often changing hands more than once.

While this proposal relates to a major event, all of the components set out in this page can be customised to suit venues and situations of any size or budget. [We are very happy to discuss this with you.](#)



### **What we can bring to a Major Civil War Event**

The English Civil War Society can bring £250,000 worth of museum-quality costume, weaponry and equipment and up to 400 participants aiming to bring the 17th Century to life in your Town.

**Working with your local museum and library**, we can provide on-site static displays of weapons, armour, and costume for the months before and after the main event.

**Working with local schools.** A schools day can be as simple as a single costumed and knowledgeable member going into various classrooms throughout the day, with a boxful of artefacts. Often carried out in a light-hearted way, with real facts delivered in a manner appropriate to the age of the students in front of them, this is where history can really come to life in the classroom.

We can provide small teams of soldiers to tour the local schools at assembly times to present what we would be doing over the weekend, aiming to generate excitement and interest among the children which they would (inevitably) take back to their parents, together with information packs and leaflets.

We can also run a 'taster event' in advance of the main weekend. Such a taster could take many forms, and is typically done months before the main event, as a very small sample of what is to come. Used as a promotion tool for the event, and to gain greater support, it can add some flair and colour, as well as anticipation. It can be as simple as a single Living History tent, a few soldiers and an information booth, or perhaps it is provided as part of a larger event such as a march/carnival, where we have a small unit with drums and colours flying, the soldiers shouting the calls of the period. Alternatively, we can stage a regimental campsite where a unit is in garrison at your town for a weekend.

We can also stage a display in town on the Friday leading up to the weekend, providing extra publicity and awareness of what is to come. We have had a great response from spectators at other events to our 'Journey of the Soldier' display where we use costumed members to demonstrate how the 'Home Guard' of 1603 gradually transformed into the first incarnation of the British Redcoat by the end of the century – with the English Civil War and its aftermath playing a major role in this. Find out how a piece of cord, a stone, and some pottery became important developments in military technology.



We can stage a **torchlit parade** into the town during either Friday or Saturday evening, followed by a dramatic display of night-firing in the marketplace or other suitable site. Our firepower demonstrations during the daytime are impressive, but at night can look quite breathtaking, and would be an excellent way to encourage evening visitors to the town where they can sample the many pubs and eateries.

Each day of the weekend, we shall send out an infantry unit ('Regiment of Foote'), with Pikemen, Musketeers, Officer, Drums and Colours for an 'Exercise of Arms' as they provide a **full drill display** for spectators. The unit will go through its normal

manoeuvres, whilst a skilled and knowledgeable commentator from our group explains the actions, the weapons, and style of fighting.



Spectators will be able to see up close a **division of musketeers** volleying ('the Salvee' as it was known at the time), and be confronted with lines of levelled pikes aimed towards them. Although a small snapshot of how the soldiers operate, this will give an insight into many areas of life, clothing and 17th century technologies. The public will get a small taste of the battle spectacle later in the day – whilst the drill might show circa 10-20 musketeers firing, the battle could feature 10 times that number.

We also stage a **display of Artillery** each day, allowing the spectators to experience the full 'Furie of the Ordinance' from our 4 Pounder Drake Minions. Our Gunners will demonstrate how to load and fire the 'pieces' and bombard their enemies.



We can also present a **Display of Skill by the Cavalry** each day. 'The Horse' was arguably the decisive arm in the battles of the Civil War, and our Cavalrymen will demonstrate how they manoeuvre on a battlefield as well as showing their individual skills and prowess with the sword.



We would set up a 17th Century '**Local Tented Village**' with a host of townfolk demonstrating crafts and businesses of 1643. The ECWS civilian living history display is second to none. The artisans and historians from the membership are passionate about their crafts, and display close accuracy to the 17th century period. These members are entertainers, giving historical information where known, and a real tactile experience for the members of public.

Skills on display vary, ranging from needlework to schoolteacher, blacksmith to gentry, medicine to printmaking, with museum quality replica equipment (or sometimes authentic from period), being handled and used as it was 350 years ago.



We typically create a 'village street' with the tents, allowing the public to wander through, with the aim that there is something of interest for everyone there. It is not unusual for members of the public to end up talking to just one of our specialists for 20-30 minutes.

These skilled interpreters capture the whole period in their presentations, engage parents and children in conversations and demonstrations, as well as being committed to be open for business throughout the day. Both townsfolk and soldiers are available to 'help' visitors and their children complete 'Sir Marmaduke Rawdon's Quiz for Children'.



Alongside the 17th Century town, we would also provide a Military Camp to represent one of the Armies, which may be billeted in your Town overnight or even an occupying garrison holding your Town for King Charles or for John Pym (who was the Parliamentary leader in the House of Commons during 1643.)

A Military Living History display is excellent for garrison-type settings such as a castle or fort. There are simple open-ended soldier tents, with senior officers' tents as well as a

kitchen set out. The soldiers can be seen relaxing, playing games of the period, or gambling, as well as standing on guard and protecting the weaponry.

The public have a chance to try on armour, handle the weaponry, and see what a 17th soldier has to carry and live on, in comparison with the 'grandee' officers. Children especially are fascinated by this, and can easily be persuaded to get even more involved.....



### **The Battle for your Town**

The 'Finale' to each day's entertainment would be the staging by the English Civil War Society of 'The Great Battle'. We can stage a full scale battle raging in front of the spectators as 400 Musketeers, Pikemen, Artillery, and Cavalry come to blows on the Battlefield. The hour-long clash of arms provides an exciting conclusion to the day, leaving spectators impressed, satisfied, and a little more knowledgeable about the English Civil War and how it affected their town.





### **How the English Civil War Society can support the Event**

Early, varied and continuous promotion of the event is essential to its success and attendance. ECWS will assist fully in the event promotion, and would propose all channels are used for such promotion. There is a lot that can be done by groups to get the word out and its benefits will return.

### **Practical Assistance over the Weekend**

- Our members pitch the 'Living History' Campsites and set up the displays.
- We would plan for our main modern campsite to be kept away from members of the public: we manage the campsite ourselves and provide 24 hour monitoring and

management.

- We erect the safety barriers for our displays and provide our own ropes, fencing, and warning signs.
- We provide full Risk Assessments and Health and Safety Plans for our events.
- We ALWAYS clear up after ourselves and gather our litter.

### **The many benefit of staging a Civil War Weekend**

- The re-enactments have helped to promote the towns through bringing thousands of visitors to watch as the Civil War approaches.
- Visitors are encouraged to remain in your town through a timetable of events over each day covering, for example, 11.00am to 5.00pm
- The Civil War Events are proven crowd-pleasers. On Sunday July 7th 2013, Monkton Park in Chippenham was packed out as 5,000 spectators came to watch the Battle instead of staying at home to watch Andy Murray win the Wimbledon Men's Final!
- In order to maximise the potential spectator presence in your towns, the English Civil War Society can plan to add an extra display in the Saturday early evening, so that the town's pubs and restaurants have the opportunity to share in the additional customer numbers.
- The English Civil War is featured within the History Curriculum (Key Stage 3) for local schools). We could tour up to local schools in the days leading up to the 'Civil War' weekend, talking to the pupils about the Civil War and promoting the re-enactment to promise local schoolchildren and their families a weekend of education and entertainment.

**If you would like to take the opportunity to highlight the role of your town in a crucial period of British History, the English Civil War Society is ready to help.**

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