

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL SITES & MONUMENTS RECORD

The County Council Sites & Monuments Record (SMR) is the most comprehensive source of information on archaeological sites in Gloucestershire. The SMR holds nearly 20,000 individual records detailing sites and finds spanning the full range of human history from the Palaeolithic to the Second World War. Sites range from earthworks, buildings, buried remains revealed as cropmarks or soilmarks, the area of discovery of a find or finds scatter, maps or documentary references, or any combination of some or all of these.

Each site is given a reference number and details are held on its location: district, parish, grid reference. The site type, period and significance, its condition and legal status are also recorded. There is a basic description of its past and current condition plus a bibliography of articles relating to it.

All 20,000 records have been entered onto a computerised database and are linked to a geographical information system thus enabling a variety of searches for specific or linked sites or site types to be undertaken. As well as computerised information the SMR has access to a variety of supporting paper records, maps, a collection of aerial photographs and slides and a library.

The SMR was set up within the County Planning Department and the emphasis of its work still closely reflects the primary functions of its host department. Its main role is the provision of information and advice to secure the protection and management of the archaeology of the county. This is achieved through the strategic and development-control planning processes, and through the provision of archaeological advice to a wide range of other consultees and enquirers. For these purposes it is heavily used by other members of the staff of the Archaeology Service, as well as by external customers such as archaeological and planning consultants. The SMR is also frequently used for other purposes such as education and research (although this role is under-used).

As well as the day-to-day work described above, the SMR is in the process of writing a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to increase access to the records that it holds and develop a programme of outreach. It is hoped that this project, known as 'Gateways to Gloucestershire's Past,' will begin

in the early part of 2003.

The Archaeology Service is also involved in a number of other large projects including:

- ⊗ The Forest of Dean Project - a major archaeological survey of the Forest of Dean;
- ⊗ A National Mapping Project covering the Cotswold Hills which will aim to identify and record all archaeological sites (from the Neolithic to the twentieth century) visible on aerial photographs.

The SMR is continually being added to and is always interested in receiving new information from members of the public, students and archaeological professionals. Similarly, enquiries in advance of planning applications are always welcome and the SMR is glad to answer any questions on archaeological sites in Gloucestershire. The Service can be contacted at:

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