

Enquiry Question:

Does war always change a place?

Objective

To understand the effects of war on people and places both directly and indirectly.

1 Additional resources are available to support learning activities - look for the orange number to guide you.

Equipment

- Pen or pencil
- Paper and clipboard or a notebook
- Additional resources
- 30 pieces of A3 card or paper
- Optional: Pre-prepared zine templates, various craft items, glue, scissors

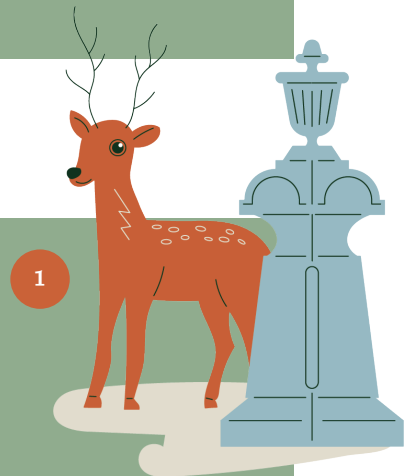
Time - this activity can take around **one hour and a half** to complete unless you wish to explore aspects in more detail.

Prepare

Introduce Sheffield General Cemetery and explain to learners that today we will be exploring World War Two and the impact it had on Sheffield and the people buried or commemorated here in the Cemetery.

Ask learners to share their knowledge of WW2. **What do you know about World War Two? What do you think happened to Sheffield during World War Two?**

Adolf Hitler was the leader of Nazi Germany and he invaded Poland on 1st September 1939. Because Britain and France promised to protect Poland, they declared war on Germany on 3rd September 1939. World War Two lasted from 1939 to 1945 and it changed the lives of many people across the globe forever.



Explore

Share a map of the site so the learner is familiar with where you are going to go. Discuss with the learner that each of the markers on the map represents the final resting place or a memorial of some people who contributed to WW2. **How might we find out about their stories? What might their stories tell us?**

2

On some of the gravestones and memorials it tells us where people fought or died. For others we rely on newspaper reports, family letters and belongings and information given to the archives. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission also honours men and women who died in both world wars.

Discover

Learners will explore the local stories from World War Two of those buried or commemorated in Sheffield General Cemetery.

3

At stop 1, explain that WW2 created many changes for both people and places. All men aged between 18 and 41 had to join the armed forces. Many recruitment posters were produced at the time to encourage men to join. However, there were also posters to encourage women to join the ATS, the Auxiliary Territorial Service. In 1938, the ATS was set up to fill a range of vital roles during World War Two. Women from all over Britain and the British Empire joined the ATS. They learnt to do the jobs that men had done before they went to war (**visit stops 2-4**).

After stop 4, walk down to the space near the Anglican Chapel and discuss how men and women were not the only ones affected by war. In 1939, thousands of children were evacuated from their homes in cities to live with strangers in the countryside. **Do you know why they had to leave?** During WW2, there was a significant threat from bombing.

Germany bombed many British cities during World War Two. Many cities with ports or docks where ships would bring in important supplies were targeted such as London, Liverpool, Bristol, Cardiff, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Southampton, Sunderland, Swansea, Belfast, and Glasgow. Industrial cities, Birmingham, Coventry, Manchester, and Sheffield, were also bombed during the Blitz. **Do you know what the Blitz was?**

The 'Blitz' was shortened from the German term *Blitzkrieg* which meant 'lightning war'. The Blitz was a continuous campaign of bombing attacks on British towns and cities. The bombs were dropped by the Luftwaffe (German Air Force) from September 1940 until May 1941. In these nine months, over 43,500 civilians were killed.

The Sheffield Blitz

There are only 9 World War Two burials of service personnel in the Cemetery. Many who are buried here died as a result of the terrible Blitz in December 1940.

During World War Two, there were many bombing raids on towns and cities across Britain. Sheffield was an important industrial city that supplied weapons to the British army during both world wars. Because of this, Sheffield became a key target for the Germans. Over two nights on the 12th/13th, 15th/16th of December 1940, residential areas, the city centre and industrial firms were bombed (**share stories from stops 5 and 6 on the map**).

Stop 7 on the map: On the night of the Sheffield Blitz, 12th December 1940, a bomb fell on Cemetery Road. It damaged the east end of the Anglican Chapel, the boundary wall, and several memorials. At least one other bomb fell and damaged the Cemetery. Claims for war damage were still outstanding in 1949 although repairs had been carried out.

Find somewhere to sit or stand in the Cemetery park such as the stone circle or the outdoor classroom (story chair in the wooded area) to reflect on what the learners have come to understand about how WW2 affected Sheffield. Offer learners some questions to consider and give them time to share their thoughts with the group:

What impact did WW2 have on the people of Sheffield? How did the Blitz change Sheffield? What was Sheffield like after WW2?

In May 1945, Germany surrendered and the war ended in Europe. The war was officially over in August 1945 when the Americans dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan.

Did you know? The Peace Gardens in Sheffield were originally called St Paul's Gardens. In 1985, the area was officially renamed to the Peace Gardens in the presence of three Hibakusha (survivors of the bombing of Hiroshima).

Create

Create a zine reflecting on the enquiry question:

Does war always change a place? *Depending on the time you have, you could draft ideas and then create the final piece another time.*

4

A zine is a handmade publication using a range of creative materials. It does not follow a set structure, learners can fill it with their own thoughts, questions and reflections following their time in the Cemetery.

Some ideas you could include:

- an acrostic poem of the word BLITZ (see additional resource example)
- a collage drawing of the Anglican chapel using newspapers or old magazines
- diary entries or short biographies of the how the war affected local people
- using ink stamps to note important dates or key words
- a sketch or painting of the Bielby gravestone or war memorial
- a WAAF poster to link to Rosemary Beedie's story
- a newspaper headline of Eva Nicholson's story
- a fold out creative map of where the bombs fell on Sheffield

Refer back to questions to prompt reflection:

What impact did WW2 have on the people of Sheffield?

How did the Blitz change Sheffield?

What was Sheffield like after WW2?



Reflect

Gather together in a circle. Remind the learners of the enquiry question: **Does war always change a place?** Give learners a chance to share a final thought about what they have discovered - they could share an aspect of their zine.

When the Sky Falls by Phil Earle is a great book to share a different perspective of the effects of WW2.

You could take photos to share with others on social media using **#learningatGenCem** and tagging **@sheffieldgeneralcemeterytrust**