

# Bletchley Park: Top-Secret [B1]

Questa tenuta dall'aspetto eclettico ospita il museo che racconta la storia della decifrazione dei codici e dei messaggi che contribuirono a sconfiggere il nazismo.

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During World War Two, the British government [requisitioned](#) many English [country estates](#) for the war effort. Some became schools, others hospitals, and Bletchley became the temporary home to the Government Code & Cypher school, otherwise known as GC&CS. This school was part of the greater British Intelligence service and was focused on [wire-tapping](#) communications among the [Axis](#) powers. Its staff were called codebreakers.

## THE CODEBREAKERS

In order to be able to successfully infiltrate and decipher communications, British Intelligence needed to find profiles of [trustworthy](#) people, who also had the necessary mathematical and computing skills to decipher codes. The GC&CS recruited mainly university graduates and junior level staff, and Bletchley Park was perfectly located for such an [endeavour](#). The mansion was chosen as the site for the school because it sat strategically along the railway line that connected the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In the early years of the war the codebreakers were few in number (about 150 people) and elite in status — some of them were already professional codebreakers.

## LIFE AT BLETCHLEY

In the early years only the initial group lived in the main house at Bletchley, a large structure with a facade built in a mixture of architectural styles. But as the intelligence operation at Bletchley quickly [gained momentum](#), the codebreakers alone could not handle the [workload](#). More staff joined Bletchley so that eventually there were around nine thousand people living in the grounds and contributing to the decoding operation. To accommodate

all of these people, wooden [huts](#) were built throughout the grounds of the park. One of the [breakthroughs](#) at Bletchley was the development of the 'Bombe' machines to mechanically decode the Enigma messages. Before these machines, the codebreakers needed to work  $\frac{24}{7}$  to decipher the codes by hand. The introduction of the machines freed up time and minds. However, the new machines needed more space to be stored and more staff to operate them.

## BLETCHLEY PARK TODAY

What happened during wartime inside Bletchley Park remained classified until the mid-1970s, which meant that the site was almost completely demolished and its history forgotten in favour of housing projects. Luckily, the Bletchley Park [Trust](#) was formed and [saw to it](#) that the park be preserved as a museum and [heritage site](#). Although there were rumours that all of the classified information at Bletchley had been destroyed in large [bonfires](#) after World War Two, in the 1990s historians began to gain access to the files and some former staff began to give testimony. Since then, we have been able [to flesh out](#) more of the story of what went on at Bletchley Park during the war years.

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# Glossary

- **saw to it** = assicurare
- **bonfires** = falò
- **requisitioned** = requisire
- **workload** = carico di lavoro
- **breakthroughs** = passi avanti, svolta
- **heritage site** = luogo del patrimonio culturale
- **to flesh out** = approfondire
- **country estates** = residenza rurale
- **trustworthy** = di fiducia
- **endeavour** = impresa
- **gained momentum** = prendere slancio, prendere il via
- **huts** = capanne
- **Trust** = fondazione
- **wire-tapping** = intercettazioni telefoniche
- **Axis** = asse