



ARP Wardens

Thousands of men and women volunteered to be **Air Raid Precautions (ARP)** Wardens during the Second World War.

An **ARP** Warden patrolled the streets and told people to put their lights out to maintain the **Blackout**. All lights needed to be turned as it may have attracted attention or guided German aircraft to ground targets.



Government posters encouraged people to join the ARP. In smaller towns and villages, ARP workers often had no training or uniforms. ARP was the only war work a 14-year-old could help with.



ARP Wardens wore a blue uniform and a Brodie helmet with a 'W' marked on it (W for warden). This is George Armstrong, he was a local Annandale farmer who volunteered to be an ARP Warden.

Most ARPs carried a **gas mask**. They handed these out with leaflets about what to do in the event of an **air raid**. Every man, woman and child were issued with a **gas mask** to protect themselves against poisonous gas bombs.



When news of an enemy air raid was communicated by the Royal Observer Corps, ARP Wardens sounded sirens and whistles to alert civilians to take cover in air-raid shelters to protect them from the falling bombs.

In the aftermath of a bombing raid ARP Wardens helped to put out fires caused by incendiary bombs and provided first-aid to any injured civilians.

Gretna was bombed on 7th April 1941. This attack left the township in chaos. A lone German Bomber dropped seven bombs and killed 28 civilians, including a 14-year old girl.





Air Raid Shelters

Thousands of **air raid shelters** were built. There were two types of air raid shelter, the **Anderson Shelter** and the Morrison Shelter.

From February 1939, the British Government began disturbing the **Anderson Shelter** to people on the home front to protect them from falling bombs. These shelters were made from sectional galvanised corrugated steel. They had curved and side panels (including a door) and were designed to withstand strong impact and absorb energy without collapsing. As the shelters had to be dug into the ground for stability, many people covered them in soil and planted vegetables and flowers to disguise the structure.



Look outside at our Anderson Shelter and Dig for Victory Garden.



People could not predict how long they would be in their shelters or whether they would have a home to return to. It was recommended to take important documents, like insurance policies, birth and marriage certificates, as well as warm clothing, food rations, candles and first aid kits into the shelters. Many would also take knitting, books, games and toys in the shelters to keep themselves occupied.

Morrison Shelter

Morrison Shelters were constructed with a steel framework and wire mesh sides. They were used internally inside the house; many were positioned under dining tables to give an extra layer of protection.

Over 500,000 Morrison shelters were made and they were given free of charge to families who earned less than £350 a year.





Worksheet

Look out for the **ARP Warden** display.

What things did they carry with them? Draw them here.

Gretna bombing

When was Gretna bombed during World War Two? How many bombs did the German plane drop?

Air Raid Shelters

How would you feel if your town was being bombed and you had to go into an Anderson shelter? _____

What would you take with you? (Look at the interactive game in the museum)

What sort of games would you play in the black out if you were in an Anderson shelter?



GLOSSARY

Can you complete this glossary?

Air Raid	
	An Air raid shelter made of semi-circles of corrugated steel.
ARP	
Black-out	Regulations were put forward by the British Government. A black out was enforced to stop enemy planes locating towns and cities at night.
Anderson Shelter	
	Air raid shelter used indoors to protect people from bomb blasts