



# A Guide to... researching local history

# Bookbite

## WHERE TO START

Your local library is a great place to start. Many have collections of local historical documents, newspaper articles and photographs. You might have to arrange to see them in advance, so it's worth ringing the library, or checking their website if you're online.

In addition, most large towns and local authorities have a record office or local studies library. They often publish their own guides to research, and store a wide range of original local documents, including:

- Local parish and government records
- Maps and estate papers
- Records of local businesses, societies and groups
- Legal records
- Diaries of individuals
- Census returns
- Visual and spoken history material
- Newspapers.

Your library or record office will also be able to tell you about local history societies, courses and publications.

## LOCAL HISTORY WEBSITES

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/localhistory/guide](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/localhistory/guide)

A storehouse of information of historical interest – from collieries, canals, docks, railways and shipping companies, to maps, tax assessments and court records.

[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

A collection of 10 million photographs, documents, plans and reports about the historical environment of England.

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeandCommunity](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeandCommunity)

Full of advice and links to do with family, local and house history research, useful local organisations, courses and much more.

[www.24hourmuseum.org.uk](http://www.24hourmuseum.org.uk)

News, listings and other information from over 3,000 museums and galleries in the UK. The website also has online trails on specific topics, which lead you to information, photographs and links.

## BOOKS ON LOCAL HISTORY

*Local History: A Handbook for Beginners* by Philip Riden

*Tracing the History of Your House: The Building, the People, the Past* by Nick Barratt

*How to Research Local History: Find out All About Your House, Village or Town* by Pamela Brooks

*Readers Digest Local History Detective: Explore Your Landscape, Your Community and Your Home* by Readers Digest.