



Exploring local identity **activity**

Exploring local identity

Main learning points

- Definition of heritage
- Concept of local identity

Introduction

Local historic sites are part of an area's heritage and identity. In helping shape our identity, our heritage becomes part of who we are and highlights our values.

Historic sites are often seen in street names, in the names of local businesses or on school or club badges, because they represent the place we live and help create a sense of identity.

Definition of heritage:

Anything passed on from one generation to the next (links to the word 'inherit), including stories and traditions which don't have a physical form ('intangible heritage')

Buildings, places, or activities from the past which we think matter today – traditions such as gala day, common ridings, guising, Hogmanay

Activities

You can do some or all of them.

It's not essential to complete them in order. It might be useful to consider what heritage means as a first step.

1. What is heritage? (p2)
2. What gives place its identity? (p2)
3. Heritage journeys (p3)
4. What's in a name? (p3)
5. Badge of honour (p4)
6. Local traditions (p4)
7. To keep or not to keep? (p4)

Extension activities

As an introductory or extended research task for the Defending Scotland's Heritage project, participants could:

- Find out and discuss what heritage means
- Explore what their local heritage is
- Look for evidence of how their local historic site has influenced where they live – both in the past and in the present
- Find out what their local historic site means to people today

Activity 1

What is heritage?

Resources required

- print outs of **images**
- learner **instructions** (p6)

Activity

- Hand out images of a range of buildings or objects (these could be of the local area, Scotland, UK or the world). Include a mix of building types and local places, loved or unloved e.g.
 - a car park
 - church
 - traditional shop sign
 - park bench
 - castle
 - bridge
 - modern block of flats
 - ruined cottage
 - phone box
- Divide participants into groups and give each group the same or a similar set of images. Ask groups to sort the images into two piles: 'worth keeping for the future' and 'not worth keeping'.
- Groups compare how they sorted their images and explain their decisions. This should lead into a discussion of why a place or object is worth keeping.

Introduce the concept of **heritage**. The **What is heritage?** powerpoint resource can be used to extend study.

Activity 2

What gives a place an identity?

Resources required

- sticky notes
- large sheet of paper/smart board
- learner **instructions** (p6)

Activity

- Hold a brainstorm session with participants based around the place they live.
 - What gives it its identity?
 - Is there something it's famous for?
 - Is there a building/place everyone knows?
- Participants think about the places and spaces that they feel are important or that they like and why.
- Discuss the fact heritage is unique to everyone and places may mean something to one person but not another.
- Participants find or take images of things they think represent the place they live, its heritage and identity.
- They could create a mind map or visual map.

Activity 3

Heritage journeys

Resources required

- local maps/online maps/GoogleMaps
- large sheet of paper
- learner **instructions** (p7)

Activity

- Ask participants to think about the route they take from home and the things that they pass on the way. What is in their local environment that they walk or cycle past every day?
- Participants could use maps to identify anything they think could be considered heritage e.g. an old house, a phone box, a milestone, a statue or memorial, a street sign.
- Challenge participants to note down things they spot next time they take their journey. They could plot them onto a map or sheet of paper and add their comments/thoughts/opinions.

Activity 4

What's in a name?

Resources required

- local maps/online maps/GoogleMaps
- large sheet of paper
- learner **instructions** (p7)

Introduction

Cities/towns/villages often developed around important buildings like a church or castle, and streets or areas were named after them.

This still happens today: for example, a new housing development opposite the abbey in Arbroath has been given the name Abbey Quarter.

Activity

- Discuss with participants where the name of their city/town/village comes from and why.
 - Has it always had that name?
 - Who owned the land around it in the past?
 - Is the name of your school linked to it?
- Using old and modern maps, either online or printed, can participants spot any street names or buildings that link to its history? Are there any public areas like parks with interesting names that could be linked to heritage?

Activity 5

Badge of honour

Resources required

- access to the internet
- learner **instructions** (p8)

Introduction

Businesses, schools, sports clubs and community groups often have a logo that features local heritage. It is another way of showing where we come from and representing our local identity.

Activity

- Do participants know what the logo on their school badge represents? Eg Kirkcaldy High's badge features their local castle, Ravenscraig.
- Ask participants to use the Internet or go for a walk to spot cafes or other businesses with names linked to their local heritage.
- Participants could find out if there are any sports clubs or groups who have names/logos linked to their heritage. Ask why might a modern business choose that?

Activity 6

Local traditions

Resources required

- learner **instructions** (p8)

Activity

- Does your city/town/village have local traditions, festivals or celebrations?
- Participants could interview members of their families for information or to ask them what their thoughts, feelings, stories and memories are about where they live. Do they feel the traditions are part of the local identity?

Activity 7

To keep or not to keep?

Resources required

- learner **instructions** (p8)

Activity

Hold a debate about whether a local historic site should be 'defended' or not. Participants could think about what they learned in the **What is heritage?** activity.

- What would be the reasons to keep it?
- What would be the reasons to knock it down?
- If it was knocked down and replaced with a car park, would they miss it? Would other people?
- What would be the impact on the place they live and its identity?

Useful sources

- Your local library or local history museum.
- Your local community or Community Council website.
- What is heritage? HES powerpoint



[Historic maps](#)

National Library of Scotland maps website



[Mapping History: a guide to using historical maps](#)

Archaeology Scotland website



[Google maps](#)

Google website



[PastMap](#)

PastMap website



[Trove maps](#)

Trove map search



[Trove](#)

Trove homepage



[Explore your neighbourhood activities and materials](#)

Archaeology Scotland website



[Aerial views of towns taken from 1919 - 1953](#)

Britain from Above website

Good to know:

PastMap is an interactive map of historic sites and landscapes all over Scotland, brought together on maps from 1843 - today.

Trove.scot is Historic Environment Scotland's digital gateway to Scotland's past. It brings together millions of records in one place, from archaeology and architecture to nationally significant objects, designation records, and over one million images, many free to reuse.

Activity 1 instructions

What is heritage?



Left: Raith Rovers football ground. **Right:** WWI gun battery at Downing Point, Dalgety Bay
© Cambaroo, CC BY-SA 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>, via Wikimedia Commons

Look at the images of a range of buildings or objects from your local area/Scotland/UK or the world.

In your group, sort the images into two piles:

**Worth keeping
for the future**

**Not worth
keeping**

Compare your image piles with other groups. Discuss your decisions.

Why is a place or object worth keeping?

Activity 2 instructions

What gives a place an identity?

Think about the places and spaces that are important or that you like and why.

- What gives the place you live its identity?
- Is there something it's famous for?
- Is there a building or place everyone knows?

Find or take images of things you think represent the place you live, its heritage and identity. Create a mind map/visual map.

Right: St Bridget's Kirk, Dalgety Bay



Activity 3 instructions

Heritage journeys

Think about the route you take from home.
What do you pass on the way?

- Use maps to identify anything that could be considered heritage e.g. an old house, a phone box, a milestone, a statue.
- The next time you take this journey, write down things you spot along the way. Plot them on a map or sheet of paper with your comments/thoughts/opinions.



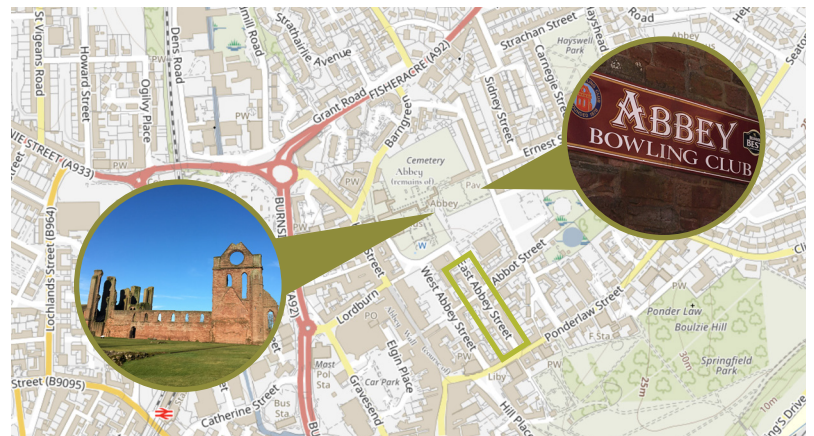
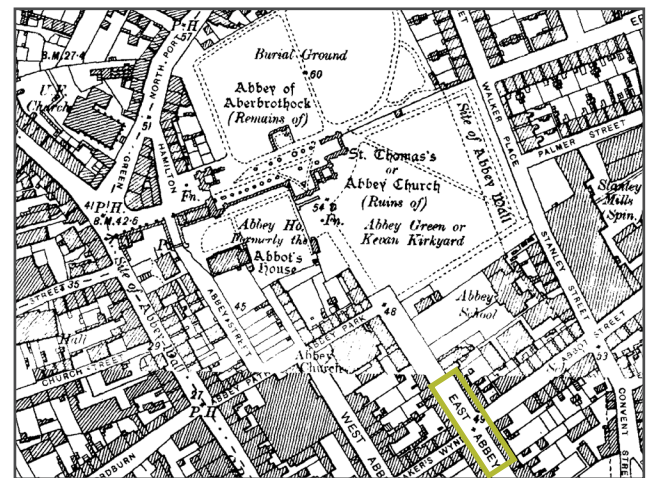
Phone and post box, Luss

Activity 4 instructions

What's in a name?

Look at some old and modern maps of your local area (either online or printed).

- Can you spot any street names or buildings that might link to its history?
- Are there any other public areas (eg parks) with interesting names that could be linked to heritage?



Above and right: Maps of Arbroath (above, OS 2nd edition; right, modern OS map) reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

Left: Entrance to new Arbroath Quarter development which references the abbey © Emily Hunter.

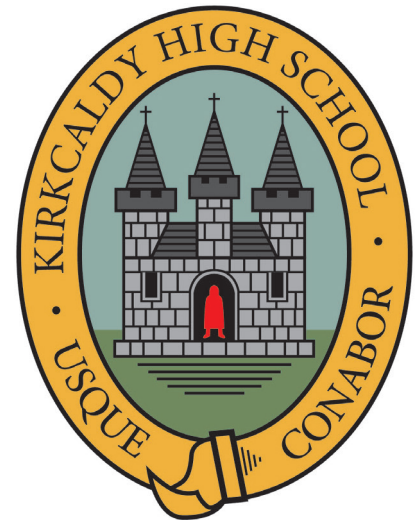
Inset: Arbroath Bowling Club sign and Arbroath Abbey © Fiona Davidson, HES Learning and Inclusion team.

Activity 5 instructions

Badge of honour

Look at the logo on your school badge. What does it represent?

- Search the internet or go for a walk in your area.
- Can you find other examples of buildings (maybe cafes, businesses, sports clubs) with names linked to your local heritage?
- Why might a modern business choose a logo linked to heritage?



Kirkcaldy High School badge showing local Ravensraig Castle
© Fife Council

Activity 6 instructions

Local traditions



Discuss what local traditions, festivals or celebrations your city/town/village has.

- Interview a member of your family and ask about your local area.
 - Do they have any stories or memories about where you live?
 - Do they feel the traditions are part of local identity?

Activity 7 instructions

To keep or not to keep?

Choose a local historic site and argue whether it should be kept or knocked down.

- What are the reasons to keep it?
- What are the reasons to knock it down?
- If it was knocked down and replaced with a car park, would you miss it? Would other people?
- What would be the impact on the place you live and its identity?

