Layers of London

User guide

What is Layers of London?

Layers of London is a free online resource that uses maps and user generated content to blend history, geography and digital technology.

Maps – Overlays

Central to Layers of London is a directory of *overlays*. Within the overlays section you can discover hundreds of historical maps and datasets of London, which can be uploaded and overlaid, letting users track how areas have changed throughout time. All our overlays have been geo-referenced, meaning the same points on all the maps can sit directly on top of each other. The overlays can be faded in and out, helping users see how areas have developed.

Records

Records are pieces of information that members of the public have added to locations on the map and appear as record pins. These might be about historical buildings, people's memories of life in the past, stories about places, or simply individual interests that people would like to share. Records can include descriptive text, images, sound recordings, and links to YouTube videos.

Exploring historic maps & datasets

To access our collection of maps and datasets select the *overlays* button in the top menu.

To select an overlay, click on its image or title in the overlays directory. This will open further information about the map.
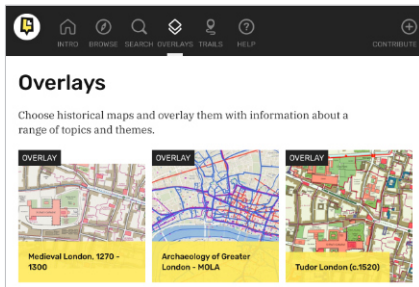
Overlays are categorised and listed in order of chronology. You can also search for specific overlays in the Search section, where you can refine your search by London borough.

Datasets

These overlays consist of vector points that give location information on particular themes – for example, the locations mentioned in Charles Dickens' novels or the locations of London's trees. Click on each point for more information.

Scroll down and click *use this overlay*. You can enable multiple overlays at the same time to view on the map. The site allows you to compare and contrast the overlays. Using the *Overlay tools* panel in the bottom left hand corner you can fade them in and out using the

sliders, temporarily disable an overlay by clicking the eye button, and change their order by clicking and dragging on

the names and bringing them up or down. You can also click *Hide pins* to make the records on the map disappear so you can get a clearer view of the overlays. To remove the overlay entirely, click its name and deselect *Use this overlay*.

Displaying multiple overlays

Many overlays have several *sublayers* within them, viewable within the Overlay Tools panel on the map. If you want to include a completely different overlay above or below your selected overlay, simple navigate to the desired overlay in the Overlays section, click on the overlay, and tick the *Use this overlay* checkbox. The overlay and any associated sublayers will be included in your Overlay Tools panel.

# Exploring crowdsourced records and collections

Finding records

The records on our site cover all areas of London and contain information on all kinds of topics. If you are interested in finding out what people have added in a particular area, simply navigate to that part of London by clicking and dragging the map or using the search.
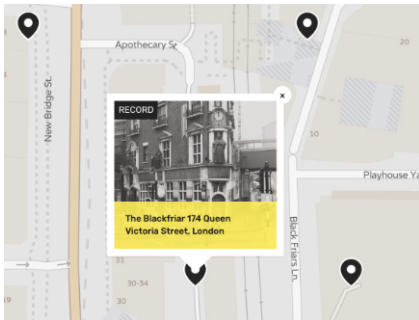
The records appear as black and white pins on the map which you can click to preview, and then to open.

If you are more interested in finding records on a particular theme, use the *Search* section in the main menu. There you can search for keywords, or filter by categories.

Collections
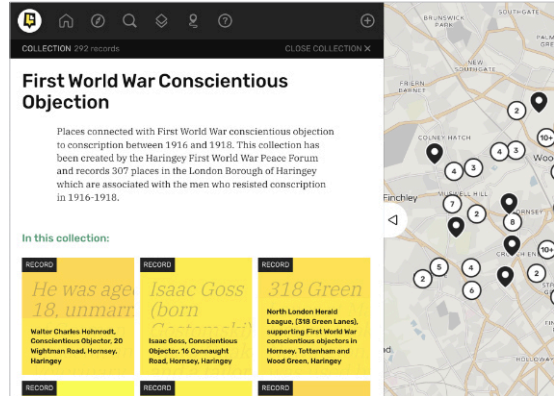
Many records are part of collections – groups of records related by theme. Some examples include Alexander Pope's London, Feminist History in the East End, and Old Postcards of Sutton.

You can see what collections a record is part of on the record's page, and you can click into these collections from there.

You can find collections the same way you locate individual records: by exploring the map (collections are marked by a smaller blue, green, and black pin icon) or by using the search function.
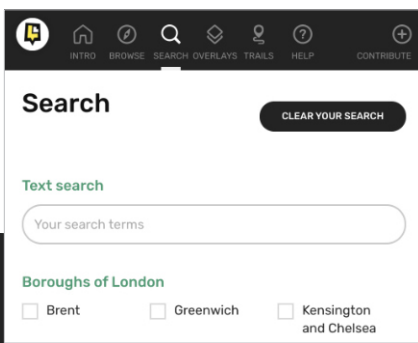
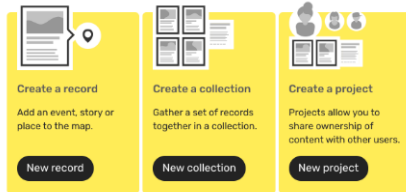# ⊕ Add your own records and collections

Before you create a record, you will need to create an account and log in.

You can create an account by using the button on the top right hand corner of the Layers of London homepage. You can then proceed to the map page. To begin, click the *Contribute* plus icon in the main menu.

Create a record	Create a collection	Create a project
Add an event, story or place to the map.	Gather a set of records together in a collection.	Projects allow you to share ownership of content with other users.
New record	New collection	New project

You will now enter the user-friendly contribute section where you can create a record, collection, or project.

A record or collection must have a location, and this is where you will start your content creation journey, by selecting as precise a location as you can. You can search for a place, and/or move the pin on a map to make the location more precise.
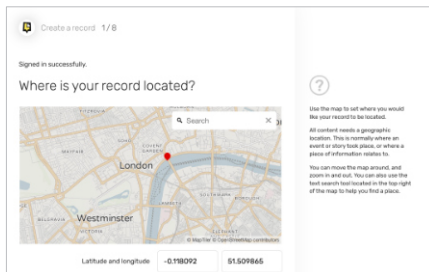
Name and content: Choose a title for your record. Try to keep to five words or less. The record content can be as long or as short as you like. If your record is principally an image you can just have a short caption, or if you have done in-depth research a few paragraphs might be necessary. Five-hundred words is a good upper limit.

Images and videos: Upload images from your computer to appear with your record or add a YouTube video by entering a link.

Date: You can pick an exact date or, in some cases it isn't obvious which year to choose. In which case, you can be less specific and only choose a year.

Links: A related webpage that the reader might be interested in.

Categories: Assign your content to a category. Again, you can be as specific as you like and choose multiple categories.

Attribution: Make sure to credit where you got your information from – a book, a website, an interview. Include a link if possible.

Saving and editing your record

Once you have filled in all the details you can choose to publish your record if you want it to be visible on the map for everyone. You can also save it as a draft if you are not finished and want to come back to it at a later date. Whether you have published it or not, you can edit your record. Click the Contribute icon. The records you have crested on will appear underneath the Create options on the page. To edit one, click into record and scroll down to the bottom, where you will nd the yellow "Edit" button in the bottom of the page.
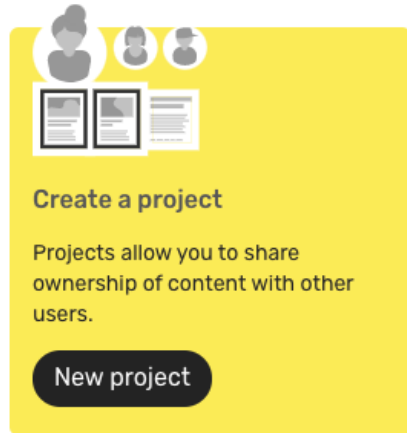

Any style guide for records?

We recommend writing your records in an accessible, not too formal style. A good guideline for length is 500 words as an upper limit, but in some cases it is necessary to go above this and that is not a problem!

Creating a collection

Some records are stand alone, but others are part of a collection of records on a similar theme. If you are adding multiple related records, you should create a collection. To do this click the *Create collection* option in the *Contribute* section. You will just need to give your collection a title and description. You can also add individual records to a collection from within the record page. Click the *Add to Collection* button at the bottom of the record page.

Working with a Project

If you are working with other people creating a collection, you might want to consider creating a Project. A project is a place for you to invite people to co-curate your work.

To do this, click the *Contribute* icon. Click on *Create a Project* and setup your project and add the email addresses of your colleagues. Members of your team can also request to join your project once the Project is all set up.

What about copyright?

All material added to the *Layers of London* website will be licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY 4.0) license. More information at www.layersoflondon.org/contributor-agreement.

Layers of London

Layers of London is part of the **Centre for the History of People, Place and Community** (CHPPC) at the **Institute for Historical Research**. The centre aims to foster engaged, innovative research into placed histories across all regions and periods, from the rural to the urban and the parish to the metropolis.

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www.layersoflondon.org