



## How to get started with House History

### Before you start.....

- Research into the history of a house can be very time-consuming so allow plenty of time!
- Sources like maps that are large, fragile or coloured should not be photocopied because of the damage this can do to the document – you are welcome to use your own camera as long as you turn off the flash and complete a copyright declaration form. We can provide digital images and prints if you prefer so please ask about this.
- Sometimes it is impossible to find out much about the physical building or exactly when the property was built because the sources do not survive or do not include precise information. If this is the case you should be able to find out something about the people who owned and lived in the property using rating and taxation records, electoral registers and poll books, census returns and probate records.
- If you live in a house that was built before about 1850 decide whether you want to trace its whole history from the 20<sup>th</sup> century working backwards or if you are more interested in finding roughly when it was built and more about its early owners and occupiers first

### Before you visit us.....

- Look at your title deeds (if you have them) to see how far they go back and note down the names of the owners and occupiers.
- Look at the building itself and its neighbours to see roughly how old it might be and whether it has been used for any other purpose like a school, pub, vicarage or shop.
- Talk to your neighbours to see what they know and whether they have any deeds for their own house. Contact the local history society for your area to see if anyone else has investigated the history of your house.

### First steps if your house was built before the 1880s

- Look at the Tithe Apportionment of about 1840 (if this exists) to see if the property is shown and, if so, who owned and occupied it.
- Look at the Inclosure Award of about 1800 (if this exists) to see if the property is shown and, if so, who owned and occupied it
- Check the map indexes to see if any other estate maps that pre-date the Inclosure Award exist
- Check the Land Tax returns from 1775 to 1832 working backwards to see how far you can trace the property – you might need to look for the name of the owner or tenant because the returns don't generally include a detailed description of the property.
- Check the indexes for references to the property or the families who owned or occupied it.

### First steps if your house was built after the 1880s

- Check the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey maps, c.1885-c.1920 to establish roughly when it was built.
- Look at the Finance Act map and book of reference of about 1915 to establish the owner and occupier
- Check the District Authority records to see if any planning records survive
- Check the rating and valuation records, electoral registers and census returns to find details of the occupiers of the house
- Check the indexes for references to the property or the families who owned or occupied it.