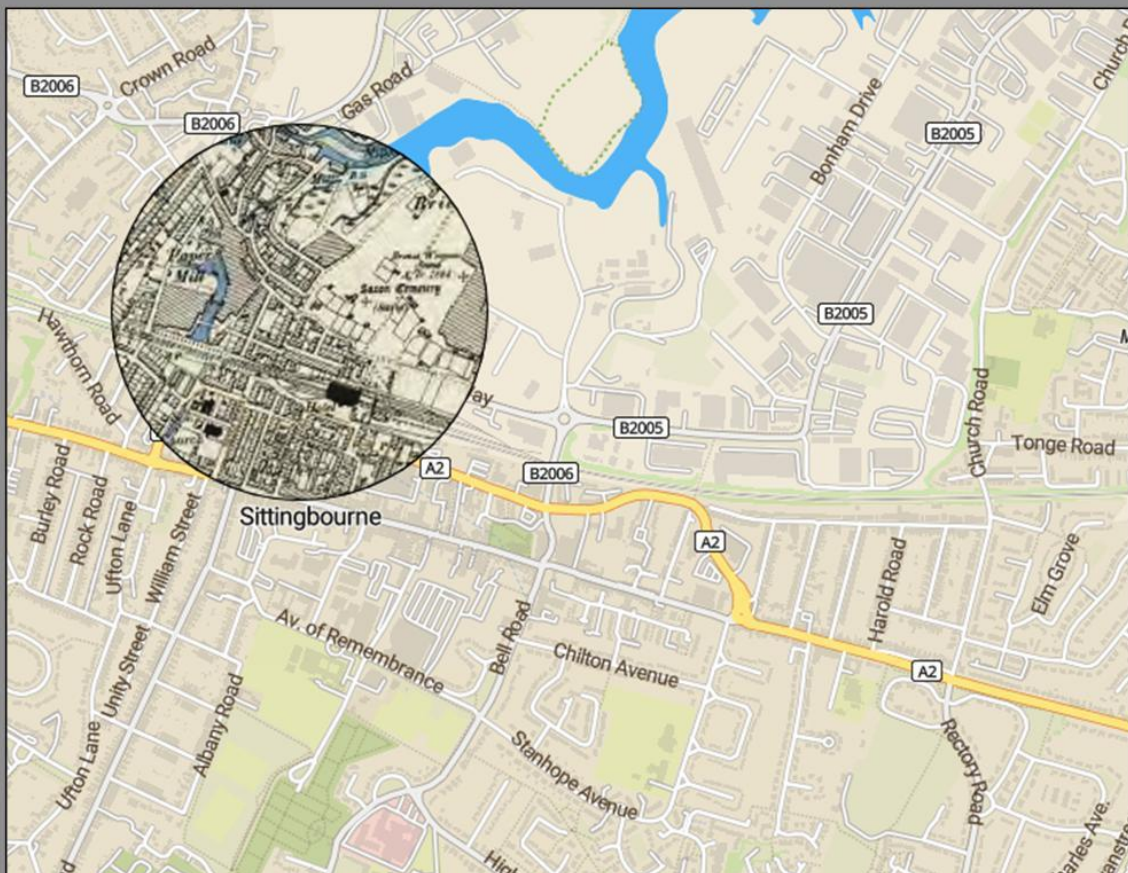




THE IAN COULSON ANNUAL BURSARY
FOR LOCAL HISTORY / ARCHAEOLOGY
IN KENT SCHOOLS

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INVESTIGATING THE HISTORY OF SITTINGBOURNE



A Local History Study for Key Stage 2
TEACHERS' GUIDE

INVESTIGATING THE HISTORY OF SITTINGBOURNE: A Local History Study for Key Stage 2

Eleanor Dawes

(edited by Andy Harmsworth)

These materials are based upon a local history study, supported by the Ian Coulson Bursary, which was developed at Minterne Junior School, Sittingbourne by Eleanor Dawes in 2021-2. They formed the basis of approximately 12 hours' work with Year 3 pupils inside and outside the classroom. The materials can be adapted for use with younger or older children and the general approach can be used by teachers in other schools to plan and resource a local history study based on their area.

These materials consist of:

- this Teacher's Guide
- a detailed Scheme of Work
- Lesson Resources

1. Aims and Objectives

For students to:

- find out about the history specific to their local town and develop a sense of belonging in their community
- understand how different aspects of national history are reflected in their locality
- investigate a range of different sources to help gather and examine information
- develop their questioning and communication skills
- identify differences and similarities between ways of life at different times in the past

2. Setting up a Local History Investigation

This section provides advice and guidance about how to plan a local history investigation and prepare classroom resources. It is intended mainly for student teachers, non-subject specialists and NQTs. With all the other things you have to do, make sure that you leave enough time for planning your investigation – probably at least a few months!

(a) Getting started

You need to understand from the start that there will not be a textbook to follow. You will need to find a range of suitable resources, use them to devise a sequence of learning activities for your children and then design appropriate tasks for them to demonstrate what they have learnt. Here are some useful introductory materials to get you started and generate some initial ideas:

- *Exploring Local History: A Practical Guide for Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools* (Geoff Timmins, 2018) contains detailed guidance about teaching approaches and using different types of sources as well as several case studies. Available from: [Exploring Local History | Local History Books | British Association For Local History Bookshop \(balh.org.uk\)](#)
- *Local History: Culture on Your Doorstep* (Curious Minds, 2015) contains ideas and practical activities for teaching local history and several case studies. Available as a free download from: [Local History: Culture on Your Doorstep | Teaching Resources \(tes.com\)](#)
- *Planning a Local History Study* (Andy Harmsworth, 2017) includes information about using different historical sources (the local environment, drawings and photographs, maps, newspapers, census returns etc) and a list of useful websites for local history in Kent. It is available as a free download from: [Ian Coulson Bursary | Canterbury Archaeological Trust \(canterburytrust.co.uk\)](#)
- The Historical Association: has a range of useful articles about teaching local history and case studies in primary schools. You will need to purchase membership to access most of them or you can purchase them individually as a non-member. [Local History / Primary / Historical Association](#)

(b) Research your local area

Carry out some research to start gathering some useful resources (WARNING – this could take several days!):

- conduct an internet search to find useful websites; social media platforms can often provide relevant information and photographs
- visit your local museum
- look through the local history section in your library; some libraries have a specialist local studies librarian who will have access to a range of materials including photographs, maps, newspapers and census returns.
- ask parents (and grandparents) for help; they might be able to provide a treasure trove of resources including photographs, newspaper cuttings and personal memories.
- walk round your local area (with a local historian if possible) to examine obviously historical buildings like a church or castle but also houses built at different times. The local environment might also contain blue plaques, street names and statues which can provide clues about local historical events, places or significant people
NOTE: a quick way of finding out if there are blue plaques in your locality is to put 'blue plaques near me' into Google.

It is useful at this stage to group your resources by category; this will help when you start putting your scheme of work together.

(c) Generate an overall 'BIG' enquiry question

Following your initial research try to devise an overall enquiry question for your local study. This can give shape and coherence to your scheme of work, tying together individual lessons into an unfolding investigation. It can also provide a starter/plenary for each lesson in which pupils can discuss what they have learnt so far and what they need to find out next. The overall enquiry question devised for this local study was *How much of Sittingbourne's past remains in the present?*

(d) Plan a sequence of lessons

Start planning your lessons by setting out a list of aims and objectives you would like the children to achieve by the end of the study to provide a clear purpose to the scheme of work.

Next, go through the different events, places and people, linking them to your learning aims and the overall 'big' question. This will also help you to know if there is enough relevant information and resources available for a specific place/figure to be part of your investigation. This step is vital as you will probably find that there will be some areas of your local history that, unfortunately, do not have enough appropriate resources for the children to use.

Once you have done this, you can begin organising your different resources into individual lessons, and then order them into a scheme of work. For example, you could investigate key historical events/periods in your local area and work through each one chronologically or you could group your lessons geographically and examine different parts of your local area in turn.

(e) Start planning your scheme of work

Now you can start outlining your scheme of work. Start with your lesson objectives and key questions for each lesson, each of which should contribute towards the overall 'big' enquiry question. Then you can add resources, learning activities and assessment tasks as you go.

Lesson	Learning objective	Key question
1	To ask historical questions about the local area	What makes a good historical question?
2	To find answers to historical questions about the local area	What remains of Sittingbourne's past are visible in the local area?
3	To place historical events in chronological order	What is the earliest event in Sittingbourne's history?
4	To describe changes over a period of time	How has Sittingbourne changed over time?
5	To identify similarities and differences between ways of life at different times	Were all the buildings in the High Street built at the same time?
6	To analyse sources	What did archaeologists discover at the Meads?

7	To discuss the relative importance of different aspects of the past	Which industry was the most important in Sittingbourne's history?
8	To review learning and communicate findings	How much of Sittingbourne's past remains in the present?

3. Supplementary notes for the Scheme of Work

The Scheme of Work for this local history study is detailed and clearly explained. These supplementary notes are to help you understand some aspects of it more clearly and/or to help you develop a similar local history study for your area:

(a) Differentiation

At Minterne School children are given a 'star rating' which is based upon their prior attainment and their English/ writing ability. Throughout the Scheme of Work the following abbreviations have been used for differentiated tasks:

LA	Lower ability	One / two star
MA	Middle ability	Two/three star
HA	Higher ability	Three / four star

(b) Lesson 1: Asking historical questions about the local area

The main activity for the first lesson is for pupils to examine old photographs of the local area and generate their own questions. The best places for sourcing photographs of your locality in the past are:

- a 'Google' search (or equivalent)
- local museum website,
- local company websites
- social media groups
- local photographers' webpages
- books in the local studies section of your local library
- Kent Photo Archive [Kent Photo Archive – Historic photographs of old Kent](#)
- The Francis Frith Collection [Francis Frith: Old Photos, Maps, Books and Gifts](#)

(c) Lesson 2: Finding visible remains of Sittingbourne's past - a guided walk

The main activity in Lesson 2 is a guided walk along the High Street led by a local historian. When setting up a local historical walk, it is important to consider:

- Are all the places of historical importance in one area? How long do you need to visit them? Are they all relevant to your local project? Do school staff have enough historical knowledge of the town?
- Does your area have a museum? If so, could a member of staff give a guided tour of the study location?
- If you are using a local history guide, you should consider:
 - How do they deliver the information? Make sure that they are briefed about the age and abilities of the children.
 - How long should each session be? It is important not to overload children with too much information.
 - How big should the groups be to allow maximum interaction between the guide and the children?

(c) Lesson 3: Placing events in chronological order

This lesson is an excellent way to follow-up the historical walk as children can link their learning and share their historical understanding through discussion. For this lesson, the children retrieve historical information from different sources such as maps, historical plaques and articles. Again, these were found on the local museum website, local company websites, social media groups and local photographers' webpages.

A useful extension activity to this task would be to ask children to place other history topics they have studied onto their timeline, particularly other cultures, so they can see what was happening in different places at the same time. This will enrich and deepen their historical knowledge and understanding.

(d) Lesson 4: Investigating change over time in the locality

In this lesson children used historical maps from different times to find out how their local area has changed. Your children could compare two paper maps on their desks or look at the maps on a whiteboard. There are several websites, however, which make this process much easier and more accessible by providing zoom and overlay functions. Two of these websites were used for this lesson:

- **KCC Heritage Maps**

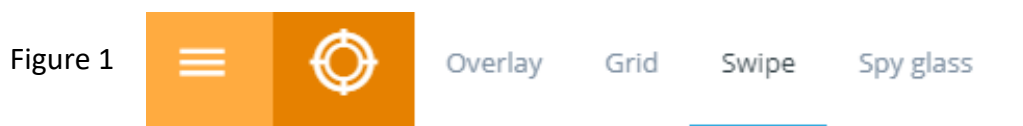
<https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.HeritageMaps.Web.Sites.Public/Default.aspx>

This site provides aerial photographs (taken in 2008, 1990 and 1946) and Ordnance Survey maps (dating back to the late 19th century) covering the whole of Kent. When you open the site click on the modern map and zoom in on your location or use the 'location search' function. Then to find

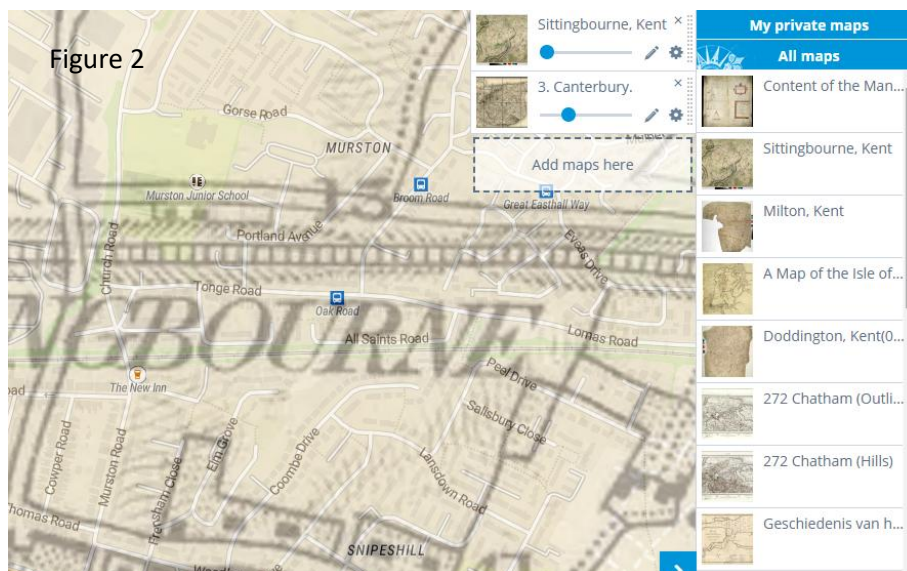
old maps of the area click on 'Historic map view' and for aerial photographs click on 'Map views'. You can zoom into the maps/photographs to observe detail and print them off as pdf files.

- **Georeferencer** georeferencer.com

This site contains historic maps from all over the world and powerful software tools to view them in different ways. When you open the 'Compare' section of the site click on the modern map and zoom in on your location or use the search function. A list of relevant historic maps will appear in 'All maps' on the right of the screen. To view each one simply click on it. You can also upload your own maps (as jpeg files) into the 'My private maps' area. Once you have selected your map you can then view it with the present-day map in different ways, by selecting options from the menu at the top (see Figure 1):



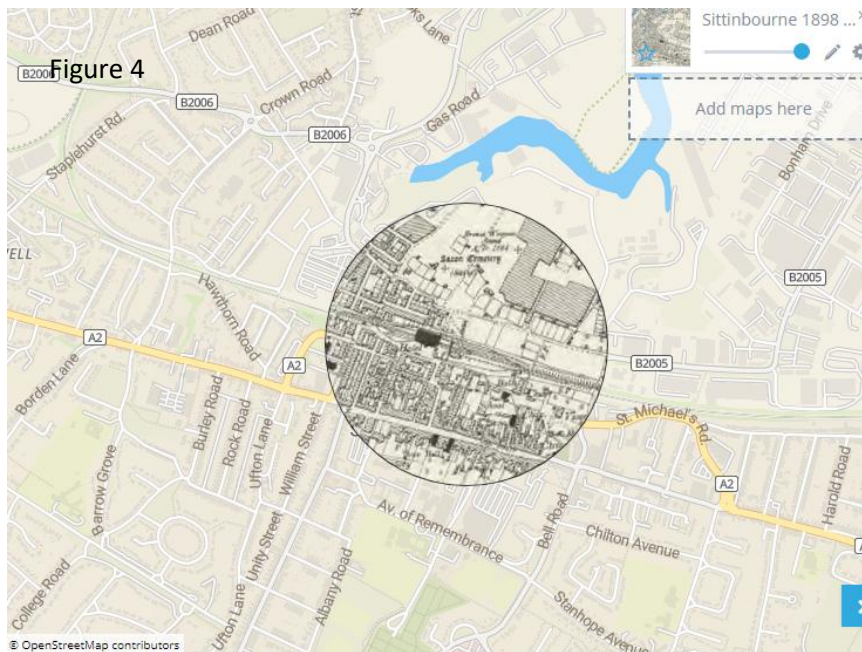
Using the 'Overlay' setting you can change the transparency of the map you have selected and overlay it on top of the current map. This is a useful tool for comparing the two maps (see Figure 2):



The 'swipe' function with its moveable slider can be used to overlay part of the old map on to the modern map. Again the transparency is adjustable. (See Figure 3 below)



The 'spy glass' function can be used to hover over the modern map and show what a small area of it was like in the older map. This provides a great opportunity for children to develop their inference skills and spend time exploring the map in detail. See Figure 4:

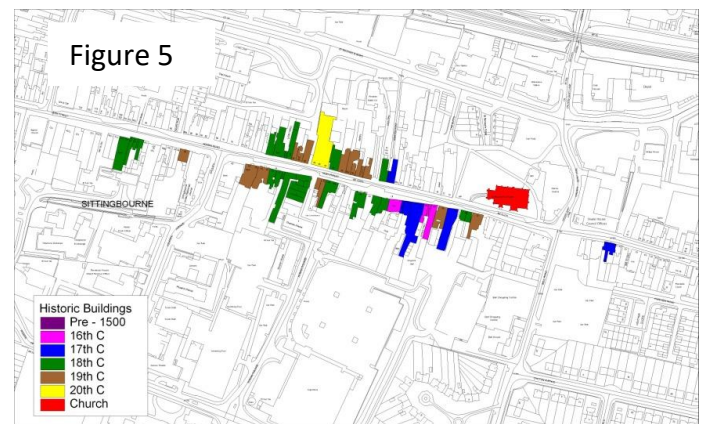


(e) Lesson 5: identifying similarities and differences between ways of life at different times

For this lesson, the children went back into the town centre to look at the different characteristics of buildings. The main objectives of this lesson were for children to gather information from different sources and develop their communication and reasoning skills. Their main task was to examine several buildings in the High Street and estimate how old they were.

When preparing the lesson it was important to locate where the different aged buildings were and factor in the amount of time the children were able to spend in the town. Using the map (Figure 5), we chose the best three buildings which covered a range of time periods. We were lucky enough to have a teacher at the school who had a wealth of knowledge about the main features of houses from different time periods and he was able to assist us with on creating the lesson resources. This website, however, has a useful guide to houses across different time periods:

<https://www.propertiesolvers.co.uk/blog/when-was-my-house-built/>



1:2392 Figure 6. Map of Sittingbourne showing historic buildings

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Kent County Council Science No. LA576708 July 28, 2003



(f) Lesson 6: What did archaeologists discover at the Meads?

This lesson focuses on an archaeological excavation at the Meads in Sittingbourne which was carried out in 2008. It was designed as an archaeological investigation in which the children had to work out what was found by the archaeologists. The main learning objective of the lesson was for children to observe and interpret detail from sources. Throughout the lesson they were given 'clues' which consisted of drawings, photographs and artefacts and, each time, were asked to develop their answer, giving reasons as the investigation unfolded.

Resources:

Handling artefacts in the classroom can be a great way for children to increase their engagement and contextualise their learning. Canterbury Archaeological Trust offer CAT Kits and Loan Boxes to schools which cover a range of time periods: <https://www.canterburytrust.co.uk/learning-about-the-past> Also contact your local museum.

(g) Lesson 7: Which industry was most important in Sittingbourne's history?

This lesson focussed on helping children to develop their inference and communication skills. They were given extracts from a transcript from the 1891 census (Figure 6) and Kelly's trade directory for 1899 (Figure 7). They had to use them to find out what different types of jobs were available in the local area over 100 years ago. Then they were given information about the two biggest industries in the local area over the last 150 years– brick making and paper making - and had to debate which one they felt had the most impact on the town - and why - using historical facts about the two industries.

Census returns and trade directories can be found online or in your Local Studies Library. A large collection of trade directories is available online on the University of Leicester website: [Historical Directories of England & Wales - Special Collections \(oclc.org\)](http://www.le.ac.uk/~le.ac/lehist/historical-directories-of-england-wales-special-collections-oclc.org)

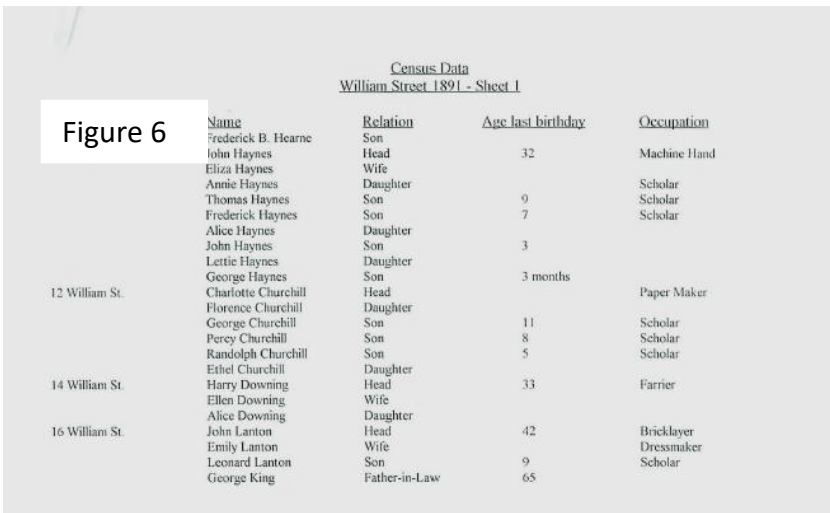
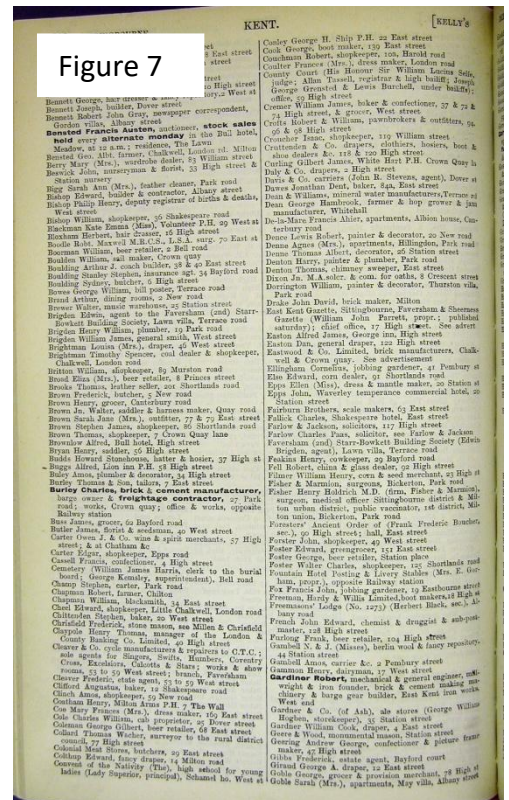


Figure 6 is a table of census data for William Street in 1891. The table has four columns: Name, Relation, Age last birthday, and Occupation. The data shows a mix of professions including Machine Hand, Scholar, Paper Maker, Farrier, Bricklayer, and Dressmaker.

Name	Relation	Age last birthday	Occupation
Frederick B. Hearne	Son	32	Machine Hand
John Haynes	Head		
Eliza Haynes	Wife		
Annie Haynes	Daughter		Scholar
Thomas Haynes	Son	7	Scholar
Frederick Haynes	Son	9	Scholar
Alice Haynes	Daughter		
John Haynes	Son	3	
Lettie Haynes	Daughter		
George Haynes	Son	3 months	
Charlotte Churchill	Head		Paper Maker
Florence Churchill	Daughter		
George Churchill	Son	11	Scholar
Percy Churchill	Son	8	Scholar
Randolph Churchill	Son	5	Scholar
Ethel Churchill	Daughter		
14 William St			
Harry Downing	Head	33	Farrier
Ellen Downing	Wife		
Alice Downing	Daughter		
16 William St			
John Lanton	Head	42	Bricklayer
Emily Lanton	Wife		Dressmaker
Leonard Lanton	Son	9	Scholar
George King	Father-in-Law	65	



(h) Lesson 7: How much of Sittingbourne's past remains in the present?

This lesson was to showcase children's learning and to provide teachers with a form of assessment. The children had to review their learning and chose an aspect of it to communicate to others. This year they created a class display to enter into a local competition but the end-product of the enquiry could be changed yearly based on the children's needs and abilities; for example they could create a mini museum, an annotated timeline, leaflets, posters, replica artefacts or a presentation to parents or other year groups.

Here are some examples of children's work:

