

A soft-focus photograph of a field of red poppies. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The background is a bright, hazy sky, creating a peaceful and nostalgic atmosphere.

Life After the Armistice

Session 4 – A Country Fit for Heroes



24 November 1918, Prime Minister David Lloyd George, speech in Wolverhampton

- “What is our task? To make Britain a **fit country for heroes to live in**. I am not using the word ‘heroes’ in any spirit of boastfulness, but in the spirit of humble recognition of fact. I cannot think what these men have gone through. I have been there at the door of the furnace and witnessed it, but that is not being in it, and I saw them march into the furnace. There are millions of men who will come back. Let us make this a land fit for such men to live in. There is no time to lose. I want us to take advantage of this new spirit. Don’t let us waste this victory merely in ringing joy bells.”



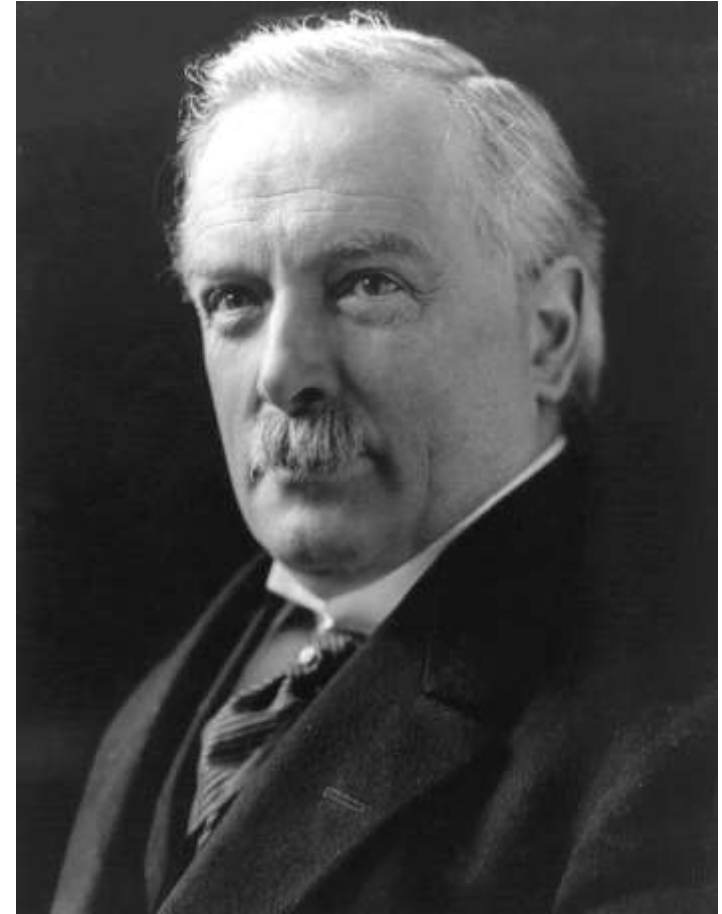


Political Overview



Political Overview

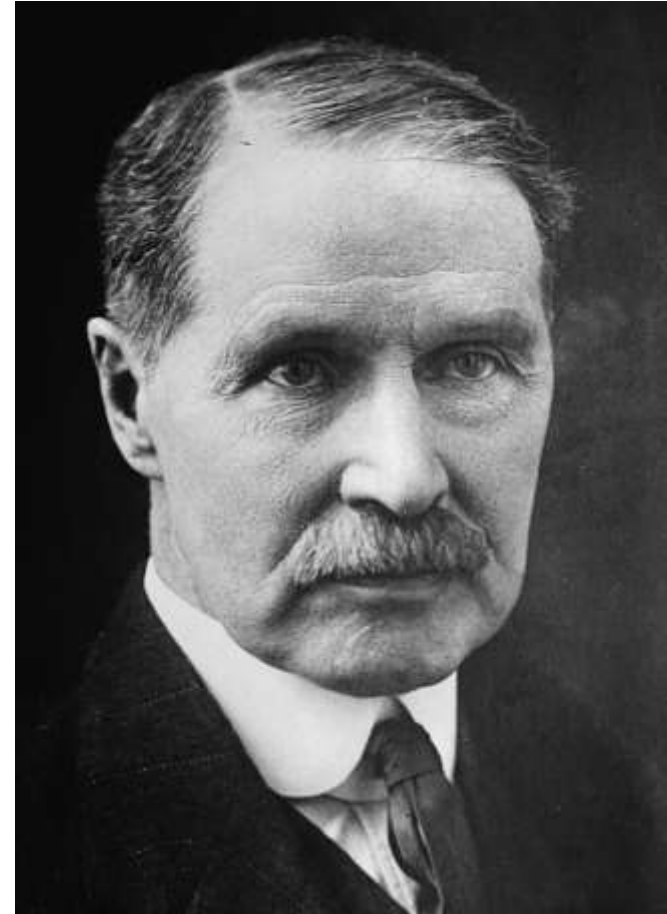
- 1918 - Lloyd George's Liberal Party returned to power but they increasingly relied on the support of the Conservatives to govern.
- After several scandals including allegations of the sale of honours, the Conservatives withdrew their support in 1922.





Political Overview

- 1922 - Bonar Law became prime minister of a Conservative government.
- In May 1923 Bonar Law resigned because of ill health and was replaced by Stanley Baldwin.





Political Overview

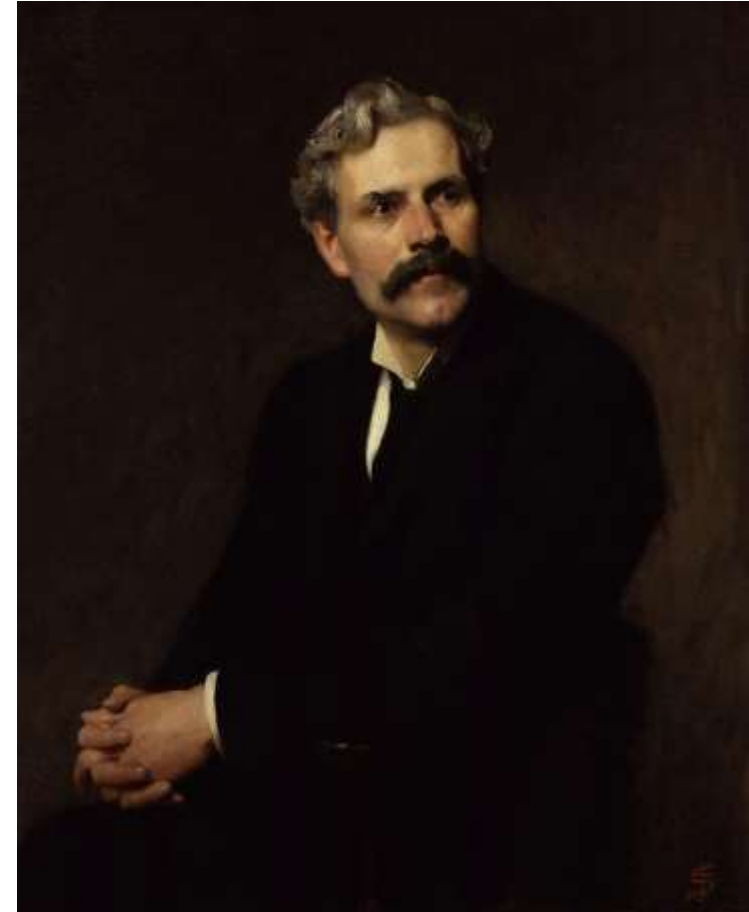
- Baldwin's mixture of strong social reforms and steady government proved a powerful election combination.
- The Conservatives dominated the political scene.
- In the general election of 1935 Baldwin's was the last government to win over 50% of the vote.





Political Overview

- 1924 – Labour led a minority Government for the first time from January to November.
- The leader was Ramsay MacDonald.
- In December 1924, MacDonald lost a no-confidence vote and Baldwin became Prime Minister again.





Political Overview

- 1929 – Labour won the most seats in Parliament.
- They governed with the support largely of the Liberals.





Political Overview

- 1931 – Because of the national crisis that faced the country a national government was formed.
- At first this was led by Ramsay MacDonald but then Baldwin took over.





Expanding the “Welfare State”



Unemployment Insurance

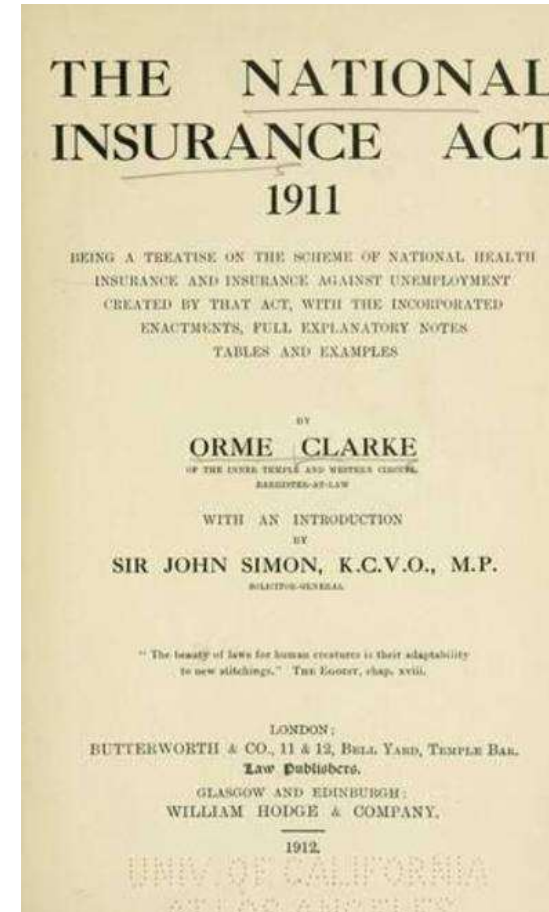
- David Lloyd George's Liberal government had introduced unemployment insurance through the National Insurance Act of 1911.
- The provisions covered 2.5 million workers, mostly in manual trades.
- Workers, employers and the Treasury contributed to an unemployment fund.





Unemployment Insurance

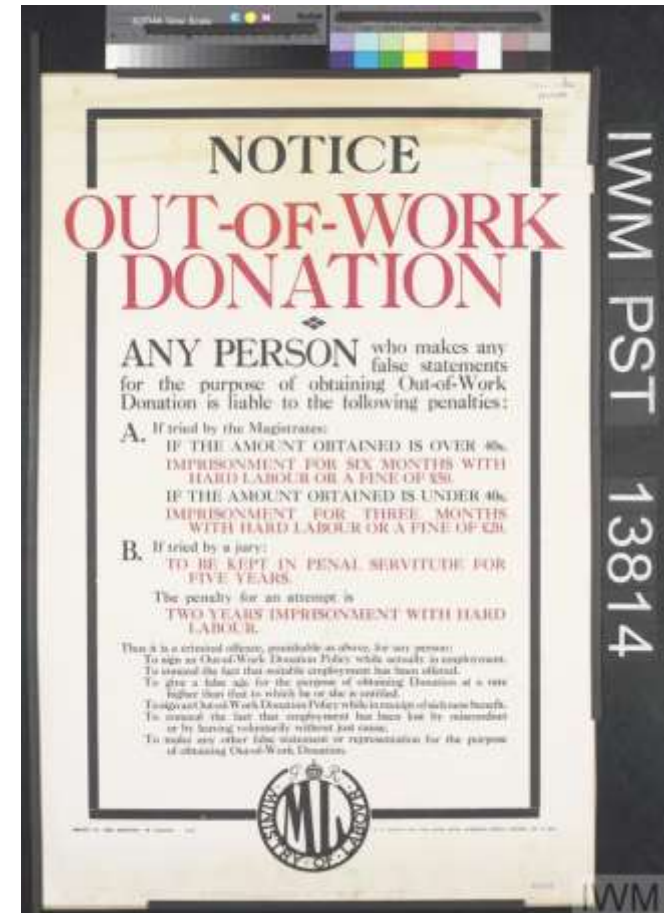
- The maximum amount payable was seven shillings a week, which was intended only as a supplement to other sources of income.
- The period for which insurance could be drawn was limited to one fifth of the period of contributions.
- The unemployed who did not qualify for insurance had recourse to the Poor Law authorities.





Unemployment Insurance

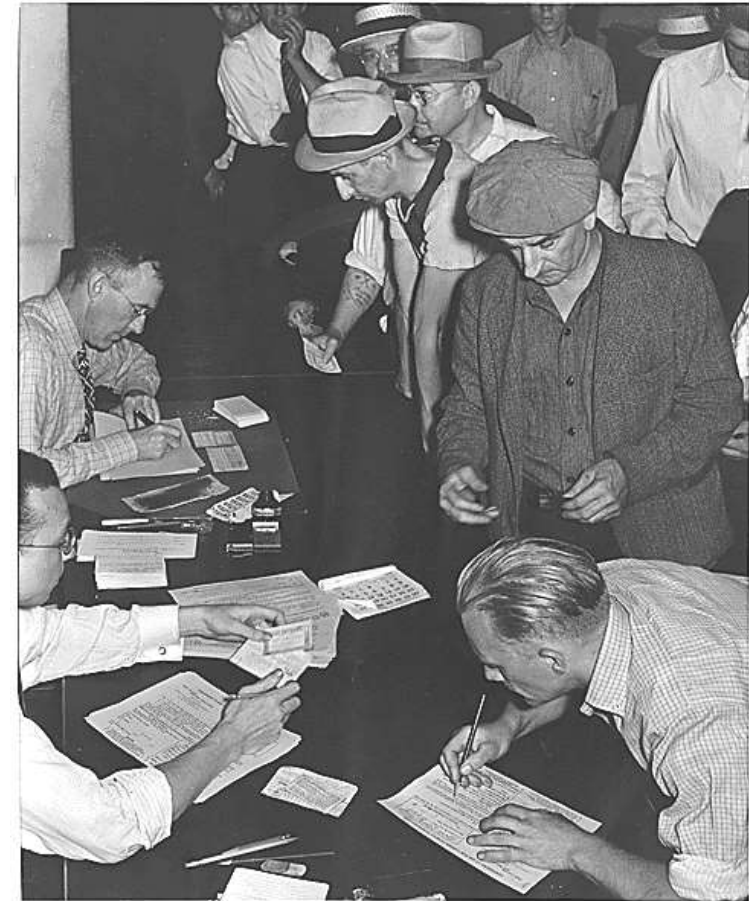
- This scheme was inadequate to provide for the large-scale unemployment that followed the end of the First World War.
- A temporary scheme of unemployment relief, the 'Out of Work Donation', was used to relieve unemployment immediately after the war.
- This enabled a much larger payment of 29 shillings a week for men and 24 shillings for women, with additional allowances for dependents, to most adults who registered as unemployed.
- This was available for a strictly limited period, but the government was forced to grant extensions as servicemen were demobilised.





Unemployment Insurance

- The 'Out of Work Donation' created expectations for the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1920, the details of which were decided in November 1919.
- The Act extended the provision of the 1911 Act to most workers earning less than £250 per annum.
- The period in which money could be claimed was limited to one sixth of the period of contribution and the maximum period of claims was 15 weeks.
- There was little opposition to the end of the Out of Work Donation, because unemployment had fallen to a low level.





Unemployment Insurance

- The position changed radically early in 1921.
- By the middle of the year unemployment, exacerbated by the coal strike, was close to 20%.
- Under these conditions, the contributory system and the one in six rule were untenable given the threat of political instability and unrest among the unemployed.





Unemployment Insurance

- The Unemployment Insurance Act of March 1921 relaxed the 'one in six' rule by providing for the payment of 'uncovenanted' benefit without previous contributions.
- The intention was that it could be drawn for a maximum of 32 weeks.
- The 1921 Act also introduced a 'seeking work' test for those claiming benefit.
- Claimants had to show that they were genuinely seeking work and were obliged to accept any work paying a fair wage





Unemployment Insurance

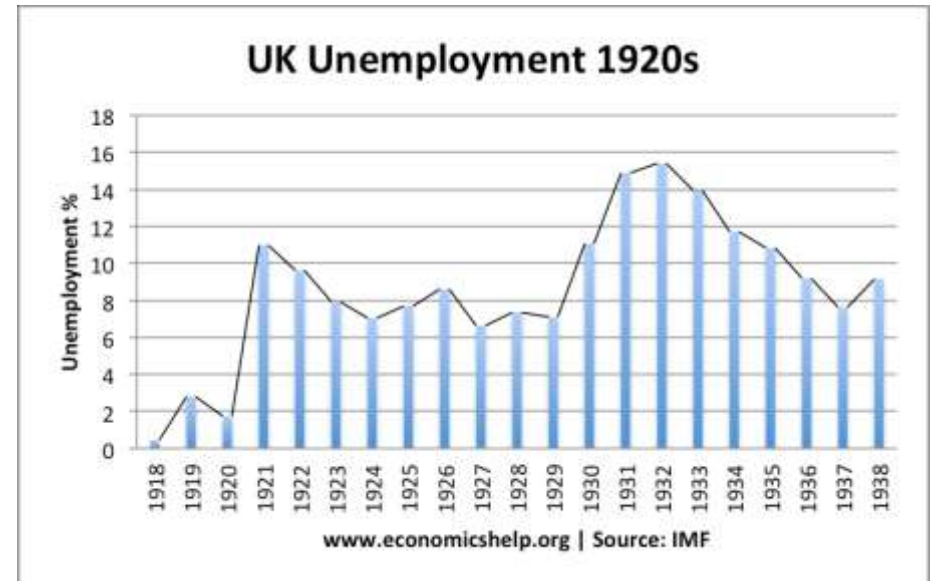
- In February 1922, a means test was introduced as a further means of restricting benefit payments.
- Uncovenanted benefit was now payable at ministerial discretion.
- Some groups, such as single adults living with relatives, could be excluded unless it would cause serious hardship.





Unemployment Insurance

- From this point until the welfare reforms after World War II, the terms of Unemployment Insurance fluctuated according to trends that are familiar today:
 - Financial pressures
 - Ideological changes – particularly about the means test
 - Suspicion of “scroungers”





Unemployment Insurance

Liverpool had a consistently high level of unemployment throughout the period when compared to other areas.

25th April, 1919

**OVER A MILLION DRAWING
THE DONATION.**

DECREASE IN NOTTINGHAM.

The latest figures available showing the number of people drawing the out-of-work donation are for the week ending April 11th. They were issued last night, and show a total of 1,020,023, made up of 731,211 civilians and 348,812 members of his Majesty's forces. The following are the details:

	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.
Civilians	217,538	457,442	26,093	30,134
H.M. Forces .	347,895	917	—	—
	565,433	458,363	26,093	30,134

The number of policies lodged in the week dealt with showed an increase on the previous week of a little over 2,000. When analysed by industries they show that the rise is in uninsured industries, such as transport and textiles, and that the fall is in the insured industries, such as engineering and iron-founding.

There was an increase in unemployment at Liverpool, Manchester, and Bristol, and a decrease at Leeds and Nottingham. Unemployment among boys and girls under 13 years of age showed a reduction.

MOTOR CARS.

Unemployment Insurance

created courtesy of THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD.

receiving information as to the Cabinet's intentions with regard to **unemployment**.

THE LIVERPOOL DISTURBANCES.

One hundred and forty-five men and one woman, Mrs Mary Bamber, appeared at Liverpool City Police Court, yesterday, to answer charges arising out of Monday's **unemployed** disturbances in the city. About 50 of the accused bore signs of the conflict. The Rev. Vint Laughland was heavily bandaged about the head. Mr Tissyman's head was also bandaged and his right arm was in slings.

In an address to the magistrates, Mr Vint Laughland alleged that he was struck while lying on the ground.

Only evidence of arrest was given, and all the accused were remanded for a week and allowed bail in their own recognisances.

14th Sept 1921

APPLICATIONS FOR RELIEF.

LIVERPOOL STAFF OVERWHELMED.

So numerous are the applications for outdoor relief, consequent upon **unemployment** in **Liverpool**, that the work involved was stated yesterday to be too much for the existing relief staff. It was resolved that applications for relief by the unemployed be dealt with separately from ordinary relief cases, and a committee was appointed to give effect to the decision in the best way possible.

Wallasey unemployed announce a demonstration for Friday to emphasise the demand for free ferryage for **the unemployed** in the borough seeking work in **Liverpool**.

28th Sept 1921

Unemployment Insurance

branch of the union.

NO BENEFIT

Some 1,000 seamen who applied for unemployment benefit at Liverpool Labour Exchange yesterday were handed notices stating that their benefit was suspended for six weeks. The refusal to grant them benefit follows their non-acceptance of what in the opinion of the authorities was considered suitable employment.

4th Sept 1925

ARMY OF CASUALS

The cold statistics of the Employment Exchanges give only a partial indication of the ramifications of the unemployment evil at Liverpool.

There are 26,000 men and 6,000 women (dock clearing-house scheme not included) on the employment register.

But members of the Employment Exchange Committee admit that the unemployment figures for the district are by no means complete, as they do not take into consideration those workers who are not receiving benefit, or the huge army of workers subsisting on casual work, who are compelled to make ends meet independently of insurance or Poor Law help.

The stagnation in the shipping industry accounts for nearly 5,000 idle Liverpool seamen, not to say anything of several hundreds more in Birkenhead.

Although only 2,900 transport workers and 1,200 dock and riverside workers are reported, the actual number is far greater, and even so these figures would appear quite modest beside the huge total of casually employed men.

Two thousand warehousemen, 1,900 building trade workers (1,300 un-

11th June 1925



Housing



Housing

- Probably the biggest social need after World War I was decent housing.
- In the years before the First World War private builders had supplied virtually all new housing in towns and cities.
- The war, however, changed everything.
- Building activity came to a virtual standstill whilst the country fought.





Housing

- By the time of the General Election in 1918 it was becoming clear that the country faced an acute shortage of housing.
- Building costs were inflated and this, combined with a scarcity of materials and labour, made it impossible for the private developers to provide houses with rents within reach of the average working class family.





Housing

- The close of the war also brought a new social attitude.
- This focused the Government's attention on a national responsibility to provide homes.
- Lloyd George's famous promise of 'homes fit for heroes' referred to the many soldiers returning from the war.





Housing

- The Housing and Town Planning Act of 1919 (The Addison Act) was seen as a watershed in the provision of corporation (council) housing.
- Councils were thrust to the forefront as the providers.
- They began to plan their post-war housing programmes.
- Housing Committees were set up, working largely from recommendations from central government's advisory committee - the Tudor Walters Committee.





Housing

- They were encouraged to build through the provision of generous subsidies.
- The subsidy arrangements shared the costs of this new housing between the tenants, local rate payers and the Treasury.
- Councils in areas of high housing need could apply for these subsidies.





Housing

- Planners promoted the construction of new suburban 'garden' estates, situated on the outskirts of cities.
- Mainly consisting of three bed houses for families, the design of the estates aimed to create self-contained communities of low density - often with no more than 12 houses per acre.
- Facilities, including churches, schools and shops, were provided; public houses were initially excluded from the plans.





Housing

- On most estates, house were provided with a generous size garden to encourage the tenants to grow their own vegetables, a privet hedge at the front and an apple tree at the back.
- The interiors varied, some having a parlour, but all had a scullery and bath.
- For most new tenants these new conditions were a huge improvement on their previous slum housing where they had experienced overcrowding and often were without even basic facilities.





Housing

- The most ambitious estate built to reward soldiers and their families after the war was the massive Becontree estate in Dagenham which was to become the largest council housing estate in the world.
- Work by the London County Council on the estate started in 1921, farms were compulsory purchased and by 1932 over 25,000 houses had been built and over 100,000 people had moved to the area.





Housing

- The new houses had gas and electricity, inside toilets, fitted baths and front and back gardens.
- LCC also, however, had strict rules for new tenants on housework, house and garden maintenance, children's behaviour and the keeping of pets.





Housing

- Most of these new council estates, like Becontree, provided good quality housing for the better off working classes but did not provide a solution for the poorer people in society.
- Rents were high and subletting was forbidden so naturally the tenants in the best position to pay were selected.
- High rents sometimes meant difficulty in paying, as more applicants from unskilled occupations were housed.





Housing

- The Addison Act was passed initially as a temporary measure to meet the housing need felt in the country as an effect of the war and at a time when private builders could not meet the demand.
- It was generally assumed that the private sector would resume responsibility for working class housing once the British economy had recovered.





Housing

- The high building standards initially embraced in 1919 were gradually reduced during the 1920s and 1930s.
- This was because cost considerations became paramount and so space and amenities were reduced.
- The principle objective of the Wheatley Act of 1924 was to secure a continuous building programme for period of 15 years and to erect houses that could be let at lower rents to meet the position of lower wage earners.





Housing

- This put pressures to reduce the size and standard of houses and called for new council estates to be developed at a higher density.
- For instance, during this period, a new three bedroom house was often only 620 square feet compared to over 1000 square feet in 1919.
- New council housing was gradually becoming labelled for the very poor.
- Despite this they generally continued to provide good quality accommodation.





Housing

- After this initial burst of building activity across the country targeted at reducing the post-war housing shortage, local councils began to tackle the problem of its existing slum housing.
- The Housing Act of 1930 encouraged mass slum clearance and councils set to work to demolish poor quality housing and replace with new build.
- Slum areas of housing existed in most inner city areas and were generally old, neglected and unhealthy places to live.





Housing

- Many of the houses had originally built for workers during the period of rapid industrial development often without thought for overcrowding or amenities such as an adequate water supply, ventilation and sunlight.
- Using powers available under the Act to acquire and demolish privately owned properties, slum clearance schemes were put into action across the country.





Housing

- By 1933 all authorities were required to concentrate efforts on slum clearance.
- Each had to submit a programme of building and demolition aimed at eliminating slums from their districts.
- Unlike the garden estates built directly after the First World War, much of the slum clearance was replaced with flats, mostly three to five storeys high.
- They were often modelled on schemes in continental Europe.
- Non-traditional building techniques were embraced.





Housing

- Local councils tried initially to rehouse people locally back into the communities they were forced to vacate but the vast majority of new houses were built on new estates, most located on the fringes of the cities.
- This was a combination of central policy and the high cost of inner city land.
- The new tenants had to weigh up the disadvantage of a considerably longer journey to work and sense of isolation against the benefits of a new well equipped home.





Housing

- Rents were generally lower in this period than they were for earlier schemes built under the 1919 Housing Act.
- Despite this and a general commitment to house those in most need, in practice the ability to pay the rent played a crucial factor in allocation.
- Rents were set much lower following the 1930 Housing Act in line with re-housing some of the poorest people in society under slum clearance policy.





Housing

- Tenancy conditions were strict and regulations were enforced from the start.
- Some tenants were put off by the oppressive housing management.
- In Liverpool women housing managers were employed to inspect properties and instruct tenants on good housekeeping.





Liverpool Housing

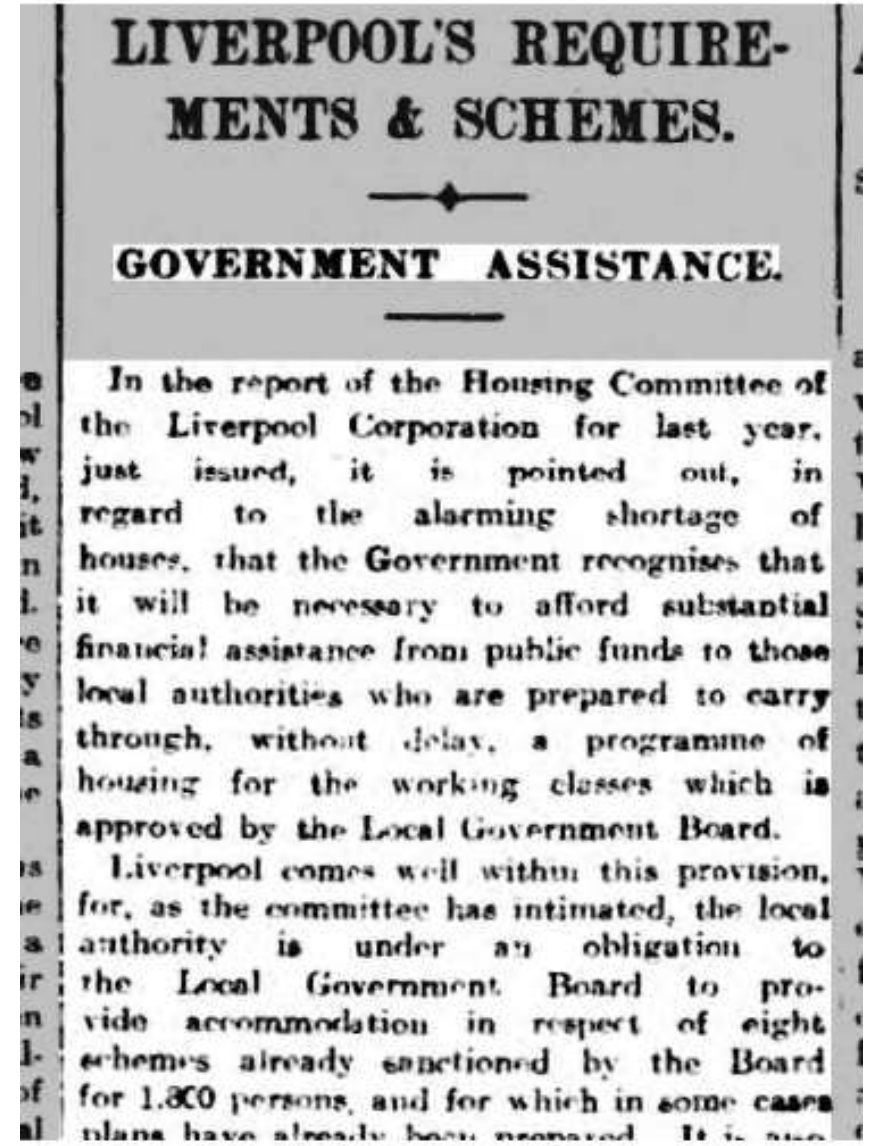
Homes for Workers





Liverpool Housing

- Liverpool's need for new housing was one of the greatest in the country.
- In 1919, 11,000 families – over 6% of its population – lived in one-room dwellings.
- It was estimated conservatively that 8000 houses were needed immediately and 1000 a year thereafter to ensure a growing population adequate accommodation.



Liverpool Daily Post - Wednesday 20
November 1918



Liverpool Housing

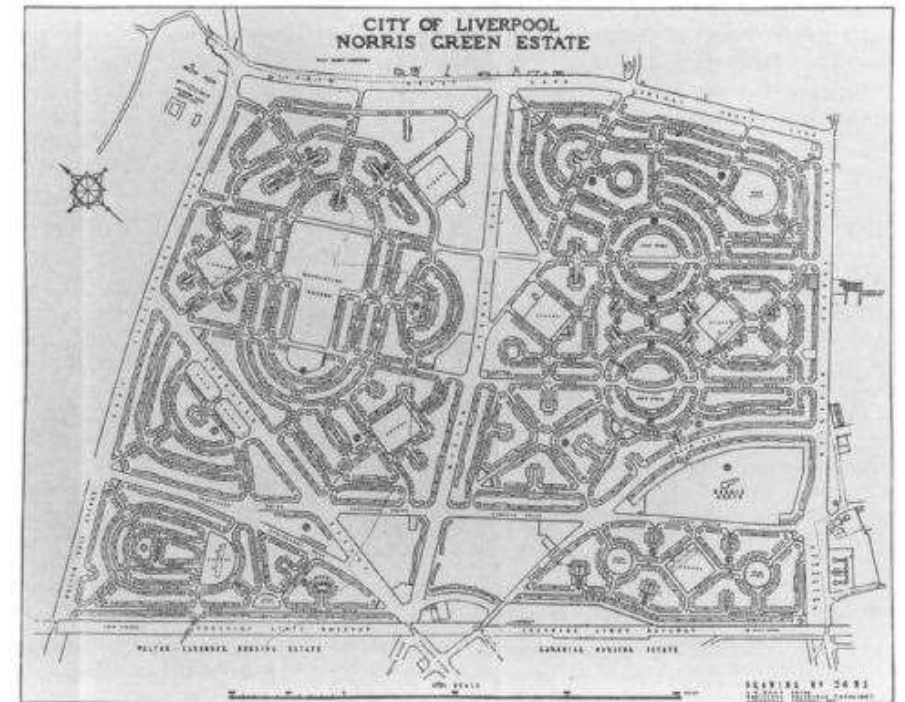
- In the post-war drive to build, the Conservative-controlled council (it would remain in Conservative hands until 1955) built 5508 houses under Addison's 1919 Housing Act – more than any municipality in the country.
- But the city couldn't rest on its laurels.
- In 1924, its overcrowding was three times the national average and there were 20,000 names on the council house waiting list.





Liverpool Housing

- In October, the City Engineer John Brodie presented plans to build 5000 new homes.
- Land was purchased on the north-eastern fringe of the city – 650 acres (of which 470 lay in the neighbouring Sefton Rural District Council until incorporated into the city in 1928).
- This would form the new Norris Green Estate.
- Building began in June 1926.





Liverpool Housing

- Within three years, the Estate contained a population of 25,000.
- Eventually, there were some 7689 homes housing a population of over 37,000.
- This was a phenomenal achievement but not without problems.





Liverpool Housing

- All the homes – 4,724 parlour, 2,965 non-parlour – had three bedrooms.
- The non-parlour had a downstairs bathroom.
- All benefited from electricity and hot water, front and rear gardens and woodwork painted in regulation Corporation green and cream.





Liverpool Housing

- Most were built of unglazed brick.
- But, to build faster and more cheaply, the Estate also featured some 3000 'Boot and Boswell' pre-cast concrete homes.
- These were influenced by Dutch designs.





Liverpool Housing

- The urgent rush to build left the Estate's infrastructure severely underdeveloped for some time.
- Early streets were unpaved – wooden planks acted as makeshift walkways – and the first shops didn't open – in the Broadway – until 1929.
- This gave Liverpool's unofficial entrepreneurs ample opportunity and at one time it was estimated 150 shops were run – quite illegally – from homes on the Estate.





Liverpool Housing

- There was little landscaping and a great deal of uniformity in the housing.
- The well-intentioned layout, which did reflect garden city ideals of circles, crescents and cul-de-sacs, only added to the confusion.
- The Corporation erected four illuminated signs at the entrances to the Estate to assist those who got lost.





Liverpool Housing

- The first school didn't open until 1929.
- Free bus and tram tickets were provided to get children to inner-city schools (though many stayed at home).
- The first Catholic school didn't open until 1933.
- More seriously, to some of the residents, there was no Catholic church until 1928.
- This was a temporary structure until a permanent building opened nine years later.





Liverpool Housing

- The Council did its bit for morality by deciding in 1926 that no public houses would be permitted on its estates.
- The brewers soon built large premises on their fringes which were well used.





Liverpool Housing

- It was not all bad, however.
- An infant welfare centre started in 1929, a temporary library in the same year, and the first public hall built on a council estate was opened in the Broadway in 1930.
- Public baths followed in 1936 and the tramways were finally extended into the Estate in 1938.





Liverpool Housing

- The reality is that for nearly all the incoming tenants their new homes represented a massive improvement on what they had known before.
- In this context, downstairs bathrooms and the Estate's teething troubles were, for the most part, readily accepted.
- Meanwhile an active tenants' association campaigned for improvements.





Liverpool Housing

- Almost 80% of Norris Green's heads of household belonged to the skilled or semi-skilled working class.
- The Council wanted tenants who could pay regularly and council rents demanded a good working-class income, the more so in these suburban estates where additional travel-to-work costs were high.





Liverpool Housing

- But in Liverpool – a city with a large amount of casual labour and with unemployment levels reaching one third of the workforce in the 1930s – this could not be sustained.
- Increasingly, Norris Green and the other estates did house a less skilled and less well-off working class, particularly in the cheaper non-parlour homes.





Liverpool Housing

- Rents, utility bills, furniture and transport costs could become unsustainable.
- Around 40% of Norris Green tenants gave up their tenancies in this period, often because they couldn't afford them but sometimes because they missed the closer-knit communities around their former inner-city homes.





Liverpool Housing

- Wearing shawls obviously signified 'rough' working-class origins and their loss was seen as a mark of 'respectability'.
- Council estates were regarded as a vehicle of upward mobility, of benign social engineering, in fact



Houses while you wait





THE DAILY MAIL, WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 1925.—5.

WHAT LIVERPOOL IS DOING FOR HOUSING.

“MAIL” MUNICIPAL SERIES—CONTINUED.

Hull's Rival in Commerce: Leader in Civic Activity.

THOUSANDS OF HOUSES: MANY NEW WORKS.

(FROM OUR LABOUR CORRESPONDENT.)

THE City of Liverpool deserves every credit for the manner in which it is lease of 1672 was obtained, the Corporation held only scattered pieces of present contracts under the 1923 and 1924 Acts include approximately 4,500 houses in



THE City of Liverpool deserves every credit for the manner in which it is tackling the greatest of its many municipal problems—that of housing. Liverpool has many civic problems, and is likely to continue having them as long as development goes on. With over a million population, many slum areas, and liable to the usual additions of extra population common to all parts, a visitor stands in amazement as he views the size of the city.

There are many points of attraction. To the administrator, the first object of interest is the Municipal Buildings, which constitute the centre of all the city's municipal activity. The commercial man would confine himself to the Exchange, while the seaman would make for the docks. The frontage of the River Mersey is certainly a place of interest. Affording splendid berthing facilities for ferry-boats and the like, which run hourly to New Brighton and other places of interest, it is also a collecting promenade for those desirous of availing themselves of the opportunity of a sea breeze when out for their evening stroll. To a resident of a seaport town, such quay-side scenes as can be witnessed at Liverpool are of daily occurrence. Comparison with Hull for an across-ferry service shows Liverpool to advantage. Instead of one boat at a time, many boats can be berthed, and intending passengers pick out the boat they need and travel whither

they desire. People with tongues in their heads and eyes to see can never go wrong if they want to make a journey by one of these boats. It reminds one of the harbour of Bridlington in summer, when the fishermen stand on the pier shouting to intending passengers which boat to use.

MUNICIPAL ACTIVITY.

To a city of such vast dimensions, every year brings its problems. Municipalities cannot afford to stand still. While administrative work grows in volume, the departments must extend their centres. With each growth, there comes the demand for the requisite safeguarding equipment. Consequently a new fire station is being erected to satisfy a new district, thus supplementing the already efficient central organisation. As the progressive development of health measures continues, new services have to be brought into use.

This feature is exemplified by the fact that a new mammoth abattoir is to be constructed on lines which will make it, when finished,

one of the largest in the country. With the development of electricity and the probable adoption en masse of hundreds of electric houses and other devices, which will mean greater consumption of electric power, the Electricity Committee has on the way a new power station designed to house some exceedingly large units of plant. The station is at the present time generating a vast number of units of electricity, and supplies the current for the city tramway service as well as that for the general body of users.

The urgent need of the new station can be gauged from the fact that a new building, recently erected, had to be demolished to accommodate the extension! There are also on the way, ten extra sub-stations for transforming the current from 6,000 volts to 230, at which latter figure it reaches the consumers. I gathered the larger station was to house finally four twenty-five thousand K.V.A. turbines.

THE CORPORATION ESTATE.

The holdings of the Corporation in estate are immense. The Land Steward and Surveyor of Liverpool was good enough to spare me a few moments of his time, and to give me a few details of the estate. Incidentally, he told me that his committee and himself had just returned from Holland, whither they went to study some points in connection with housing. This is the second city, to my knowledge that has sent delegates to Holland in connection with housing advancement. In that country, they are reputed to build the walls in one piece by means of a mould, with spaces left for doors and windows. After the structure is set, the latter are fitted in with bolts and nuts to fasten them, and the rest is plain sailing.

The Land Steward (Mr H. D. Jenkins) was good enough to review the points concerning the city's estate, from a paper he read on the subject before the Surveyor's Institution and Land Agent's Society, which met recently in Liverpool to hold the summer joint meeting of the two societies. The acquisition of the estate goes back to 1207, when the record began with letters patent from King John. The first intimation of the acquisition of land (which may be taken as the beginning of the Corporation estate) was by a grant of six acres of moss in the Moss Lake, made by the Earl Thomas of Lancaster to the burgesses of Liverpool in 1309 at the nominal rent of one penny per annum. In 1394 the great lease granted by John of Gaunt gave full control of the common pasture between Liverpool and Toxteth to the Corporation. Until the



lease of 1672 was obtained, the Liverpool Corporation held only scattered pieces of land, which could not be classed as an estate. That tenure, however, provided a solid base to work upon, and in a short time the Corporation annexed most, if not all, the waste lands within the borough boundaries, which they gradually garnered into their own keeping.

These were then enclosed and let out to persons desirous of erecting buildings upon them, with a consequent return in leasehold to the Corporation. The Corporation Estate owns its real origin to that period, which was about the time of the first Enclosure Movement, the results of which were not so disastrous to the peasants as that of the later 18th century movement.

LATER DEVELOPMENT OF THE ESTATE.

Through the various epochs in the history of Liverpool, the estate has grown in commercial value. For this a great deal of the credit is due to the farseeing ancestors of the present inhabitants of the city. The estate has, in not a few instances, come to the assistance of the Corporation when money was sorely needed. There are standing today in Liverpool several large public buildings, much bigger in dimensions than the largest hall in Hull, which have been erected and paid for solely from moneys received by renewals of leases and fines. This fact itself is indicative of the growth of the estate owned and administered by the Corporation

of Liverpool. According to the Land Steward and Surveyor, about the year 1798 the Corporation had some difficulty with their bond debt, and raised money by selling some reversions to their freeholds, and it is recorded that between 1798 and 1814 they realised about £181,000. They also sold ground rents of £275 per annum for £9,335, and these sums were applied to the reduction of their bond debt. The capital value of the Corporation Estate in 1792 was calculated at £2,621,442. In 1906 the freehold of the estates was valued at £12,500,000.

SOURCE OF ENORMOUS WEALTH.

The net annual value of property falling into possession from 1887 to 1922 (i.e. all property in lease) is given at £623,000. Capitalised at 16 years' purchase this gave a sum of nearly £10,000,000, which, invested at 3 per cent., produced an income of about £300,000. To-day, Liverpool has an estate which, if in possession, was worth about £20,000,000, and increasing in value, had received nearly £4,000,000 for fines on renewals, sales, and net rents, to say nothing of the

enormous sum that would have accrued to the estate if the value of areas allocated to public buildings and improvements had been sold to improvement account, and invested for estate revenue purposes.

Some of the big public buildings, it will be seen from the above statement, are not included in the estate for revenue purposes. It is questionable whether there is any other city in the country which has a more valuable Corporation Estate than the city of Liverpool. It constitutes a formidable asset, and stands as an eloquent testimony to the far-seeing accumen of earlier Liverpool civic administrators.

I wondered, whilst listening to my informant, as he told me of the public buildings which had been built and paid for out of the fines etc., derived from the renewal of leases, that had such a fund been available in Hull, the new North Bridge Scheme, the level-crossings, and the new Tador-street project, and who knows perhaps, the Humber Tunnel, might have been regarded in a different light, and much sooner than the present. Liverpool has a great deal to be thankful for.

HOUSING ACTIVITY.

In common with most large cities, Liverpool has a great amount of leeway to make up in the matter of housing. Like most municipalities, also, its housing activities, prior to the war were wholly confined to dealing with insanitary property; the introduction and carrying out of schemes for housing the inhabitants dispossessed of their insanitary dwellings. Directly after the war, however, the question of housing the people grew to immense proportions, with the result that the functions of the Housing Committee were diverted to wider fields, and the provision of working class houses became its first consideration.

Housing had passed the stage of debate. It had to be recognised as a national question, requiring a determined and drastic attempt to mitigate its possible consequences. As a commencement, the committee acquired 1,257 acres of land, and of these 664 acres have been built upon.

20,000 HOUSES REQUIRED.

The estimated shortage of houses in Liverpool in 1919, when the campaign commenced, was about 15,000. Despite all the houses that have been built the most up-to-date figure puts the number still required at 20,000. The number of houses contracted for was 5,838, of which 2,814 have been erected and let. The



present contracts under the 1923 and 1924 Acts include approximately 4,300 houses in brick and concrete. Besides the above figures, there is also a number of wooden huts at Knotty Ash, which formed part of the American camp during the period of the war, which the committee took over, and made into dwellings for the people. The number now erected is indicative of the whole-hearted manner in which the Liverpool Housing Authorities have tackled the housing problem.

THE RATE OF BUILDING.

This has been proceeding on very rapid lines. August 3rd, 1919, saw the first sod turned under the Addison scheme (1919), and the rate of building can be gauged by the fact that in July, 1920, there were 38 houses completed; in 1921, 1,056; in 1922, 3,153; and in 1923, 3,004, not including the 488 wooden bungalows previously mentioned as forming part of the camp taken over by the authorities. From these figures it will be seen that during the three years, 1920-1923, the rate of production of houses reached by the Liverpool Housing Committee in these schemes was an average of 1,655 per annum. The average annual production of houses of similar accommodation by all agencies, private enterprise and corporate, between the years 1905-1909, was 1,648 per annum, and from 1910-1914 it was 904 per annum. These figures throw a lurid light on the problem,

and show how the housing shortage was creeping up.

£240,000 ANNUAL GROSS RENTALS.

The sizes of the estates are enormous, and, when the last house on each is erected, will appear as miniature towns. The annual gross rentals of the new estates are approximately £240,000, while the annual addition to the rateable value of the city is over £100,000. There are 150 streets and roads on the various estates, having a total length of 20 miles approximately. If the whole of the houses had been built of brick, 110,000,000 bricks would have been used, whilst 110,000 tons of mortar would also have been required. As a matter of fact, Liverpool has been called the experimental city, for her pioneer work in experiments concerning house structure, and building materials.

15 DIFFERENT METHODS.

The authorities have employed no fewer than fifteen different methods of construction. In rotation, these are as follow: (1) Brick, 11in. hollow walls, 3,133 houses; (2) brick-

11in. hollow walls, 23; (4) concrete, none like concrete slabs, 9in. hollow walls, 335; (5) concrete Duo slab houses, 8in. hollow walls, rough cast, 214; (6) concrete "Australia" slab houses, 6in. hollow walls, (Economic) roughcast, 925; (7) concrete "Aero" block, 6in. hollow walls, roughcast, 2; (8) concrete, "C.D.L." concrete in situ, 8in. hollow walls, roughcast, 5; (9) concrete, "Calver" slab houses, pillars and slab roughcast, 20; (10) concrete, clinker slab houses, roughcast (Kirk Randall), 5; (11) re-inforced concrete, Waller system, 78; (12) frames construction, steel Dorman-Long expanded metal, roughcast outside, 16; (13) frames construction, steel and wood, with exp. metal, roughcast outside and slab or brick inside, 10; (14) frames construction, steel and wood, with exp. metal, with "Bishopric" roughcast outside and slab or brick inside; (15) wood huts, 488; making a grand total of 6,326.

RECREATION GROUNDS PROVIDED.

It cannot be said that the housing sites have merely been laid out for the purpose of crowding people into houses, anyhow. Forethought and the long view have been exercised in laying out the land. The provision of ornamental gardens and recreation grounds constitute a pleasing feature of the schemes, and as the provision of open spaces is advocated almost on every hand, Liverpool has taken time by the forelock, and accommodated its sites to the new needs. Over 45,000 square yards of land have been allocated for school sites, and two schools are already in existence.

Nearly 20,000 square yards of land on three estates have been sold on a 29 years' leasehold for the provision of shop sites, banks, works, professional men's residences, etc. On four of the sites library sites have been provided and 27,000 square yards of land have been set apart on four estates for churches of various denominations. The allotment holder has not been forgotten, for provision has been made for 458 plots of land on four estates to be used for allotment purposes. The main aim in the layout of the housing sites has been to provide all the amenities usually associated with our national suburban life. All the schemes are practically within a five-mile radius of the Pier Head, and are served by direct lines of railway or electric tramway, and in most cases by both.

UNHEALTHY AREAS.

Like the majority of large towns, Liverpool
(CONTINUED AT FOOT OF COLUMN 3.)



has its slum areas. These have to be dealt with apart from the general question of housing, so that an activity in this direction is supplementary to the effort already described. Prior to the war, a number of unhealthy areas were scheduled, but nothing could be done to alter the conditions during the war. Now, however, a serious attempt has been made, and the new proposals are already in course of completion. The question of housing the dispossessed tenants of unhealthy property is the main difficulty standing in the way of a real attack being made on slum property, and this fact is bound up with the general housing shortage.

In one case, that of Prince Edwin-street area, a tender has been accepted, and the work nearing completion, for the erection of 60 tenement flats on the site of the existing unhealthy area. The two photographs will illustrate the old and new types of houses in that slum area,



PRINCE EDWIN-STREET: UNHEALTHY AREA.



PRINCE EDWIN STREET SCHEME. TENEMENT FLATS.



Elevation of New Tenement Flats.

PRINCE EDWIN-STREET: UNHEALTHY AREA.

A tender for the erection of these tenement flats has been accepted and the work is being put in hand immediately. The new buildings will occupy the site of insanitary property, the nature of which may be judged by the other photograph.

—By courtesy of the City Engineer.