

# Explore the Past

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service

## Discovering House History at The Hive



[www.explorethepast.co.uk](http://www.explorethepast.co.uk)



 **worcestershire**  
county council

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## Discovering Your House History

Who lived in your house 100 years ago?

When was it built?

What was it used for?

Clues to the history of your home may be here at The Hive.

## Getting Started

Whilst tracing the exact age of your house from documentary sources can be very difficult, there are usually some sources available which will reveal some of the property's



history, as well as information about those that lived there.

Identifying a particular property amongst older records can be a challenge.

Remember that in some towns, street names and numbers have changed over the years. There also may have been changes to the town, city, county, or local authority boundaries over time.

You must establish some facts first – our records are indexed by parish, so you will need to know which one your property of interest is located within. It is then helpful to do some background reading about the local area, so that you know what to look out for in your research.

There are several books and resources about tracing the history of your property. Many of these can be found at The Hive, borrowed from your local library, or found online. Before you get started, have you been able to look at your own deeds? It could be useful to do so, if you can, and make a note of the information they contain.

## Maps and Plans



These are the best place to begin and can be used to see when your house first appears on maps and plans of the area. Bear in mind they may feature an earlier building on the same site! Large scale Ordnance Survey plans start in the 1880s. We may hold a tithe or enclosure plan for your parish; and the accompanying tithe apportionment record will tell you who owned and occupied the property. These typically date in the 1830s to the 1850s. We also have many maps that predate this, but coverage can vary.

An index of most of the maps we hold can be found on our website.

## 1910 Land Valuation Surveys

The 1910 Land Valuation Survey – sometimes known as the Lloyd George Domesday – was a self-reported nationwide assessment of properties, their value, and their purpose. Most landowners in England and Wales were required to fill these out, and we hold an extensive collection of these here.

## Census

Census records are normally used to trace people – but they can be used to trace all occupants of a particular property or address.

In the UK, population censuses have been taken every 10 years since 1801. However, names of individuals can only be found from 1841 onwards. Census records are released to the public 100 years from the date on which they occurred. Publicly available censuses currently range from 1841-1921.

We hold copies of Worcestershire census returns from 1841-1901 on microfilm, but the most convenient way to access this information is via online services such as Ancestry or Findmypast. These services can be accessed for free at any Worcestershire County Library, including The Hive.

The most recent census released was the 1921 census. We do **not** currently provide access to this census and is currently only available to access online through Findmypast. The originals can be consulted for free at The National Archives.

## Planning Applications



For properties in towns and cities and built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century, we may have relevant planning applications or similar administrative records. In rural areas they usually begin later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Bear in mind that many records were not organised perfectly, or did not survive before being archived, so coverage can vary.

## Photographs

The Worcestershire Photographic Survey contains over 80,000 photos taken around the county, plus thousands more elsewhere in our collections. These may feature your property, street, or local area. An index to these can be found on our website.

## Electoral Registers

Registers and poll books date back to the mid-19th century, listing all voters by address. The names of voters who lived in a particular property can be viewed through these. Digital copies of these records are available to view on Ancestry.

## Deeds

We may hold deeds relating to your house. These are often grouped into large bundles, and so finding a specific record can be difficult to locate or interpret.

## Historic Environment Record

This is a searchable electronic database linked to digital mapping of land in the county. This includes over 26,000 records. As well as holding information on listed buildings, it also contains information, photographs, building recording reports and plans relating to the many other historic houses, farms and other buildings in Worcestershire.

Questions about the Historic Environment Record, and archaeological queries should be directed towards the Archaeology Team, who can be reached via our website.

## Other Useful Sources

The great thing about archival research is that records can help in unexpected and unpredictable ways. Rate books, valuations and surveys might include the property; wills and probate inventories might mention it; perhaps sale particulars survive, from the old to the relatively recent. There might be documents that could help if your house belonged to an estate, the Church of England, a notable local family, or if it has been a school, chapel, or public house in the past.

Speak with a member of the team! Our archive staff are experts in WAAS' holdings and are always happy to help. Enquiries can be submitted on our website or come in and talk to us on the desk when we're open.



## Can't make it into the Archive?

If you are unable to come in to see our records in person, we might be able to do some research for you. Our team can carry out a wide range of research requests – just submit an enquiry online to find out what we can do for you.

## Take a look at our collection.

The catalogue to our full collection of records is currently split into two: across an online database, available on our website, and a physical index based here in The Hive.

Whilst these two ways to search our holdings do overlap, users should take a look at both for the **best results**.

## Need to take a copy home?

Our specialist digitisation team can reproduce records to an excellent standard and with high resolution images. Submit an enquiry on our website to discuss what you need digitising.

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## Useful Online Resources

[www.explorethepast.co.uk](http://www.explorethepast.co.uk) Our website, listing all of our available resources, including our online catalogue of records. You can also get in touch with us here.

<https://maps.nls.uk/os/> The National Library of Scotland hosts a practical, user-friendly resource which overlays historic editions of Ordnance Survey Plans onto a modern map of Great Britain. A great starting point.

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk) The website of the UK National Archives. TNA Discovery – a searchable database of the collections of most UK archives – and plenty of advice can be found here.



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## Where to find us?

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service

The Hive, Level 2

Sawmill Walk

The Butts

Worcester

WR1 3PD

No need to book, check our opening times at [www.explorethepast.co.uk](http://www.explorethepast.co.uk)

New visitors to the archive searchroom may need to register for an ARA Archives Card. This is a free, national scheme which permits entry to many local authority archives across the country.

Sign up at [www.archivescard.com](http://www.archivescard.com).

