



How did Coventry recover after the war?

Coventry Cathedral Photo Pack - Teacher Guide

Children will have learned about St Michael's Cathedral, also known as Coventry Cathedral, being badly damaged by bombs during the Coventry Blitz on the 14-15th of November 1940.

Before sharing the photo pack with children, you may choose to read this information to them.

Between the 14-15th of November 1940, the Luftwaffe dropped bombs on Coventry killing and injuring many people and damaging and destroying lots of buildings. The cathedral was reduced to a shell and, in 1950, a competition was launched to find a design for a new cathedral. The winning design was by a Scottish architect, Sir Basil Spence.

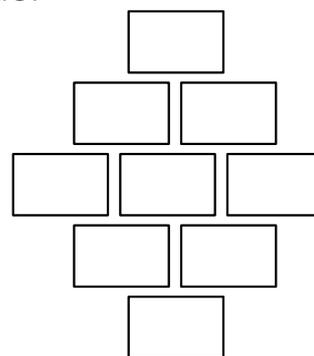
The company selected to build the cathedral was John Laing and work began to clear the ground ready for construction to start. On the 23rd of March 1956, Queen Elizabeth II came to ceremonially lay the foundation stone and work began. Coventry Cathedral took six years to build and was completed with an 80-foot bronze spire that was lowered on to the roof by helicopter.

All but one of the photographs in this photo pack come from the John Laing Photographic Collection (all of those starting with reference numbers starting with JLP01 do). They provide quality source information that can help children build a narrative about the rebuilding of Coventry Cathedral.

Activities

Chronological Order – Give children the photographs and ask them to use what they already know and their inference skills to sort them into chronological order. The correct order can be confirmed at the end of this guide.

Diamond of Significance – Ask children to sort the images into a diamond of significance with the most important image at the top and the least important at the bottom. There are no wrong or right answers, but it will encourage children to consider the significance of each photograph.



Key Questions

Some key questions that you could ask about the photographs include:

- What can you infer from the photograph?
- What evidence is there that helps you date the photograph?
- How would you describe the photograph to someone who could not see it?
- Does the photograph affect the way that you feel about Coventry?
- Why are photographs a good historical source?





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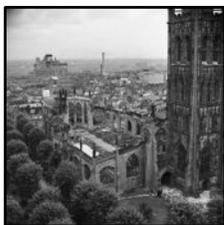
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Chronology of Images



11th October 1941

A view looking over the remains of Coventry Cathedral showing the damage caused by the November 1940 air raid.



11th November 1958

The photograph shows the construction of the new Coventry Cathedral, the ruins of the Cathedral Church of St Michael, badly damaged by bombing in 1940 and Holy Trinity Church.



March 1954

Following the bombing of Coventry Cathedral in November 1940, a competition was launched in 1950 to find a design for a new cathedral. From over 200 submitted, the winning design was by Sir Basil Spence. This is one of his perspective drawings of his proposed design. Children may notice his signature in the bottom right corner.



24th May 1960

The photograph shows the progression in the construction of the new Coventry Cathedral.



28th April 1955

The photograph shows the work to prepare the ground for the building of the new cathedral.



26th April 1962

The photograph was taken during 'Operation Rich Man' a joint project involving Royal Air Force staff and Laing staff. This involved a RAF Belvedere helicopter hoisting in to place the 80ft bronze spire on to the new cathedral. The part of the operation to lower the cross that sits on top of the spire had to be postponed due to windy conditions.



23rd March 1956

Queen Elizabeth II came to lay the foundation stone on 23rd March 1956 so that building could commence. Here Sir Basil Spence is showing her a model of the new cathedral.



1962

A view of the newly built Coventry Cathedral. It had taken six years to build, and it was more than 20 years since the previous cathedral had been damaged by bombs.



23rd April 1958

View taken from the tower of the old Cathedral showing Coventry Cathedral under construction.



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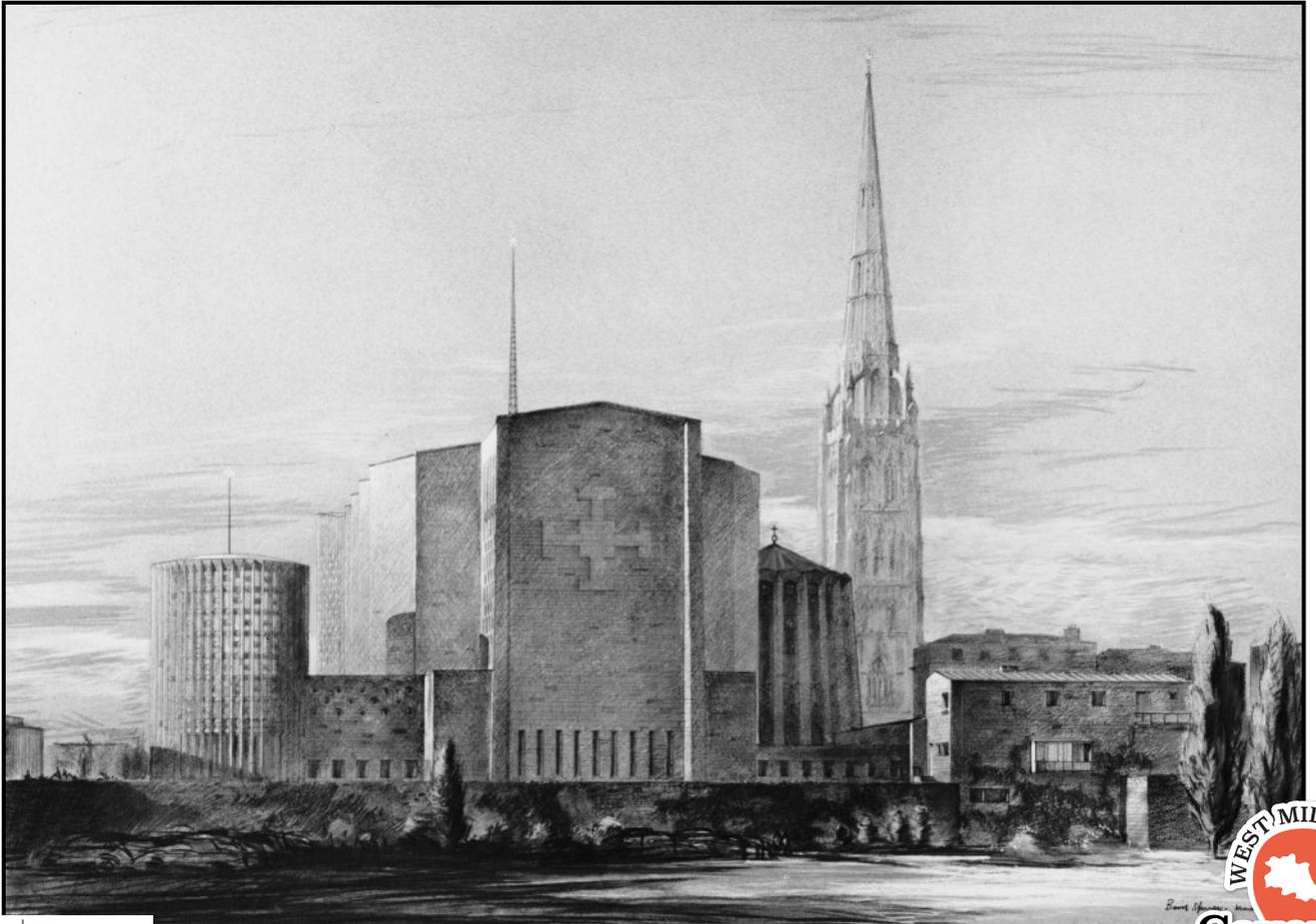
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How did Coventry recover after the war?

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How did Coventry recover after the war?

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How did Coventry recover after the war?

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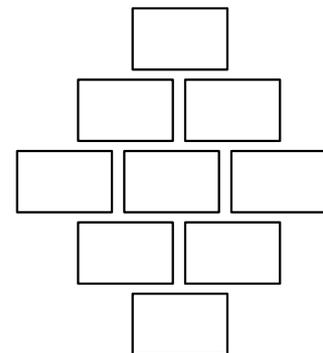
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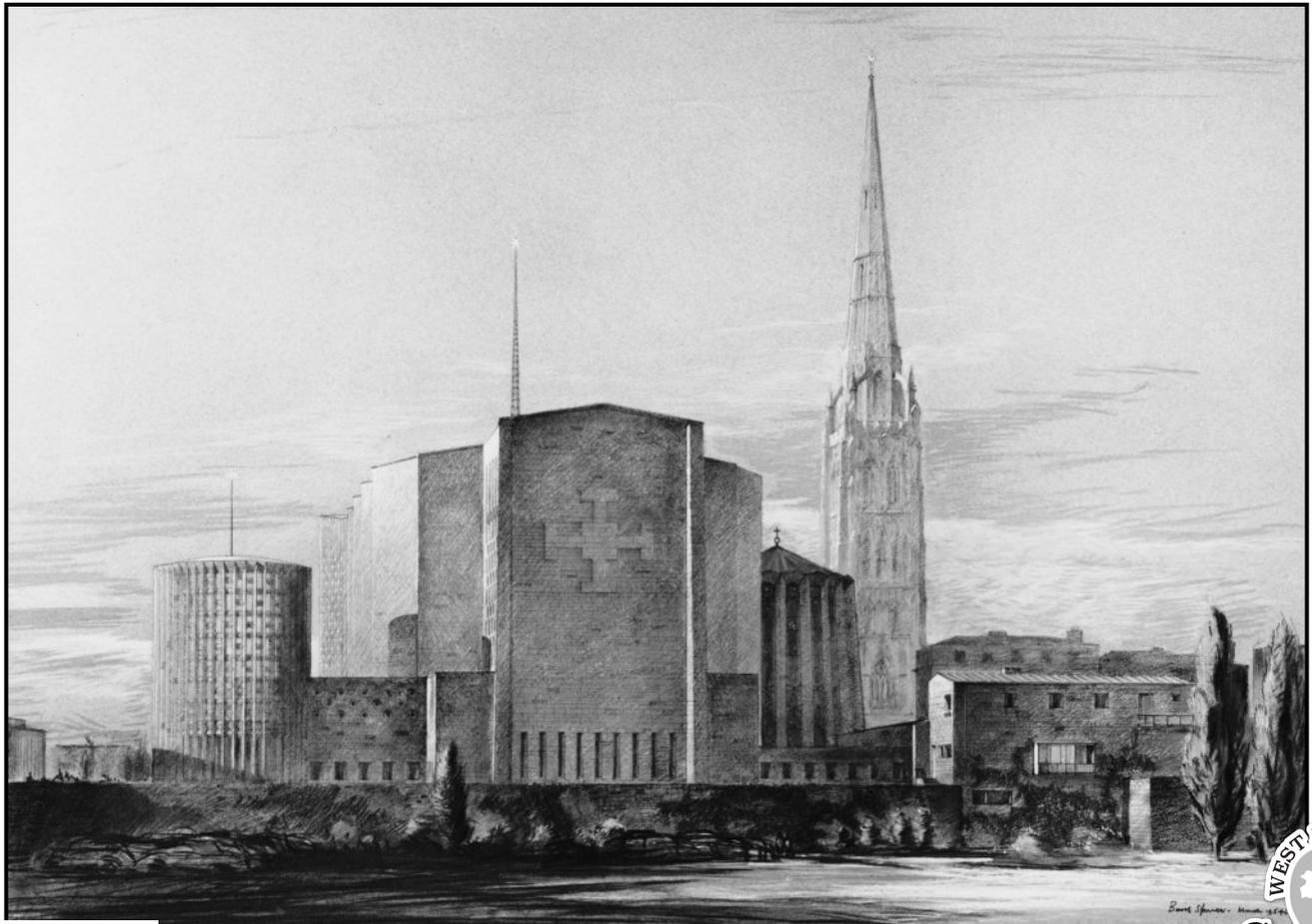
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Local History

Historic England and Teacher's Pet have come together to bring you a collection of free resources that you can use in your local history teaching.



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Teacher's Pet

Who are Teacher's Pet?

Teacher's Pet have been providing downloadable and playable educational content to early years and primary school teachers for over 14 years. We cover all areas of the curriculum and use a team of in-house teachers and designers to create engaging and memorable concepts, that the children will love.

Why local history?

At [Teacher's Pet](#) we want to empower primary school teachers by giving them the tools they need to deliver inspiring and thoughtful lessons about the local area and its history. We believe local history teaching has such an important part to play in a child's wellbeing – helping to give children a sense of pride in where they live.

Our Local History project is designed to provide teachers across the UK with everything they need to successfully carry out a full scheme of teaching about their local area, through key enquiry questions and source led activities.

Working with [Historic England](#) gives us access to archived maps and photos for resources and information from knowledgeable local historians, as well helping us to provide the content to you free of charge.

For more information about our Local History project or to find out more about Teacher's Pet Classroom Resources, please visit our website.