

An Introduction

Lincoln and its surrounding area have a long and rich history. There is much to learn about the first settlers in the area and how its population changed over time. In this study, children will gain an understanding of how Lincoln became the place we know and love today.

What you need to know

The area now known as Lincoln has been occupied for thousands of years. Evidence from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, and Iron Age shows continuous human activity, including hunting, farming, and metalworking. Notable discoveries include a Palaeolithic hand axe on Flaxengate, over 785 Mesolithic flints near Brayford Pool, Neolithic stone axes and ring ditches by Roaring Meg springs, Bronze Age armlets at Lincoln Castle, a sword at Monk's Leys, and the Iron Age Witham Shield found near Washingborough. By AD 48, the Romans established a fortress on the hill above the River Witham, later developing it into a civilian town called Lindum. Roman roads, walls, buildings, and a colonia for retired soldiers transformed Lincoln into a centre of trade and daily life, which declined after the Roman withdrawal around AD 410.

During the Anglo-Saxon period, Lincoln's population remained small but stable, with the Lindisware settling north of the River Witham by AD 480. Christianity returned around AD 628 when Bishop Paulinus baptised the local leader Blecca and built a stone church. The Viking Age brought Lincoln into the Danelaw by AD 918, turning it into a thriving trading centre with workshops, a reopened suburb at Wigford, and the second busiest mint in England by AD 950. By AD 1066, the town had more than twenty churches. Following the Norman Conquest in 1066, William of Normandy built Lincoln Castle in 1068, and the cathedral was begun in 1072, completing its tallest tower by 1311. Lincoln prospered through the medieval wool and cloth trade, became a staple town by 1291, and attracted pilgrims to the shrine of St Hugh of Avalon. Despite fires, earthquakes, civil war, anti-Jewish riots, and the Black Death of 1349, the town remained important, though its trade declined from the late 14th century. Many medieval buildings, including the castle, cathedral, Jew's House, and Aaron's House, survive today.

By the 19th century, Lincoln was a market town of just over seven thousand people. Advances in farming, turnpike roads, canal improvements, and the arrival of the railway in 1846 facilitated trade and industrial growth. Engineering firms such as Clayton & Shuttleworth, Ruston's, Proctor's, and William Foster & Co expanded the city's economy, producing agricultural machinery, locomotives, and mining equipment. By 1900, Lincoln's population exceeded fifty thousand, and civic improvements included

sewers, waterworks, and public parks. During World War 1, the city became a centre of military production, with William Foster & Co designing the first tanks in 1915, while women took on vital factory roles. The city endured Zeppelin raids in 1916 and commemorated its fallen with a War Memorial in 1922. World War 2 again saw Lincoln's factories producing tanks, aircraft, and munitions, while Luftwaffe bombing raids in 1940–41 caused damage and loss of life. In the post-war years, the city expanded into suburbs such as Ermine, Birchwood, and Hartsholme. Heavy industry gradually declined, replaced by education, health, and IT services, with the University of Lincoln opening in 1996 and transforming Brayford Pool into a modern campus quarter, while firms such as Siemens continue to provide employment today.

Resources

Our key enquiry questions, sources, PowerPoints, activities, and other resources will help to build children's understanding of their local area of Lincoln and answer the question 'How has Lincoln changed over time?'

Get in touch

Is there an area of local history you'd love to see on our Local History Hub?
Get in touch to learn how we can work together! Email

LocalHistory@tpet.co.uk
to find out more.



Local History

Historic England and Teacher's Pet have come together to bring you a collection of free resources that you can use in your local history teaching.



**Historic
England**



Teacher's Pet

Who are Teacher's Pet?

Teacher's Pet have been providing downloadable and playable educational content to early years and primary school teachers for over 14 years. We cover all areas of the curriculum and use a team of in-house teachers and designers to create engaging and memorable concepts, that the children will love.

Why local history?

At [Teacher's Pet](#) we want to empower primary school teachers by giving them the tools they need to deliver inspiring and thoughtful lessons about the local area and its history. We believe local history teaching has such an important part to play in a child's wellbeing – helping to give children a sense of pride in where they live.

Our Local History project is designed to provide teachers across the UK with everything they need to successfully carry out a full scheme of teaching about their local area, through key enquiry questions and source led activities.

Working with [Historic England](#) gives us access to archived maps and photos for resources and information from knowledgeable local historians, as well helping us to provide the content to you free of charge.

For more information about our Local History project or to find out more about Teacher's Pet Classroom Resources, please visit our website.