



Historic England

Further Reading, Online Resources and Contacts

Building Stones of England





The Building Stones of England

England's rich architectural heritage owes much to the great variety of stones used in buildings and other structures. The building stones commonly reflect the local geology, imparting local distinctiveness to historic towns, villages and rural landscapes.

Historic England and the British Geological Survey (BGS), working with local geologists and historic buildings experts, have compiled the [Building Stones Database for England](#) to identify important building stones, where they came from and potential alternative sources for repairs and new construction.

Drawing on this research, plus BGS publications and fieldwork, guides like this one have been produced for each English county. The guides are aimed at mineral planners, building conservation advisers, architects and surveyors, and those assessing townscapes and countryside character. The guides will also be of interest if you want to find out more about local buildings, natural history, and landscapes.

Each guide includes references for the area covered. This volume offers more general references for books and online resources on geology, building stones, mineral planning, and building conservation plus contact details for building stone collections, and geology and building conservation organisations.

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HistoricEngland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/

Front cover: Library, Darwen. Carboniferous sandstone. © Historic England Archive.



Contents

1	Further Reading.....	1
2	Online Resources	4
3	Organisations	8
4	Collections.....	13
5	Contact Historic England	15
6	Acknowledgements	16

1

Further Reading

Geology, building stones and minerals planning

Brenchley, P J and Rawson, P F (eds) 2006 *The Geology of England and Wales* (2nd edition). London, Bath: Geological Society of London

Davey, N 1976 *Building Stones of England and Wales*. London: Bedford Square Press

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2014 *Guidance on the planning for mineral extraction in plan making and the application process* [gov.uk/guidance/minerals](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/minerals)

Geoconservation UK 2000 *RIGS Handbook* geoconservationuk.org/geoconservationuk-documents/rigs-handbook/

Historic England 2016 *Sourcing Stone for Historic Building Repair*. Swindon: Historic England historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/building-materials-for-historic-buildings/identifying-and-sourcing-stone-for-repair/

Historic England 2020 *Mineral Extraction and Archaeology: Historic England Advice Note 13*. Swindon: Historic England historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/mineral-extraction-and-archaeology-advice-note-13/

Historic England 2021 *Purbeck Marble. Conservation and repair*. Swindon: Historic England historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/purbeck-marble-conservation-and-repair/

Historic England 2023 *Glossary. Building Stones of England*. Swindon: Historic England historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/building-stones-england-glossary/

Howe, J A 2001 (1st edn 1910) *The geology of building stones*. Donhead St Mary: Donhead

Hudson, J and Cosgrove, J 2019 *Understanding Building Stones and Stone Buildings*. Abingdon: CRC Press, Taylor & Francis

Natural England 2015 *Access to Evidence Information Note EIN007 Summary of evidence: Geodiversity* publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6058759363231744

Stone Specialist 2021 *Natural Stone Directory* stonespecialist.com/natural-stone-directory-22nd-edition-2022-2023

Toghill, P 2010 *The Geology of Britain: An Introduction*. Shrewsbury: Airlife

Historic building conservation, architecture and landscape

Ashurst, J and Dimes, F G 2016 *Conservation of Building and Decorative Stone*. Oxford Butterworth-Heinemann Ltd

Bailey, B J 1982 *Stone Villages of England*. London: Robert Hale Ltd

Brunskill, R W 2020 *Vernacular Architecture: An Illustrated Handbook*. London: Faber & Faber

Clifton-Taylor A and Ireson, A S 1983 *English Stone Buildings*. London: David & Charles

Curl, J S 1993 *Encyclopaedia of Architectural Terms*. Shaftesbury: Donhead

Doyle, P ed 2008 *England's Heritage in Stone*. Folkestone: English Stone Forum researchgate.net/publication/318406002_England's_Heritage_in_Stone

Fidler, J (ed) 2002 *Stone. English Heritage Research Transactions Volume 2*. London: English Heritage

Hill, P R and David, J C E 1995 *Practical Stone Masonry*. Abingdon: Routledge

Historic England 2012 *English Heritage. Practical Building Conservation: Stone*. Abingdon: Routledge historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/stone-conservation/

Historic England 2014 *English Heritage. Practical Building Conservation: Roofing*. Abingdon: Routledge historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/roofing-conservation/

Historic England 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*. Swindon: Historic England historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/

Honour, H, Fleming J and Pevsner, N 1999 *The Penguin Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture*. London: Penguin

Lewis, S 1848 *Topographical Dictionary of England* (7th edition) british-history.ac.uk/topographical-dict/england

Penoyre, J and Penoyre, J 1978 *Houses in the Landscape: A Regional Study of Vernacular Building Styles in England and Wales*. London: Faber & Faber

Pevsner, N 2016 *Pevsner's Architectural Glossary (Pevsner Architectural Guides)*. London: Yale University Press

Schaffer, R J 1972 (1st edn 1932) *The weathering of natural building stones*. Watford: Building Research Establishment

Warland, E G 2015 (1st edn 1929) *Modern Practical Masonry*. Abingdon: Routledge

Wood, C (ed) 2003 *Stone Roofing. English Heritage Research Transactions Volume 9*. London: English Heritage

Wright, G N 1985 *The Stone Villages of Britain*. Newton Abbot: David and Charles

2

Online Resources

Building stones

British Geological Survey (BGS) and Historic England's 'Building Stones Database for England' historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/building-stones-england/

Developed with the British Geological Survey, this GIS application allows you to investigate the use of building stones and quarries across England.

Stone Specialist www.stonespecialist.com/

Online information about the stone industry.

University of Southampton Archaeology Department's 'Stone in Archaeology Database' archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/stones_ahrb_2005/cfm/Public/searches/AllRocks.cfm

This database, based on the Department of Archaeology's large archaeological comparative rock collection, allows the identification of stone samples by searching on the distinctive physical properties of a stone. It also provides information regarding the use, quarry location/vicinity and distribution of the stone throughout various periods of history.

Geology and geodiversity

British Geological Survey's 'Lexicon of Named Rock Units' webapps.bgs.ac.uk/lexicon/

The lexicon provides definitions of the lithostratigraphic, lithodemic and lithomorphogenetic geological units of the UK and its continental shelf. It focuses mainly on geological units of member, formation and group rank (and equivalent) but it also includes information on some units of lesser rank, notably economically important coal seams and laterally extensive marine bands. The lexicon includes superficial and bedrock units, plus synonyms and other names that are not currently recognised by the BGS or regarded as obsolete.

British Geological Survey's 'OpenGeoscience' bgs.ac.uk/geological-data/opengeoscience/

OpenGeoscience is a free service where you can view maps and download data, scans, photos and other information including the Geology of Britain map viewer, GeoScenic geological photographic archive, published paper maps and sections from 1832 to 2014 and printed publications from 1835 to the present.

Ruth Siddall and Dave Wallis 'London Pavement Geology' londonpavementgeology.co.uk/

A searchable resource on stones used in buildings that has been extended to cover the whole of the UK.

Natural England's 'Geology and geodiversity' publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/30050

A list of Natural England's publications relating to geology and geodiversity.

Mineral planning

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's *Mining and quarrying in the UK* gov.uk/government/publications/extractive-industries-transparency-initiative-payments-report-2018/mining-and-quarrying-in-the-uk

Research and analysis on mining and quarrying in the UK.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's 'Minerals' gov.uk/guidance/minerals

Guidance on the planning for mineral extraction in plan making and the application process.

Historic England's 'Minerals Extraction' historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/mineral-extraction/

Web pages on quarrying, mining and other forms of minerals extraction aimed to help planners, the minerals industry and others to explore the relationship between minerals extraction and the historic environment.

Historic buildings

Historic England's *National Heritage List for England* historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/

The official register of all nationally protected historic buildings and sites in England – listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, registered parks and gardens, and battlefields.

'Understanding Historic Buildings and Landscapes' historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/recording-heritage/recording-buildings/

'Looking after Historic Buildings' historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/

Historic Environment Records

The Historic Environment Records (HER) (sometimes referred to as Sites and Monuments Records) are sources of, and signposts to, information relating to landscapes, buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas and archaeological finds.

The HERs may be held by county councils, district councils or unitary authorities. In each case, the record will cover the whole of the local authority area. Selected major historic towns and cities are covered by Urban Archaeological Databases (UADs). In many cases, UADs are held as part of, and are accessible via, the local HER.

The Heritage Gateway provides the contact details for individual HERs. heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/

Pevsner architectural guides

The Pevsner Architectural Guides published by Yale University Press cover the architectural history and styles of a county and details of individual buildings in each town. yalebooks.co.uk/page/pevsner/

The Pevsner Books Trust's web site includes a glossary lookingatbuildings.org.uk/glossary/introduction.html

Victoria County Histories

The VCH volumes are authoritative and encyclopaedic histories of each county, from the earliest archaeological records to the present day, as well as topics such as topography, landscape and the built environment. history.ac.uk/research/victoria-county-history

Landscape characterisation

‘Historic Landscape Characterisation’ historicengland.org.uk/research/methods/characterisation/historic-landscape-characterisation/

The Historic Landscape Characterisations (HLC) provide a framework for broadening our understanding of the whole landscape and contributes to decisions affecting landscapes. The HLC projects produce interactive GIS-based descriptions of the historic dimension. A list of HLCs is available at archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/HLC/

Natural England’s National Character Areas (NCA) map and profiles gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making

Natural England’s National Character map defines 159 areas. The character areas are used to describe and shape objectives for the countryside, its planning and management. The 159 NCA profiles provide information on each defined character area in England. They include a description of the landscape, its topography, geology and soils, history of the area, settlement and development patterns and commonly used building materials and building design.

The NCAs are used to inform landscape planning and management.

3

Organisations

British Geological Survey

Keyworth
Nottingham NG12 5GG
Tel: 0115 936 3100
Email: enquiries@bgs.ac.uk
www2.bgs.ac.uk/MineralsUK/

English Stone Forum

Channel Business Centre
Ingles Manor Castle Hill Avenue
Folkestone
Kent CT20 2RD
englishstone.org.uk

GeoConservation

GeoConservation and Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site groups geoconservationuk.org

Geologists' Association and local geology groups

Burlington House
Piccadilly
London W1J 0DU
Tel: 020 7434 9298
geologistsassociation.org.uk

Affiliated and local groups website: geologistsassociation.org.uk/affiliated-local-groups/

East of England

Bedfordshire Geology Group bedfordshiregeologygroup.org.uk
Cambridgeshire Geological Society cambsgology.org
East Herts Geology Club ehgc.org.uk
Essex Rock and Mineral Society erms.org
Friends of the Sedgwick Museum sedgwickmuseum.org
Geological Society of Norfolk norfolkgeology.co.uk
Hertfordshire Geological Society hertsgeolsoc.org.uk

London

Amateur Geological Society (North London) amgeosoc.wordpress.com
Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society cnhss.co.uk
Harrow and Hillingdon Geological Society hhgs.org.uk
Sidcup Lapidary and Mineral Society sidcuplapminsoc.org.uk

Midlands

The Black Country Geological Society bcgs.info
East Midlands Geological Society emgs.org.uk
Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society – Geology Section
charnia.org.uk
Peak Lapidary and Mineral Society rockexchange.uk
Stamford and District Geological Society stamfordgeolsoc.org
North Staffordshire Group of the Geologists' Association nsgga.org
Shropshire Geological Society shropshiregeology.org.uk
Teme Valley Geological Society geo-village.eu
Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group wgcg.co.uk
Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club Geology Section woolhopeclub.org.uk

North East

North Eastern Geological Society negs.org.uk

North West

Cumberland Geological Society cumberland-geol-soc.org.uk
Geolancashire incorporating Lancashire Local Group geolancashire.org.uk
Liverpool Geological Society liverpoolgeologicalsociety.org
Manchester Geological Association mangeolassoc.org.uk
Westmorland Geological Society westmorlandgeolsoc.co.uk

South East

Berkshire Geoconservation Group berksgeoconservation.org.uk
Brighton and Hove Geological Society bhgs.org
Bucks Earth Heritage Group bucksgeology.org.uk
Farnham Geological Society farnhamgeosoc.org.uk
GeoConservation Kent geoconservationkent.org.uk
Hastings and District Geological Society hastingsgeology.chessck.co.uk
Horsham Geological Field Club hgfc.org.uk
Kent Geologists' Group kgg.org.uk
Medway Fossil and Mineral Society mfms.org.uk
Mole Valley Geological Society mvgs.org.uk
Newbury Geology Society newburygeology.org.uk
Oxfordshire Geology Trust oxfordshiregeologytrust.org.uk
Reading Geological Society readinggeology.org.uk
Sidcup Lapidary and Mineral Society sidcuplapminsoc.org.uk
Southampton Mineral and Fossil Society sotonminfoss.org.uk
West Sussex Geological Society wsgs.org.uk

South West

Bath Geological Society bathgeolsoc.org.uk
Bristol Naturalists Society bristolnats.org.uk/areas-of-interest/geology
Carn Brea Mining Society cbms.org.uk/
Cheltenham Mineral and Geological Society cmgs.yolasite.com
Devon RIGS Group devonrigs.org.uk
Devonshire Association, Geology Section devonassoc.org.uk
DIGS (Dorset's Important Geological Sites) dorsetrigs.org
Dorset Building Stone group dorsetbuildingstone.org
Dorset Geologists' Association Group dorsetgeologistsassociation.org
Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society dorsetmuseum.org
The Environmental Records Centre of the West of England brerc.org.uk
Jurassic Coast Trust jurassiccoast.org
Royal Geological Society of Cornwall geologycornwall.com
Plymouth Mineral and Mining Club j4pmmc.denuk.net
Ussher Society ussher.org.uk
West of England Group of the Geologists Association wega.org.uk

Yorkshire

Huddersfield Geology Group huddersfieldgeology.org.uk
Hull Geological Society hullgeolsoc.org.uk
Kingston Lapidary Gem and Mineral Club mineralclub.ca
Leeds Geological Association leedsga.org.uk
Mid Week Geology Group in Yorkshire mwggyorkshire.org.uk
Rotunda Geology Group rotundageologygroup.org
Yorkshire Geological Society yorksgeolsoc.org.uk

The Geological Society

Burlington House
Piccadilly
London W1J 0BG
Tel: 020 7434 9944
geolsoc.org.uk

Historic England

See page 13 for list of Historic England offices.

Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC)

Jubilee House High Street
Salisbury SP3 6HA
Email: services@ihbc.org.uk
ihbc.org.uk

The Institute of Quarrying

National Stone Centre
Porter Lane
DE4 4LS
Tel: 0115 972 9995
Email: email@quarrying.org
quarrying.org

National Stone Centre

Porter Lane
Wirksworth
Derbyshire DE4 4LS
Tel: 01629 824833
Email: nsc@nationalstonecentre.org.uk
nationalstonecentre.org.uk

Planning Officers Society's Minerals and Waste Network

Tel: 07806 800359
Email: communications@planningofficers.org.uk
planningofficers.org.uk/pos-networks/pos-minerals-and-waste-network

Stone Federation Great Britain

Channel Business Centre
Ingles Manor
Castle Hill Avenue
Folkestone
Kent CT20 2RD
Tel: 01303 856123
Email: enquiries@stonefed.org.uk
stonefed.org.uk

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)

37 Spital Square
London E1 6DY
Tel: 020 7377 1644
Email: info@spab.org.uk
spab.org.uk

Vernacular Architecture Group and local buildings groups
vag.org.uk

Affiliated and local groups:

East of England

East Anglian Regional Telluric House Association eartha.org.uk

Essex Historic Buildings Group ehbg.co.uk

Norfolk Historic Buildings Group nhbg.org.uk

Suffolk Historic Buildings Group shbg.org.uk

Midlands

Avoncroft Museum avoncroft.org.uk

Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust nbpt.co.uk

Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology slha.org.uk

North East

North East Vernacular Architecture Group

northeastvernaculararchitecturegroup.wordpress.com

North West

Cumbria Vernacular Buildings Group cvbg.co.uk

Middleton Archaeological Society middletonas.com

South East

Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society's Historic Buildings Group

bucksas.org.uk/hbg.html

Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey) dbrg.org.uk

Oxfordshire Buildings Record obr.org.uk

Weald and Downland Living Museum wealddown.co.uk

Wealden Buildings Study Group wealdenbuildings.org.uk

South West

Gloucestershire Building Recording Group buildingarchaeology.org

Somerset Vernacular Building Research Group svbrg.org.uk

Wiltshire Buildings Record wiltshirebuildingsrecord.org.uk

Wessex Mills Group wessexmillsgroup.org.uk

Yorkshire

Yorkshire Vernacular Buildings Study Group yvbsg.org.uk

4

Collections

British Geological Survey's mineralogy and petrology collections

The collections contain upwards of a million samples and are held at Keyworth and Edinburgh.

British Geological Survey
Keyworth
Nottingham NG12 5GG
Tel: 0115 9363100
Email: enquiries@bgs.ac.uk
www.bgs.ac.uk/technologies/databases/bgs-rock-collections/

Natural History Museum's Building Stone Collection

The Building Stone Collection contains around 16,000 specimens. It is one of the largest documented collections of its kind in the UK. It is particularly useful for matching stone in historical buildings during conservation work.

Natural History Museum
Cromwell Road
London SW7 5BD
Email: Principal Curator (see web site)
www.nhm.ac.uk/our-science/collections/mineralogy-collections/rock-collection.html

National Stone Centre

The National Stone Centre is an educational charity that seeks to engage and inform about the importance and history of stone and its allied industries. The centre's collection of stones is open to visitors. They also offer services such as stone matching and courses.

National Stone Centre
Porter Lane
Wirksworth
Derbyshire DE4 4LS
Tel: 01629 824833
Email: nsc@nationalstonecentre.org.uk
www.nationalstonecentre.org.uk

Oxford University Museum of Natural History's Corsi Collection of Decorative Stones

The museum's 19th century collection includes 1,000 samples of different polished decorative stones such as marbles, serpentines, jaspers and granites and minerals.

Oxford University Museum of Natural History
Parks Road
Oxford OX1 3PW
Tel: 01865 272955
Email: earth@oum.ox.ac.uk
www.oum.ox.ac.uk/corsi/about/oxford

Sedgwick Museum of Life Sciences' Building Stones Collection

The collection comprises approximately 2,500 traditional building stones, roofing slates, road stones, flagstones and decorative and ornamental stones that were in extensive use during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The collection is open to the public by appointment only.

Sedgwick Museum of Life Sciences
University of Cambridge
Downing Street
Cambridge
CB2 3EQ
Tel: 01223 333456
Email: sedgwickmuseum@esc.cam.ac.uk
www.sedgwickmuseum.org

5

Contact Historic England

East of England

Brooklands
24 Brooklands Avenue
Cambridge CB2 8BU
Tel: 01223 582749
Email: eastofengland@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Fort Cumberland

Fort Cumberland Road
Portsmouth
Hampshire PO4 9LD
Tel: 023 9285 6700
Email: fort.cumberland@HistoricEngland.org.uk

London and South East

4th Floor
Cannon Bridge House
25 Dowgate Hill
London EC4R 2YA
Tel: 020 7973 3700
Email: londonseast@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Midlands

The Foundry
82 Granville Street
Birmingham B1 2LH
Tel: 0121 625 6888
Email: midlands@HistoricEngland.org.uk

North East and Yorkshire

Bessie Surtees House
41-44 Sandhill
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 3JF
Tel: 0191 269 1255
Email: northeast@HistoricEngland.org.uk

North East and Yorkshire

37 Tanner Row
York YO1 6WP
Tel: 01904 601948
Email: yorkshire@HistoricEngland.org.uk

North West

3rd Floor, Canada House
3 Chepstow Street
Manchester M1 5FW
Tel: 0161 242 1416
Email: northwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk

South West

Fermentation North
(1st Floor)
Finzels Reach
Hawkins Lane
Bristol BS1 6JQ
Tel: 0117 975 1308
Email: southwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Swindon

The Engine House
Fire Fly Avenue
Swindon SN2 2EH
Tel: 01793 445050
Email: swindon@HistoricEngland.org.uk

6

Acknowledgements

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Historic England

We are the public body that helps people care for, enjoy and celebrate England's spectacular historic environment.

Please contact NationalSpecialistServices@HistoricEngland.org.uk with any questions about this document.

[HistoricEngland.org.uk](https://www.historicengland.org.uk)

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