# How did Britain use propaganda to help the war effort?

Britain's success in the war depended on people joining together and not losing hope. But living through the Second World War could be very scary, for example having to go and fight or endure bombings at home. If the public lost faith that the country would win the war, or couldn't see what they were fighting for, it could prove disastrous as they were the ones powering the war effort.

To counter this, the British government formed The Ministry of Information in 1939. They produced posters, leaflets, radio broadcasts and films as propaganda; information that changed how the public viewed the war and encouraged them to continue with the war effort.

Propaganda was also used to tell people what they needed to know to understand the war. That might be by telling people to wear visible clothing during black out or it might be by warning people against things that were bad for the war. Like bringing children home from evacuation.
Often propaganda was used to get people involved in the war effort, like volunteering as an air warden.

Posters were put up in shops and shop windows, council buildings and village halls. Different posters were used to put over different messages. For example, the famous “Dig for Victory” posters were used as the government wanted people to grow their own food during wartime. Special government films shown in cinemas were also used to persuade people to behave in certain ways.

For example, people were encouraged to grow their own food and save waste. This was because it was difficult to import food from other countries during wartime. Kitchen waste could be fed to hens and pigs. People were asked to salvage as many materials as they could. Wastepaper, metal or bones could be made into planes and ammunition.

Travel within Britain was to be limited at all times. Posters with the slogan “Is your journey really necessary?” were used to remind people to save fuel and allow trains to transport soldiers and war supplies instead.

Some posters encouraged women to work in factories to make weapons or planes. Others called women to join the Land Army to work on farms “for a healthy, happy job”.

The Ministry of Information was also keen to explain to the people the danger of “careless talk”. They wanted the public to become much more careful about security because information or secrets might be used by enemy spies listening in.

Posters were also used to up keep morale or wartime spirit. They made it clear that everybody was in this war together and everybody had an important part to play. This also helped the public to feel involved. This really mattered if Britain wanted the workers in the factories to make as many planes, bombs and tanks as they could or farmers to grow as much as possible.

During World War 2, the people faced many dangers such as the bombing of cities, ports and factories. They also had accidents caused by the blackout. Health during the war was a big worry for Britain. The public needed to keep fit and healthy in order to work and keep up production in the factories and on the land. Therefore the Ministry of Information produced many posters on these subjects.