In 1986 the BBC launched an ambitious project to record a snapshot of everyday life across the UK for future generations. Over a million people contributed photographs and stories about their local community creating a truly unique picture of life in the 1980s.

Now, 25 years later you can see all this information online. Go to bbc.co.uk/domesday to explore the archive, see the pictures, update the information and make your mark on this fascinating record of our collective history.
Place your 80s picture here.

Place your new picture here.
**DOMESDAY RELOADED**

**THE STORY OF THE DOMESDAY PROJECT**

The BBC’s Domesday Project launched in 1986, 900 years after William the Conqueror’s original Domesday Book. BBC Domesday was an ambitious attempt to capture the essence of the United Kingdom. Over a million people contributed to this digital snapshot of Britain.

The whole of the UK – including the Channel Islands and Isle of Man – was divided into 23,000 4x3km areas called Domesday Squares or “D-Blocks”.

Schools, community groups and scouts and guides surveyed over 108,000 square km of the UK and submitted more than 147,819 pages of text articles and 23,225 amateur photos cataloguing what it was like to live, work and play in their community.

The project used cutting-edge technology of the day, and the data was eventually presented on a special type of Laser-Disc, read by a BBC master computer and navigated using an innovative tracker-ball pointing system.

But the technology didn’t catch on, and very few people ever got to see the fruits of all the hard work.

However, behind-the-scenes enthusiasts have been attempting to rescue the data. Now 25 years later in our age of the world wide web, digital photography, email and social networking, it’s time to have a look at those entries again, to bring the project up to date, and perhaps to lay down another layer of local history for future generations.

And The National Archives are helping us to ensure that this is preserved for future generations.

Michael Wood

Historian and Broadcaster

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This is an opportunity for everyone to get involved and share their stories and experiences so that a wide array of perspectives can be gathered together to produce a rich tapestry of the nation’s history.

Views of how a place has changed, pictures of community events, and stories that mean something to the contributors all help to create a wider, but personal picture of life in a particular place at a particular time. We want to preserve this insight and I encourage everyone to contribute to Domesday Reloaded – you can shape history by being a part of a future historical record.

The National Archives is pleased to be working with the BBC to ensure that the data generated by this significant social history project is preserved and to keep it accessible and useable for the long-term.

Tim Gollins,

Head of Digital Preservation

at The National Archives
GET INVOLVED WITH DOMESDAY RELOADED

There are around 23,000 images with captions, and 150,000 articles – far too many for one person or even a team of people to update. That is why we are asking you and as many other people as possible, to help us by sending in comments, stories and photographs about the places and people you know.

EXPLORE THE DOMESDAY RELOADED WEBSITE

On the Domesday Reloaded website you’ll find access to all the original pictures and text included on the 1986 Disc. Browse around the map, search for a location you know, or try finding articles about something you remember.

COMPARE THEN AND NOW

Help us to identify the changes that have taken place over the last 25 years and build a picture of what it’s like to live where you do today. The ideas on the next page will help you to get started.

SEND US YOUR COMMENTS, STORIES AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Use the email form on the website to tell us what you know. Some of your comments and stories will feature on our blog and we’re working with The National Archives to preserve as much as possible for future generations.

Whatever you send us, you’ll be asked to make sure you own the copyright to all the material, and that you’re happy for it to be included in Domesday Reloaded, so that future historians or researchers – maybe future generations of your own family – can have full access to this powerful resource.

And we’ll ask for your contact details in case any of the BBC’s programme makers want to get in touch.

What is a D-Block?

For the purposes of the project, the map of the UK has been divided into 4x3km rectangles called D-Blocks, short for Domesday Block.
SPOTTING THE CHANGES

1. Rural landscapes have changed...
   ...buildings demolished, estates built, farming practices changed. What was the land used for in 1986 and what is there now: fields or buildings, derelict wasteland or wildlife meadows?

2. Technology has changed...
   ...in a remarkably short while, our use of communications and media has utterly transformed. Computers, phones, television, and transport are all different. What can you see in your square now, phone boxes or mobile phone masts, TV aerials or satellite dishes?

3. Society has changed...
   ...do we get together like we used to? What do we wear? How do we play? What community groups do we belong to? Do the generations mix as much these days and what is it like to be elderly now compared to then?

4. Towns and cities have changed...
   ...some buildings come and go, some last hundreds of years. How has our interest in sustainability changed our ideas of taste and design? Have urban regeneration projects altered the way we use our inner cities?

5. Work has changed...
   ...how do most people make a living in your block now? Have the days of the pit or the factory gone? What new industries, if any, have taken their place?
USING DOMESDAY RELOADED WITH THE COMMUNITY

Here are some ideas for taking things further and bringing Domesday to life.

QUICK IDEAS

CREATE A DISPLAY
Print off the three pictures from your D-Block and attach them to the photo frames on page 2 (print an extra copy for each picture), then pin up the poster for everyone to see. You could retake the pictures and attach the modern views too – or, challenge your groups to find the locations and re-photograph each of the scenes.

SHOWCASE YOUR COLLECTION
Domesday Reloaded is going to get people thinking about the recent history of their local area. They may want to research the last 25 years in their D-Block, so make any relevant books, photos or digital files you have ready. Precious images or documents should be photocopied with the originals kept safely locked away. Use the poster on the front of this resource to draw attention to your display.

GO BACK IN TIME
Host a 1980s day – dress up in fashions of the decade and display any 1980s artefacts you have. Libraries could create a display of great 1980s novels, see our reading list for some inspiration. Find the list at bbc.co.uk/domesday.

GROUP SESSIONS

ARRANGE A TALK
Host a talk on 25 years in your D-Block. Local museums or historical societies may be able to provide speakers. A talk doesn’t have to be long, around 30 minutes can be enough time to explore a subject, with additional time at the end for questions from the audience.

RUN A WORKSHOP
Use Domesday Reloaded as the subject for a group workshop. You could:
• Look at 25 years in your square. Print out the three photos from 1986 and put them on the wall. Ask your group to find a photo from every year since then until 2011 and finish your display with the three updated versions of the original views.
• Run an intergenerational workshop where children interview older members of the community to find out about life in the 1980s – it’s ancient history to them!

RECREATE THE PHOTOS
If your square has group photos, see if you can find the people in the pictures and retake the shots. Where is everyone now, what have they been doing in the last 25 years?

SCHOOLS
Cross-curricular KS2 lesson plans are available to download at bbc.co.uk/primaryhistory.

FIND MORE ONLINE
Go online to download more copies of this guide, find help with digital photography and join the Domesday conversation on our blog at bbc.co.uk/domesday. Or tell us about your Domesday stories on Twitter, we’re @bbcdomesday.

If your activities produce material that you would like included in the archive, go to bbc.co.uk/domesday and use the email form to send it to us.