

ED BROWN

High Rise

A sea of windows,
Looking out. **Towering.**

People living,
Hoping for better.

Neglected.

Sorrow.

A microcosm of the city.
Soon to be ground to **dust.**

The high-rise blocks in Druids Heath were commissioned in 1965 and constructed using Bison Precast Concrete method – a quick way to respond to the housing crisis that was hanging over the nation at that time.

The vision for high-rise living in the second part of the 20th C was one of a modern, efficient, and affordable way to live. It was seen as a way to solve the housing crisis, and to provide people with access to amenities and services that they wouldn't have otherwise had. These blocks were home to the hopes and dreams of the post war generation.

However, the reality of high-rise living often fell short of the vision. High-rise buildings were often poorly built and poorly maintained. The latter being true of the Druids Heath Blocks.

Druids Heath was never given the attention it deserved and has been in a state of decline for years. The area remains the only estate in Birmingham not to have had any major investment since it was built and in 2019 was listed as one of the most deprived places in the UK.

Earlier this year bids for £82 million, to fund 5 projects (including regeneration at Druids Heath), from the levelling up fund were rejected. Another example of the failure of government

to respond to the needs of the people. They had a chance to transform the area, to rejuvenate it but once again the Government has treated Druids Heath and the people who live there with contempt.

It's sad to see the high rise blocks in such a state of decline. Some are up for demolition, others have yet to find out their fate. Once they are gone, a little bit of our local history goes with them.

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6th April 2023