



# Changing Lives, Changing Communities



A journey into the homes and lifestyle of the Victorians

## ***We invite you to take a walk back in time...***

**Take a journey back in time to the Victorian era. Find out who the everyday Victorians were, where they lived, how they lived and where they shopped. Plus learn about the inventions they created that you couldn't live without!**

**This pack also gives you the opportunity to look at how historical information is passed on and whether or not you can trust it to be factually correct. Why not leave your own interpretation for the future - what about making your own time capsule for your school?**

**This pack is a free education resource from Taylor Wimpey and can be used to support the History Curriculum and also for cross curricular projects.**

**To download more copies of this pack, please visit  
[www.taylorwimpey.co.uk/schools](http://www.taylorwimpey.co.uk/schools)**



# Victorians Near Us

For this section of work you will need to identify a typically Victorian street in your local area. Try to find a street where the houses have had little or no alteration to them and also where you can find an aerial photograph of the houses. If possible try to get a plan of the inside of one of the houses, to enable your pupils to view the room locations, hallways, corridors etc. Try to find an historic photograph of the houses and also recent one (although a visit to the site is preferable where the pupils can sketch the houses.)

Talk to your pupils about the Victorian era. Explain to them that although some Victorians lived in large houses (called villas), many did not. The majority of people lived in terraced houses and houses built during the Victorian era can be identified by looking for some of the following features:

*Slate roof*

*No garage*

*Bay windows - many of these were sash windows so they opened by sliding them up not pushing them out like modern windows.*

*Chimneys - fire was their only way to keep warm.*

*Railings around the front of the house.*

*Boot scrapers set into the wall of the house.*

Discuss with your pupils how many of their houses have the above features. Why would the Victorian houses not need garages? Do your pupils know why many of the

houses had boot scrapers? (It's because the streets were never cleaned so shoes got pretty disgusting!) Do any of them live in a Victorian house? If so could they draw the layout of the rooms for you?

Thinking about water now, ask your pupils what, throughout the day, their family uses water for. Write a list of the different uses for water in the house. Where do they get the water from? Where did Victorians get their water from?

Explain that many Victorian streets shared a water pump and some even shared toilets! How much water would they have to carry to their house for all their needs today? Do they know that even if you were lucky enough for your house to have its own toilet it would not be inside but would be in the back yard.

Should you be unable to locate a suitable street, please use the enclosed Victorian street case study.

## ACTIVITY

If possible arrange to take your pupils on a visit to the street you have chosen. Ask them to sketch the houses.

On the pupils worksheet pupils need to look at photographs of a Victorian street and also look at the layout of the inside of a typical house. They can do this in small groups and then complete the worksheet (which you can photocopy and give out) on the back of this page. They will also need to use different urces to find out what Victorians used when they needed to go to the toilet at night. They then need to use this information to draw a picture of a chamberpot.

## Curriculum Links

History: Historical knowledge and understanding 1

Geography: Investigating 1 and 2

Geography: Skills 3

Geography: Understanding places, environments and processes 2 and 3



Queen Victoria

# Victorians Near Us

What were Victorian houses like?

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What features might you find on a Victorian house?

List them below and then put a tick next to them if you have these features on your own house.

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We know that many Victorian terraced houses shared toilets, these toilets were not near the houses, but would be at the bottom of the back yard or even down an ally; this was because they smelt so much!!!

At night you wouldn't be expected to go outside to walk to the toilet in the dark so what would you do instead? Use some different resources to try and find information on what the Victorians used when they needed to go to the toilet at night, then draw a picture of what you discovered below.

**Did you know...**  
The Victorians thought it was unlucky to swallow a spider coated in butter!



# Victorian vs Modern House Design

Let's look at Victorian houses compared with modern developments. In this pack you will find plans for a new Taylor Wimpey housing development. Your pupils need to look at what they have already learnt about Victorian houses and compare it to this modern development.

Talk the pupils through the key features of this new development. Look at house style, the type of house (e.g. detached, semi-detached etc). How much land do these new houses have? Do they have any shared facilities? What about the type of road they are on? What about the roof, windows, entrances. Take a close look at the brick work, is there any difference between the Victorian way of laying bricks and the way Taylor Wimpey do it today?

What about inside the house, can they spot any rooms that the Victorians didn't have that we take for granted? How did Victorians cope without bathrooms? How did the Victorians wash? Did they know that the bath water wouldn't be changed from person to person and the last one in the bath (which was usually the youngest child) would have very dirty water to wash in!

## ACTIVITY

The pupil worksheet helps to reinforce the differences between the two eras of housing you have discussed. You will need to provide them with a separate piece of paper so they can draw the front of their own house. Then have a look as a group at the pictures of the pupils own houses that they have drawn, do any of them have any Victorian features? Whose house do you think is the oldest and whose is the most modern?



## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Can your pupils find any other pictures of Victorian houses? Can they find any that were lived in by the middle class? How do these differ from the working class terraced housing we have been looking at? Try and use a variety of resources, photographs, newspaper cuttings and the internet. Where possible get the pupils to do their own research.

### Curriculum Links

Geography: Understanding places, environments and processes 2 and 3

Geography: Investigating 1



# Victorian vs Modern House Design

Have a look at the plan of the inside of a Victorian house and the plan of the inside of the new Taylor Wimpey house then try and answer the following questions.

	In a Victorian house	In the new house
How many rooms?		
How many bathrooms/toilets?		
How many bedrooms?		
How many doorways?		
How many windows?		
How do they heat the houses?		

What are the main differences between these two types of house? Have a look at which rooms/features the Victorian house has that the modern one doesn't and then look at it the other way round, what does the modern house have that the Victorian house doesn't?

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On a separate piece of paper draw a picture of the front of your house. Does it have any features similar to those found on a Victorian house? Do you know how old your house is, if not how would you find out?



# Who were the everyday Victorians?

Who would have lived in the Victorian houses we looked at in the last two worksheets?

Your pupils need to find out who would have lived on a typical Victorian street, they then need to write about a typical household using the sheet over leaf.

Talk to your pupils about a typical working class Victorian family. They usually had 5 or 6 children and many of them would have been sent out to work from the age of 4 or 5. The children worked very long hours doing quite dangerous work, some as chimney sweeps and some were sent down the mines.

Unless your family could afford for you not to work you would not have been able to go to school. Although from 1870 all children over 5 were supposed to go to school, many didn't go regularly. Some parents couldn't afford the few pence it cost to send the children to school; however, primary education became completely free in 1891. Many families also needed the money the children were earning and their help in the home. Most working class children would have worn second hand clothes and would have had very few toys.

## ACTIVITY

Using the pupil work sheet your pupils need to use the knowledge gathered from looking at the 1891 Census and other research to make up a typical Victorian family. They also need to think how they would have organised a street party and also look at a Victorian shopping list and write down which Victorian shops they would have to go to in order to buy all the items.

If available, use the 1891 census to find out who lived in your local area. How many people lived in one house, how old were they and can you find out what they did they do for a living? Talk with your pupils about how that compares with today's modern family.

Communities were very different from today - how many pupils in your class can name their neighbours? In Victorian times everyone knew their neighbour and they would have big street parties for celebrations such as Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. Houses were decked out with Union Jack flags and bunting. Even though the communities were poor they made their own decorations and shared food to celebrate. Do your pupils think that would happen today? Have they ever been to a street party?

What about the wider community, do your pupils have any local shops? Where do they go to get food, shoes, clothes, medicines etc? Where do they think the Victorians would have got their shopping from? How would they get the shopping home, remembering that they didn't have buses or cars?

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Work with your pupils to research your local area, where were the local shops in the 1890's? What were they? Can you find any pictures of them?



Penny farthing

## Curriculum links

ICT: Skills 1-3

History: Historical Knowledge and Understanding 1

# Who were the everyday Victorians?

What was a working class family like?

Use your imagination to make up a Victorian family, use books and the internet to help you if you need to. You need to think of names, ages and jobs for each family member.

Name	Position in the family	Age	Job
<i>e.g. John Smith</i>	<i>Head of the family</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>Blacksmith</i>

How would you have organised a street party (remember you have no internet, no telephones, no electricity, no car and not much money)?

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Victorian Shopping. Here is a shopping list, write down which shop you would have to go to to buy each item.

- Potatoes \_\_\_\_\_
- Cabbage \_\_\_\_\_
- Bacon \_\_\_\_\_
- Milk \_\_\_\_\_
- Cough Medicine \_\_\_\_\_
- Soap \_\_\_\_\_



**Did you know...**  
Victorian children called their dads 'sir'?!

# Fact or Fiction?

Interpretation is the explanation or communication of information. How do we do this? Can your pupils come up with any ways they communicate information?

You will need to have ensured that your pupils have used various forms of interpretation for completing the previous worksheets. Make a list with your pupils showing the type of historical interpretation used. Newspaper cuttings, oral histories, written accounts, photographs, books and the Internet can all be used.

Which do they think is the most accurate and why do they think that? The past is represented in many different ways listed above but it can also be represented on TV, in films and information can be found in many other forms.

## CLASS ACTIVITY

A great way of demonstrating the importance of using first hand accounts is to play a simple game of Chinese Whispers. By doing this you can easily demonstrate how information changes when passed from person to person. Knowing this, which form of historical interpretation do the pupils think is the most accurate now?

Have your pupils heard of time capsules? These are a fantastic way of ensuring information and artefacts are preserved for future generations. Do you know of any time capsules near your school?

## ACTIVITY

Using the worksheet pupils can write their own list of historical interpretation. They then need to write about the best way of making sure accurate information is passed on to future generations and list what they would put in a time capsule.

## Curriculum Links

ICT: Skills 1-3

History: Interpretations of history 1 and 2

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Why not make a school time capsule; you could make a simple one by using a small box. Put items inside, for example a class photograph, some of their work, their thoughts on school life and seal the box up. You can then open the box up, in a few years for another class to look at. Or ask your class to help make a time capsule for the first year pupils at your school, then they can open it up when they are about to leave.

However, you could always make a real time capsule. Ridgequest <[www.ridgequest.co.uk](http://www.ridgequest.co.uk)> make proper lead capsules that you can fill and register with the International Time Capsule Society <[www.oglethorpe.edu](http://www.oglethorpe.edu)> (search for ITCS) so your capsule doesn't get lost or forgotten about.



# Fact or Fiction?

How many different forms of historical interpretation can you list?

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What would be the best way for you to leave first hand information about your life now for pupils in this school in 100 years time?

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If you were making a time capsule what would you include? What is important to your life now? (Draw your answers but don't forget to label them too.)



**Did you know...** In 1896 the speed limit for cars increased from 4 to 20 mph?!

# Something for the Future

Using all the knowledge gathered from the previous worksheets, pupils now need to produce their own historical interpretation on the changes in housing design.

Take some time to go over what they have learnt so far. Each pupil can use their previous completed worksheets to help with this activity.

The pupils need to design a leaflet that explains the changes in housing design from the Victorian era to today. The leaflet is aimed at pupils at their school in 100 years time. So they need to think about the age of their reader and the type of information they would be interested in reading.



Street tram during Jubilee celebrations

## **EXTENSION ACTIVITY**

Produce the leaflet using a design software on the computer and then add historical images that can be either scanned in or found on-line (remind them that they need to ensure that the information is accurate and that the era is correct).

## **ACTIVITY**

The pupils can plan their leaflet using the worksheet, then they will need a separate piece of paper to make their final leaflet. They need to use historical vocabulary and ensure the contents are historically accurate, so they need to think carefully about where they get their information from.

### **Curriculum Links**

ICT: Create and communicate information  
1

History: Organisation and communication  
1 and 2



# Something for the Future

You need to produce a leaflet showing the changes in housing design from 1900 to today.

Try to include key features and differences between the houses. Use the images of Victorian houses and the modern Taylor Wimpey houses to help illustrate your leaflet.

Plan your leaflet below: remember to make sure the information you put in is accurate, how do you know it is?

Outside of the leaflet

Information	Back Cover	Front Cover

Inside of the leaflet

Information	Information	Information



# What you couldn't live without!

What do we use today that was invented by the Victorians?

Talk about Victorian life with your pupils, discuss that some families shared toilets, had coal fires and got their water from a communal pump in the street. Then get them to think about what they have in their house that the Victorians didn't? For example, telephones, televisions, mobil phones, MP3 players, games consoles etc

## ACTIVITY

To help them complete the worksheet, ask them to choose from one of the inventions below or to research Victorian inventions and come up with their own. They need to find out when it was invented and by whom, they also need to find out who used it, was it available to everyone? Can they work out what the alternative was before this was invented?

Victorian Inventions:

The first pedal bicycle (invented by Kirkpatrick Macmillan in 1839)

The first postage stamp (issued in 1840)

Morse Code (by Samuel Morse in 1844)

The first sewing machine (invented by Elias Howe in 1846)

Ice cream (invented by American Jacob Fussell in 1851)

The telephone (by Alexander Bell in 1876)

Electric light bulbs (by Swan and Edison in 1897)

The first petrol motor car (was invented by Karl Benz in 1885)

Moving pictures called a cinematograph (was invented by the Lumiere brothers in 1849)

The wireless radio (was launched by Guglielmo Marconi in 1895)

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## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

What would your pupils have invented? What would have been the most important invention for them, would it have been a flushing toilet or running water or perhaps they would have invented the television before John Logie Baird in 1926?! What would their priority be!



Alexander Graham Bell

### Curriculum Links

ICT: Skills 1-3

History: Historical Knowledge and Understanding 2 and 3



# What you couldn't live without!

Choose a Victorian invention to research:

I have chosen the \_\_\_\_\_

It was invented in \_\_\_\_\_

It was invented by \_\_\_\_\_

Before it was invented, Victorian's had to use \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you think is the best Victorian invention and why?

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Did you know...  
Some Victorians  
ate Squirrel pie and  
mice on toast?!



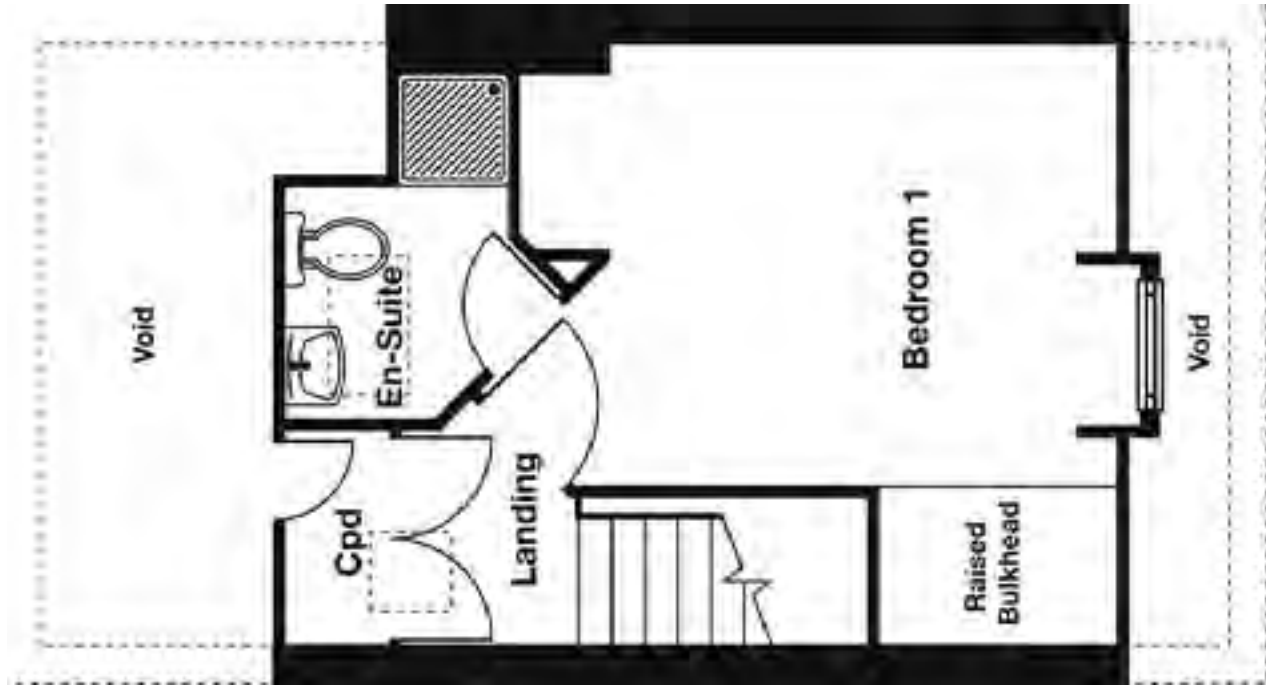
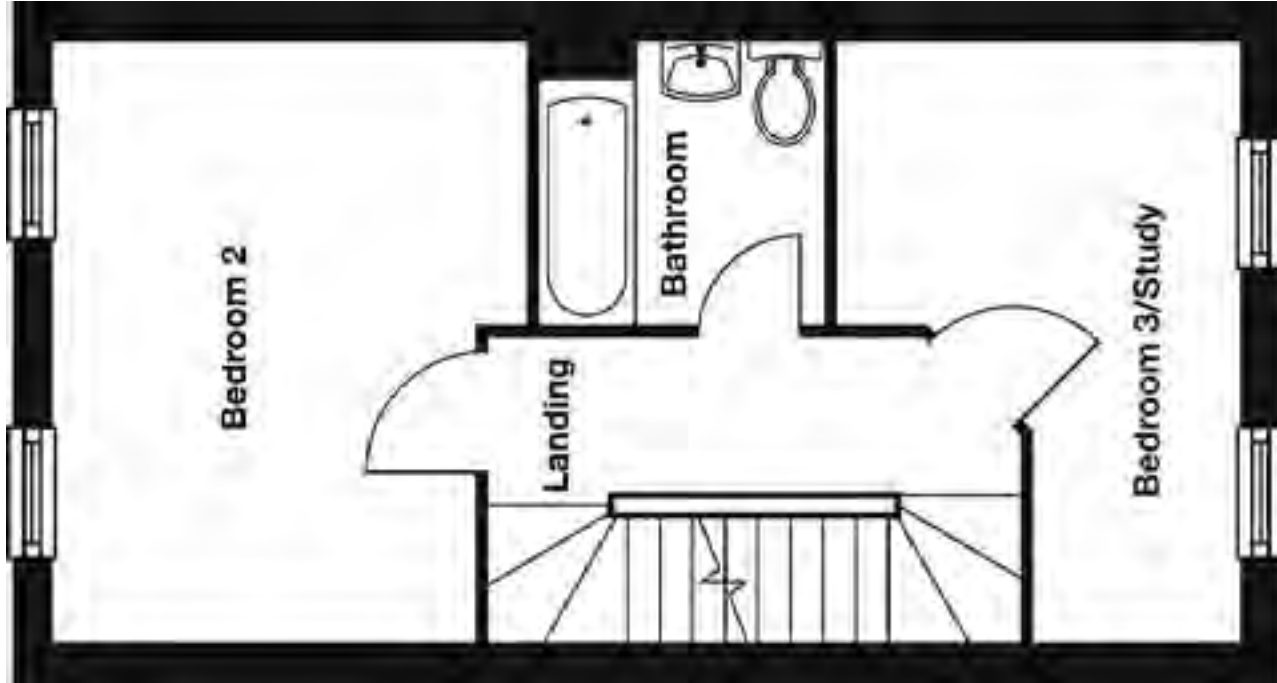
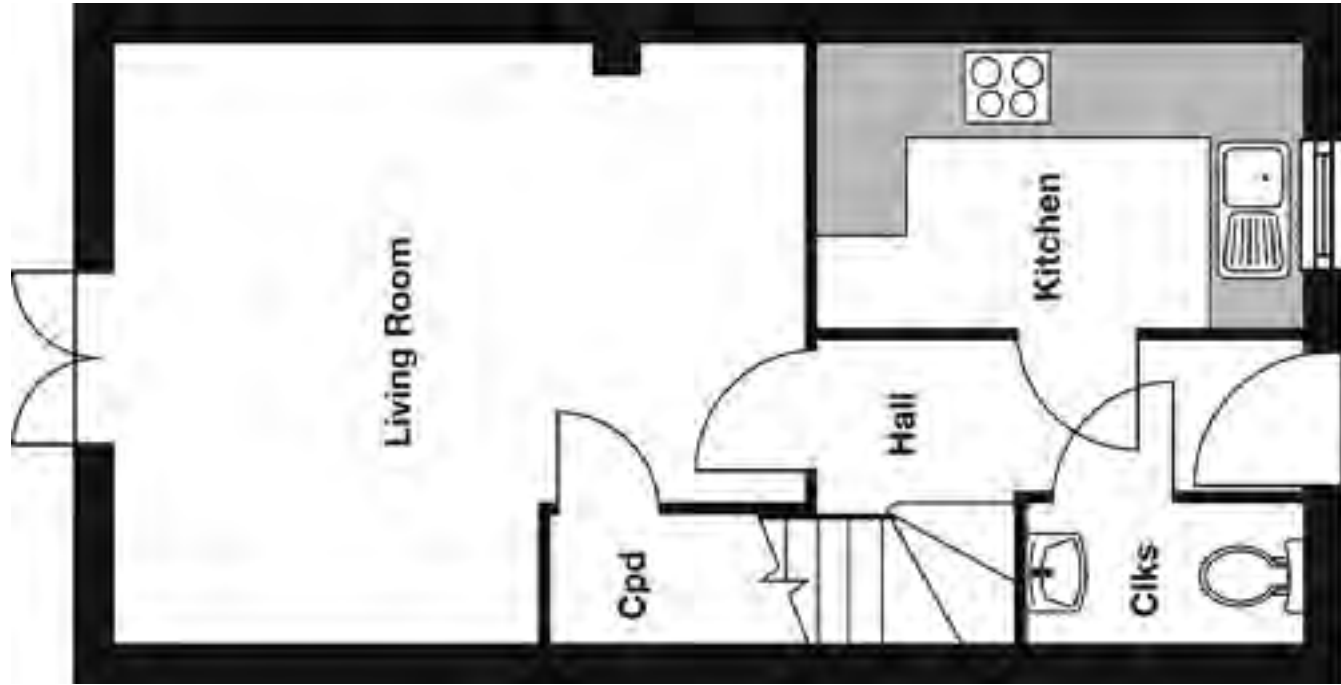
# Victorian Street View



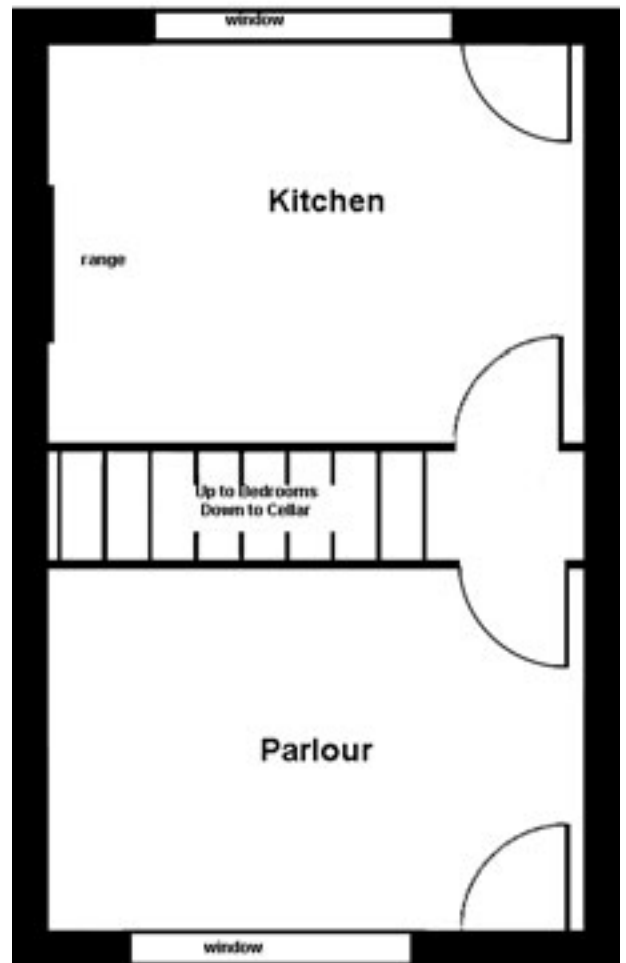
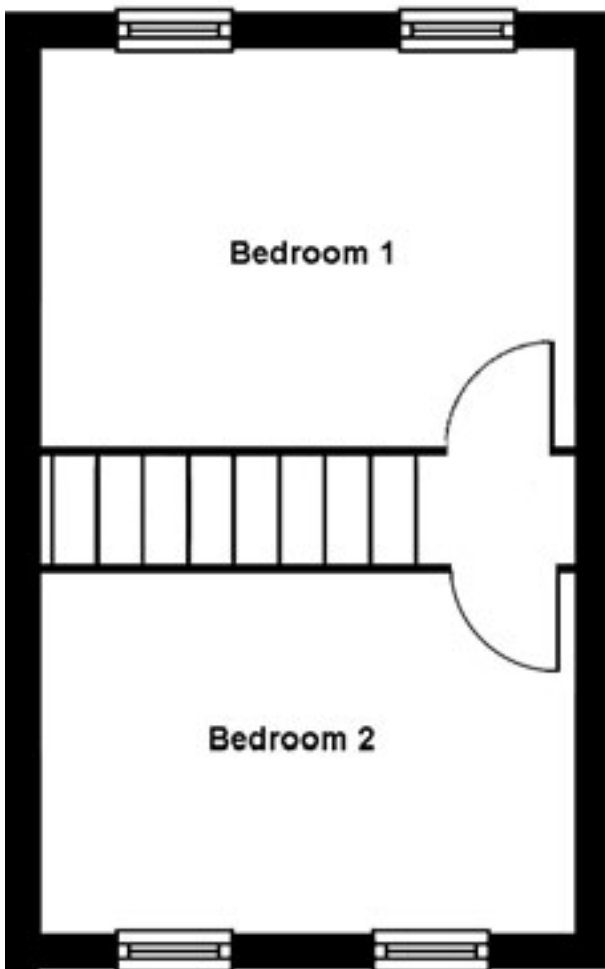
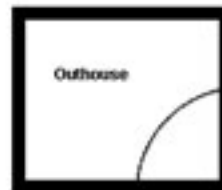
# Victorian Street Map



# Modern House Layout



# Victorian House Layout



# Modern Taylor Wimpey housing development





# Taylor Wimpey

