

# Know Your Place

A Bristol Heritage Framework Project

2015 - 2018







Contents	
Preface	3
Getting to Know Your Place	4
Understanding Place	6
Community participation	8
Place-based learning	10
Collaborations	12
Coverage and plaudits	18

Prepared by City Design Group, Planning Division, Place Directorate, Bristol City Council  
© City Design Group, 2015

Aerial photography © Blom Pictometry, 2012  
©Crown Copyright and database right 2014, Ordnance Survey 100023406

# Preface

**Know Your Place is the collaborative public information web-based resource for the historic environment in Bristol. Know Your Place is, and will continue to be, professionally managed, updated, and made freely available to all. Know Your Place is helping to ensure that the historic environment brings the greatest economic, social and cultural benefits to the people of Bristol.**

Since 2011, Know Your Place has been helping communities, researchers and developers to understand how Bristol’s unique neighbourhoods have developed. This understanding is contributing to a wider debate and informed decisions about how the city should develop in the future.

From the outset the strap line for the resource was ‘learning and sharing information about historic Bristol’. The 100s of contributions from members of the public to the site’s community layer and the wide use of the website in Bristol schools is testament to the achievement of this objective.

The numerous collaborations and partnerships that have resulted from the creation of Know Your Place are evidence of the recognition of the value of the site in connecting people to their past and in raising awareness of the relevance of heritage to the contemporary city and the challenges it faces.

The continuing success and enrichment of Know Your Place is being made possible through collaborative working between teams within the City Council and collaborations with external stakeholders.

**‘Bristol’s Know Your Place is an invaluable resource for the NPN residents’ planning groups and individuals and is the envy of both professionals and neighbourhood communities outside the Bristol area.’**

*Alison Bromilow, Neighbourhood Planning Network*



1 Know Your Place launch event at the Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery, March 2011

2  
3

1 Know Your Place enables access to and direct comparison of a range of maps from Rocque's 1750 plan (right) to Blom's 2012 aerial view (left)

2 Other maps on the website include the 1880s Ordnance Survey map (left) and a 1946 RAF aerial view courtesy of Historic England (right)

# Getting to Know Your Place

Know Your Place was created in 2011. The web resource was the outcome of an English Heritage funded project that was a collaboration of historic environment officers, IT specialists in the Geographic Information Services (GIS) team and community volunteers.

The aim of the project was to make as much information about the city's historic environment as possible available online. The key data to achieve this was the Historic Environment Record (HER) managed and maintained by the City Design Group. In addition primary records from the City Archives were added where these had been, or could easily be, digitised and spatially located.

In addition to the city council's existing data the concept was to enhance this information through crowdsourcing personal archives and images from members of the public to create a community layer.

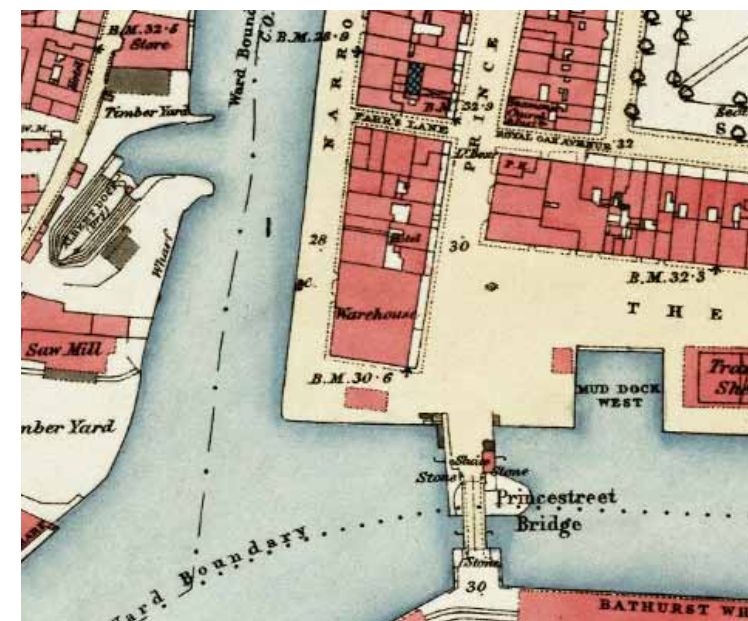
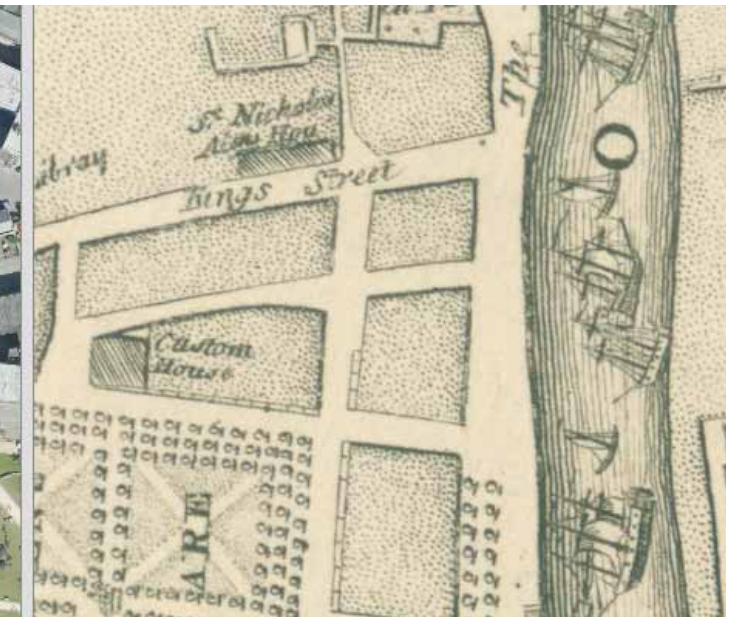
The resulting resource enables users to overlay and compare a vast amount of heritage information and historic maps as well as contribute new information through a simple online submission form.



## Historic Environment Records

Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use

*(Annex 2: Glossary, National Planning Policy Framework, Communities and Local Government, March 2012)*





- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | 1 Extract from Guildhall Heritage Statement, Fielden Clegg, Bradley Architects, 2015 (15/03532/F) |
| 2 | 2 Extract from 25 Portland Square Heritage Statement, O’Leary Goss Architects, 2015 (15/02941/F)  |

# Understanding place

Through its user friendly interface, Know Your Place is encouraging a greater interaction with heritage and contributing to the development of an understanding of place that is shared by communities, planners and developers.

This shared understanding is the first part of our four step process as defined in *Our Inherited City: Bristol Heritage Framework, 2015 - 2018*.

This approach is intended to demonstrate the relevance of heritage at all scales of development projects. It also aims to promote a project process that embeds a consideration of the historic environment within the design of a project.

## Towards an understanding of significance

Being able to overlay historic maps enables a rapid understanding of the development of a neighbourhood, street or individual building.

Additional information such as historic images add detail to this historic overview.

Layers from the Historic Environment Record (HER) include archaeological reports and monument descriptions and provide signposts to further reference collections to enable expanded and more detailed research.



## Heritage Statements

Know Your Place is frequently used by architects, developers and planning consultants to inform their development proposals.

Maps and images from the resource appear in Heritage Statements associated with planning applications of various scales.

2.0 Site History

2.3 Historic Development





c.1880s

c.1900s

1946

There have been no significant alterations to the site or surrounds, and this block of the city centre is beginning to take the shape in which it remains today.

The Guildhall Chambers annex to the north is now shown as included within the ownership of the main Guildhall Footprint.

This is the last detailed map that describes the city centre prior to the blitz. The map evidences the density of the castle park area prior to the bombing which levelled that district. The map also shows the formation of Colston Avenue to the west, reclaimed land after the floating harbour was culverted beneath the streets.

Records of the Luftwaffe map of Bristol show the Old Council House marked as a potential target due to its classification as "Kunstdenkmal" - an artistic or cultural monument. The building survived without significant damage, whilst the Guildhall sustained a direct hit.





The Site and Building

The 1828 Ashmead map shows a front block, similar in depth to the other buildings in the terrace, an extension to the rear, and a rear building on Chapter Street. This configuration alters over time as the maps opposite show.

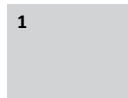
The extension linking the Portland Square block and the Chapter Street block is missing on the 1855 and 1874 Ashmead maps. It is entirely possible that the 1828 map, produced so close to the completion of the buildings around Portland Square, is a declaration of the development intent rather than an accurate record of exactly what was built.

The 1880s OS map shows the front and back buildings linked, a configuration confirmed by the 1900s OS map.

By the end of the 19C the building was in use as employee's residences for Jones & Co. By the early 20C the current full site coverage is recorded on a Goad plan with the premises occupied by The English Corrugating Paper Co. The building, occupied by this company, suffered fire damage in 1931, but survived the complete destruction of the adjoining nos. 22-24 during the Second World War. After the war the building was used as a furniture factory followed by a variety of other uses up to the present day. Such uses have included a floor coverings warehouse, a radio station, and accommodation for what was to become the City of Bristol College.

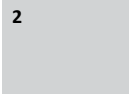




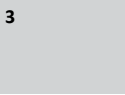
1 A layer of archive films from the Bristol Record Office has been added to the website thanks to volunteers



1 An image of a group of five previously unrecorded limekilns uploaded to the site by a member of the public



2 The gun crew at Purdown in World War II from the Hartley Collection (image 21248). Thanks to readers of the Bristol Post several of these men have been identified



3 A flood scare post in St Werburgh's nominated for the Local List by a member of the public

# Community participation

## The Community Layer

The concept of a community layer and the crowdsourcing capability of Know Your Place has enriched our understanding of the city in many ways.

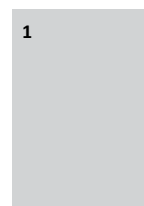
Within days of the site being launched people were adding information and images about the history of their neighbourhood to the map. Some of this was related to family history and personal memories while other images related to sites of historic interest that were previously unrecorded or their significance not understood.

As a result when it was decided to create a Local List of heritage assets that communities valued Know Your Place was adapted to accept public nominations to the this list.

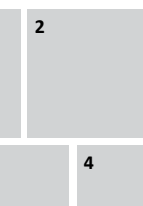
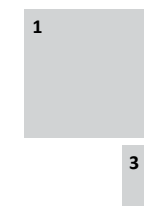
The advantage of being able to upload images and information has been used to enable people to volunteer to enhance the resource. Layers of archive material like the Hartley photographs from MShed and the Film Archives from the Record Office have developed on the site as a result of time and dedication of volunteers researching and adding information remotely.







1 Participants at the Our Place Westbury-on-Trym activity



1 Our Place projects enable communities to identify assets of value in their neighbourhood



2 The character mapping allows participants to quickly define the distinctiveness of local streets

3 and 4 The results are published in an Our Place document for wider consultation and can ultimately be used as an evidence base to support local policies

# Community participation

## Our Place Mapping Toolkit

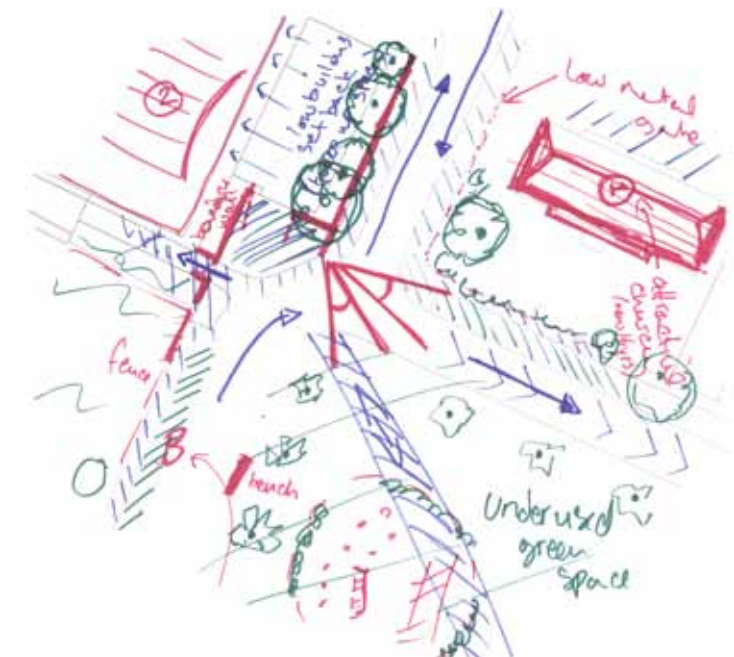
In addition to the online facility, City Design Group have developed a neighbourhood character mapping toolkit called Our Place. This has been created in partnership with Bristol based urban design specialists Context 4D. It has been devised to enable communities to identify and define the special characteristics and distinctiveness of their local areas.

The toolkit uses a mapping notation system based on the work of Kevin Lynch<sup>(1)</sup> and Gordon Cullen<sup>(2)</sup>. The toolkit has been used by communities in Westbury-on-Trym, Henleaze, St Pauls, Whitehall, Oldbury Court and Bishopston.

Our Place projects have proved to be an enjoyable activity for participants and can facilitate community engagement in wider neighbourhood planning activities.

The Our Place Westbury-on-Trym project led to the preparation and adoption in 2015 of a new Conservation Area Character Appraisal document. Other Our Place projects have been used to inform forthcoming community plans, proposals for public realm improvements or contributed to the baseline evidence for the Local Plan.

Valued buildings or features of the environment identified through an Our Place process can be submitted to the community layer of Know Your Place for consideration.



(1) Kevin Lynch was an American urban planner and author. He is known for his work on the perceptual form of urban environments and was an early proponent of mental mapping.

(2) Gordon Cullen was an influential English architect and urban designer who was a key motivator in the Townscape movement.



## Place-based learning

### Use in Bristol Schools

Know Your Place is used increasingly in schools to support learning within and outside the classroom. The new touchscreen enabled interface provides a powerful interactive and engaging learning resource that can be demonstrated by the teacher on the screen or used by pupils on class tablets.

Creative lesson plans have successfully embedded the use of the resource for a wide range of learning objectives. These go beyond local history and geography studies to include the development of key skills such as literacy and numeracy.

The promotion of Know Your Place by Historic England's Heritage Schools initiative has drawn the attention of primary and secondary education providers. It is increasingly recognised as an important resource for place-based learning and the creation of the Bristol Curriculum as proposed by Bristol City Council's Culture Team.



**'I used know your place for a local study of the Oldbury Court Council estate, which, although it was only built in the late 1940s, the children were fascinated with as it is their home. We used the old maps to compare with the current map and looked for similarities in all of them such as the road and two old bungalows next to the school, and the shape of the field boundaries.'**

**We then went out on a walk of the local area and it was on this walk we used the photos uploaded to the Know Your Place site to see if we could find those images and whether they had changed. It sparked interesting comments about where the photographer had been standing to take the photograph, whether or not the image had changed.**

**The site was the main resource used in the local study apart from up to date OS maps and contributed greatly to the children's learning.'**

*Karen Clark, Class Teacher, Frome Vale Academy*



1

1 A watercolour drawing of Little Peter Street executed by T. L. Rowbotham in 1826 in the Braikenridge Collection of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery (BRSMG M2721)

1

1 Aerial view of the City Docks in the 1920s in the collections of the Bristol Reference Library (LS.47)

# Collaborations

## A Growing Resource

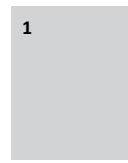
A major success of Know Your Place has been the additional collaborations and partnerships that have been prompted by the quality and effectiveness of the resource.

For example Bristol City Council's Museums, Galleries and Archives team are increasingly looking for opportunities to publish archived material on the resource. In addition to the historic maps Know Your Place now includes other information such as:

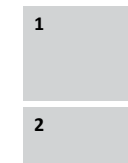
- The Braikenridge Collection layer of early 19th century paintings from the City Museum
- The Loxton Collection of early 20th century drawings from the Reference Library
- The Hartley Collection of photographs from the 1930s-1950s from MShed
- Early 20th century photographs from the Bristol Municipal Charities Collection at the Record Office







1 Know Your Bristol on the Move booklet, University of Bristol, 2015



1 Know Your MShed event, 2013



2 Community archive material presented by members of the public at Know Your South Bristol, 2013

3 Know Your Hillfields, 2013

4 The 2900th Vaughan postcard added to Know Your Place by a volunteer working on the Know Your Bristol on the Move project

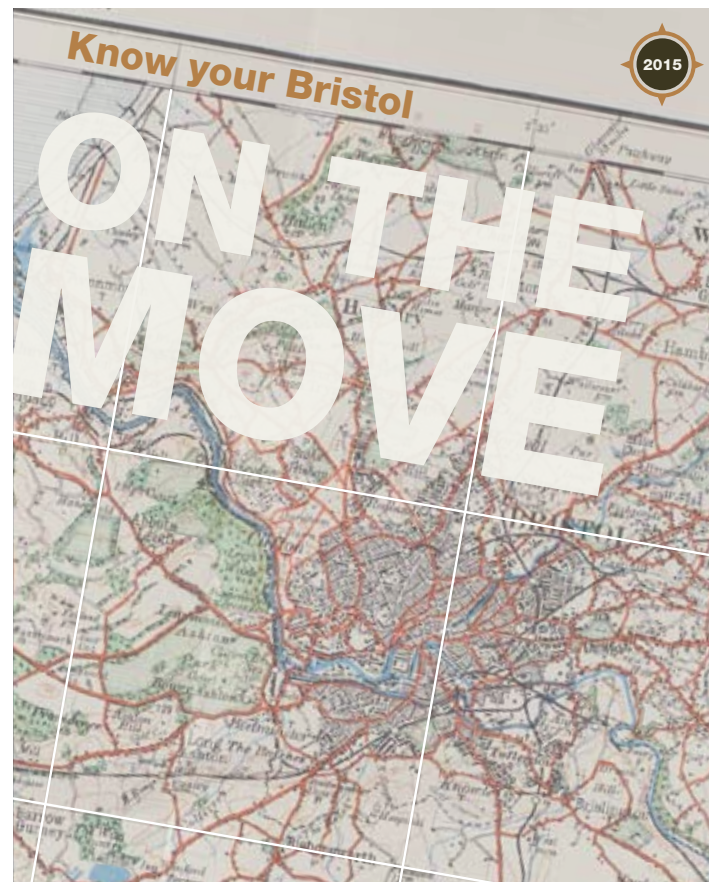
# Collaborations

## Know Your Bristol

A particularly productive collaboration has been that with the University of Bristol. The university have secured several successful funding bids since 2012 from the Arts and Humanities Research Council for a series of Connected Communities projects entitled Know Your Bristol. These projects have encouraged communities to share their archives and stories about the development of their neighbourhoods with researchers and Know Your Place.

These projects have contributed 100s of points of local information and oral histories to the website; 3000 early 20th century postcards from the Bristol Record Office; and over 600 photographic images taken in the 1970s and 1980s by architect John Trelawny-Ross of the city council's Urban Design Team.

A follow on partnership project working with the LGBT community will map and add an 'Outstories' layer of data to Know Your Place.





## Know Your Place West of England

The geographic coverage of Know Your Place by 2017 as a result of the Heritage Lottery funded Know Your Place West of England project

- Bristol
- HLF project partners
- Potential extension to current project

1

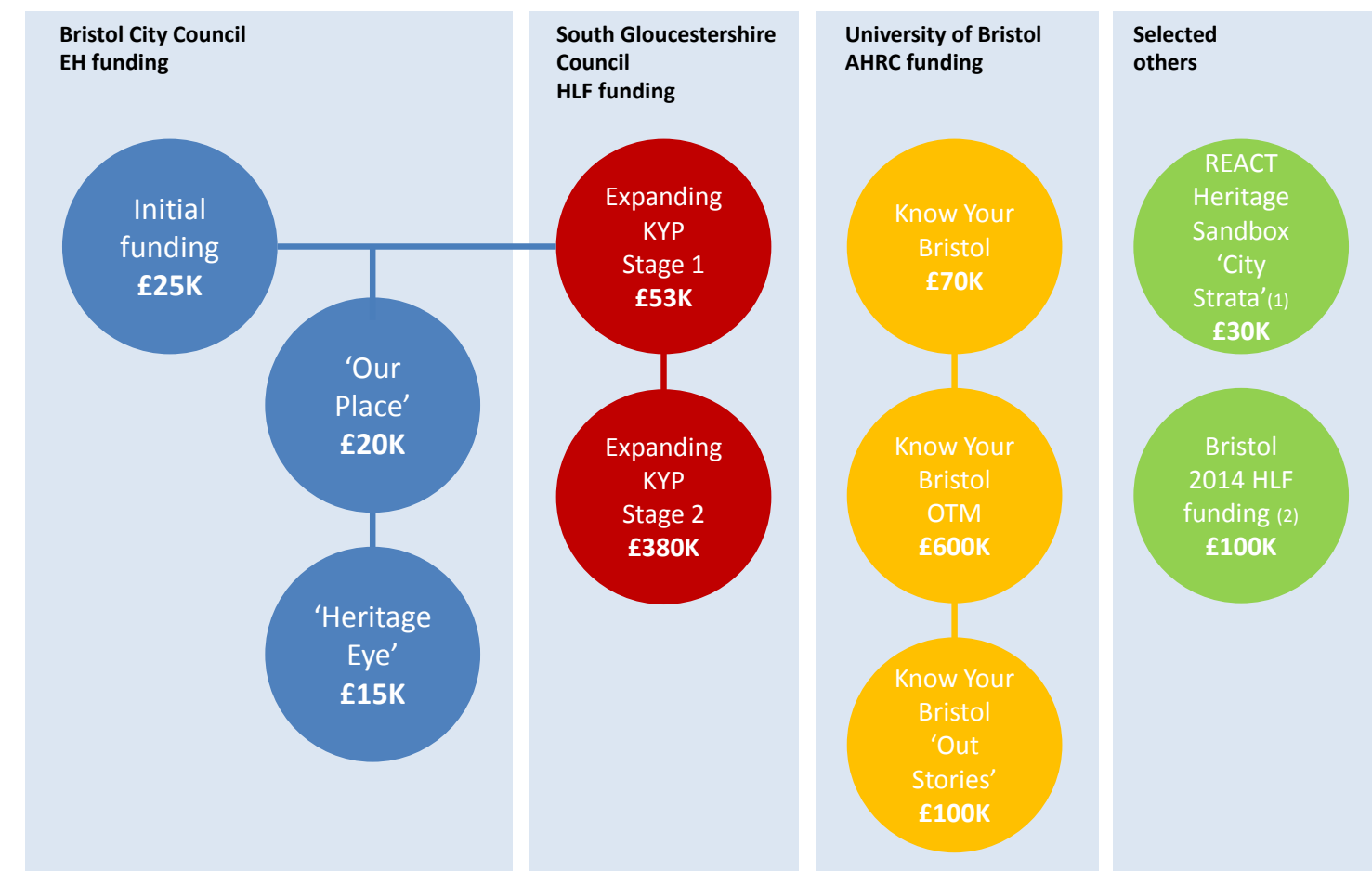
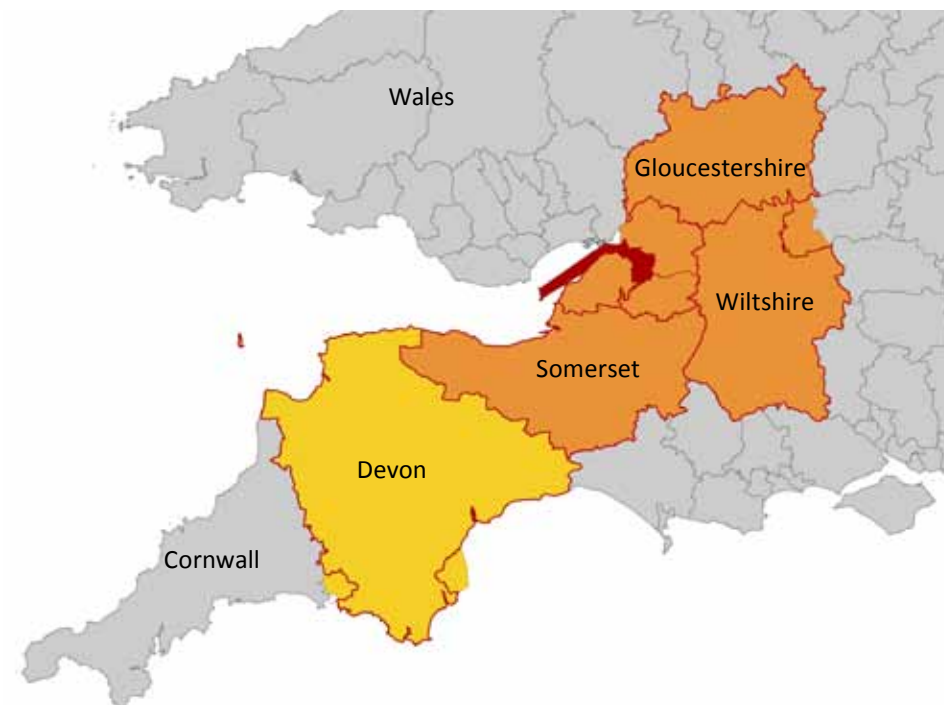
1 Some of the main Know Your Place partner projects and their funding sources - English Heritage (EH), Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)

# Collaborations

## Expanding Know Your Place

In 2015, South Gloucestershire Council secured funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to expand Know Your Place to cover the West of England. The bid was written in partnership with Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council, Gloucestershire County Council, Somerset County Council and Wiltshire Council. The bid seeks funding to create a free online public resource that covers data from seven local authorities and eight if Devon also participate.

Since the creation of Know Your Place in 2011 over £1 million of external funding has been secured for associated projects by the City Council or partner organisations.



(1) A partnership project with UWE funded by AHRC and developed with creative partner Calvium. The resulting smartphone app informed the development of the City Council's 'Heritage Eye'.

(2) Project led by the Bristol Cultural Development Partnership resulting in the creation of the World War I content on Know Your Place.



1	1 Know Your Place exhibition at the Bristol Architecture Centre, 2011
---	---

1	3	1 Local press coverage of the launch event
2		2 Francis Tibbalds Urban Design Award, 2014
		3 National coverage in Planning magazine

# Coverage and plaudits

Know Your Place has drawn national attention as a innovative planning tool as well as the engaging use of historic archive material that it enables.

The launch of the site was well covered in the local media and there have been several subsequent articles about aspects of the resource in the Bristol Post.

In 2011 Know Your Place won the Local Government Vision Award at the software company ESRI's national conference.

In the same year it was a finalist in the RTPI Planning Awards.

In 2014 the website along with the associated Our Place project won the Francis Tibbalds Urban Design Award at the annual Urban Design Group conference.



**‘Know Your Place is a significant project not just for the South West but in the development of historical community mapping projects.**

**This project will open up access to these wonderful ancient maps and give people a fascinating insight into their local heritage and how the areas they live and work in today have been shaped over the years.’**

*Nerys Watts, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund South West*





RAF aerial view of Bristol,  
December 1946



**City Design Group**  
Planning Division  
Place Directorate  
Bristol City Council

October 2015



**BRISTOL**  
**2015** EUROPEAN  
GREEN CAPITAL