

How much has Leeman Road changed over time?

Vera, aged 94, who lives on Bright Street



Image: R Bruce

Did you live in the Leeman Road area when you were growing up? How long ago was that? If not, when did you move here? What was it like?

No, we moved here on 19 September 1955. It was very friendly, everyone chatted. Mrs Burke and her neighbour used to sit out on the street and knit. You could let the children play out.

I grew up in Hetherton Street, where Marygate car park is now. I started at Park Grove School as a junior the day before World War II started.

Did you go to St Barnabas School? What do you remember about it?

No, but my daughter did and she loved it. There was a playground for the juniors and a little playground up a few steps for the infants.

There was a small yard round the side where the boys used to play. They would slide down the coke pile.

We still have streets of terraced houses. How have the houses changed?

No one had baths. We went to the Slipper baths next to the vet's. Then the people in no. 5 got a bathroom put in! When Pamela, my daughter, was 12 we got a grant for £1,000 to put a bathroom in. That was a lot of money as the house cost £4,000.

What shops were there?

There were about 30 shops. There were shops on most corners but some were just in front rooms.

There was a dairy on Kingsland Terrace and he had a milk round. His brother delivered coal.

There were two bookmakers, greengrocers, three butchers, hairdressers, general grocery shops and four fish shops. There were four shops just on Albany Street! There was a lady who made children's clothes if you asked her nicely – not fancy, just everyday clothes.

Are there any other ways in which the area has changed?

There used to be a ferry across the river until there was a royal wedding and they built a temporary Bailey Bridge in 1961 for the extra traffic. The ferry might still be in the river!



There was a swimming hut and diving board on the river near Scarborough Bridge for railway workers.

In the park, there was an open-sided hut, like a bus shelter, you could sit in. We used to play bowls on the bowling green near the war memorial.

The children used to play where the bombed houses were. They would dig in the ground with spoons.

There was a Catholic Sunday school that held bingo. It was a shilling and the prizes were things like a teapot stand or a tea cosy.

My daughter used to go to Sunshine Corner near where the vets are now. It was a children's club. Their song was

'Sunshine Corner, Oh! It's jolly fine!

It's for children under ninety-nine.

All are welcome, seats are given free.

Sunshine Corner is the place for me.'

The no. 7 bus used to come round Bright Street and go to The Bee's Wing on Hull Road.

There was a Working Men's Club behind the Jubilee pub. My husband used to go there sometimes on a Friday night to play cards or dominoes. He didn't drink, he gave up beer when he came out of the army. He was a bus and coach driver. He used to have a Britvic orange and make it last all night.

We would stand and chat with our neighbours but we wouldn't go into their houses.

What would be the same if your younger self could visit?

Everything has changed – all the shops have gone. But the church hasn't changed.