

Project proposal template

Graduate School studentships

March 2015

<i>Project title</i>	Field scale reconstruction of 19th century rural land use using first County Series OS maps and parish area books	
<i>First Supervisor</i>	Professor <input type="text" value=""/>	<input type="text" value="Nigel Walford"/>
<i>Second Supervisor</i>	<input type="text" value="Dr Doug Brown"/>	
<i>School</i>	Geography, Geology and Environment <input type="text" value=""/>	
<i>Other member of supervisory team (no more than three KU supervisors in total)</i>	<input type="text" value=""/>	
<i>Specific requirements beyond 2:1 degree</i>	<input type="text" value=""/>	

Project summary (max 4,000 characters)

The project will explore agricultural land use change in mid-19th Century England, which was a period of relatively high prosperity and stability before the onset of an era of decline and depression from the early 1870s through to the 20th century. The project will draw on a previously under exploited source of land use data for mid-19th century England, namely the first County Series of Ordnance Survey (OS) maps (1853-4) and accompanying area books published for each parish (1855 to 1879). The research develops from and extends the historical and geographical focus of work on 20th century agricultural land use completed at Kingston University, which has concentrated on the South Downs and Weald in South-East England. The project will provide the opportunity to undertake a comparative analysis of mid-19th century agricultural land use in this area of lowland farming with an English upland farming area.

The research is situated within the expanding field of Historical Geographic Information Systems and Science. It is likely to involve the creation of a database of land parcels and associated land use information in a GIS for contiguous parishes across the lowland and upland farming areas. The OS maps are freely available through Digimap and the area books are held in the British Library. The research will offer insights into field scale patterns of agricultural land use at this transition point in English agriculture.

Possible research questions include:

1. How were the field scale patterns of agricultural land use related to the transition from prosperity to depression in English 19th century agriculture?
2. How differentiated were lowland and upland farming systems in their ability to cope with this transition?
3. Did the mid-19th century agricultural land use patterns lay a foundation for 20th century agricultural adjustment?

