

**#ConnectMe**

# **A Place-Based Resource**

**Designed to allow  
you to fully CONNECT  
with your place**



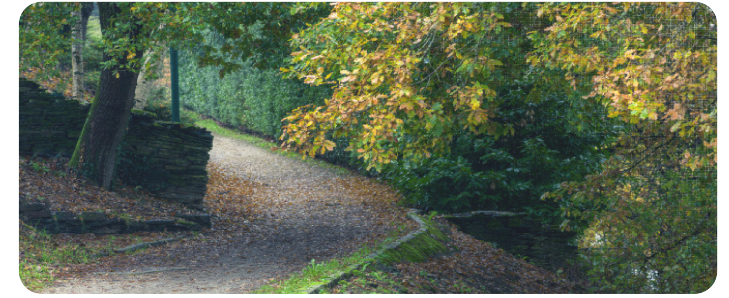
[www.interwovenproductions.com](http://www.interwovenproductions.com)

**For Ages 13 - Adult**

An Interwoven Productions CIC Resource



Every street, every house, flat or maisonette, every tree,  
stream or park – ANY place at all – has a story to tell.  
You've just got to know how to SEE it.

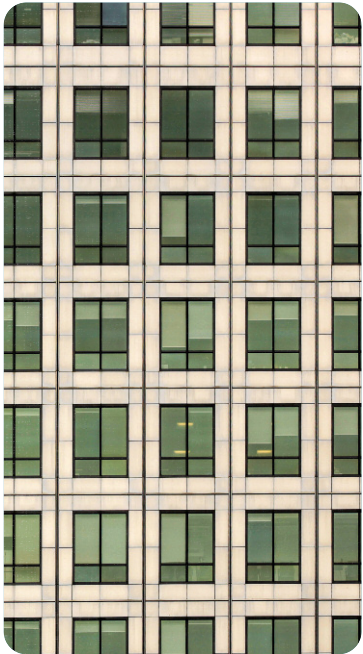


## Why is it important to know the story of your place?

Even if studying history leaves you cold there is a reason to uncover the history of your very own place. And that reason is **CONNECTION**. Exploring your place connects you to the people you share it with; connects you to other people in other places who share aspects of it; connects you with the factors that shaped it; connects you to a vision of how it could be in the future. Without connection there's no caring,

no investment, no community. So we invite you to join the **#ConnectMe** campaign. Each of us exploring and celebrating our own place and using that celebration to connect with others. One interconnected world!

We're going to take you through 3 simple steps to uncover the truth of your very own place and, through that, to find connection – wherever you are!



## THREE SIMPLE STEPS TO TELLING THE STORY OF YOUR PLACE

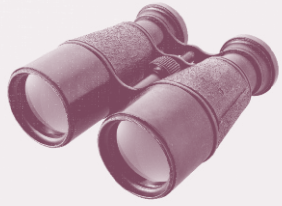
Seeing  
Differently

Getting  
Creative

### Share And Connect

Every street has got a story so let's use those stories to find and connect with each other





## SEEING DIFFERENTLY

**Normally, the first step in uncovering the history of your home would be an internet search but we're going to encourage you away from the screen for a while to take a fresh look at your place. To see it with new, enquiring eyes. You can do this from indoors using the best window view that you have or, better still, from outside looking in.**



## Question

### What colour is it?

That may seem like a simplistic kind of question to ask about your home but actually it's a potential clue to real connection. For the most part builders will use local clay for bricks and stone for building. That is, they will find the nearest building materials so that they don't have to transport them too far. So the colour that you see most of in your area will be colour of the earth in your place. Iron, one of the commonest elements in the earth's crust, oxidises to a red or yellow colour so often bricks or stone are reddish or yellowish.

The distinctive red soils of Devon, for instance, have been created from the underlying geology – the New Red Sandstone. Once you know that, you know something else about your place... It has been here far longer than the buildings that stands upon it. That's the first rule of Seeing Differently. It's *interesting* to find out about buildings, particularly the building you live in. But it's *fascinating* to realise that the plot of land that your home sits on, has a history of not only hundreds of years but, in fact, hundreds of millions of years. That teaches us a little humility. Most of us know that our place on this planet, our patch of

landscape, precedes our lifetime or even the lifetime of the dwelling we live in. But it's good sometimes to stop and consider that your place, in fact, precedes humanity itself and will still be there when we have gone. It deserves a little respect!

It also provides lots of clues to understanding the story of your place. The bedrock may not be obvious in a built up area but it will have influenced many things about the building choices made. Not just the colour of the brick or stone but also style of architecture and settlement pattern.

So take a look out of the window, or stand on your street to see, really see. What colour is the soil in the gardens? What's the predominant building material, what colour is it? Does the soil colour match that of the buildings? If not, why might that be?

Ok, makes some notes, take some photos but hold off on the internet. We'll show you some resources where you can check your underlying geology but, first, there are a few more things to "See Differently" ...



## Question

### Can you see the sky? How much sky can you see?

This is going to depend on how built up your area is. It will also depend on the *topography* of your landscape. That is, the lie of the land. Is your landscape hilly or flat? This is important because it's a wonderful piece of connection.

The significant thing about topography is that, for the most part, it does not change, even over thousands of years. In human terms it is a constant. Chances are when you walk up a hill in your place, the Neolithic you, 15<sup>th</sup> Century you or 19<sup>th</sup> Century you would have walked up

that **same incline**. This is extraordinary when you come to think of it! The physical relationship of human legs to incline is a constant throughout time. It's a **time-traveller sensation**.

So take another look at your place. Try to strip the modern buildings and tarmacadamed roads out of the view. Strip it back to the *topography*. When you can see that in your mind's eye, you'll be Seeing Differently. You will also be seeing back in time.

**One more question whilst you're Seeing Differently...**



## Question

Can you see water of any kind?

A sea, river, stream, or even water that is being managed like a pipe, a viaduct or a water tower?

In cities, many of our smaller streams have been culverted (channelled underground). However, topography can help with this too. Where there are hills, there are troughs or valleys too and this is where the water will run or will have run in the past. Older residents will often remember streams before they were managed and of course place/street names like "brook", "coombe", "stream", "pond" can help pinpoint them too.





## Where there is water, there is a story

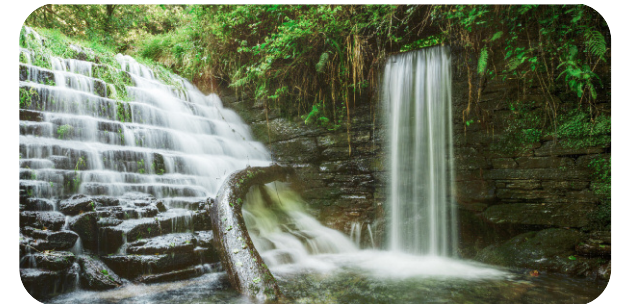
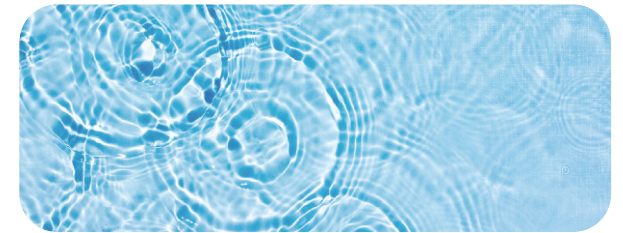
The human relationship with water is extremely rich. We divert it, dam it, use it to power mills and to create fishponds. We tame it to control flooding, pollute it and clean it again. Wherever there is a water course, no matter how tiny the trickle is now, there are stories to be told.

Make a note of anything you can see from your place that might indicate the presence of water including a very flat landscape – you may be on a floodplain even if you can't see the river from your place. The topography is the clue.

So, why are we starting by looking out from our homes instead of studying the building?

Because, rock, water and the shape of the land are all the essential ingredients of Place. They're the things we ALL have in common. It doesn't matter if you're in New York, Jaipur, Beijing or Scarborough. We all have a place on this one shared earth, this one planet surface and these are the things that connect us. The ground beneath our feet, the sky above our heads and the waters that flow through.

**We're all in this together!**





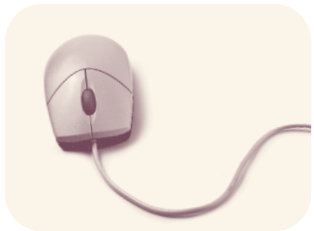
## Getting back to your computer – some useful online resources

### The bedrock of your place - Geology of Britain viewer

<https://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

If you zoom right in on your place (you can adjust the transparency to pinpoint the exact spot of your home) and then click – it will tell you not only the name of your bedrock and how old it is but also describe the environmental setting when it was first formed. For instance, my place, my piece of this earth's crust, is 252 – 299 million years old and was laid down by

rivers in a semi-arid desert! The fact that there were seasonal floods meant that the iron in the deposits oxidised and the desert was red. Hundreds of millions of years later that means that the local clays extracted here were red too – and so is my house! Red is the colour of my place and that connects me to all the other people on this planet where the same processes of deposition and oxidation (even if at different times) have made their place red too. Hello fellow reds!



## Topography and waterways Topographic map

<https://en-gb.topographic-map.com/maps/b9/England/>

Now do the same for your topography. Again you can zoom right in on your place. If you click on it you can see how many feet above sea-level you are, whether your street is part of a ridgeway or a floodplain. If you're at less than 50 feet above sea-level and you're near a watercourse, the chances are flooding will be part of the history of your place!

I can see that I live 112ft above sea level but also that I live on a ridgeway that is dictated by the underlying bedrock that I saw in the earlier map. I can also see how that ridgeway is connected to the broader landscape of my City and indeed of my County.

I can see where the natural valleys are. It's the first clue in fact that there used to be a stream at the bottom of my garden, which prompts me to ask, when did it dry up? The answer to that is part of the history of my home.



## Your building

Ok, so now that you have a little more of a sense of where and how your home is situated on this planet's surface and how that might impact on the history of your place, here's the part you've been waiting for – looking at the history of your building.

## When was it built? Using Maps

Of course, you may already have a sense of approximately how old it is from the architectural style. If your building is brand new and you know you're the first occupier you can use the below resource to check out what was there before. There are few places in the British landscape that don't show built history of some kind.



## The National Library of Scotland map site

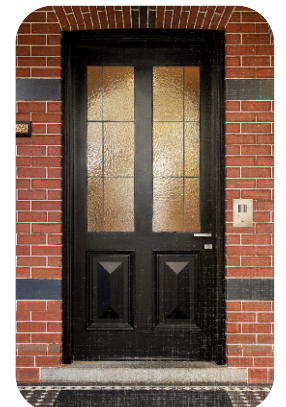
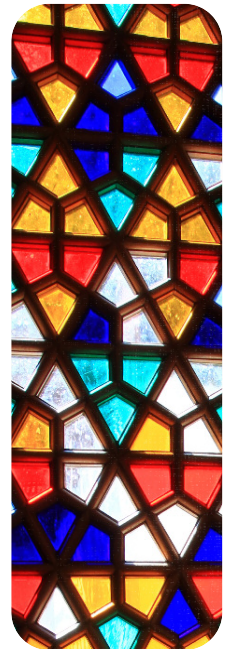
<https://maps.nls.uk/os/6inch-england-and-wales/>

This is a great resource if you live in Britain. Just by putting your street name in, you can see exactly what was right there 100 years or 50 years ago! Select the second option “As a **seamless zoomable overlay layer (1888-1913)** on modern Google and OS maps”. This lets you zoom in and out until you're sure that you are looking exactly at where you live.

**Note:** Under “Select a category” you can choose different maps from different periods. If you select “Great Britain” you'll see lots of Ordnance Survey (OS) maps of different ages. Type in your street name and then try these to pinpoint when your home first appears!

- OS Six Inch, 1888-1913
- OS 24 Inch, 1892-1914
- OS 1:25000, 1937-1961
- OS 1:10560, 1949-1969

If you switch to “England and Wales” under Select a Category, you'll find a different set of maps which might give you more information but it is the OS maps that will be most useful in pin-pointing exactly where your home is and what was there before.





**Look** for other features too – old maps are also great ways of seeing things that have now been built over. Look particularly for old streams that have now been culverted. Old quarry sites where stone or sand has been removed in the past will often be shown. Large houses that would have had gardens or “parkland” of their own. Often the house and the gardens have gone but the name of modern streets and parks will reflect these old features like “Quarry Lane” or “Park Road”.



### Heritage Gateway

If you discover a feature on an old map that refers to a historic site you can do a little more research here:-

[www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/)

This will provide lots of links to publications and other sources such as archaeological reports that mention your site.

### DCC Historic Environment Viewer

If you live in Devon you can also access the DCC Historic Environment Viewer (if you live elsewhere, there's likely to be a similar resource provided by your local authority) –

<http://map.devon.gov.uk/dccviewer/?bm=0SGreyscale&layers=Historic%20Environment;0;1&activeTab=Historic%20Environment&extent=210064;27188;338387;150088>

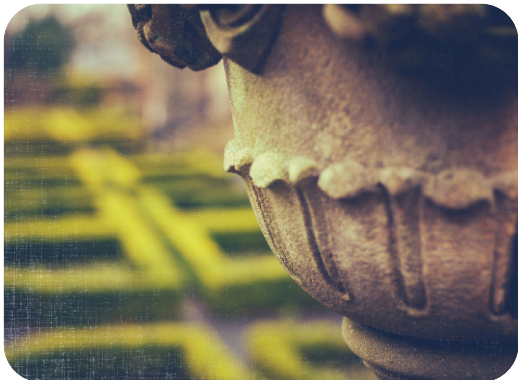
Again, you can find your specific address but it gives you oodles of overlay options. For historic research it's best to start with “Historic Environment” and check the boxes for the Historic Environment Record, Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings. These should then show up around your address. Just click on them and this will take you directly to the Heritage Gateway giving you more information.

### Tithe Maps (1840's)

[www.devon.gov.uk/historicenvironment/tithe-map/](http://www.devon.gov.uk/historicenvironment/tithe-map/)

(click the “select a parish” dropdown and scroll to “Exeter”) – the available Exeter parishes are listed there.

Most areas in Britain have now also digitised the Tithe Maps and their Apportionments. These are early Victorian records of landscapes that record, field by field, who the owners were and who occupied each plot. The maps show a code that relates to the Apportionment that holds all the detail. Fortunately for us, they have now digitised the Apportionments so that you can download them as spreadsheets and search them. These are big, cumbersome maps and finding your way around them can be tricky because there's no transparency layer to let you see the modern landscape. Also the maps can be patchily preserved but it can be great fun finding where your home was in the 1840s. Even if it was then just a field you can find out the field name and size and its owner who rented it.





## Using other documents

Getting at other documents might be trickier if you don't have access to genealogy databases such as *Ancestry* or *Find my Past* but if you don't have a subscription to one of these then you should be able to access the following records at your Local Heritage Centre. Otherwise, both sites have occasional "free days" so it's worth storing your questions up and keeping your eyes open.



## Census records

A census has been taken in the UK every ten years since 1841. This is a great way of tracking the occupation history of your home. Here are couple of things that it's useful to remember when searching Census records:-

- Street names are likely to have changed since these early census records and you may need to make like a detective to track your street down.
- There's a 100 year limit – so the 1921 census won't be available until 2021.
- The census captures who was in that house on that day, so may include people who don't normally live there or exclude individuals who are away.



## 1939 Register

At the outbreak of WWII the government undertook a survey of the population to help with managing the issue of ID cards, rationing and other wartime administration. This Register has now been digitised and is available via *Ancestry* or *Find my Past*.

## British Newspaper Archive

[www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/help/about](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/help/about)

In terms of free resources this is a great link – a completely searchable archive of 40 million newspaper pages since 1800.

Also of course, do check your own documentation – rent agreements, property deeds, family correspondence – all great historical resources.



## GET CREATIVE

From your researches then, you may well find that a particular time period leaps out at you. Maybe you've discovered that your home sits on or near the site of an early medieval abbey, or a Victorian brickworks. Maybe you've come across the name of someone who lived in your house or someone from the past who had an impact locally?

The next part of this process is about following your heart and letting your imagination have a little fun but also, importantly, using a link with an individual from the past to help you connect more deeply with your place.

### Let us explain:-

Firstly choose a time period that interests you and choose – or create – a character from that time. You're going to use that

character to “move around” the historic landscape of your place. Even if you don't end up creating a story or anything else from this, it's still a great way to re-experience your own landscape – through *Histori-goggles*!

If you are creating your character, decide now if they present as male or female. Give them an age. From now on, when you envisage your mind-map of your topography and watercourses you will put yourself behind the eyes of your character.

Go out for a walk if you can. Take your notes and maps with you if it helps but as you go imagine yourself dressed as and in the mindset of your character. Let them follow a stream or walk along a ridgeway or another distinctive topographical feature in your area.



## If you'd like to be a little more creative, try this:-

From your researches, construct (let your imagination fly!) the answers to the following questions:-

**What is their destination?**

**Why are they going there?**

**What can they see?**

**What is the vegetation like?**

**What buildings can they see?**

**Watercourses?**

**How are they feeling?**

**Happy? Tired? Hungry? Worried?**

**What is their journey like? Fun?**

**Leisurely? Are they struggling?**

**What is their dearest wish?**

**What is their greatest fear?**

In working towards answers to these questions are you completing two important functions.

**Firstly**, you are providing yourself with a clear mechanism, using your researches, to reconstruct a specific historic landscape; a landscape that has local significance to you.

**Secondly**, you are beginning to create a story...



## An Example – How To Wear *Histori-Goggles*

A little research into the history of Mincinglake Valley Park soon reveals the importance of St Katherine's Priory which was dissolved by Henry VIII in the Tudor Period. Since any period of change is potentially fascinating I chose that period to move my character through.

My next stage was to create a character and to try and walk in their footsteps, mentally "moving" them through the landscape of their time. I decided to work with Anne Carew, who I had read was a sub-Prioress, in the year 1538, when the Priory was dissolved.

Firstly I pulled together the landscape facts as far as I can know them:-

The Priory had a long history (near 400 years) of involvement with the local landscape. The Mincinglake Stream runs through the valley, directly past the Priory.

They dammed the Stream, "where the valley narrows considerably", probably to create a fish pond and then to provide power for a mill. The mill buildings would have been near to and parallel with the stream.

There is reference in 1796 to an orchard - "between these [mill] buildings and the dam is an orchard..." and we can expect that these were established in the Tudor period or earlier as a way of providing food for the Priory.

I don't know Anne's age at the time of dissolution so, for my purposes, I will make her 16 years old.

So, taking these things on board I adopted my *Histori-goggles* and took Anne Carew on a "walk" through the Mincinglake valley park by creating answers to the following questions:-





### What is her destination?

The Great Mill Pond

### Why is she going there?

She has been sent by the Prioress to sort out a problem with the miller. The Prioress is nervous and stressed and is convinced that everybody is trying to deceive her. Anne knows the miller and has no such concerns and no intention to speaking to him. She spends a lot of time in the orchards and by the pond and is just enjoying being there.

### What can she see? What is the vegetation like? What buildings can she see? Watercourses?

A six acre, tranquil mill pond, bordered by the mill itself and an orchard. There are willow trees because these like to be near water and the pond is very well established. The ground rises steadily to the North in open ground but is thickly wooded in the distance. There are large flocks of sheep, part of a thriving wool-cloth trade, in large fields to E and W.

### How is she feeling?

Happy? Tired?

Hungry? Worried?

She's glad to away from the Priory and the stressing Prioress and loves to spend time near the pond. She is worried. Her father is a local, wealthy woollen cloth merchant and paid a great deal of money to secure her a place at the Priory. Already so many other monasteries and priories have been dissolved and all their property shared out. Nobody knows what is going to happen.





**What is her journey like?**

**Fun? Leisurely?**

**Is she struggling?**

She's taking her time, dragging the time out as much as possible. She has the feeling that soon everything will change. That she won't be able to come here and enjoy the pond, the trees and the flowers. She had a dream last night that there was no longer any water and it was filled with filthy rubbish and teeming with rats. (Mincinglake was the City tip in 1950's and 60's). It terrified her and she wanted to come today and just see that everything was as it should be.

**What is her dearest wish?**

That she could be free to spend time near the water, to be its guardian.

**What is her greatest fear?**

That everything will change. That she'll have to leave this place. That no one will care for the pond or the fish or the wildfowl.



So you see how it goes. This is the beginning of a story. You may not choose to do anything else with your story or your character but by putting yourself in their mindset, thinking about how they would be dressed, how they would wear their hair and by moving them through your place, you allowed your imagination to greatly enrich your documentary research.

You may well also have created a drawing of your character, or a costume for them. You may have drawn a reconstruction of your place or created a play or story based on your research. If you've been moved to do this then we'd love to see it.





## SHARE AND CONNECT

You are not obliged to share anything that you've discovered or created of course but as we said at the beginning, a large part of the joy of this process is the potential for CONNECTION.

By reaching out and sharing your Place with others on this one shared earth, you will find others who have made similar connections, either in time period, theme or environmental factors like local geology or topography.

## HERE'S HOW TO SHARE History research

If you've discovered some interesting facts or resources concerning your place then please do share it on this Group -

**#ConnectMe - Age 13 to Adult -  
Local History**

### Creative work

If you've created something new then please do share it here -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/237630870874390/>



These images were taken during Interwoven street celebrations. We don't expect you to hire actors in costume for your creative output from this Pack but if you're interested in scaling up – why not get in touch and we'll show you how.



Supported by



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