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The Corporation's Housing Estates

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Post-War 3 Bedroom Type Houses – Mounthill Estate

AT the time of its incorporation 21 years ago the Epsom and Ewell Borough Council owned 509 properties comprising 433 houses and 76 flats. To-day that figure has risen to 1,878.

In 1938, it was decided to build another estate in Ewell which would produce 174 houses but the construction thereof was interrupted by the outbreak of war in 1939, when only 56 had been completed. During the six years of war, house building came to a standstill, and quite a number of the Corporation's properties suffered from bomb damage, though this might have been considerably worse. But even those properties fortunate enough to escape damage suffered in another way, for maintenance labour and proper materials were very difficult to obtain.

But what a difference those six years of war had made ! From a moderate flow of requests for Council houses in 1939 with a waiting list of under 200, the demand reached a peak of 2,233 applications on the waiting list by the end of 1945.

Building difficulties also appeared. Skilled labour was short, and many substitutes had to be used for conventional materials which were unobtainable. However, as difficulties were met so they were overcome, and estate after estate was built and occupied until 1958 was reached with approaching 2,000 tenants on the rent-roll in dwellings ranging from two-bedroom type flats and bungalows to four-bedroom houses. Provision has also been made for aged couples by the inclusion of 42 chalet-type bungalows on the various housing estates in the Borough.

The Corporation has, therefore, made a notable contribution towards housing its citizens.

Despite soaring costs since 1945, the rents charged do not show as big an increase as might be imagined, remembering that the Government Housing Subsidy for General Needs was abolished in November, 1956. A three-bedroom pre-war house is normally let at 26s. 1d. per week, whilst its post-war counterpart is 34s. 10d., both exclusive of rates.

In order to help tenants in the lower income group, the Corporation operates a rent rebate scheme. Rent is assessed according to the income of the tenant subject to various allowances and adjustments to allow for family responsibilities and additional income. Assessments do not intrude on matters beyond the scheme's reasonable scope.

Full details of the scheme or any other information connected with the Corporation's housing can be obtained from the Housing Manager, West Hill House, Epsom.



Pre-War 3 Bedroom Type Houses –Hookfield Estate