

## Closing Of The Mines



For hundreds of years, coal mining had been at the heart of many counties across Britain. When Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister in 1979, all of that was about to change.

She appointed a man called Ian McGregor, who argued that most of the pits were losing money. Together, they planned to close many of the coal mines and buy cheaper coal from abroad.

The idea of losing their jobs overnight, with nothing in place to support them, was too much for many miners. They decided to go on strike in 1984 and refused to work. This strike went on for almost a year, with many miners suffering terrible hardships as their pay dried up. Thatcher asked the police forces to step in, and this led to many fights between miners and officers.

When the strike ended in 1985, there were 174 deep coals mines in the UK. By 1994, all but 15 had been closed. In some areas, this meant that nearly half of the people were out of work, with no other jobs available to them.

The final coal mine in Britain closed in 2015.

### Vocabulary

Which phrase tells you that mining was important to many communities?

Which word describes something that people do when they refuse to work?

### Infer

Why do you think the miners were worried?

What evidence is there that Thatcher and McGregor achieved what they set out to do?

### Retrieve

When did the miner's strike end?

When did the last coal mine close in Britain?