



Social housing and working class heritage

Would you consider a dilapidated seventies tower block as heritage? In England, some social housing developments have already been given listed status, a level of protection usually associated with castles, monasteries and stately homes. Others are considered as a failed experiment by an outmoded welfare state, fit only for demolition. In this album, we see working class residents of one such estate fighting for its survival. By doing so, they may be challenging some of our fundamental assumptions and preconceptions about heritage. The album also contains academic perspectives from Rodney Harrison, Lecturer in Heritage Studies at the Open University; and Alan Powers, Professor in Architecture and Cultural History at the University of Greenwich. This material forms part of the Open University course AD281 Understanding Global Heritage.

You can discover something of what it's like to study the course by using the downloadable 'activities' files to explore post-war housing and its conservation as part of the 'canon' of heritage, the ways in which decisions are made about which buildings are conserved as heritage and which are not, the relationship between heritage and a 'sense of place', and heritage as a form of social and political action.