

ED BROWN

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## Ledbury Close & Rodney Close Area

Until Victorian times Ladywood was a largely agricultural area on the fringes of the city. It saw sporadic development in the late 18th century and was regarded as a “high-class” retreat close to town. From the middle of the 19th century the area started to be developed heavily with densely packed housing as the population of Birmingham increased and started to sprawl outwards.

By the late 1800s Ladywood was packed with housing for the working classes and by the beginning of the 20th century Ladywood was a district of long straight streets of closely packed terraces. The tightly packed Victorian housing wasn't fit for purpose at the time it was built, with much of it lacking proper sanitation, and was completely replaced during the 1960s and 1970s (it's surprising that it lasted so long).

After World War II, Ladywood was marked as a “Redevelopment Area” alongside Highgate, Lee Bank and Newtown. These inner city areas were severely damaged by heavy bombing and the dilapidated housing and industry and street patterns were simply demolished. The majority of Ladywood and surrounding inner-city areas were rebuilt from the 1960s in a mixture of tower blocks and low-rise housing.

Wells Tower and Truro Tower were both part of that 1960's redevelopment with plans for the blocks being approved along in 1962 and 1963. Both of the towers were completed in 1965 by Wimpey. Standing at 47 metres tall and containing 93 flats these blocks tower over the Middleway. In 2020 both towers were refurbished by Wates.