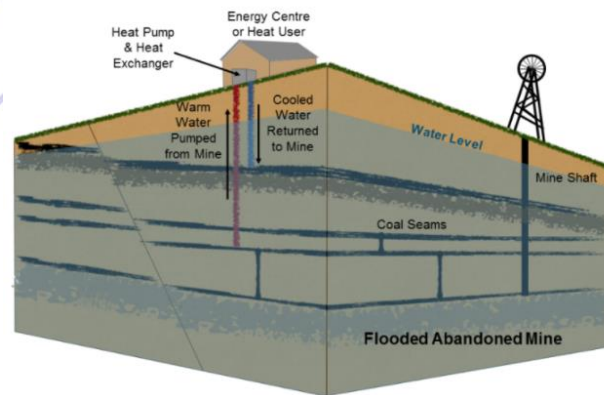


## Key Knowledge



## Glossary

Colliery	A coal mine, its buildings and machines.
Davy Lamp	A safety lamp designed to be used in mines to reduce the risk of fires or explosions.
Fossil Fuel	Natural fuels, such as coal or gas, that were formed millions of years ago from animal and plant remains.
General Strike	A strike that includes workers from all or most industries.
Industrial Revolution	A period of time when more work was done by steam-powered machines than by hand.
Natural Gas	A flammable fuel that is found underground
Non-renewable energy	A source of energy that comes from fuels that cannot be replaced once it has been used, such as oil, coal and gas.
Renewable energy	A source of energy that can be produced as quickly as it is used, such as wind or solar power.
Sediment	Stones and sand grains that form a soft, wet substance.
Strike	To refuse to work as a form of protest against an employer, usually due to working conditions, pay or job losses.

## The History of Coal Mines

### Origin of mining

Small-scale mining of surface deposits dates back thousands of years including the Roman Britain era.

The Romans had already discovered most of the major coalfields and were extracting from them.

### Industrial Revolution

The industrial revolution started in Britain in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as factories and manufacturing products became highly sought after.

Coal was essential for this change as it was required to feed the steam engines and steamships.

### 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Coal mines in this period were cramped, poorly ventilated and very dangerous

Health and safety in coal mines at this time was not that important and many people were injured or killed by explosions, roof falls, or being run over by carts (a lot of these young children).

Children played an important role of the tasks underground such as door keepers, drammers, and colliers' helpers.

## Coal and War

Miners were recruited into the army during the First World War because they were able to use their skills to dig trenches that went under enemy lines. However, this caused a lack of miners in the UK, which led to coal shortages and rationing. During the Second World War, government minister Ernest Bevin introduced a 'no choice' lottery. This meant that one in 10 conscripted men were sent to work in the mines. They were known as the Bevin Boys.



## General Strike 1926

In 1926, British miners went on strike because mine owners wanted them to work longer hours for less money. People from other industries supported the miners, which caused massive disruption. The miners returned to work nine days later.

## End to mining in the UK

The British coal and mining industry went into decline in the 1950s. Coal imported from abroad was cheaper, and gas and oil were replacing coal as cleaner sources of power. In 1984, 187,000 miners went on strike to protest against the government's plans to close 20 mines. After a year, the strike ended and many miners went back to work. The last deep mine in the UK, Kellingley colliery in North Yorkshire, closed in 2015.

### Reasons for the Mine Closures

- Oil, natural gas and nuclear power were all cheaper for producing electricity.
- Coal industry had not made profit for over 40 years.
- Cheaper to import coal than mine it in Britain.

### Reasons Against the Mine Closures

- Closing mines will create massive unemployment.
- There are usually no other jobs in coal mining areas, so little chance of new employment.
- Vast reserves of coal should be mined.
- Closing mines could 'kill' communities.



Arthur Scargill is a British trade unionist who was President of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) from 1982 to 2002. He is best known for leading the 1984-85 miners' strike, a major event in the history of the British Labour movement.

Joining the NUM at the age of nineteen in 1957, Scargill became one of its leading activists in the late 1960s.

A decade later, Scargill led the NUM through the 1984-85 miners' strike. It turned into a fierce confrontation with the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher in which the miners' union was defeated.



Sunderland miners taking part in the 1987 strike.



Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister

