**Developing a local history study**

As with previous curricula, the National Curriculum 2014 requires that schools undertake a local history study. Apart from the fact that the National Curriculum 2014 requires it, why should you do a local history study? There are many reasons:

* It requires pupils to generate questions as well as search for answers.
* Information is not going to be found neatly packaged in textbooks, it will come from talking to people, exploring the studied locality and examining documents such as old maps and photographs, census material, trade directories etc, so will use all of pupils’ blossoming enquiry skills.
* Pupils will work with adults other than their teachers for a real purpose.
* It can lead to some really imaginative and creative products.
* It gives children a sense of belonging to a particular community with its own unique past. There is even a chance that something completely new (or long forgotten) may be discovered about the locality or one of its past residents.
* For many children this will make history really come alive.

**Where to Start**

It is best to start with what is around you, so your own school or locality if either has any age to them at all are the best options. However, if there is little history for either of these you will need to find a suitable subject somewhere close. Note: the National Curriculum does not define what is meant by *local*, so as long as you can defend your choice to Ofsted, the studied place or places could be quite distant.

**Resourcing your school/ locality study**

The next step is to see what materials can support your study. If you are focussing on your school there may be old log books and photographs held at the school, or at Hampshire Records Office (<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/archives> ). If you are looking at the school’s locality, letters to parents and an approach to any local museums or history societies may be a source for reminiscences, photographs, maps, and video recordings about your town or village. If not, Hampshire Record Office should be your next port of call.

If your school population has a large number of pupils from black or minority ethnic groups, forces or traveller families you should bear this in mind when planning your local unit, both in terms of making sure the study is inclusive and in terms of resourcing it. Your local unit could be linked to a geographical study of whatever part of the world any sizeable group of pupil’s families originate. If you have forces pupils or military bases locally then why not contact one of the many military museums that Hampshire is home to for some background information about to them? For traveller children, Hampshire Record Office or Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) (<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/ema.htm> ) should be able to help.

**Activities you might try:**

* Use your IWB to overlay maps of different periods then compare and contrast.
* Spot the difference - using photographs of the locality being studied
* Town Trail – physically walk children round a planned route in the area you are studying, looking at street/area names (see below) and buildings to identify period features and relative ages of different buildings or areas (e.g. modern housing estates but much older town/village centre). Keep it active, look for clues and features you can explore, such as dates or other inscriptions carved into lintels etc. Record any questions for which the children want to find answers.
* Place name detective – what do street/area names tell you? These often relate to past events/significant people e.g. Balaclava Terrace relates to a battle from the Crimean War and therefore also links to Florence Nightingale. If you come across a local street or building with ‘Jubilee’ as part of its name, get pupils to research to which jubilee it refers, one of our current queen’s or Queen Victoria’s or a local one?

**Local History in the 2014 National Curriculum**

For key stage 1 the National Curriculum 2014 simply states that: *pupils should study significant historical events, people and places in their own locality,* which offers no clues as to how that might be achieved. We hope that the above has offered you some ideas to try.

For Key Stage 2 the new National Curriculum suggests some options to the traditional locality study as described above. For those of you who might want to pursue one of these, here are our comments and suggestions:

* *a depth study linked to one of the British areas of study*

Since the British areas of study are all pre-1066, this means studying, *in depth*, a significant Iron Age, Bronze Age, Stone Age, Roman or Saxon site (although the Vikings raided various places locally there are no sites featuring Viking remains in most of Southern England).

So, for the Stone Bronze and Iron Ages you might want to study Stonehenge (relatively local), or one of the many Iron Age hill forts dotted around Hampshire, of which Danebury probably offers the best developed, readily available resources and information. Your visit can be supported by the resources on the web site <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/countryside/danebury/discover-danebury.htm> which include:

* A short video showing what life was like during the Iron Age narrated by a re-enactor in authentic clothing.
* Three podcasts of stories set at Danebury which were created by storyteller Tim Laycock and children from Balksbury Junior and Wherwell Primary schools.
* Information about the hill fort, including a downloadable explorer sheet, created by children for children.
* All the resources needed for guided and self guided school visits to the site.

For those of you too distant from the Andover area, you might want to look at these resources with a view to adapting them for an Iron Age hill fort closer to your school.

Major Roman sites such as Silchester or the villa at Rockbourne near Fordingbridge, Portcheser (Roman fort) are possible options.

The Anglo-Saxons offer a possible local study for schools in and around the Meon Valley in southern Hampshire or on the Isle of Wight as Jutes settled in these areas as well as in Kent. Another study might revolve around Wessex and its development into the foremost Saxon kingdom by the end of the Saxon era.

The second option suggested in the new curriculum document is:

* *a study over time tracing how several aspects of national history are reflected in the locality (this can go beyond 1066)*

This is probably less difficult than it at first sounds. For example, those of you in the south of the county might look at aspects of local maritime history via local sites. The Mary Rose (in the Historic Dockyard) and Southsea Castle in Portsmouth reflect Tudor rivalries with France and Spain. The Victory (also in the Historic Dockyard in Portsmouth) continues this theme with Nelson defeating the French. In Southampton the Seacity Museum houses not just Titanic memorabilia but also traces the city’s story as a port and the people who arrived via it from Roman traders and Saxon settlers to Huguenot Protestants. Down in the New Forest, Bucklers Hard was the birthplace of many British naval vessels, including many of Admiral Nelson's fleet. During World War II, the village was used to build motor torpedo boats and the river was a base for hundreds of landing craft for the Normandy invasion.

In central and northern Hampshire you might study the history of aviation. The first powered flight in Britain happened in 1908 at Farnborough with Samuel Cody piloting. This was just three years after the Wright Brothers first ever powered flight. Even today Farnborough remains at the heart of aviation innovation. You could visit FAST museum (<http://www.airsciences.org.uk/> ). Central Hampshire was home to many early aviators and aircraft pioneers. Early airfields developed at Eastleigh and Hamble. The History Centre can give you some names etc. to follow up and Eastleigh Museum also has some information in their local studies collections. Other aviation links include the development of the Supermarine seaplane in Southampton by R J Mitchell. This was the fore-runner of wartime spitfires, and winner of the Schneider Trophy, an air race for seaplanes, three times in succession in the late 1920s early 1930s. You could arrange a visit to Solent Sky Museum (see (<http://solentskymuseum.org/> for more information). During WW2 many factories in and around Southampton built Spitfires and other aircraft. Also in WW2 the owner of Marwell Hall (before it became a zoo) allowed new and repaired aircraft to be stored in woodland surrounding the hall, where they would be hidden from enemy attack under the trees, while they awaited transport to where they would be based. Interestingly most of the ferrying of such aircraft was done by women, which could add interest to the study, can you trace the names of any women who did this important and surprising job? Some could be local with surviving family still in the area.

The third suggested option is:

* *a study of an aspect of history or a site dating from a period beyond 1066 that is significant in the locality.*

This option will probably suit those of you who are in schools where the town or village has (or had) a major building/ other feature or event from a period in the past eg: a Medieval manor, cathedral, or monastery, the site of a Civil War battle or siege, a Tudor fort or mansion, damage and court cases relating to the Swing Riots, a Victorian workhouse, canal or railway or somewhere that was a target for German bombing and was evacuated during WW2. That would give you your focus period *and* area of study. As there will not be time to cover the entire history of any period, you must base your focus on what you have by way of major significance in the area. So if there was once a Victorian workhouse in your locality (and there were quite a lot in Hampshire) then sensibly your focus would be on the social history of that period. If your school is in Eastleigh, the arrival of the railway and the town’s expansion would seem to be the obvious choice etc.

**Some historical sources you could use:**

Selected extracts of materials concerning the losses of property etc. by local Royalists during the Civil War – from Hampshire Record Office.

Selected extracts from **official documentation from courts** e.g. for trial of Swing Rioters (the History Curriculum Centre can offer some selected items, otherwise contact Hampshire Record Office).

**Construction plans**: e.g. for the construction of workhouses, canals or railways, contact Hampshire Record Office.

**O.S maps**: If you are in a town, try to get a copy of a 25” to the mile map published between 1855 and 1895. These provide a wealth of detail right down to street furniture such as post boxes. Copies are available from Hampshire Record Office and main libraries.

**Street directories**: These were the Victorian equivalent of the classified telephone directories. Trades people and local worthies could pay a small sum for inclusion in the street directory which was regularly updated. Most contained a list of the important people in a town or village, a list of shopkeepers, advertisements and information about the post service, and times of coaches and trains. Town directories often listed traders by streets and you can use this to track the way shopping areas have changed over time.

**Census returns**: The first census was in 1801 and one has been held every ten years since then, but only from 1851 was every occupant of every household with details of their age, occupation, and place of birth included. Copies can be obtained from the Hampshire Record Office and from Local Studies sections of main libraries.

**Parish registers:** These began in 1538 but few complete copies survive from this early period. From the 1750s onwards you have a good chance of finding a copy for your parish. Most are held by Hampshire Record Office. Remember that these records relate only to church members.