

## Jobs for civilians during WWII

Life did carry on during the war but there was a change to who did the jobs in many cases. For younger men, they were in the military or reserved occupations. The government worked hard to mobilise the whole country into the war effort. By 1944 a third of the civilian population were engaged in war work, including over 7,000,000 women.

Ernest Bevin, the Labour minister, introduced Essential Work Orders (EWOs) that stopped employers sacking workers without the government's (Ministry for Labour) involvement for jobs which were considered essential. He also introduced Reserved Occupations which gave groups of skilled workers in certain occupations exemption from military service. The list of occupations changed as the war developed but some of the jobs were ship building, and many engineering-related trades but also agricultural, civil service jobs, architects, lighthouse keepers and many others (see PDF).

Coal mining was not a reserved occupation at the start of the war but quickly was added. However shortages of mineworkers became a problem and in December 1943, one in ten men conscripted was chosen at random to work in the mines. These men became known as 'Bevin Boys' after the Minister for Labour and National Service. Women were not permitted to work underground. (1842 Mines Act).

The jobs that women did varied.

### Coatbridge APP 1940



RB Tennant's (metal foundry Whifflet/Coatbridge) workers 1940s



Glenboig brickworkers 1940s. All types of brickworking were in the reserved occupation list, excluding labouring.