

ULTRA ACCESS

May Day

A Public/"Bank" Holiday in celebration of British Historical Culture

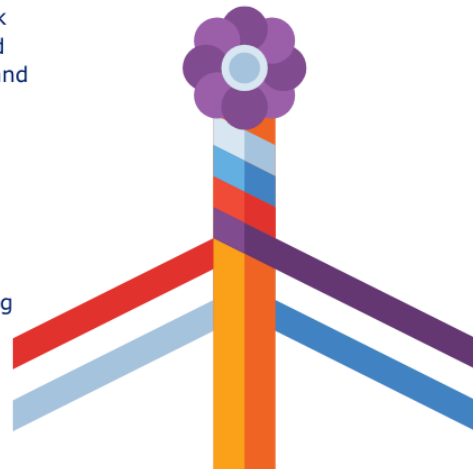
May Day, is a public holiday observed accurately on May 1st in Britain (although the actual "Bank Holiday" might move to the first Monday of the month instead, depending on the calendar cycle).

A relatively new public holiday, only being first being officially recognised in 1978 but its origins as a day of celebration dates back over 2000 years, beginning as a Pagan ritual. Falling (roughly) between the Spring Equinox and the Summer Solstice, early Britons and Celts were said to have celebrated it as their first day of Summer, calling it "Beltane". Romans in Britain also celebrated a similar day, which they called: "Floralia" - named after Flora, their Goddess of Flowers, Vegetation and Spring.

In Britain, many villages across the country have feasts and festivals, with traditional Morris and Maypole Dancing among other activities including picnics and lighthearted (and wholesome) competitions, like bobbing for apples, egg and spoon racing, and so on.

Morris Dancing: is primarily a traditional English folk dance, usually performed in mixed groups of men and women with finely choreographed stepping patterns and flamboyant costumes. It's unique in its usage of props, like bells, sticks and handkerchiefs, too.

The "**May Pole**" is a pole of approximately 15ft tall, that has many coloured ribbons attached to it, with dancers rotating around it using more choreographed fast-paced skipping patterns - then with each grabbing a strand, the dance is continued, with said ribbons being intertwined to - as part of the performance to form a laced pattern back around the pole which also concludes the dance.



2 extremely old and once widely-celebrated traditions, that forms part of our fantastic and ancient British Culture!

Dancing might not be everyones cup of tea, but its usually considered a great day out for the family at one of these country / village "May Day" festivals. **Good wholesome British family fun**, and you never know... they might have a selection of ice cold locally / homemade Cider to help get you in the mood for a good Morris Dance!

