

Heritage School Case Study

A local study

A primary school researched the story of their locality and found an interesting story about a Women's Rights Activist

Where: Shaftesbury Primary School, Leicester

Who: Two year 4 classes

After examining historical maps and aerial photos of the locality the children went on a trail to see how their area had change over time. By looking at windows, doors and chimneys we found many examples of Victorian buildings. While visiting the Co-operative Boot and Shoe factory we saw a blue plaque about Alice Hawkins, a trade Unionist and Suffragette.

The children found out about what life was like in late Victorian and Edwardian Leicester, especially in the local shoe, boot and hosiery factories. They looked at the difference in roles pay between men and women and found out that in Alice's day, women could not vote. The children took part in debates about this inequality and were encouraged to give reasons for their opinions. The children used archive material to find out about Alice's life. They also conducted research about the suffragettes and their campaign. The children answered the question does Alice Hawkins deserve to be remembered, how and why?

Finally they spoke to Alice's great grandson, Peter Barratt who visited the school with a re-enactor in the role of Alice. They looked at her sash and were able to ask questions. They talked about the importance of equality, democracy in Britain and using your vote.

Intended Outcomes:

- To find out about how the local area has changed or remained the same.
- To find out how lives of local men and women have changed over time
- To use archive materials to find evidence of the past.
- To encourage children to express their opinions and give evidence.



What we did:

- Studied maps and aerial photos and photos of the locality.
- Went on a trail to look at evidence from built heritage.
- Enquired about the lives of men and women in the late Victorian and Edwardian times.
- Use information, archive materials, oral history and a re-enactor to build up a picture and form opinions about the past.
- Relate what we have found out to modern times.

Challenges:

- Finding a safe route around the local area, minimalizing the crossing of busy roads.
- The children were using archive resources for the first time and needed some guidance in doing so.

Successes:

- The children found a pride in their locality and understood what an important place it was.
- The children were able to talk about 'British Values', form and express opinions in a relevant way.
- The children developed their enquiry skills and could use primary and secondary evidence effectively.
- The school made contacts with local shop which could be used in subsequent units.

Resources and web links:

- Historic England Archive [Local History Packs](#) for schools
- National Library of Scotland [historic maps](#)
- Aerial photos from [Britain From Above](#)
- Website about [Alice Hawkins](#)

Next steps/extension activities:

- Look at how the area has changed and the history of immigration to the area.
- Go on a trail of the local shops and restaurants using it as an opportunity to visit one or two and make contacts.
- Look at the origin of the food in the restaurant in the area and plot these on a world map.