

Developing Historic Environment Records for the 21st Century

HER21 18 months on (October 2012)

6000 Bristol Historic Web Map, Bristol City Council

The creation of Know Your Place has been a huge and continuing success for our service and the local authority as a whole. Our aims for the project were to provide greater access to archives and encourage greater community interaction with this material particularly in terms of informing neighbourhood planning exercises. We also wanted to enhance our records through direct community, or crowdsourced contributions to the HER.

Know Your Place now provides access to eight layers of historic mapping alongside layers of historic images from the City Archives and traditional HER data. New layers are being created, many of them through continued support from volunteers.

Material from the website is regularly referred to in planning submissions, heritage statements and archaeological studies. Know Your Place has also been used at several neighbourhood planning events such as the Lockleaze Frontrunner or Vanguard project and the Prince's Foundation funded community planning project for Old Market.

Since going live in March 2011, there have been nearly 600 public contributions to the site. These vary in type from historic photographs to images of existing street furniture. All this material is moderated by the HER officer, although the process has not proved to be onerous and only rarely has something inappropriate been submitted.

The launch of the site has prompted new collaborations, partnerships and projects. These include:

- A successful partnership with the University of Bristol, 'Know Your Bristol', that involved a series of community workshops to draw more personal archive material to the website <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/public-engagement/events/know-your-bristol/>
- A collaboration with University of the West of England and software company Calvium as part of the 3-month rapid-prototyping REACT 'Heritage Sandbox' project, 'City Strata' <http://www.watershed.co.uk/ished/heritagesandbox/projects/2012/city-strata/>
- Our colleagues in museums, galleries and archives are creating a variety of projects to add more content to the resource through their volunteering programmes.
- The creation of a Local List for Bristol will use Know Your Place as the main tool for accepting nominations to the list.

The biggest success of the project has been in raising the profile of heritage and our team within the authority and across the city. The website has huge support from our elected members including our executive member for housing and regeneration. Know Your Place won the ESRI Local Government Vision Award in 2011 and was a

2011 RTPI Planning Awards finalist. The crowdsourcing approach also formed a key part of an article in Placemaking 2012

http://issuu.com/RUDIUrbanXtra/docs/placemaking2012_web/49

In addition to adding further layers and content to the site we have been approached by our neighbouring authorities to explore the potential for expanding Know Your Place so that it covers South Gloucestershire, North Somerset and Bath and North East Somerset.