

# Session Plan 6

## Field recording

**This session introduces practical archaeological field recording skills. It enables groups to collect appropriate site-based data to upload to the Home Front Legacy project's map of sites.**

*The activities are designed to support the National Curriculum in England, Wales and Northern Ireland at Key Stage 2, and are suitable for pupils in Scotland following the broad general education phase of the Curriculum of Excellence. They are relevant for the KS2 'Local History Study' in England and Wales, 'The World Around Us' at KS2 in Northern Ireland, and support experiences and outcomes in Social Studies at Levels 2-4 in the broad general education of the Curriculum for Excellence. The activities can be used effectively with youth groups such as Young Archaeologists' Clubs, Scouts and Guides.*

### Session aims

- To involve your pupils or group in recording First World War sites in your local area.
- For pupils or your group to learn about field recording and archaeology, and to practise the skills used by archaeologists to record sites
- To add more information to the Home Front Legacy records by adding value to existing records, or finding new places to research and record.

### Session outcomes

Your class or group will have learnt about archaeological field recording and will practise the skills required to record sites for the Home Front Legacy project.

### Resources required

#### Training videos:

The [Home Front Legacy project](#) has commissioned a series of training videos to support the project. Three of the videos are particularly relevant to this session: [Grid](#)

[referencing with the Home Front Legacy app](#), [Writing your own site descriptions](#), and [How to take a site photograph](#). They can be viewed via YouTube on your class whiteboard. The videos are presented by members of the Sheffield [Young Archaeologists' Club](#).

### **Home Front Legacy project member login:**

In order to access the Home Front Legacy project's recording app to upload the information that you collect during your site recording sessions, you will need to create a member login (you may already have done this in **Session 4: Accessing and using the Home Front Legacy recording app**).

To create your Home Front Legacy project member login, visit:

[www.homefrontlegacy.org.uk/wp/register](http://www.homefrontlegacy.org.uk/wp/register) and complete the online form.

Once you have logged into the website, you can access the Home Front Legacy recording app, via the [Member Toolkit page](#) by clicking on the red button.

### **Home Front Legacy recording forms (paper):**

Whilst out on site undertaking your field recording, it is easiest to record your observations on a paper Home Front Legacy recording form. These can be downloaded as PDFs or Word documents from the [Member Toolkit page](#) of the Home Front Legacy website and printed out for use on site. Note that there are different versions for each of the nations; make sure you download the correct version!

### **IT resources:**

Your class or group members will need to access the Home Front Legacy app using laptop or desktop computers, smartphones or tablets in order to upload the information that they collect during your site recording sessions.

### ***Young Person's Site Recording Guide:***

Three chapters from the Home Front Legacy's *Young Person's Site Recording Guide* are useful for this session and can be provided as handouts: ['Taking a grid reference'](#), ['Writing your own site descriptions'](#), and ['Investigating site condition'](#).

### **Additional equipment for your site visit:**

Whilst out on site you will also need to have access to a digital camera (or a smartphone or tablet) to take site photographs. Notebooks, paper, pencils and clipboards are also useful to help with note taking and recording. A long tape measure will enable you to accurately record dimensions of any structures that you are recording.

### **Session plan**

Everyone can record First World War Home Front sites for the Home Front Legacy project and you don't need any prior experience to get involved. This is the opportunity for your pupils or group to get involved in archaeology and help preserve First World War sites for future generations.

You might like to conduct a site visit of the place or building that your group investigated during their desk-based research in **Session 5: How did the First World War affect our local area?** You may choose to undertake field recording of a different First World War Home Front site; this could be a site that is completely new to the Home Front Legacy project, or one that is already recorded but has scant details about its condition, and is lacking in a full site description and photographs.

The methods you will be using to conduct your field recording are the same as those used by archaeologists to record historic buildings.

The key parts of an archaeological record are:

- **Location:** The location is recorded as a grid reference and directions; this allows other people to find your site.
- **Site description:** This is a written description describing the type of site, its history, and remaining features. On-site observations are an important aspect of a site description.
- **Photographs:** Photographs are often taken to show how the site appears and to highlight any important or significant features.

It is a good idea to practice some of the site recording skills required to complete an archaeological record before heading out onto site. Begin your indoor session by

watching the Home Front Legacy training videos about site recording. These include [Grid referencing with the Home Front Legacy app](#), [Writing your own site descriptions](#), and [How to take a site photograph](#).

### **Taking grid references:**

Your group can be introduced to grid references by watching the [Grid referencing with the Home Front Legacy app](#) video. The video features a practical exercise where your group can have a go at taking a grid reference for each of the sites in the video using the feature within the app itself. These sites can be searched for using the place name, e.g. 'Whitby', or the supplied postcode.

Practicing taking a grid reference using the Home Front Legacy app can be conducted in a classroom or at your group's meeting place. Once your group is confident with taking a grid reference they can have a go at taking a grid reference for a location or building they know well. This can be a local school, their house, or other area they can find easily.

*Have a go at...* as well as using the Home Front Legacy recording app to find the grid reference for your site, you can also have a go at working them out manually yourselves on a hard copy of an Ordnance Survey map. There is a [Map Reading Made Easy](#) booklet to download from the Ordnance Survey website that helps to explain how to use maps and take grid references.

### **Taking site photographers:**

Your group can be introduced to taking site photographs by watching the [How to take a site photograph](#) video. The video explains why archaeologists take photographs and shows you how to take your own site photographs.

Your group can practice taking site photographs by photographing buildings such as a school building, or your group meeting place. Review your photos to ensure that the image isn't obscured and the site, or aspect of interest, is in the centre of the shot.

When undertaking your site visit, it's best to take as many photographs as you can; the photographs can then be reviewed, and the images which best represent the site, its interesting features, and its condition can be attached to your record.

### Writing a site description:

Your group can be introduced to writing a site description by watching the [Writing your own site descriptions](#) video.

*Have a go at...* writing a site description of one of your school buildings or your group meeting place. Remember to focus on **What?, Where?** and **What remains?**

*Inspirational idea...* challenge your pupils or group members to choose one building or place in your local area that was used to support the War Effort. They may have identified this during **Session 3: What was our area like 100 years ago, at the time of the First World War? How is it different today?** Does this building or place have a record with the Historic Environment Record? Can they find historic photographs that show how it looked during the First World War? Are there any stories that are linked to the building or place which they can discover through archive research and old newspapers?

### Site visits:

The aim of a site visit is to gain further information about your chosen site's location and condition, as well as to photograph the site.

Before you head out, decide whether you will record your site while 'on site', using a tablet or mobile device, or whether you will upload your record later, using a laptop or desktop computer.

If you do intend to upload your record 'on site' with a tablet or mobile device, please ensure that a mobile internet signal is available. If you plan to upload your information after your visit, remember to download and print out paper recording forms from the [Member Toolkit page](#) of the Home Front Legacy website for you to use on site. This will ensure that you collect the relevant information to create or update your record.

You may wish to conduct more than one site visit as this will give your group the opportunity to investigate the site further and make their own observations.

It is very important that you ensure that landowner consent is granted before your visit, and that you carry out a risk assessment before you take your group onto the site. The Council for British Archaeology and project partners are not responsible for any issues that may arise as a result of using the Home Front Legacy recording app.

When conducting your field recording, you may wish to split the group into 'Recording teams'. These teams can be assigned a task to complete. For example:

- **Team 1: The Site Photographers.** This group identifies features to photograph and is responsible for taking site photographs. Photographs of features of interest, such as original First World War features and date stones, are very useful. If the finished record is to be uploaded on-site, this team will need to take their photographs with the tablet or mobile device which will be used to upload the record.
- **Team 2: The Condition Monitors.** This group determines the site's condition and identifies the materials used in the construction of the building. This team can also identify any threats to the site's long term survival.
- **Team 3: The Field Recorders.** This team uses the Home Front Legacy paper recording forms to write down site observations for the site description. The group can focus on the **What?, Where? and What Remains?** sections of the site description.

Once your site visit is complete and all your information has been gathered and reviewed, your pupils or group can upload the information that they have discovered onto the Home Front Legacy map of sites, using the Home Front Legacy recording app. This could involve adding extra detail about a site that is already recorded, or uploading a new site to the map.

### Uploading your record:

Sites can be recorded on site using a mobile or tablet device, or in the classroom using a laptop or desktop computer.

When working with a large group it is recommended that the group leader uploads the finished record via the Home Front Legacy recording app. This ensures that no duplicate records are created.

If the group has been divided up into 'Recording teams' each team can input their specific set of information into the information panel. For example:

- **The Field Recorders** can be assigned with inputting the 'site location' information, including the grid reference, site name, directions, and the finished site description.
- **The Condition Monitors** can input the 'site observations' including site type, dates, construction materials, site condition, and threats.
- **The Site Photographers** can attach the site photographs and record the information regarding people associated with the site.

If your class or group is updating an existing record, there are two ways to do this:

- You can contact the [Home Front Legacy team](#) with the additional information, and they will upload it for you;
- Or you can upload a new record for the site. If you choose this option, please ensure that the reference number of the original record is included in the 'Related sites' field of the app using the following format, 'HFL Ref: 000'.

Please note, there is no in-built app function for users to add to an existing record.

Be sure to review the information before it is uploaded to the Home Front Legacy map of sites, and check that all the required information fields (indicated by an asterisk) are complete. Once everything is ready press the 'Submit' button. The record will then appear on the Home Front Legacy map of sites as a red pin.

If any records are accidentally added or duplicated during your session please [contact the Home Front Legacy team](#), stating the reference number of the records.