

Homes for Heroes



Homes for Heroes

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- What are homes for heroes?
- What is different about homes for heroes?
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- What are the reasons for and against slum clearance?
- Can we identify homes for heroes?

Resources

How to use this resource

There are 5 discrete activities in this resource,

Though some of the activities follow on from the previous one, it is possible to be selective and some of the activities can stand alone.

Each activity consists of aims and objectives, learner and teacher activities and resources. The hyperlinks in the resources section on each activity will take you directly to the relevant information.

Opportunities to promote equality and diversity (E&D) and Every Child Matters (ECM) have been highlighted where relevant in each activity.



Postcard image of Forest Avenue, Hillfields, 1920s courtesy of Bristol Record Office (43207/4/17)



Architects drawing of a non parlour house typical of the housing estates built in the 1920s, courtesy of Bristol Record Office

Homes for Heroes

What are homes for heroes?

Activity 1/5

Aims and Objectives

- To ascertain existing knowledge
- To encourage enquiry
- To explore linguistic connotations

Learners' activities (including skills acquired)

- In pairs, students write down all the associations that they make with the word 'heroes'
- **(E&D-ECM)** All associations to be recorded, all pairs to participate
- Students explore the word 'home' and feedback

Teacher's activities

- Write the word 'heroes' on the board and ask class for some initial associations before students continue to make associations in pairs.
- Teacher provide brief background from resources about Homes for Heroes.
- Ask students to consider the connotations of the word 'home' as opposed to house (can draw attention to alliterative feature that helps to make it a memorable label).

Resources

Background information

- The First Housing Act after WWI was introduced in 1919 following a speech by the prime minister, David Lloyd George in which he stated that the country should build "homes fit for heroes".
- Many people in Britain at the time lived in old unsanitary buildings, without a bathroom and often had to share a toilet in a backyard.
- Houses were often shared by many families or large families were crammed into houses that were too small for them. Sometimes a family might be living in a single room.
- The 1919 Act provided money for local councils to build the first 'Council Houses'.
- The first council houses in Bristol were built at Hillfields shortly followed by houses in Knowle and Sea Mills.
- People were often moved from 'slums' to these new housing estates and had a three bedroom house, bathroom and internal flushing toilet for the first time in their lives.
- Many of the first council houses had a 'parlour' or second reception room as well as a living room. Part of the thinking for this was that the parlour could double up as an alternative bedroom if the family were caring for an injured serviceman who could not easily get upstairs.
- In September 1920 there were 676 applicants for houses at Hillfields, 591 of these were ex-servicemen.

Homes for Heroes

What is different about homes for heroes?

Activity 2/5

Aims and Objectives

- To encourage observation skills and use of descriptive language
- To understand how these houses were different to previous buildings

Learners' activities (including skills acquired)

- Students compare and contrast an image of the interior of a 1920s house with an image of a pre WWI house.
- Students spot the differences or similarities and feedback.

Teacher's activities

- Teacher to draw out other differences, such as 1920s houses usually had bathrooms whereas before, even if people took a regular bath it would have been in a tin bathtub in front of the fire in the living room.
- Also, 1920s houses were some of the first houses to have a flushing toilet within the house rather than a shared latrine outside in a communal yard.

Resources



[Click to view larger copies of these images.](#)

Homes for Heroes

Why were homes for heroes created?

Activity 3/5

Aims and Objectives

- To build on prior learning within this unit
- To encourage listening skills
- To be able to understand the social and political climate with regard to housing.

Learners' activities (including skills acquired)

- Identify why the houses featured in the Pathe film were to be demolished.
- Discuss in pairs why many of the existing houses ('slums') were not appropriate for returning soldiers.

Teacher's activities

- Show Pathe film.
- Explain that although the film dates to 1933 the approach originated as a result of the 1919 Housing Act introduced by the then prime minister, David Lloyd George.

Resources

- Pathe film <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/much-done-but-more-remains/query/Bristol+housing>



A typical Victorian tenement, photograph from the Bristol Municipal Charities Collection courtesy of Bristol Record Office (33041/BMC/12/1/a/43)

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What are the reasons for and against slum clearance?

Activity 4/5

Aims and Objectives

- To understand the issues surrounding slum clearance
- To introduce the concept of propaganda and bias

Learners' activities (including skills acquired)

- While listening to audio clip, students identify the disadvantages of living in a 'slum' dwelling.
- Students list the reasons for moving and the reasons for staying.
- Students produce a persuasive speech either for or against the slum clearance.

Teacher's activities

- Teacher to play audio clip from Know Your Place.
- Teacher highlight that despite the disadvantages mentioned on the audio clip the speaker talks fondly of her old home. Discuss reasons for this with the class.
- Teacher to explain that the Pathe film is just one side of the story. The people living in the 'slums' had to be rehoused usually in other parts of Bristol breaking up a community that might have survived for many generations.

Resources

[Ms P. Burnell talking about her memories of living at No.1 Upper Terrace.](#)



A sketch of Lower Terrace in 1912, now part of Castle Park, drawn by Samuel Loxton courtesy of Bristol Reference Library (X1461)

Homes for Heroes

Can we identify homes for heroes?

Activity 5/5

Aims and Objectives

- To encourage analytical skills
- To encourage spatial understanding
- To be able to produce representational plans
- To encourage assessment of modern housing conditions

Learners' activities

(including skills acquired)

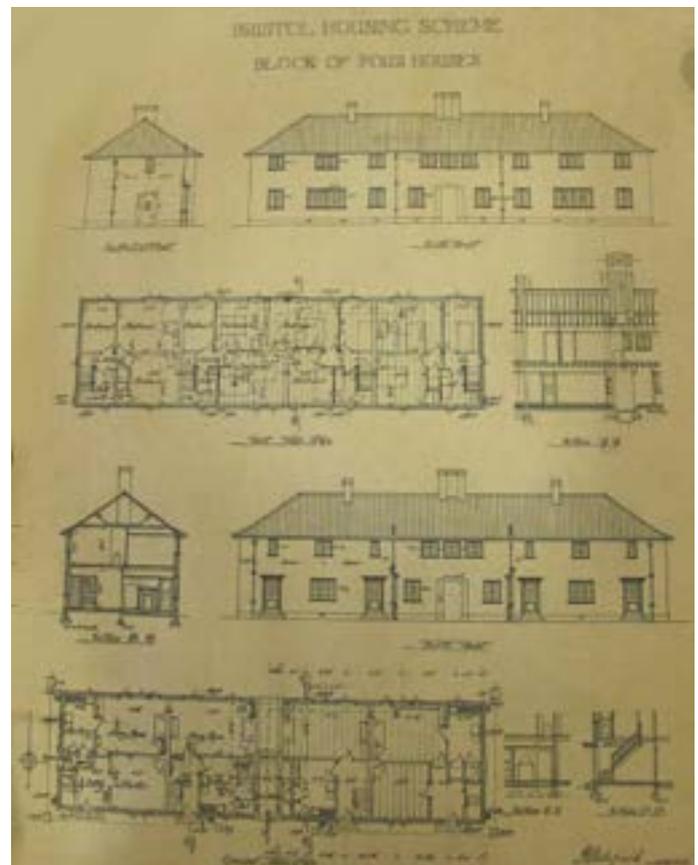
- Using the historic plan as a guide, students create a labelled floor plan of their own home.
- Students assess the suitability of their houses for returning servicemen.
- Students adapt their floorplans to accommodate an injured soldier.

Teacher's activities

- Teacher to show historic building plans to students and check that students understand what is being represented.
- Teacher to model floor plan of the school building, students could label.
- Teacher to support students as they produce floor plans and modified floor plans of their own houses.

Resources

- Building plans of a terrace of four properties; half with parlours and half without



[Click for a larger version of this image](#) or [click here to view an annotated version](#).

Homes for Heroes



Image taken from <http://www.discover-liverpool.com/24/section.aspx/3>



Image of 1919 Ministry of Munitions house at Lower Shirehampton courtesy of Bristol Record Office (40826-HSG-138-002)

Homes for Heroes

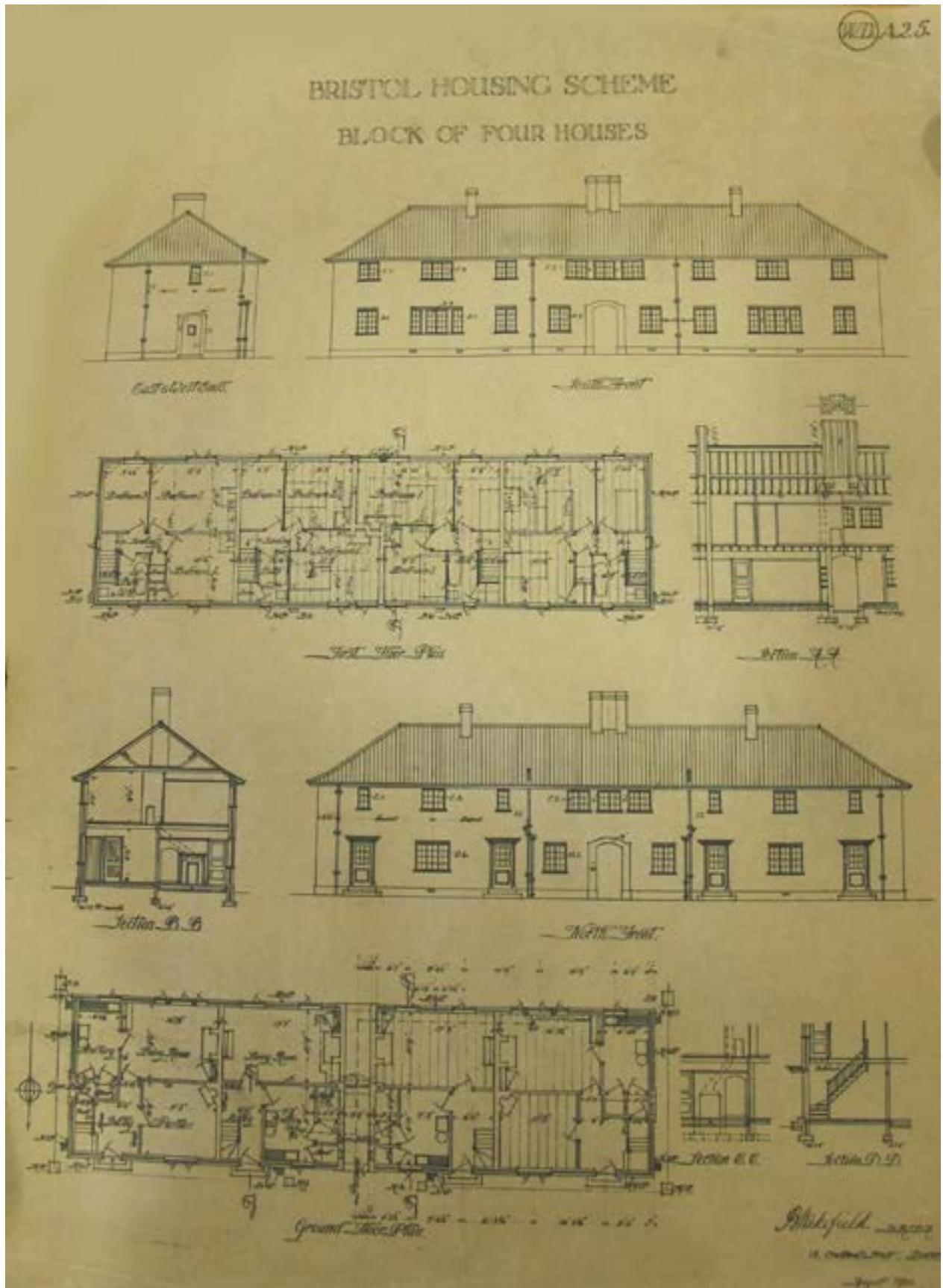
Hillfields

- Parlour houses
- 3 bedroom non parlour houses
- 2 bedroom non parlour houses
- A mix of parlour and non parlour

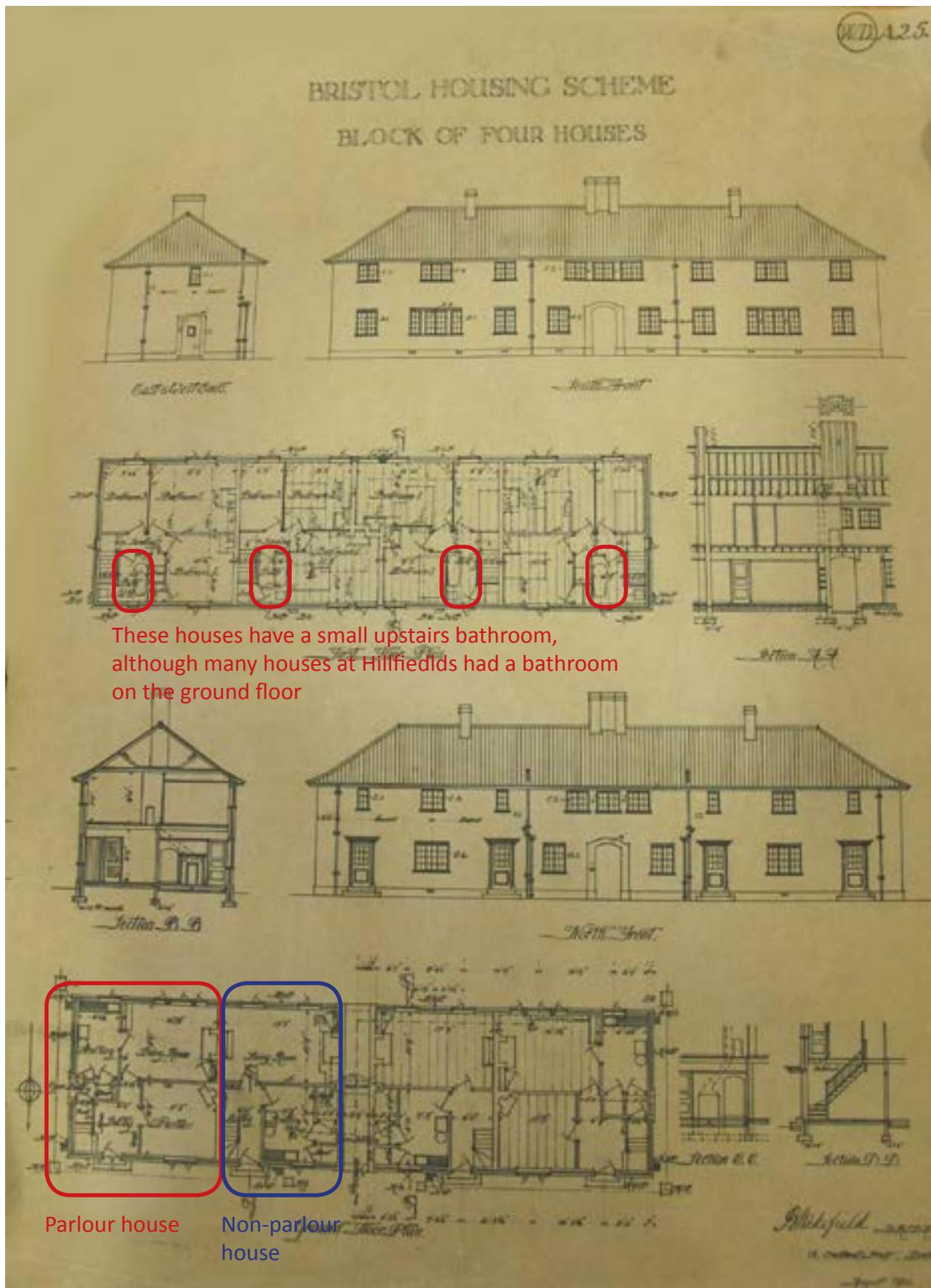


This plan gives an indication of how many parlour houses were built in Hillfields. It can be used on a walk around the area where pupils can identify which properties would have been most appropriate for a returning soldier.

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The Ministry of Munitions estate at Lower Shirehampton, built in 1919 for employees at the former mustard gas factory at St Andrew's Road, Avonmouth. The factory became the National Smelting Company after the First World War.

Although not 'homes for heroes' and these pre-date the concept of council houses, this was the first housing estate to be built after World War I.

Image courtesy of Bristol Record Office (40826-HSG-138-001).

