

### Learning objectives:

- To consider change over time
- To compare houses and home life then and now

### Key vocabulary

house, home, back streets, washing line, coal bunker, outside toilet, tin bath, yard

Generate a discussion with the children about their house. Consider home life – range of appliances available, toilets/bathrooms/an ensuite perhaps, a range of technology in the home, a front and back garden. Consider also how families spend time in the home.

Use the PowerPoint to look at family scenes within the home that Norman Cornish painted.

The family home life depicted in his drawings and paintings was quite different from today. For example, a toilet outside in the back yard, no bathroom – just a tin bath filled in front of the fire.

It was less common for mothers to work and many took on the childcare and housework while their husbands went out to work.

Housework was much more difficult back then too because women did not have the modern appliances we have today. Tumble driers, microwave ovens, coffee machines, slow cookers and so on.

Women in the home would do much more physical work than they do today – scrubbing the step on hands and knees, beating rugs, boiling a kettle on the hob to heat the water to fill the tin bath and then emptying the tin bath afterwards before hanging it up in the yard.

Housework was not as easy as modern living just pushing clothes into the washing machine and then into the tumble drier. For those who had a washing machine, it would be a washing machine with mangle on top. This had to be filled from the tap using a rubber tube/pipe. The whole kitchen would fill with steam. In the winter or on a rainy day, clothes would hang on a wooden clothes horses around the fire. On fine weather days, clothes would be pegged out in the back yard.

There was no central heating like modern homes have today; the downstairs rooms were heated by coal fires. Every home had a coal bunker. There would be a coal delivery to each house and coal men would carry the bags of coal to the coal bunker. From there, the coal would be taken by a coal scuttle into the house.

Entertainment was provided by the radio and television – these were box-shaped (not flat screen) and showed programmes in black and white - only two TV channels to watch, not the vast range we have today. Families would often play a board game together in the evenings.

Hand-knitted garments were common. These garments, when outgrown, would often be re-cycled by being unravelled and re-knitted into something else. Socks and stockings would be darned – a ‘make do and mend’ approach.



There are also opportunities to investigate old photographs of home life in the 50s/60s. The Norman Cornish Trail has an app which contains oral histories – local people describing family life. Examples such as these can be used as a good starting point for discussion and for comparison.

A visit to Beamish would enable children to appreciate inside the colliery home.

### Plenary

Recap on learning and compare houses and home life now to home life back in Norman Cornish's paintings and in his particular 'slice of life'.

Children could complete a comparison grid based on past and present home life.

*Norman Cornish*