

# Rationing and Salvage

## Background

During the war everyday life changed. In 1940 rationing began. Rationing meant people could only buy a fixed amount of food each week.

Britain got a lot of its food from other countries like we do today. In the war it became dangerous for ships to carry food to Britain. This was because our enemies destroyed them with their submarines. In Horsham people noticed foods like oranges and lemons were getting harder to find in the shops even before rationing began. With less food to go around rationing made sure everyone got a fair share.

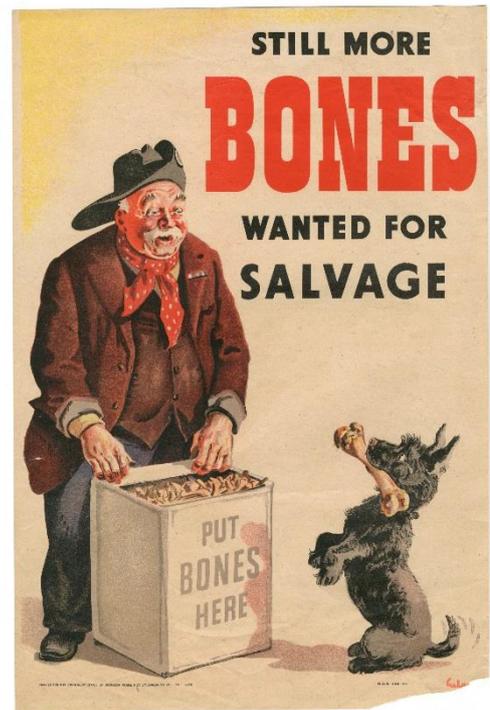
People were given ration books. These books allowed them to buy their share of food from the shops. To get food they had to be 'registered' with their local shops. 'Registered' meant the shop owner had your name on a list of who was allowed to buy food from their shop. When you went to the shop you had to give them a coupon from your ration book as well as money. If you ran out of coupons for that food you could not buy anymore.

Because food was harder to get people were encouraged to use every scrap and grow their own. Children would help their families 'Dig for Victory' by planting vegetable gardens wherever there was space.

But it was not just food. Clothes were rationed too. Women were encouraged to 'make do and mend'. This meant when something tore or broke you had to repair it. You could not just go and buy a new one.

It was also very important in the war that Britain made lots of weapons, tanks, planes and equipment for soldiers. To do this they needed materials like rubber and metal. People were asked to collect 'scrap metal'. This was metal that was old or not being used like broken pots and pans. Children helped collect this scrap metal. In Horsham even the iron railings in St Mary's Churchyard was cut up for the war effort.

The material was recycled. For example metal was melted down and made into new shapes for weapons, planes and tanks.



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Poster put up in Horsham encouraging people to collect bones for recycling.



## Worksheet 4: Rationing and Salvage

### Activity 1: 'Collect' the information

Because collecting materials to recycle was so important the government made posters to encourage people.

Look at posters 1 and 2 then answer the questions below.

1. Poster 1 talks about another material that was collected and recycled.
  - a. What was this material?

.....  
b. What could it be used to make?

.....

2. Poster 2 talks about collecting metal in Horsham.  
Where were people supposed to take the metal?

.....

### Activity 2: 'Recycle' the idea

During the War recycling helped Britain survive. Today recycling is also very important. If we recycle we are:



- not taking so much from the earth because we are reusing materials instead of making new ones.
- Using less energy. Because it takes less to recycle materials into a new object than to make a brand new object.
- protecting the environment. Making new objects creates a lot of pollution. Recycling materials creates less.
- putting less rubbish in landfills. Landfills are unpleasant places where everyone's rubbish is piled up. When it piles up it can create nasty gases that are bad for the environment.

Does your school recycle?

**What** does it recycle?

Do **you** recycle?

**Make something that will help your school encourage pupils and teachers to recycle. It could be a poster, or a leaflet or even a video.**



Poster 1: Government poster put up in Horsham.



Poster No.: 1999.753 © Horsham District Council's Horsham Museum and Art Gallery



**Poster 2:** Horsham Poster.

The original poster could not be photographed clearly.



Poster No.: 1982.27 © Horsham District Council's Horsham Museum and Art Gallery

