

Historic Environment research tools

The links below provide useful information for those researching the historical development of an area, place, space, landscape or building in Cornwall. The Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record is a good place to start considering which sources of information may be useful. Generally we will refer as many enquiries as we can to what is available via self service routes, partly because of our own limited resources but also because the potential amount of information is huge and doing this enables officers and communities to select what sort of information that might want, what geographic coverage and at what level of detail.

Local and regional information
<u>The Cornwall & Scilly Historic Environment Record</u> (HER) is the comprehensive and definitive record of the historic environment of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and includes information on all aspects of the past from the earliest traces of human occupation up to the present day. In addition to information on archaeological and historical sites and structures, the HER also incorporates collections of photographs (including aerial photos), maps, plans and surveys, and an extensive reference library.
Historic Cornwall provides further information on historic environment including reports which can be downloaded via the interactive mapping site. Historic Cornwall hosts the following individual websites:
The Cornwall & Scilly Urban Survey describes 19 historic towns including Medieval markets, ports and fishing harbours, administrative centres, industrial towns and holiday resorts, looking at their rich historical and archaeological legacy and how this has created a distinctive and special character for each. . The purpose of the Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey has been to support the process of change, seeking to ensure that in each case regeneration is based on a thorough understanding of the historic environment and builds upon the existing distinctive character of the place.
Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative provides reports on 50 industrial settlements including villages, ports and towns associated with Cornwall's 19th century industrial revolution, based on metalliferous mining, slate and granite quarrying, and china clay extraction.
The Access to Monuments (A2M) website is an online guide to accessible monuments in Cornwall, compiled by the Historic Environment service of Cornwall Council. It is aimed at all those with an interest in the countryside who wish to experience for themselves the wealth of the county's remarkable heritage of sites and monuments. Each site listed here is located on a public right of way or is sited in open-access land. Although some of the routes included here are bridleways, most are footpaths and access is restricted to walkers; most of the sites can only be reached by people on foot.
Flying Past: The Cornwall and Scilly Mapping Project. Cornwall Council Historic Environment Service have interpreted and mapped the archaeology of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, from aerial photographs. The project transformed the amount of information known and the way it can be accessed by archaeologists and the general public. Historic and prehistoric sites and landscapes can be viewed interactively and an overview is given on this website.

The [Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site](#) comprises 10 distinct Cornish mining landscapes across the county. The substantial remains are a testimony to the contribution Cornwall and west Devon made to the Industrial Revolution in Britain and to the fundamental influence the area had on the mining world at large

[Historic Environment Data sheets](#)- The Historic Environment Service has prepared a data sheet per community network area outlining the characteristics of the historic environment and some useful sources of information. Each sheet then goes on to identify: missing evidence; threats to the historic environment; major heritage at risk; and planned or proposed projects.

The [Cornwall Record Office](#) is open for you to visit and explore your family history. It holds parish registers, Bishops Transcripts, probate records (wills, administrations and inventories), copies of the census returns, as well as thousands of other records for you to see. Particularly useful for your family history research are poor law records, deeds, leases, tithe maps and school admission registers. Prior to your visit it may be best to consult the [online catalogues](#) to check that what you require is available. Many of the documents at the Record Office can be copied.

The [Cornish Studies Library](#) is the only public library with professional librarians and staff who specialise solely in helping those who are studying Cornwall. It holds a wide ranging collection covering all subjects from mining to modern art, poetry to prehistory, and family history to farming

There are 145 [Conservation Areas in Cornwall](#) covering 4070 hectares of land. You can follow the links on the Cornwall Council website to access lists of these areas and online mapping. Local Authorities are encouraged to produce Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plan for each of their Conservation Areas. Link to the [Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans page](#) to view all those produced to date. Further guidance on assessing historic areas can be found on the [English Heritage webpages](#)

Cornwall's Historic Environment Service pioneered the methodology for [Historic Landscape Characterisation](#) (HLC), undertaking the first countywide characterisation in 1994. Characterisation continues to be fundamental to our interpretation and presentation of the historic environment. It allows the historic dimension of the whole landscape to be fully considered and provides a readily understood context for the surviving archaeological remains. The Historic Landscape Character mapping and associated texts are available to browse and download (PDF) via the Council's interactive [mapping site](#) under the 'Landscape Assessment' option.

[Historic Maps of Cornwall](#) may be viewed at the Cornwall Record Office and the Cornwall Council Historic Environment Record or can also be viewed through the internal Cornwall Council Intranet pages. Otherwise there are [commercial companies](#) which can provide a commercial service.

The [Historic Cornwall Advisory Group](#) provides a forum for Cornwall Council's Historic Environment Service and Historic Collections (archives, historic library and museum collections) to inform heritage partners of their work. It also provides an opportunity for partners to provide feedback and advice and for them to inform the Council of their own work. [See reports](#)

The Cornwall Council website provides detailed guidance on [Energy Conservation in Historic Buildings](#). The historic environment is a finite and non-renewable environmental resource in its own right; not only in terms of the

embodied energy but also in terms of local identity and sense of place. Traditional methods of construction and land management are often sustainable, though often incorrectly seen as inefficient. The pages on the website provide useful guidance and link to a number of websites providing further advice.

Over the last ten years [Heritage regeneration schemes](#) worth over £73m have transformed Cornish towns, helping to strengthen the self image of communities, recreate viable, attractive places; encourage sustained inward investment; lever in significant amounts of capital and sustain and create local jobs. This page links to individual reports.

[Curriculum Kernewek, the Religious Education syllabus for Cornish schools](#) has a helpful website with suggested activities, resources and timelines. The interactive map is still being developed but will focus strongly on prehistoric and early medieval sites, and the resources sections make good use of both the Flying Past and Access to Monuments websites (see above).

National websites

[English Heritage's National Heritage List for England \(NHLE\)](#) is the official database which provides access to up to date information on all nationally designated heritage assets- From this page you can:
Search to find out if something is designated
Report a [minor amendment](#) to an entry on the List
Apply for something to be designated using the online [listing and designation application form](#)
Cross search national records on the List with local records of England's historic sites on the [Heritage Gateway](#)
Use the [map- based search](#) for all statutory designations (listed buildings, scheduled monuments, historic gardens, wrecks etc)

[British History online](#) is a web-site with access to transcriptions of historic documents, historic maps and the Victoria County History

The [Heritage Gateway](#) is managed by English Heritage in partnership with [ALGAO](#) and [IHBC](#). The website provides access to local and national records on the historic environment including the following resources:
Local records from over 50% of England's Historic Environment Records (HERs)
National records from the [National Heritage List for England](#) including listed buildings and scheduled monuments
The National Record of the Historic Environment ([PastScape](#))
Records from the National Trust Historic Buildings Sites and Monuments Record
Photographs of listed buildings ([Images of England](#))
Historic photographs of England (Viewfinder)
The National Monuments Record Excavation Index
Information of historic parks, gardens and historic landscapes ([Parks & Gardens UK](#))
Designation Decision Records

[MAGIC](#) was the first web-based interactive map service to bring together environmental information from across government. It contains datasets from a wide range of bodies including Defra, Forestry Commission, Natural England, RSPB and National Trust

The [Portable Antiquities Scheme](#) is a government funded project to encourage the voluntary recording of archaeological objects found by members of the public in England and Wales. Every year many thousands of objects are

discovered, many of these by metal-detector users, but also by people whilst out walking, gardening or going about their daily work. Such discoveries offer an important source for understanding our past.

There are a number of **character assessment toolkits** which provide a basis on which communities can assess the character of their areas. An excellent example is that prepared by [Oxford City Council](#). The downloadable survey tools can be adapted to suit your purpose.

[HELM \(Historic Environment Local Management\)](#) provides accessible information, training and guidance to decision makers in local authorities, regional agencies and national organisations whose actions affect the historic environment. The HELM programme was set up by English Heritage in 2004 with the aim of working with key partners to provide the tools to manage change in the historic environment with increased skill and confidence. The HELM website contains the latest [English Heritage publications](#), information on [Heritage Protection Reform](#), details of [HELM training events](#), useful web links and news. There is a searchable databases of [good practice case studies](#).

The Joint Committee of the National Amenity Societies (JCNAS), has launched a free public information service called **[Heritage Help](#)**. This brings together for the first time the expertise offered by heritage organisations to offer support on saving and caring for heritage resources. This includes information on protection and planning (helps you to find out about designation, the planning system and how you can get involved), caring and conserving (including information on finance and grant aid, how to look after heritage assets and how to learn more) and Heritage organisations (listing individual organizations with links to their websites)