



BOOKLIST and other resources

This booklist, compiled in November 2008, lists sources of information and expertise for anyone who is interested in historic houses. This includes not only books, but also websites, journals and organisations.

It also throws its net widely, recognising that historic buildings never stand alone; the story they can tell us depends on the landscape – or townscape – within which they stand, the ways in which their occupants earned their daily bread, and how successive generations altered them to suit their own ideas and needs.

Most of the books listed will be obtainable through the public library system, though they may not be easily found on the shelves and you may need to wait a week or so while a copy is found through the inter-library loans system. Copies can also be found, new or second-hand, in bookshops and over the web.



WHERE TO BUY BOOKS ON HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Bookshops don't tend to stock many new books on buildings so it's hard to find somewhere to browse. However you can often buy current editions second-hand, because books on buildings don't seem to change very often, if at all. Also many are out of print. So second-hand bookshops are a good source.

- For second-hand it is always worth looking on the [Abebooks](#) website.
- [The RIBA bookshop](#) is open to all (in Portland Place, London) and they sell books through their website too.
- [Blackwell's Art bookshop](#) on Broad Street, Oxford sells architectural books - and sometimes has special offers on volumes of Nikolaus Pevsner's *Buildings of England* series.
- [Oxbow books](#) is an archaeological bookshop in Oxford but they do sell some buildings books. Their shop is at 10 Hythe Bridge St but they also sell online.
- And there's always [Amazon](#) of course, often the cheapest.

1: Introductions

Shire Books publish a series of pamphlets and short books which provide a cheap, basic introduction to many architectural/historical subjects. They are also bringing out new books all the time so it is worth checking their website at www.shirebooks.co.uk or asking for a booklist by phoning them on 01206 256 002.

2: Understanding the context - Landscape

Michael Aston, *Interpreting the Landscape* (Routledge 1985)
(that's Mick from television's TimeTeam)

W.G.Hoskins, ***The Making of the English Landscape***.

This has appeared in various paperback editions and reissues, of which the latest appears to be 2005. It is a pioneering book written in 1955 which introduced the landscape approach to local history studies. A must-read.

David Lloyd, ***The Making of English Towns*** (Gollancz paperback edition 1992)

Richard Muir, ***The English Village*** (Thames and Hudson 1980)

This has a nice chapter on buildings - titled '*The villager at home*' - and some lovely photos although most are in black and white.

Oliver Rackham, ***The History of the Countryside*** (Phoenix paperback 1997).

There are other editions.

Michael Reed, ***The Landscape of Britain from the beginning to 1914*** (Routledge 1990)

Despite the title this includes a lot on buildings. A good overview.

3: Buildings and Architecture

David Austin, Mac Dowdy and Judith Miller, ***Be your own House Detective*** (BBC Books 1997)

John Betjeman, ***Ghastly Good Taste*** (Century 1986, in the National Trust Classics series)

Bill Breckon, Jeffrey Parker and Andrew, Martin, ***Tracing the History of Houses*** (Countryside Books 2000).

R.J.Brown, ***The English Country Cottage*** (Robert Hale 1979).

R.W.Brunskill, ***Traditional Farm Buildings of Britain*** (Yale University Press 1999)

R.W.Brunskill, ***Vernacular Architecture, An Illustrated Handbook*** (Faber and Faber 2000)

The bible for vernacular buildings.

- There are also numerous other books by Brunskill.

Stephen Calloway and Elizabeth Cromley (editors), ***The Elements of Style – an encyclopaedia of domestic architectural detail*** (2005).

Alec Clifton-Taylor (edited by Jack Simmons) ***The Pattern of English Building*** (Faber and Faber 1987).

Excellent on building materials but sadly out of print.

Pamela Cunnington, ***How Old is Your House?*** (Alphabooks 1980).

James Stevens Curl, ***Encyclopaedia of Architectural Terms*** (Donhead 1992)

The standard and most complete work – though the trouble with an encyclopaedia is that you really need to know the term so you can look it up! For beginners an illustrated encyclopaedia is ideal but I don't know of one in print.

Anthony Emery, ***Discovering Medieval House***, (Shire)

Only 3 pages on peasant houses but he is the expert on medieval buildings so it is very good on larger and religious houses.

Richard Harris, ***Discovering Timber-Framed Buildings*** (Shire 1999)
Excellent introduction with lovely sketches showing building elements and types.

D.Iredale and J.Barrett, ***Discovering Your Old House*** (Shire).

Osbert Lancaster, ***Pillar to Post (or the Pocket Lamp of Architecture)***.
Out of print but an excellent introduction which should make you smile. Despite the light-hearted approach he really knew his architecture.

Osbert Lancaster, ***Homes Sweet Homes*** (1953)
Also out of print. His take on home interiors. Similarly entertaining,

John McCann, ***Clay and Cob Buildings*** (Shire).
Lovely colour photos including some of Buckinghamshire's own Haddenham.

Richard Morriss, ***The Archaeology of Buildings*** (Tempus 2000)

J.E.C.Peters, ***Discovering Traditional Farm Buildings*** (Shire)

Christopher Powell, ***Discovering Cottage Architecture*** (Shire)
A thorough survey for such a small book.

Hubert Pragnell, ***Architectural Britain*** (National Trust Books 2007)

Matthew Rice, ***Village Buildings of Britain*** (Time Warner Books paperback 2003 – with earlier editions published by Little Brown)
A nice picture book - but nothing from Buckinghamshire. It has an illustrated glossary.

John Summerson, ***The Classical Language of Architecture*** (Thames and Hudson paperback 1980, originally published in 1963)
Written in a chatty style because it started as a series of television lectures. This is the authority on the subject and a must-read for basics on classical architecture. It has a good glossary.

- There are numerous other books and articles by Summerson.

Paula Sunshine, ***Wattle and daub*** (Shire).

T.W.West, ***Discovering English Architecture*** (Shire)
A very basic little book covering from classical right through to modern buildings, with sketches. OK if you are a complete novice but may be too sketchy if you have some knowledge.

Trevor Yorke, ***British Architectural Styles – an easy reference guide*** (Countryside Books 2008)

Trevor Yorke, ***Timber-framed Buildings Explained*** (Countryside Books 2010)

Trevor Yorke, ***The Victorian House Explained*** (Countryside Books 2005)

Trevor Yorke, ***The Edwardian House Explained*** (Countryside Books 2006)

Trevor Yorke, ***The 1930s House Explained*** (Countryside Books 2006)

Trevor Yorke, ***The Country House Explained*** (Countryside Books 2003)

4: The recording of buildings, and structural stuff

N.W.Alcock, M.W.Barley, P.W.Dixon and R.A.Meeseon, *Recording Timber Framed Buildings: An Illustrated Glossary* (Council for British Archaeology, Practical Handbook in Archaeology no.5, 1999).

Susan J.Brown, *A Practical Guide to Measuring and Drawing a Timber-framed Building* (Essex Historic Buildings Group 1997)

Excellent how-to guide - usually available from the Weald and Downland Museum.

Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice (English Heritage 2006)

Many of English Heritage's publications can be downloaded from their website at www.english-heritage.org.uk or you can be ordered in booklet form.

P.Swallow, R.Dallas, S.Jackson and D.Watt, *Measurement and Recording of Historic Buildings* (Donhead 2004)

Tells you all you are likely to need - and more. One for the serious recorder!

5: Fixtures and fittings

N.W.Alcock and Linda Hall, *Fixtures and Fittings in Dated Houses 1567-1763* (Council for British Archaeology 2002) Practical Handbooks in Archaeology no. 11.

A slim tome but based on meticulous and the extensive research.

6: Buckinghamshire

The Chilterns Design Guide, available from Chilterns Conservation Board.

A very good intro to Chiltern vernacular. Also see their technical notes on flint, brick and roof coverings.

Leslie Hepple and Alison Doggett, *The Chilterns* (Phillimore 1994)

Niklaus Pevsner and Elizabeth Williamson, *The Buildings of Buckinghamshire* (Penquin 1994)

This update on Pevsner's original is still very disappointing on vernacular buildings but has good introductory chapters and glossary.

A few older publications are worth looking up in the library (the BAS Library at the County Museum, the County Reference Library or the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies - all in Aylesbury):

RCHME Reports, *Buckinghamshire North* and *Buckinghamshire South* (1912)

The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) was the forerunner of English Heritage. Its two volumes on Bucks can be found in local libraries. They only cover buildings up to the 17th century, so are useful only for the really old stuff, but still useful - especially to show how things have changed since 1912. Good photos, but only a few.

The Victoria County History of Buckinghamshire: otherwise William Page (editor)

A History of the County of Buckinghamshire (four volumes plus index, 1905-1927).

An on-line version is accessible through British History Online at www.british-history.ac.uk

George Lipscomb, *The History and Antiquities of Buckinghamshire*, (1847).

J.J.Sheahan, *History and Topography of Buckinghamshire* (London 1862).

Records of Buckinghamshire is published by the society. An index of 150 years of articles is on-line at <http://www.bucksas.org.uk/articles.html>.

Local authorities can also be good sources as they hold the lists of listed buildings ('the Green backs') and most have listed building descriptions on-line. Also conservation area appraisals and design guides.

Parish councils sometimes have historical information which isn't published or generally known about. Also they may have a parish plan and/or village design statement.

It is also usually worth trawling the shelves of the local library (don't rely on the catalogue) and bookshops for local interest books - especially of old photographs.

7: Churches

Child, Mark, *Discovering Church Architecture* (Shire).

This is just a glossary of terms with small sketches to help identification - small enough to carry around.

T.Cocke, D.Findlay, R.Halsey, and E Williamson, *Recording a Church: An Illustrated Glossary*, (Council for British Archaeology 1996) Practical Handbook in Archaeology no.7.

Cunnington, Pamela, *How Old is that Church* (Blandford 1990)

8: On using documentary sources

Alcock, N,W., *Documenting the History of Houses* (British Records Association 2003) Archives and the User no. 10

Barratt, Nick, *Tracing the History of Your House* (Public Record Office 2001).

9: Websites

[English Heritage](#)

The EH website is not easy to navigate but often includes useful information, including academic papers. Their list of publications is extensive and many can be downloaded or are free. It's worth asking them to send you their Conservation Bulletin – also free.

[Images of England](#)

This includes listed building descriptions from all over the country, most with photos. However it may not include recent listings, and sometimes the photo may be of the wrong building - so it pays to make sure the description matches the picture!

[Listed Buildings On-line](#)

This website is the best place to search for listing details on individual buildings, but does not include photos.

[Heritage Gateway](#)

An embryonic website which should, in time, become the first port of call for information once the new Heritage Protection legislation is in force. It is also an access point for the [Heritage Environment Record](#), including that for Buckinghamshire.

[Unlocking Buckinghamshire's Past](#)

This is the best route into the Historic Environment Record for Buckinghamshire, with a database of more than 17,000 records of archaeological sites - excavations, earthworks and stray artefacts - plus historic buildings and landscapes. You can text search or search using a digital map.

10: Societies to join

- [Vernacular Architecture Group](#)
The expert group for vernacular buildings. Its annual journal is a very learned tome and a must-see for research. They also have conferences and study tours.
- [The Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings \(SPAB\)](#)
A campaigning with an excellent magazine, 'Cornerstone'. They give advice and run courses, mainly for homeowners. To join you have to sign up to the William Morris declaration on the protection of ancient buildings. Their address is 37 Spital Square, London EC 1 6DY, and phone 020 7377 1644.
- [Ancient Monuments Society](#)
Despite the name this covers buildings of all dates. Another excellent magazine, 'Transactions'. If you join you automatically become a Friend of Friendless Churches.
- [The Victorian Society](#)
Another misleading title since they campaign for both Victorian and Edwardian buildings.
- [The Georgian Group](#)
Originally an off-shoot of the SPAB. Campaigns to protect Georgian buildings.