

BURNBANKS

MODEL SETTLEMENT

A BOLD PLAN FOR MAN AND MACHINE

The Manchester Corporation Act of 1919 authorised the construction of waterworks at Haweswater. Despite interruptions caused by recession and two world wars, the dam was finally completed in 1940. Designed by George Eric Taylor, it is the highest in Britain and a rare example of a hollow buttress concrete dam. The gigantic scheme strained the reserves of the workforce - navvies, surveyors and engineers. The remoteness of the site, severe weather, and unyielding rock tested stamina to the limit.



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THE BURNBANKS' COMMUNITY

The workforce could not be supplied locally. From the late 1920s, hundreds of unemployed workers were recruited in Manchester and West Cumberland using grants from the Ministry of Labour. Labourers were the first to arrive - digging foundations and constructing roads to transport building materials.

At first workers sought lodgings in scattered farmhouses but Manchester once more showed its civic pride. Instead of a 'navy camp', Manchester built a model village close to the dam. Burnbanks provided 66 self-contained bungalows of a sturdy cast-iron construction, with electricity, hot and cold running water, and modern kitchens and bathrooms. They were the envy of many a local farmer. Community life flourished. Manchester provided a mission, recreation hall, dispensary and shop and paid for a policeman, a nurse and a shopkeeper as well as financing the expansion of Bampton School.

