



Historic England

# Education

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## Heritage Schools Case Study

'What is special about our village?'

*A two day investigation into the local heritage of Crowcombe village in West Somerset.*

**Where:** Crowcombe CE VA Primary School, West Somerset

**Who:** Key Stage 2 Students

Crowcombe CE VA Primary School is a small village school in West Somerset with two vertically grouped classes in Key Stage Two. For this village study, the Year 4/5/6 class worked with LHEM Michael Gorely for two days to investigate the story of their village.

To begin day one, the children investigated historical maps of the village. They played a "Where's Wally?" game giving them the opportunity to look very closely at the features of the old maps. They then listed a set of similarities and differences between the old map and a modern map and were asked to record two "interesting" things that they noticed in the form of enquiry questions. Examples of which included: "Where did the villagers get their water from?" and "Was there ever a building in Broad Meadow?"

Later in the morning the children walked around the village, recording the listed buildings and also noticing unusual architectural features such as dovecotes, wells, gateposts. They recorded the names of the houses in the village with the plan to investigate whether the names related to their functions in the past.

The afternoon was spent investigating the 1901 census for the village. The children transcribed pages and attempted to find the answers to questions such as: "Were family sizes larger 100 years ago?", "What jobs did people do?", "How mobile was the population of Crowcombe?" and "What first names were popular 100 years ago?"

The second day began in Broad Meadow with Tony Roberts an archaeologist from Archeoscan. He worked with groups of children throughout the morning completing a geo-physical survey of the field to try to ascertain if the foundations of a mill remain under the surface. Meanwhile the rest of the children worked with Chris Jelley from Storywalks to create a storywalk for Crowcombe village. They added photographs and descriptions to the trail which can be accessed at [crowcombe.storywalks.info](http://crowcombe.storywalks.info) on a smartphone, enabling anyone to go on a guided heritage walk around the village.



#### Intended Outcomes:

- Children understand historical change and continuity in Crowcombe.
- Children use primary historical sources to research their local story.
- Children use knowledge acquired to produce their own online heritage trail.

#### What we did:

- Children investigated historical maps.
- Children undertook a heritage trail in the village acting as history 'detectives'.
- Children completed a geo-physical survey of a field in the village to assess whether a mill building had once been there.
- Children interrogated the 1901 census returns for Crowcombe village.

#### Challenges:

- It wasn't always easy to match existing houses to historic census returns.
- A wide age range and mixed ability class.
- Short period of time to input information into the Storywalks website.

#### Successes:

- Children were very motivated to find out about the village.
- Several children were able to discover the history of their own house.
- Children really enjoyed undertaking a real archaeological process and have greater understanding of how archaeologists work.

#### Resources and web links:

- The support of Historic England's Heritage Schools Programme was really appreciated in putting this workshop together. [www.historicengland.org.uk/heritageschools](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/heritageschools)
- Storywalks website: <https://crowcombe.storywalks.info>
- Archeoscan: <http://www.archeoscan.com/>

#### Next steps/extension activities:

- '[Enriching the List](#)' – children add images and information to Historic England's list of protected buildings.
- Children take parents on a heritage walk through the village.
- Children use [Commonwealth War Graves Commission](#) website to find out more about the men on the First World War memorial.