

# Exeter During WWII Knowledge Planner: How did WWII impact on the people living in Exeter now and during the Second World War?

## What caused WWII?

After the loss of WWI in 1918, Germany's economy had suffered. In 1934, the people voted for Hitler, the leader of the Nazi Party to lead them after he had offered them hope. Even though he spoke of peace, Hitler and the Nazi Party invaded Austria and Czechoslovakia (now know as Czech Republic and Slovakia). Two days after the invasion of Poland, Britain declared war on Nazi Germany.

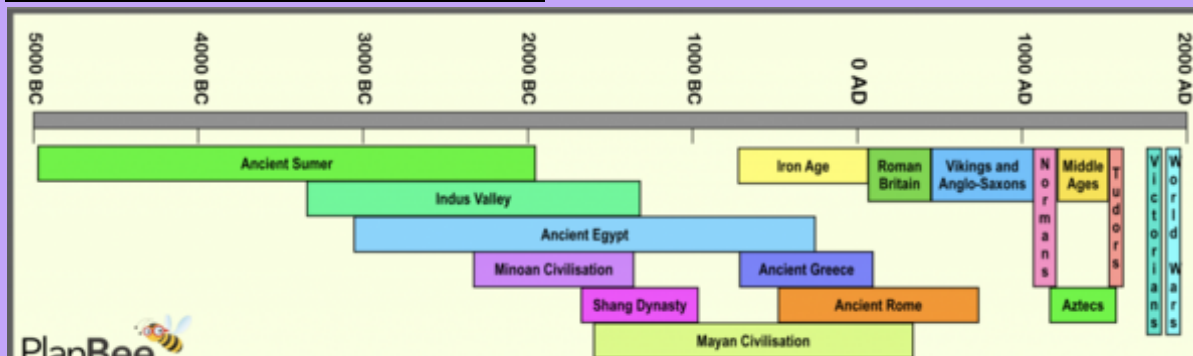
## Historical Concepts

Change	The process or actions by which something or someone becomes different.
Continuity	Aspects that may stay the same despite changes.
Causation	The connections between events where one thing happens as a result of another
Significance	Identifying those events, sources, people, places or ideas which are most important.
Similarity and Difference	Comparing ways of life at different times.
Perspective	When interpreting evidence recognise that judgements are influenced by the view and opinion of the observer.
Sources	Evidence that is used to gather information and reach judgements.
Chronology	Arrange historical events in their correct time order.
Empathy	Placing yourself in another's position to better understand their actions.

## Key Vocabulary

Air raid	An incoming attack from the air, where planes would drop bombs on the cities below.
Ally	Countries that work together for a military purpose
Blitz	The heavy bombing of British cities by German aircraft in 1940 and 1941 is referred to as the Blitz.
Chamberlain (Neville)	Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1937 to 1940
Churchill (Winston)	Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1940 to 1945
Evacuated	To remove from a place of danger to a safer place.
Hitler (Adolf)	Leader of the Nazi Party from 1934 to 1945
Industrial	An industrial city or country is one in which industry is important
Industry	The work and processes involved in collecting raw materials and making them into products in factories.
Invasion	Entering a country with an army
Luftwaffe	The German Air Force
Nazi	A member of the far-right political party in Germany
Rationing	The system of limiting the amount of food, water, petrol, or other substances when there is not enough of them.
Rural	Places that are far away from large towns or cities
Surrenders	Stop fighting or resisting someone.
Urban	Relating to a town or city.
Warden	A person who is responsible for a particular place or thing

## Timeline: When was World War II?



## Timeline

- 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939:** Hitler invades Poland in preparation for war, evacuation begins.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939:** Britain (Neville Chamberlain) declares war on Nazi Germany.
- January 1940:** Rationing begins.
- May 1940:** Neville Chamberlain resigns and Winston Churchill becomes Prime Minister.
- July 1940:** The Battle of Britain begins.
- October 1940:** The Battle of Britain ends.
- April 1942:** The Blitz begins.
- April and May 1942:** Exeter was bombed as part of the so-called "Baedeker raids"
- 30<sup>th</sup> April 1945:** Hitler dies
- 4<sup>th</sup> May 1945:** Nazi Germany surrenders
- 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945:** VE Day
- March 1946:** Evacuation officially ends
- 1954:** Rationing officially ends.

### **Evacuation:**

- Many children living in **urban** areas were moved temporarily from their homes to places considered safer, usually out in **rural** areas of Britain
- The British **evacuation** began on Friday 1 September 1939. It was called 'Operation Pied Piper'.
- When the war was over, Government began to make travel arrangements to return the **evacuees** to their homes



## Local history study – the impact of the Blitz on Exeter

There were 19 separate raids on Exeter  
265 people were killed and 788 people injured  
Many of the dead were buried in a mass grave in Exeter Higher Cemetery.  
It took 20 years to rebuild the city as completely new infrastructure had to be installed.  
Commercial premises destroyed : 400 shops, 150 offices, 50 warehouses and stores, 36 clubs and pubs.  
Of 20,000 houses, 1500 were destroyed and 2700 were seriously

A Baedeker was a tourist guide which Hitler used to target historic towns and cities to bomb. They were seen as revenge attacks.



### Important Artefacts

#### Morrison Shelter



#### Anderson Shelter



### Rationing:

- As part of their **campaign**, Nazi Germans tried to cut off supplies of food and other goods coming to Britain by attacking many of the ships that brought food to Britain.
- This meant that there was less food for the people - whatever food was grown, produced or managed to enter Britain was **rationed** - people used the Ration Book during this time.



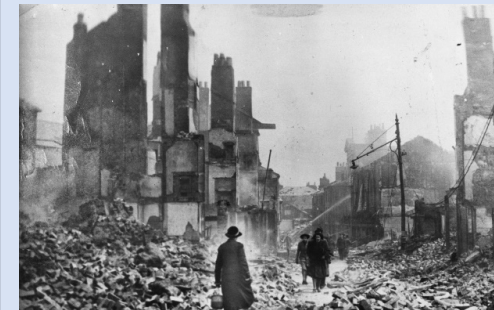
## Important Places

### Map of damage



Map of damage from the Exeter blitz. ©2006

### Photographic evidence



### Jobs:

- Many men fought in the war and so women were tasked to carry out much of the war work. However, some jobs were protected - men who held these jobs were not called up to join the army (e.g. doctors, miners)
- Jobs undertaken by women during the war included mechanics, ambulance drivers and air raid wardens.

