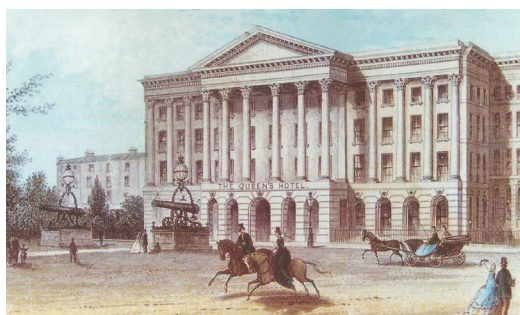
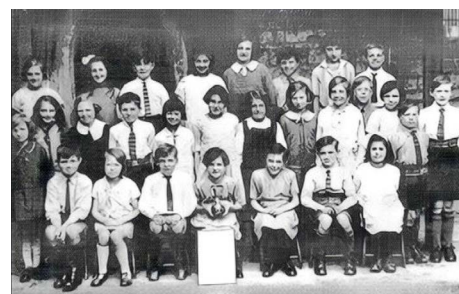
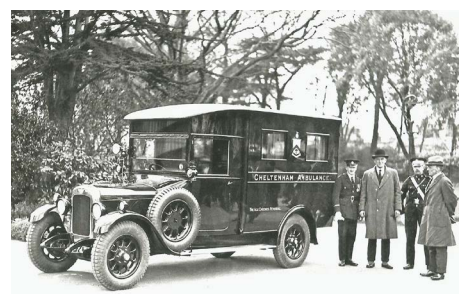


LOCAL HISTORY RESOURCES

FOR CHELTENHAM PRIMARY SCHOOLS

BRINGING LOCAL HISTORY ALIVE



Cheltenham Local
History Society

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Dedication

In memory of Carolyn Greet (1941–2025)

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WELCOME

This free brochure has been produced by Cheltenham Local History Society for primary school teachers to support the development of topics within Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum. We hope you find it useful.

Local history holds a distinctive place in the school programme.

It has the potential to engage children in their learning through hands-on, collaborative, and creative activities that enable them to explore, record, and celebrate the heritage of their local community.

Through this process, children can make meaningful connections between the present day and the lives and experiences of people in the past.

It helps develop both their emotional literacy and their understanding of others, while also building stronger community relationships. Most importantly, it gives children a sense of belonging and care for the place where they live.

About Us

Cheltenham Local History Society, registered charity (no. 1056046), was founded in 1982. Its mission is to explore, record, and celebrate Cheltenham's heritage.

The Society offers a programme of talks, walks, and visits. Members also receive a journal and three newsletters each year, along with updates on local history events.

We are affiliated to Cheltenham Arts Council, and are members of the British Association for Local History, Gloucestershire Local History Association, and Friends of Gloucestershire Archives. Our membership stands at around 400, and the Mayor of Cheltenham is our President.

Get in Touch

To find out more, or to make comments about this brochure, please visit:
<https://cheltlocalhistory.org.uk>

Download further copies from: **<https://cheltlocalhistory.org.uk/schools>**

We look forward to hearing from you.



**Cheltenham Local
History Society**

WHAT LOCAL HISTORY CAN DO FOR YOU

Local history can:

- Delve into the past lives and experiences of people, set against local or national events.
- Track how towns, streets, and even individual buildings have evolved to meet changing needs.
- Retell the stories of individuals who lived and worked locally. This helps children understand how time brings change and how the modern world has developed.
- Bring the past alive in a personal and meaningful way.

Some Topics to Consider

Possible local history topics may include:

- My house through time – what came before, who built it, and the lives of former residents.
- A street through time.
- Local industries – agriculture, aerospace, carriage-making, quarrying, pharmaceuticals, hospitality, spa and wells, manufacturing, etc. and their impact on the community.
- The history of your school – its origins, notable teachers, subjects taught, the lives of pupils, and changes over time.
- Local landmarks and buildings – Leckhampton Hill, Cleeve Hill, the River Severn, churches, great houses, key buildings, and the events that occurred there.
- Famous visitors – statesmen, military leaders, artists, authors, actors, and musicians.
- Local characters.
- Transport – railways, canals, and roads – and how they transformed the area.
- War History – the impact of wars, including stories of local soldiers and wartime events.
- Shops and shopping – the history of shops, vanished trades, sources of food, and pre-decimal currency.

The range of subject matter is really only limited by our imagination.

Types of Resources

There are many resources to support the teaching of local history – some local, others regional or national.

These may include:

Books, maps, photographs, newspapers, property deeds, wills, museum collections, street and trade directories, websites, historic buildings and artefacts, research papers, TV and video programmes, guided walks, local memories and oral history, online teaching resources, census returns, and family history records.

Use this brochure to help you discover what is available.

Note: All of the following hyperlinks have been tested at the time of production. Do let us know if any fail, in which case please use your browser to search for the resource.



In the kitchen at Holst Victorian House, Cheltenham

CHELTENHAM LOCAL HISTORY RESOURCES

- **Cheltenham Local History Society:** Research journals and newsletters, local newspapers, street and trade directories, chronologies of life in Cheltenham (including sports and education), displays, walks, and useful links – all free to download. The Society also owns a large collection of historical photographs. <https://cheltlocalhistory.org.uk>
- **Leckhampton Local History Society:** Newsletters, research bulletins and articles, local and family history, walks, and other resources. <https://leckhamptonlhs.weebly.com>
- **Prestbury Local History Society:** Publications, free articles, newsletters, and a local archive. <https://prestburyhistory.com>
- **Swindon Village Society:** Research and local memories, maps, photographs, bulletins, and displays. <https://swindonparish.org.uk/?q=node/5>
- **Charlton Kings Local and Family History Society:** Research bulletins and a wide range of online resources. <https://charltonkings.org>
- **Pittville History Works:** The history of Pittville, information about past residents and their houses, architecture, a proposed zoo, and notable buildings. <https://pittvillehistory.org.uk>
- **Cheltenham Library:** Lending and reference materials. Library computers give free access to Ancestry, Findmypast, and the British Newspaper Archive. <https://gloslibraries.uk/library/cheltenham-library>
- **The Wilson (Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum):** School workshops using original artefacts to develop an understanding of timescales and bring history alive. <https://cheltenhammuseum.org.uk/learn>
- **Cheltenham Civic Society:** Blue Plaques map (notable people), Green Plaques map (events and places), and organises Cheltenham Heritage Open Days. <https://cheltcivicsoc.org>
- **Cheltenham South Town:** Illustrated history of shops and businesses in the Bath Road, Suffolks, and Tivoli areas, with a commentary on the general local history. <https://cheltenhamsouthtown.org.uk>
- **Cheltonia:** A street-by-street history of Cheltenham. <https://cheltonia.wordpress.com/about>
- **History of Hester's Way:** The detailed history of Hester's Way and Arle since their rural origins. <https://historyofhestersway.co.uk>
- **Holst Victorian House:** Gustav Holst's birthplace, with information about his life, family and music. See the piano on which he composed The Planets. The house has authentic interiors and activities for children. <https://holstvictorianhouse.org.uk>

- **Friends of Naunton Park:** Has a section on the history of Naunton Park.
<https://friendsofnauntonpark.org.uk>
- **Victoria County History:** Draft texts for Cheltenham and historical record transcriptions.
<https://www.history.ac.uk/research/victoria-county-history/counties-z/gloucestershire>
- **Britain on Film – The Cheltenham Spa Story:** A film tracing Cheltenham’s development using old pictures, cine film, and modern footage. <https://britainonfilm.co.uk>
- **Facebook Groups:** A useful source of old photos, maps and local memories (with adult supervision):
Days Gone By in Cheltenham
<https://facebook.com/groups/243104989178394>
Cheltenham Past and Present
<https://facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063602526665>
- **Cheltenham’s WW1 Battlefield Crosses Museum:** Preserves wooden battlefield grave-markers of Cheltenham soldiers and tells the story of how the 23 remaining crosses were rescued, with research contributed by students from Pittville School.
<https://cheltenham-battlefield-crosses.org>
- **Cheltenham College Archives:** Records of the College, Preparatory School, and the Cheltonian Society. <https://cheltenhamcollege.org>
- **Cheltenham Ladies’ College Archives:** Digital magazines from 1880 onwards, photographs, details of academic and sporting achievements, and the history of the College and its buildings. <https://digitalarchive.cheltladiescollege.org>
- **Dean Close School Archives:** The Dean Close Foundation Archive and Heritage Collection.
<https://deanclosefoundation.org.uk>
- **Pate’s Archives:** Artefacts and records from Cheltenham Grammar School (founded 1574), Pate’s Grammar School for Girls (1904), and the current mixed school (1986).
<https://community.patesgs.org/pages/archives>
- **Jet Age Museum:** Aviation history of Cheltenham and Gloucestershire. Group visits by appointment. <https://jetagemuseum.org>
- **Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway:** Heritage trains between Cheltenham Racecourse and Broadway, loco shed tours, a museum and displays.
<https://gwsr.com/your-visit/schools-groups>
- **Cheltenham Heritage Open Days:** Annual September festival with behind-the-scenes heritage visits. <https://cheltcivicsoc.org>
- **School Log Books:** Since 1862 state funded schools were required to keep a daily log book or diary. Your school administrator may know if these are available, or try Gloucestershire Archives. <https://catalogue.gloucestershire.gov.uk>
- **Britain’s Most Historic Towns (Channel 4, DVD):** In Cheltenham, Britain’s most Regency town, Alice Roberts attends a period society ball, investigates the rigid social hierarchy of the age and explores the Regency fondness for enemas.
<https://amazon.co.uk/Britains-Historic-Towns-Roberts-Channel/dp/B07CXBHXR>

GLOUCESTERSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY RESOURCES

- **Gloucestershire Archives:** The main repository for historic records, including maps, photographs, and school resources. Offers school access days. <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/learning-for-all/schools>
- **Gloucestershire Local History Association:** An umbrella group for county local history societies, with links to online resources. <https://gloshistory.org.uk>
- **GlosDocs:** Gloucestershire Local History Documents Online contains images and documents relating to Cheltenham and further afield. <https://glosdocs.org.uk>
- **Gloucestershire Family History Society:** Support for research into ancestors and community history. <https://gfhs.org.uk>
- **Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology:** Focuses on the history and remains of local industries. <https://gsia.org.uk>
- **Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society:** Hosts the Gazetteer of Cheltenham street names. <https://bgas.org.uk/resources/bgases-resources/cheltenham-gazetteer>
- **Gloucester Docks and Sharpness Canal:** Covers features of the docks and the 16 mile ship canal. <https://gloucesterdocks.me.uk>
- **Museum of Gloucester:** Roman origins, Dark Age and medieval development, and school sessions with loans boxes. <https://museumofgloucester.co.uk>
- **Corinium Museum, Cirencester:** Roman finds, school loans boxes, and workshops. Also runs events and workshops aimed at KS2 & KS3. <https://coriniummuseum.org>
- **Museum in the Park, Stroud:** 4,000+ objects, including dinosaur bones and historic artefacts, with a schools learning programme linked directly to classroom teaching. <https://museuminthepark.org.uk>
- **Chedworth Roman Villa:** Roman life in the Cotswolds. School visits with guided tours, artefact handling, and Roman games. <https://nationaltrust.org.uk/chedworth-roman-villa>
- **Crickley Hill:** Although little remains today, there's evidence of settlement from the Neolithic to the 5th century AD. <https://nationaltrust.org.uk/crickley-hill>
- **Belas Knap Long Barrow:** Neolithic burial site, excavated in the 1860s. Access is via a steep climb through woodland and fields. <https://english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/belas-knap-long-barrow>

- **National Waterways Museum, Gloucester:** Explores 200 years of canal history. Teachers visit free. The education coordinator will be happy to meet with you to discuss your school visit. <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk>
- **Winchcombe Museum:** Local history of this ancient Cotswold town. <https://winchcombemuseum.org.uk>
- **Dean Forest Railway:** Workshops, museum tours, and educational fact sheets covering KS1-3. <https://deanforestrailway.co.uk>
- **Dean Heritage Centre:** With five acres to explore, the centre offers a range of learning opportunities for active engagement, understanding and enjoyment of the Forest of Dean's unique history. <https://deanheritagecentre.org/education>
- **Tewkesbury Museum:** Discover Tewkesbury's rich and diverse history through a collection which ranges from Roman remains through to wartime austerity. <https://tewkesburymuseum.org>
- **The John Moore Museum, Tewkesbury:** an extensive and award winning education programme, providing museum workshops, outreach and loans focused on the Tudors & Stuarts, local history, geography, science (living things and habitats) and much more. <https://johnmooremuseum.org/education>

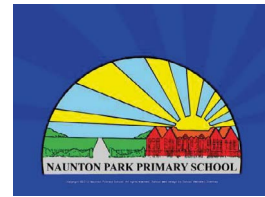


Detail from 2nd century Seasons Mosaic (summer) © Corinium Museum, Cirencester

OTHER LOCAL HISTORY RESOURCES

- **British Association for Local History:** Teacher guidance and classroom ideas. <https://balh.org.uk>
- **British Newspaper Archive:** Digitised newspapers (free in public libraries). <https://britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>
- **BBC Local History Trails:** Archived resources on industry, landscape, the village and the city, and Victorian Britain. <https://bbc.co.uk/history/trail>
- **BBC Legacies:** Archived case studies from across the UK. <https://bbc.co.uk/legacies>
- **BBC WW2 People's War:** 47,000 first-hand accounts and photographs from the Second World War. <https://bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar>
- **National Curriculum in England:** <https://gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study>
- **English Heritage:** Local Learning, a guide for anyone teaching or studying local history. <https://english-heritage.org.uk/learn>
- **The Historical Association:** Local history resources for KS2 and KS3. <https://history.org.uk/primary/categories/key-stage-2>
- **The National Archives, Discovery Section:** Teacher resources and online workshops. <https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/education>
- **National Planning Applications:** <https://planningportal.co.uk>
Also, **Local Planning portals** often have useful maps, sections on the history of the area to be developed, local archaeological finds etc. See <https://cheltenham.gov.uk/maps>
- **Ancestry and Findmypast:** The first census was in 1801 and one has been held every ten years, except for 1941 due to the Second World War. Only from 1841 was every occupant of each household included, with details of their age, occupation, and place of birth. Find these and many other records, including some street & trade directories, on <https://ancestry.co.uk> and <https://findmypast.co.uk> (free in public libraries).
- **Historic England:** Aerial photos of Cheltenham. Offers aerial photo packs and other resources for schools. <https://historicengland.org.uk/education/schools-resources>
- **National Library of Scotland:** Historic maps, including Cheltenham. <https://maps.nls.uk>
- **Know Your Place:** Old maps of Cheltenham, including the 1855 Town Survey, and other resources. <https://maps.bristol.gov.uk/kyp/?edition=glos>

A CASE STUDY – THE NAUNTON PARK SCHOOL PROJECT



In the summer terms of 2023 and 2024, Cheltenham Local History Society partnered with Naunton Park School to study how the Bath Road shopping area has changed over time.

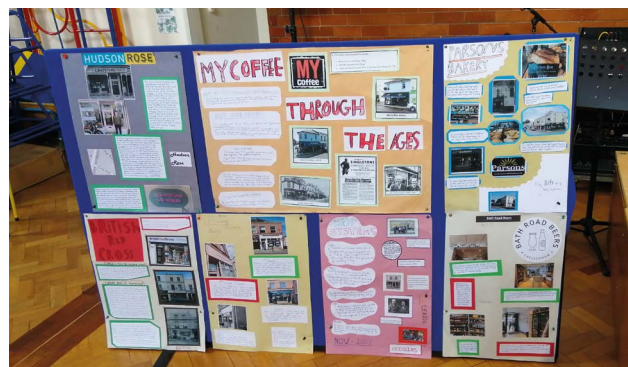
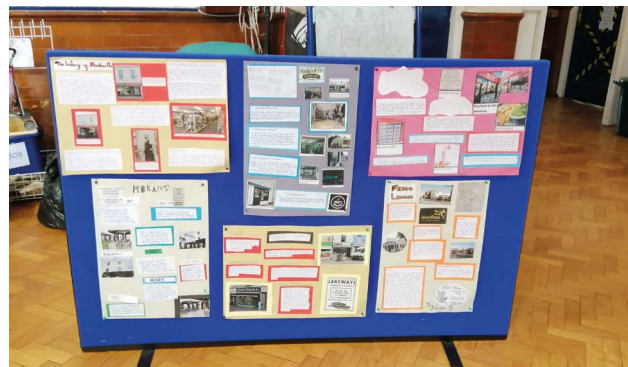
Following a preliminary meeting with teachers, a slideshow of vintage photographs, maps, and advertisements was presented to the Year 6 classes. Pupils were then asked to investigate the history of individual shops, as well as their current use.

Teacher Vicki Walls explains:

“As part of the KS2 History curriculum, children are required to carry out a local study. At Naunton Park, in collaboration with Cheltenham Local History Society, we decided to explore our local shopping street, Bath Road, to see how it has changed over time.

We began by looking at how the area evolved dramatically from a rural landscape to the vibrant urban place it is today. Then we considered shopping habits and how they have changed since Victorian times. Local residents came into school to share their memories, which the children loved, as it made the topic feel more real.

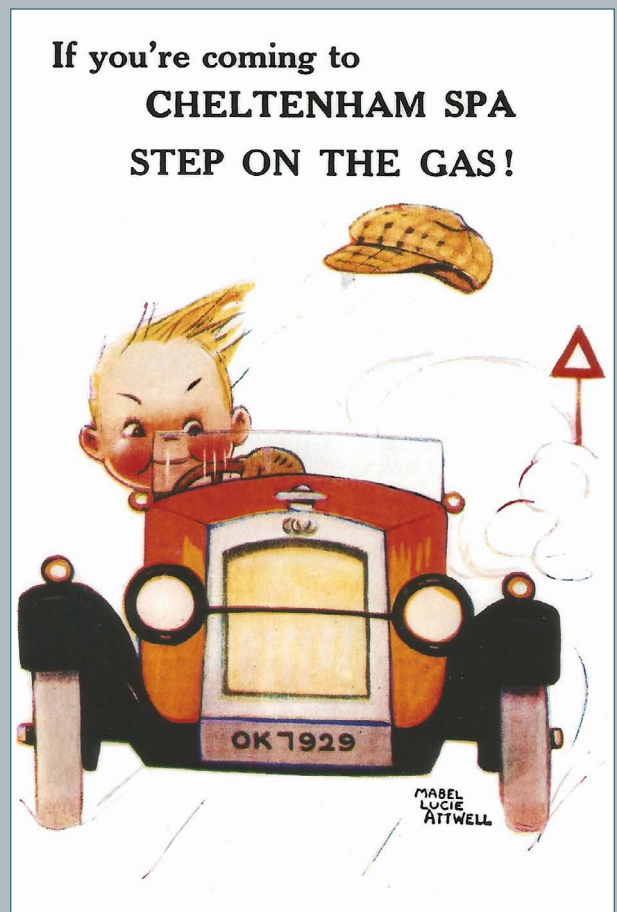
Each child researched a specific shop, using the Cheltenham South Town website, as well as by visiting and interviewing today’s shopkeepers. They created posters comparing the past with the present. It has been a fabulous topic that both children and staff thoroughly enjoyed – something clearly reflected in the quality of the children’s work and the knowledge they gained.”



LOCAL HISTORY RESOURCES FOR CHELTENHAM PRIMARY SCHOOLS



- Over 60 local history resources
- Ideas for classroom topics



- Types of teaching material available
- A real life case study



**Cheltenham Local
History Society**

Cheltenham Local History Society
Registered Charity: 1056046
<https://cheltlocalhistory.org.uk>