



Anderson Shelter

Bombing raids by enemy aircraft put everyday people at risk. As protection from the attacks, people erected small air raid shelters in their garden. The Anderson Shelter was usually made from six corrugated iron sheets bolted together at the top, with steel plates at either end. It was designed to hold six people. It would normally have one or two benches which were also used as beds. It would also have a suitcase or box containing games, book and possibly some food. The shelters were often dark and damp and tended to flood in the wet weather.

Can you imagine a whole family trying to sleep in a small space like this?

The entrance was protected by a steel shield and an earthen blast wall.

By September 1939 one and a half million Anderson shelters had been put up in gardens.

What were Anderson Shelters like?

The Anderson Shelters were dark and damp and people were reluctant to use them at night

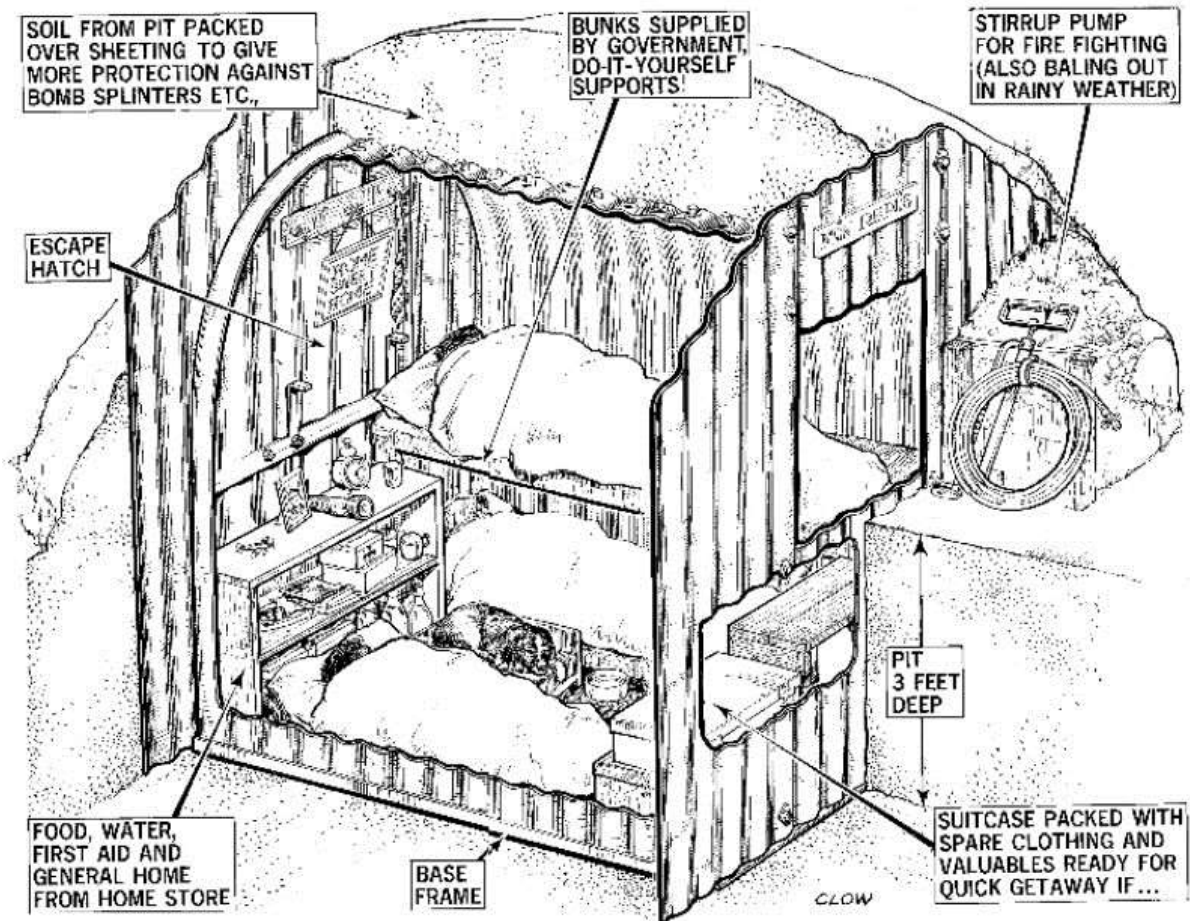
In low-lying areas the shelters tended to flood and sleeping was difficult as they did not keep out the sound of the bombings.

How much did they cost?

Anderson shelters were given free to poor people. Men who earned more than £5 a week could buy one for £7

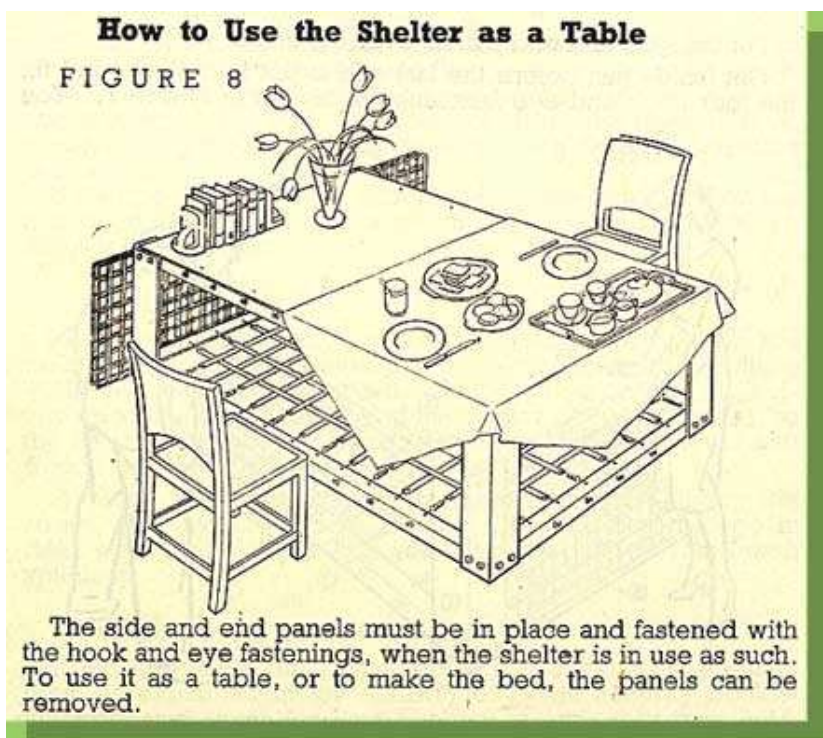


Note: this Summerlee Anderson shelter is designed to be wheelchair accessible, they would normally be like this one shown in this picture.



Inside an Anderson shelter

Homes without gardens would have used a communal shelter or a some would have had a Morrison shelter which was a re-inforced steel indoor shelter - people slept in at night but during the day could be used as a table.



1940s Garden

Vegetables were not rationed but were often in short supply. People who had gardens were encouraged to plant vegetables instead of flowers. The government called this 'Digging for Victory' and produced posters to persuade people that they were helping to win the war by planting vegetables.

The government tried to encourage people to grow their own food at home. The 'Dig for Victory' campaign, started in October 1939, was one of the most famous of the war. It encouraged people to use every spare piece of land, including their gardens, to grow vegetables.

- Farmers were encouraged to plough up as much land as they could.
- Public parks, bomb sites and railway embankments were used as allotments.
- Householders were told to use their gardens to grow vegetables, and many people kept rabbits and chickens.



The garden at Summerlee shows the crops that people would have grown during the war. Everything would be grown to improve the diet of the household as the basic rations weren't enough to live on.

Dig! Dig! Dig!

And your muscles will grow big

Keep on pushing the spade

Don't mind the worms

Just ignore their squirms

And when your back aches
laugh for glee

Just keep on digging

Till we give our foes a wiggling

Dig! Dig! Dig! For Victory!

*WWII dig for victory
propaganda song*

1940s House



This is a Coatbridge home during the Second World War. There is a front 'best' room; the kitchen at the back also acted as a family sitting room. There would have been bedrooms upstairs.

This house shows the improvements in housing made during the 1920s and 1930s. As well as having several rooms, there is electricity and running water.

The family has a fairly high standard of living and the home might belong to a station master or the manager of a small colliery. The furniture is of good quality: the radio and gramophone are fairly expensive items that would have been bought on hire purchase. The carpet square also shows that this family is fairly well off as poorer families would still have had linoleum.

The most obvious sign of the war is the blackout curtain rolled above the window to prevent the lights being seen by enemy aircraft. There is also an army uniform hanging on the door.



1940s Kitchen



Three generations of this family are living in the house. The grandparents rent the house from the railway company and their daughter and grandchild are staying with them while her husband is away fighting in the war.

They cook, eat and live in this room; there is also a best front room that is kept for visitors and two bedrooms upstairs. The table is pulled out for tea. The other table has been put back against the wall because the baking has been done. When tea is over this table will also be pushed back to give more space.

The range heated the room, but the gas cooker would be used for most of the cooking. Hot water came from the boiler above the sink. During the war many foods were in very short supply, such as meat, eggs, sugar and fresh fruit. To supplement the rations, the back garden has been turned into a large vegetable patch.

Anderson shelters were given to households in areas where air raids were likely. Men and women who were not in the forces or on night shift took turns working as ARP wardens or fire watchers. Although some British towns were devastated by bombing, Lanarkshire was not seriously attacked despite the large number of vital industries here.