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 AT THE POLYTECHNIC OF CENTRAL LONDON.

**URBAN DESIGN  
 QUARTERLY**

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# URBAN DESIGN QUARTERLY

Special Issue

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**1 DAY CONFERENCE**  
**THURSDAY 20th JUNE 1985**  
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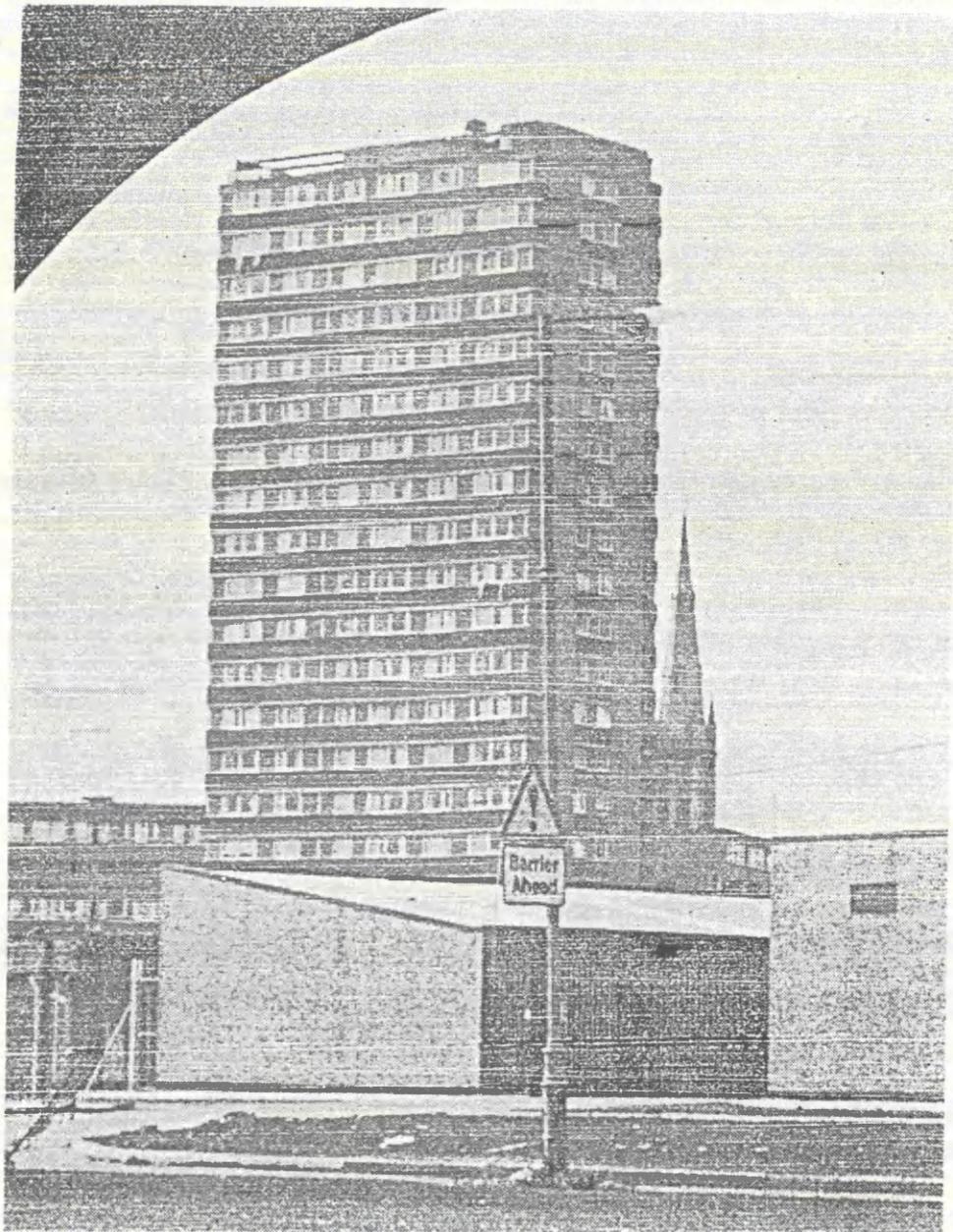
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# Foreword

Much of the current debate about the appalling state of many post-war housing estates seems to swiftly degenerate into a sterile argument about 'whose fault' it was: was it the architects, or the builders, or the politicians, or the housing managers, etc.? In organising this Conference under the title 'Humanising the Legacy' we were concerned to be at least positive, if not optimistic, about the problem, and look at the various ways in which Local Authorities, at a time of the severest financial restraint, are attempting to cope with the awesome problems that the decaying post-war estates are presenting, concentrating particularly on the success stories which could point the way forward.

Although the Conference was sponsored by the Urban Design Group, we devised the programme in the knowledge that design alone cannot solve the problems of these estates. The really interesting area for debate, it seemed to us, was the way in which changes to the design of an estate and changes to its management or ownership structure can be mutually sustaining.

The evidence appears to show that with imagination and perseverance, but above all with the involvement and support of the people who actually live on the estates, a humane environment can be created from even the most brutal relic of the Modern Movement. Dynamite is hardly ever the best solution.

Colin Rowe, in his book 'Collage City', lamented 'the impoverished banalities of public housing which stand around like undernourished symbols of a new world which refused to be born'. Given nourishment of the right sort a new world can be born in most of the post-war estates, but it is a very different and much more diverse and vital world, thank God, than the ville radiouse that inspired them.

Peter Studdert  
Conference Organiser

# Summary

In helping to organise this year's Conference I undertook to prepare a presentation of photographs showing typical scenes to be found in many of our Post-War housing estates to be shown in the Foyer throughout the day. As an Inner City Local Authority Planner I was not totally ignorant of the conditions that are found on many of these estates. But nevertheless I was quite unprepared for what I actually found.

Irrespective of who is to blame, the quality of life which is possible in estates where lift lobbies stink of urine, where rubbish is left to accumulate in corridors, where mattresses are burned in rubbish rooms on the 22nd floor, and where, from the outside, it is impossible to identify your own home, cannot be high. In compiling my photographic record I set out to find examples of all the varied types found across South London from deck-access in the Brixton Wall and at the Elephant and Castle, point-blocks in Camberwell and Bermondsey culminating in the two together at the Andover and Pepy's Estates. It was not one of my most enjoyable days out memorable for an overwhelming feeling of, "Thank God I don't have to live here!". I really do not feel that I could cope with the constant degradation of it all. At the end of my day I could see no long term solution other than wholesale demolition, starting with a clean sheet.

But after the Conference I was forced to modify this view to a degree. I am still convinced that in the worst cases (of which there are a substantial number) demolition and redevelopment along more traditional lines is the only viable option. Combinations of problems - social, physical, structural, financial - all combine to offer no alternative. But several speakers offered other views, all notable for attempts to change residents attitudes to their own housing: in some cases laying it on the line that they could be offered no other housing and it was in their own interest to make the best of the housing they have; in others seeking resident involvement in all decisions from the repairs service through major rehabilitation programmes to formulating the Housing Investment Programme bids and deciding priorities as to where it should be spent. In most examples given, this sensitivity to residents needs and wishes appeared to be paying dividends and demonstrated that, in humanising these estates, social and administrative changes are as essential as physical improvements.

This view was also evident in the discussion period at the end of the day. John Kernaghan had managed, contrary to Urban Design Conference custom, to keep to a tight timetable enabling ample time for contributors from the floor. Because of the nature of the Group's conferences and our aim to foster inter-professional collaboration through both the topic and the interest groups invited to attend, this was one of the most important parts of the day. The group provides one of the very few fora where such pressing problems can be debated across professional boundaries, improving each groups perception of the views of the others.

The need to involve people more fully in decision making was a point raised by many contributors as was the fact that economic realities ruled out the bulldozer as an applicable solution for the foreseeable future. Delegates benefitted from opinions expressed not only by Urban Designers, Architects and Planners but also Housing Managers, House Builders, Sociologists, Politicians. And unexpectedly, none of them sought to attribute blame for the design and construction of these estates, contrary to the much reported inter-profession sniping of subsequent months. The crisis is already too far advanced for such views to be of any further value. What time, effort and thought is available must be turned to finding solutions, not scapegoats.

In summing up the Chairman expressed his thanks to the Group for gathering such a varied audience to discuss this pressing problem and, naturally, thanked the speakers for their contributions which had set the tone for a lively day, full of ideas.

Wishing to end on a positive note, he identified four points which he wanted delegates to take away from the Conference and to bear in mind in their future dealings with Post-War Estates; four needs which are pointers for the future:

- the need to establish who are the true housing clients and what are their needs.
- the need to recognise that cuts in public expenditure can foster innovation.
- the need to exploit the positive role of the private sector and to diversify tenure.
- the need to encourage tenant participation and community development by providing the tenants' movement with a sound funding base to allow it to take control of its own future.

Only then can the housing environments created by inadequate and ill-conceived designs be more adequately humanised.

Lawrence Revill



Obsolete post-war  
tower blocks being blown up  
in Newham, London,  
November 1981.

# I INTRODUCTION & WELCOME

by the Conference Chairman, John Kernaghan,  
Director of the Society for Cooperative  
Dwellings and past-Chairman of Housing  
Committee, Glasgow District Council

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Welcome everyone. I would firstly like to say that the Urban Design Group is to be congratulated on taking the initiative on this issue. I certainly agree with them that the Legacy of Post-War Housing is a major problem, perhaps the most significant problem, being faced by housing authorities the length and breadth of the country. The only slight quarrel I would have with the topic is the use of the words "Inner City"; outside of London a lot of the most serious problems are being experienced on the periphery of cities. The fundamental problem, nevertheless, is that local authorities have phenomenal problems trying to deal with these inherited difficulties, and that the tenants who occupy these houses are having even greater difficulties trying to make a life in what often is a quite appalling set of conditions.

I have a particular interest in this subject, because for 20 years I lived in just such a housing estate, and I remember it had a most magnificent setting with rolling hills and, in parts, quite heavily wooded. Unfortunately, the planners and architects ignored that majestic topography when they designed the housing estate. What they built were regimented, identical 'walk-up' flats spread out in straight lines, over these hills, which disappeared into the middle distance, and creating an appalling physical environment which led to much more serious problems later on.

The problem facing local authorities just now is clearly one of resources, especially the collapse of Housing Investment Programmes. It seems clear to me that it is fundamentally important, if major in-roads are going to be made into these difficulties, that this trend is reversed. I would, however, add a note of caution. In the past, local authorities were not always very good at dealing with these problems even when they had the resources. There was a historical tendency to solve problems by throwing money at them, and the authority I was involved with in Scotland was guilty of that as many others. There are some classic examples of work done in the 1970s where a lot of money was wasted, because of a lack of thought and a lack of involvement of people themselves.

It was summed up for me at one meeting I attended, it was called participation but it was actually public relations, where the architects gave a very glossy presentation of their scheme. As I was leaving the meeting I overheard one elderly lady say to another, "What did you think of that, Mary?" to which the response was, "I didn't like it, but they sounded as if they knew what they were talking about, so I didn't want to say anything!" I'm afraid I still think there are shades of that attitude around even now, in terms of the role of the professional involvement in housing, despite attempts to fulfill the aspirations of communities through tenant involvement.

The problem of resources is of course a very major one, and the thing which concerns me most is that the campaigning issue has to be intensified. It is important that it is continually brought home to Central Government just exactly what the consequences are of their present investment policies. At the same time, people in local authorities should not become totally despairing of the present situation, there are examples throughout the country of what can be done despite limited resources. Of course they are limited by this severe lack of finance, but things are happening and they should be given a closer examination. We are far too often trying to re-invent the wheel, there is a lack of exchange of information. Often because good solutions can seem so obvious that we often assume that everyone else knows about it and must be doing it as well. That is something we can not afford to assume.

There is a lot we can learn from each other. For example, there is a fundamental role for tenant involvement in local authority housing, and private sector involvement and investment could also be of critical importance. Most of all, I hope that today will be an opportunity for people to meet, exchange ideas and make contact with other professionals involved in housing, so that they can take away fresh ideas to begin to achieve the objective of this conference, namely 'Humanising the Legacy of Post War Housing Estates'.

I think I should now stop there. I've been taking advantage of my position as Chairman to put across a few half-baked philosophies on the issue. I would now, therefore, like to introduce to you the opening speaker, Ted Cantle, who will give the Keynote Speech.

## 2 KEYNOTE TALK

by Ted Cantle,  
Under Secretary, Housing and Public Works, The  
Association of Metropolitan Authorities.

I hope that some time in the future, after having experienced this Polytechnic building, we might have another conference on humanising polytechnics ... But that is another matter!

### The Scale of the Problem

The Association of Metropolitan Authorities has conducted research into the scale of the problem now facing local authorities with regard to the condition of their housing stock. The Association has produced three separate reports and these show that the problem is by no means confined to post-war industrialised and system built properties. Our research has concentrated on physical defects and until the very recent inquiry set up by the Department of the Environment, this is the only research of its kind.

### The Traditional Housing Stock

The Association's report "Defects in Housing Part 3 - Repair and Modernisation of Traditional Built Dwellings" published in March 1985 estimates that there are 1.2 million pre-war dwellings in England and Wales in the ownership of local authorities. We have further estimated that 450,000 of these are unmodernised. We know, however, that 300,000 unmodernised dwellings are in metropolitan areas and therefore our estimate in respect of district councils is somewhat cautious and may well be an under-estimate. The average cost for modernisation was some £12,500, producing a total estimated cost of £6,000 million. However, based on member authorities' estimates, we found that a further £2,000 million would be needed for capitalised repairs programmes to pre-war dwellings. We have therefore estimated that the total cost of dealing with pre-war dwelling stock would be some £8,000 million.

Our member authorities are currently modernising 15,000 dwellings a year and, at this rate of progress, it will take 20 years to complete all the pre-war stock. However, there are wide local variations and, for example, in Birmingham they have 24,900 pre-war dwellings to improve, but only managed 40 in the last year. At this rate, it will take them 622 years. Furthermore, the rate of progress is slowing down as local authorities find that they have less and less money and are having to divert resources to more immediate problems in the post-war stock. We would therefore estimate that the current programme would take at least 50 years, and possibly 100 years to complete.

The following slides show that the modernisation elements include the following:

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| (1) Walls            | Often solid brick, rain penetration, failed dpcs, poor thermal insulation and condensation. Cavity wall tie failure is also a problem. |
| (2) Floors           | Absence of membranes, or failure of, sulphate attack.  |
| (3) Roofs            | Delamination/slippage of slates and tiles and lack of insulation.  |
| (4) External Joinery | Window frames and doors and door frames often require major repair and/or replacement.   |

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| (5) Chimneys/<br>Flues      | Often unsuitable for modern appliances, may need closing or removing altogether.   |
| (6) Internal<br>Arrangement | WC may be external and poor bathroom arrangements. Kitchen often originally designed as a scullery, non-parlour houses have generally low space standards and more difficult and expensive to improve.     |
| (7) Heating                 | Most dwellings rely on solid fuel heating in one room which often feeds the hot water system. Services may be in lead and fittings generally in poor condition.  |
| (8) Electricity             | Usually the electrical system requires considerable upgrading.   |
| (9) External<br>Works       | Not only are the houses 60 years old, but also the roads and footpaths, fencing, landscaping, drainage, and so on will also require some attention. The road system is often inadequate for present needs. |
| (10) Flats                  | Often special problems are associated with these early flats and, in general, will require some redesign as well as modernisation to make them acceptable.   |

The traditional post-war stock also requires attention. Probably there are around 625,000 dwellings in England and Wales built prior to 1960 in the ownership of local authorities. We have estimated that at least £1,000 million is necessary for the urgent capitalised repairs to this stock. In many respects, the properties are deteriorating - for example, outworn kitchen and bathroom fittings, inadequate heating systems which are difficult to maintain, electrical systems which require upgrading, external joinery items, and especially metal window frames which require replacement, asbestos cement, rainwater goods and so on.

In Scotland, there is perhaps slightly more information and a Parliamentary Written Answer on 19 April 1985 gave details of local authorities housing checklists and housing plans. This revealed that there were 68,000 pre-war local authority dwellings in Scotland to modernise and a further 27,000 requiring partial modernisation. In addition, there were 200,000 post-war dwellings of traditional construction that required either comprehensive or partial modernisation. Capitalised repairs are also necessary. Using similar figures for unit costs in England, I would estimate that a further £3,000 million is necessary for Scotland.

The total cost of dealing with the traditional housing stock can therefore be estimated at at least £12,000 million and probably £15,000 million if a more generous interpretation is taken of the English post-war stock problems.

### Non-Traditional Dwellings

The Association's first report in July 1983 entitled "Defects in Housing Part 1 - Non-Traditional Dwellings of the 1940s and 1950s" found that there were over 500,000 such dwellings built immediately after the Second World War. These were in response to the then housing crisis and were encouraged by

both Labour and Conservative administrations. The traditional industry could not cope and non-traditional techniques were brought in to help meet the high housebuilding targets of central government. These dwellings were warranted by central government but local authorities now face major problems.

The prefabricated reinforced concrete types are now widely recognised to have major structural defects and the main problem is carbonation - the steel reinforcement rusting and expanding and breaking up the concrete elements. There are 170,000 PRC houses, most of which remain in local authority ownership. We estimate that it will cost around £2,000 million to repair these.

There are many other types of non-traditional dwellings, such as BISF (steel frame), Howards (steel frame), Spooners (timber frame) and No Fines construction. All of these have problems to some degree or other and many will require major repair and, of course, modernisation.

The non-traditional dwellings do have the virtue of being generally low rise with high space standards. Generally, they are situated in popular locations and have reasonable environments. The sorts of problems found include not only carbonation, but also flat roof failure, lack of cavity barriers and separation between dwellings, low thermal insulation, deteriorated metal flues, weather penetration, and deterioration of cladding and roofing systems.

We have estimated that the cost of dealing with non-traditional dwellings will be no less than £5,000 million, although to this figure must be added the cost of modernisation for similar items to the traditional stock, such as electrical re-wiring and replacement of fittings etc. In some cases, some estate redesign will also be necessary.

#### Industrialised and System Built Dwellings

The industrialised and system built dwellings have attracted most attention and this was the subject of our second report entitled "Defects in Housing Part 2 - Non-Traditional and System Built Dwelling of the 1960s and 1970s" which was published in March 1984.

This sort of dwelling was again produced in response to a housing crisis and enabled central government to achieve high housebuilding targets and to raise output rapidly. The traditional building industry could not cope and this enabled the use of more unskilled labour and was an attempt to produce a factory industry. Local authorities were given higher subsidies and enhanced programmes and were required to devote a rising share of their programme to the industrialised building. Again, the systems were warranted by central government - by the use of the National Building Agency set up for the task - and 89 appraisal certificates were issued which guaranteed a 60 year life of the dwellings. It is clear now that these appraisals were superficial and that the systems relied on untried and untested materials and techniques.

We have estimated that there are between three-quarters of a million and one million such dwellings in over 150 systems. Other research has shown that there are 4,600 high rise blocks (over 6 storeys) which include 300,000 dwellings. In addition, there are a further 75,000 to 150,000 dwellings in deck access forms. The problem of physical defects is compounded by problems arising from new built forms and the generally low acceptability of the new designs.

The physical problems include differential movement (for example, between the structural frame and cladding), inadequate bearing/jointing, panels inadequately fixed, water penetration around panels and in many different locations, flat roof failure, asbestos, poor thermal insulation and cold bridging, inadequate sound insulation and spalling concrete.

The problems of Taylor Woodrow Anglian (TWA) and Bison dwellings are becoming better known and the Building Research Establishment (BRE) are now conducting research into all large panel systems.

The Association has estimated that the cost of dealing with this problem will be a further £5,000 million and it is worth pointing out that 10,000 such dwellings only 10 years old or so have already been demolished.

The total cost of dealing with the physical defects in the local authority housing stock is therefore likely to be at least £20,000 million and could well reach £25,000 million.

The Association, however, recognises that its own research is insufficient and is very pleased that the Department of the Environment has at last agreed to conduct an inquiry with all local authorities to identify and quantify the problem. Local authorities in England and Wales were required to make a return to the Department of the Environment by the end of May and early indications certainly suggest that AMA figures will be validated.

The likely cost of dealing with the problem can be compared with the present level of housing capital expenditure. Gross provision for England and Wales is currently around £2,300 million and only about £1,000 million of that will be spent on rehabilitation of the local authority housing stock.

#### The Rate of Deterioration

Very little is known about the rate of deterioration of the local authority housing stock. The pre-war stock is generally around 60 years old and obviously, if it is not dealt with, will deteriorate still further. However, it is important to point out that much of the post-war stock is now some 30 years old and often requires some major repairs and/or partial modernisation if further deterioration is to be averted. More and more problems are also emerging in the more modern post-war stock.

The number of 'non-standard' dwellings in local authority ownership in England fell from 710,000 in 1983/84 to 153,000 in 1984/85 according to aggregate HIP returns. This may partly reflect, however, better identification but would certainly seem to confirm that the current levels of expenditure are inadequate.

A recent report by the Audit Commission on capital controls indicated that the backlog of disrepair was increasing on the local authority stock by some £900 million per annum. This was based on an RICS formula of 1.8% of capital value reinvested and included revenue expenditure.

Much more work needs to be done on the rate of deterioration in order that future levels of investment can be determined.

#### Humanising the Legacy

It must be the case that humanising the legacy depends first and foremost upon rectification of the physical defects. Clearly, local authorities will in any case have a statutory duty to maintain certain standards and ensure that water is not coming through the roof, there is no danger of structural collapse, etc. However, such a programme of dealing with the physical defects will cost billions of pounds to implement. Furthermore, tackling these problems cannot be in isolation from the many other aspects of estate and house modernisation. In short, there is simply no point in dealing with the physical defects if at the same time, because of design, management, or social and environmental aspects, the estates will remain unacceptable places to live.

Deciding the means by which we 'humanise the legacy' is extremely difficult and I think it would be quite wrong to put forward panaceas, or any sort of national solution which could not take account of the many widely differing and varied local housing problems.

Nevertheless, two schools of thought seem to have emerged, the first of which concentrates on management factors. This is the approach fostered by the Priority Estates Project (PEP) and seems to have favour with Government. Generally, it is a low cost option. In view of Ministers' comments about the poor housing management by local authorities, it may be assumed that the Government may actually believe that this is at the root of the problem and that Priority Estates Projects may be a substitute for real resources.

There is much that can be learnt from the Priority Estates Project in terms of decentralised and intensive housing management. However, some people would argue that rather than actually repairing properties, this is simply a device to appoint more staff to explain to tenants why it is impossible to do all the repairs that they would like! It may reduce vacancies and speed up the management response and may also help with some of the more manifest social problems, for example, by the provision of door entry systems and special caretaking squads. However, the priority estates approach does demand additional staffing resources, not only from the housing department, but also by other agencies. It seldom results in extra resources, but rather a concentration of existing resources upon a particular estate. We do not know what is happening to other estates in the meantime. Furthermore, it is a continuing commitment and the intensive management and higher levels of maintenance response must continue indefinitely if the estate is simply not to regress. It must also be said that it fails to deal with the more fundamental problems - deck access accommodation is still deck access and high rise concrete structures may be repainted or reclad, but essentially they are the same underneath.

The continuing maintenance commitment should not be under-estimated. Many of the system-built and industrialised dwellings have very high and peculiar maintenance costs and there are particular difficulties with high rise forms. Hairline cracks in brickwork panels for example on multi-storey block can give rise to water penetration and this would simply not be a problem in low rise form. The many unusual materials and components generally have a shorter life and require more maintenance. If a life cycle costing is devised for such dwellings, a management and maintenance approach may have to be reconsidered.

The second school of thought is that of design. There are many aspects of design which local authorities and residents may be unhappy with, but it is worth focussing on those selected by Alice Coleman in her new book "Utopia on Trial". Alice Coleman attempts to identify those issues which she thinks contributes to "social malaise" and correlates particular aspects of design with certain evidence of such malaise.

Alice Coleman looked at 4099 blocks of flats in London and (to a limited extent) in Oxford. "Social malaise" was measured by reference to: litter; graffiti; damage; children in care; pollution by urine; pollution by faeces.

Alice Coleman's main plea was simply that we should not build flats. However, she did suggest that flats could be modified in such a way that the above problems would be come less prevalent. These were as follows:

- overhead walkways to be demolished.
- only one block within one site.
- no shared spaces between blocks.
- access to site to be clearly defined, with gates, etc.

- number of storeys to be reduced.
- number of dwellings per block to be reduced (maximum should be 12 - possibly 20).
- number of dwellings per entrance to be reduced (maximum 6 - possibly 10).

Alice Coleman goes on to say that new dwellings should be designed which take account of the above, but also to improve surveillance and definition of public and private spaces. For example, there should be bay windows and no projections on the front facade to restrict views, front entrances are preferred to side entrances, front gardens should provide a buffer zone with waist high fences, back gardens should be easy to view with no escape routes.

I would suggest that design issues have been very much under-rated and probably misunderstood and I think that Alice Coleman's book is a very valuable contribution to the present discussion. It should be essential reading for all architects, housing managers, tenant groups, and others involved in the problem. However, in itself, it does not seem to be a complete answer, and there are instances where dwellings of identical design are more acceptable in one location than in another and, in fact, in some cases exhibit no problems whatsoever. I would therefore suggest that a more local approach to the problem be developed which essentially attempts to relate the estate and the problems therein to the local housing market. I would not wish this to be seen as yet another pseudo-scientific term and certainly the only 'experts' in each case will be the local housing officers and other staff, elected members, and tenants and prospective tenants. They will have an understanding even if never articulated before, of the relative popularity of the different estates and the reasons for it.

Other local factors which should be included in this assessment would include:

- shopping and community facilities.
- child density, play and other facilities for children.
- ethnic minority dimensions.
- drug abuse.
- low/no employment opportunities.
- high cost of public transport/poor public transport.
- previous letting policies.

Perhaps an illustration how complex a problem this is is given in the latest report from CES Limited on Outer Estates. This paints an extremely grim picture of such estates and identifies certain characteristics such as the young age structure, overcrowding, economic and social deprivation, rates of unemployment three times the national rate and so on. These are not therefore simply housing problems.

We should not overlook that possibility that the cost of carrying out physical repairs will be considerable; redesign of the estate may also be expensive and ineffective; and management initiatives may also prove ineffective and costly to sustain. The overall popularity of the dwellings in the future must always be in doubt. Consequently a demolition option may have to be considered, although the rehousing consequences may also be hard to live with.

There is also a trend towards privatisation and this may be seen as a panacea as if the change of tenure is an answer to all problems. Privatisation may well imply the rectification of some physical defects, changing the style of management, and some redesign, but it generally relies upon the decanting of all or most of the existing residents and sale to individual owners. Sales are often made more attractive by subsidies - discounted prices of building or land, or through Government grants. One of the main reasons they are attractive at all is because of daft Treasury notions as to what constitutes "private

finance" and "public expenditure". For example, local authorities now are almost entirely dependent upon private finance - capital receipts - and yet this is counted as public expenditure. It remains public expenditure even when it is spent on private housing. All this just reinforces the Government's view that public expenditure is bad and private finance is good irrespective of the cost benefits and the social implications.

Only about 20,000 houses have been privatised in the last 3 years and probably it will decline still further. Some local authorities, particularly in the north, have found that they could privatise the odd estate without too many difficulties, but in stress areas it is extremely difficult to do so. It is very difficult to justify the decanting of several hundred tenants and rehousing elsewhere at the expense of urgent applications on the waiting list and, indeed, homeless families within that borough. In some London boroughs as many as a thousand families are in temporary accommodation and the loss of any property, and especially whole estates, can be disasterous.

The Government yesterday announced the setting up of the Urban Housing Renewal Unit (UHRU) and this has been established without consultation with the local authority Associations. This is yet another "glossy" brochure initiative and does not bring in new resources. We have been critical of UHRU in the same way that we were critical of CATS (City Action Teams). In response to CATS, the Association said we needed MICE (More Inner City Expenditure). Certainly UHRU would be better re-named RAT - because it is "Really About Tenure". The Government seems obsessed with tenure rather than housing conditions, and seem to overlook the simple fact that more public expenditure is needed to humanise the legacy and also to arrest further decline. Such expenditure would be well spent and the present restriction must simply not be allowed to remain.

# 3 POLITICAL APPROACH ONE

by Councillor Duncan Hawkins,  
Chairman of Housing Policy Committee, London  
Borough of Wandsworth

partnership with a number of major house-builders.

I want to talk to you about Wandsworth's approach to one of its large and unpopular housing estates and the measures we are taking to make it a place where people want to live. Before doing so I would like to tell you something about the policies we have adopted over recent years to improve both pre-war and post-war housing estates at a time when financial resources are limited.

Like many London boroughs we have a mixed housing stock mainly consisting of flats and maisonettes, many in need of refurbishment.

Since the Borough Elections in 1978 returned a Conservative Council, the widespread public desire for house ownership has been recognised by according a very high priority to sales. We had an active sales policy long before the Housing Act 1980 gave Council tenants the right to buy their own homes; more recently we have introduced the concept of sales areas where certain Council dwellings are sold as they become vacant to first time buyers. We have recognised, however, that not everyone wishes to buy their own home, that many cannot and that in the foreseeable future there will continue to be a considerable need for housing to rent. We therefore have introduced imaginative allocations policies to ensure that those with the greatest need have an opportunity of obtaining a Council tenancy.

With these two aims in mind we have set about the refurbishment of the Council's older stock. This comprised pre-war purpose built walk-up flats, cottage-type estates and older houses previously acquired by the Council. Over recent years a number of options have been available to local authorities wishing to refurbish their unimproved housing stock and Wandsworth has taken advantage of a number of them to secure good quality housing both for owner occupation and for renting. One of our over-riding considerations has been to see that the older stock is brought up to modern standards and to achieve this a number of approaches have been adopted.

- (a) Some pre-war estates have been directly modernised by the Council, either while the tenants have remained in occupation or after vacant possession has been obtained.
- (b) The Council has carried out improvement-for-sale schemes, the modernised flats being sold, with discounts, to first time buyers from the Council's sales register.
- (c) We have sold part of a pre-war estate to a Housing Association for an improvement for sale scheme - finance having been obtained from the Housing Corporation.
- (d) The Council has set up its own homesteading scheme.
- (e) We have sold part of a pre-war Council built estate of 76 flats to a Housing Association for a moderation and reletting scheme, mainly to the single homeless, here again the Council has provided the capital finance.
- (f) The Council has sold unmodernised flats to developers who have raised their own finance, those on estates with asbestos problems of such magnitude that tenants had to be moved out, and where the cost of putting them to rights was beyond the Council's capabilities.
- (g) We have entered into an active programme of partnership schemes, the Council working in

The partnership approach has been particularly attractive to us. In our case we have moved away from the traditional approach of working with a local builder to build starter homes, in favour of combining the expertise of the Council and the private developer in refurbishing four storey houses and 1930's housing estates. In this way we are able to help first time buyers, particularly those on low incomes, through the influence the Council can have on selling prices as well as its ability to offer discounts of up to 30 per cent.

We are now well advanced in tackling our unmodernised pre-war housing stock and have been able to turn our attention to our larger post-war housing estates which, although planned to provide a high standard of amenity, are difficult to manage and are unpopular with our housing applicants.

I will tell you, with the help of some slides, about the approach we have adopted to our Doddington Estate in Battersea.

The Doddington Estate comprises 964 flats and maisonettes of between one and four bedrooms in 15 high and low rise system-built blocks. The Estate was built in the late 1960's on a slum site of dilapidated and sub-standard terraced houses. Even though the Estate provided homes with modern fitted kitchens, bathrooms with plentiful hot water and central heating, it has, like many other Estates of similar design in inner city areas built to high population density and incorporating untried design approaches proved unpopular with its tenants and those aspiring to council housing. In 1980 we introduced a compensatory policy of improvements on the Estate to give tenants a better quality of life. These measures did not meet with the success we had hoped for; in fact after the work was completed the Estate still suffered from problems associated with vandalism, graffiti and noise nuisance. Instead of the Estate becoming more acceptable to tenants its popularity continued to decline to the point where only the more desperate applicants would accept tenancies.

In planning our new strategy we recognised that the tenants could not be expected to wait months or even years to see an improvement to their environment. Therefore, although a number of the measures we were to adopt would not become effective immediately we clearly had to carry out work that would have an immediate effect and would demonstrate to the tenants that we meant business.

In the short term we had to improve cleanliness, improve security, improve the repairs service, provide more effective tenant consultation, improve the Estate's image, introduce changes into the letting and management of the Estate and involve the Police far more extensively.

In the longer term we were aiming to bring about a more balanced community on the Estate, to break the Estate down into clearly defined localities with which tenants could identify (this requiring imaginative but practical environmental improvements, including the provision of physical barriers such as fencing), to make radical improvements to misused communal areas (particularly garage compounds and store sheds) a measure we considered to be vitally important to bring about an upturn in confidence, and to increase owner occupation on the Estate.

We decided that the Estate needed to be managed in a way that would restore the tenants' confidence in their environment and nurture a relationship between tenants and Council officers that will hopefully result in the formation of active and representative tenant groups who wish to contribute to and participate in the running of their Estate. We knew we had to convince the tenants of the Council's sincere intentions for the Estate by allocating sufficient money and staffing. We therefore set up a local management and repair team working from a local office on the Estate with whom the tenants can have easy and regular contact. The office we are providing will include a tenants' meeting hall which we see as an essential measure in promoting the creation of tenants associations.

In the few months that our local team have been based on the Estate they have already become known to most of the tenants and I am particularly encouraged by the fact that they are establishing a relationship with young people on the Estate.

One of the fundamental issues has been the lack of cleanliness both within buildings and in their surrounds. The local work force has found it extremely difficult to cope with the Estate and to deal with the formidable daily cleaning tasks. Apart from an initial major clean of the Estate we have increased our resources in this area in an attempt to combat the acts of vandalism and general untidiness caused by a minority of the residents.

With the help of Inner Area Programme money we have redecorated the 14 worst corridors on the Estate (a horrendous feature of some blocks is the 'interior street' concept; long dreary ill-lit and featureless corridors) together with improvements to lighting and flooring. This work had an immediate impact and has encouraged tenants to take a greater interest and pride in the areas outside their own front doors.

An important part of our policy for the Estate is to diversify the tenure spread by sales and other methods. It is important that tenants should be encouraged to exercise their Right to Buy and I believe that there are many who would wish to do so. However, it is a question of getting started. In order to give impetus to those thinking of becoming home owners we have decided to make flats from four of the blocks available for sale to first time buyers as they become vacant, aiming particularly at existing Council tenants and those on the housing waiting list. In addition, we propose to transfer up to 40 tenants from one of the blocks to provide us with a pool of vacant properties which can also be made available for sale. We will of course only be transferring tenants who wish to move from their present flats and no doubt some will choose to move to other blocks within the Estate.

With the support of the Building Societies we hope to see an active programme of sales and I have no doubt that when this gets under way some of the existing tenants will feel confident enough to apply to buy their own dwellings.

In my view the Estate will benefit enormously from a mix of owner occupiers and tenants. Personally I would also like to see management co-operatives introduced on to the Estate and this is something I hope we will be able to get going when confidence is sufficiently restored.

We have looked closely at our lettings policy and have decided that here too a more local approach is needed. First of all we want to let some of the larger flats to local employers for subsequent licensing to their employees. We are in discussion with interested parties at the moment.

Our first move in this direction has been to let a flat to a local Church for occupation by a Curate working on the Estate and his family.

As far as smaller flats are concerned these will be allocated by the local Estates Manager who will be giving priority to estate residents and their sons and daughters. I know from experience that one of the things our tenants want to see is an opportunity given to their sons and daughters to obtain their own homes while remaining close to the family.

I know that to be fully successful we need the support of the tenants and need to involve them in the decisions that will affect their lives. We are now consulting them over our management policies and the improvement works and I am pleased to say that interest is growing, albeit slowly. We cannot expect to restore confidence overnight; some tenants are sceptical about the very possibility of the major turn-round we seek to achieve, while others are still unconvinced of our sincerity.

One way in which we are keeping tenants fully informed is by the production of a Doddington Tenants News Sheet which is produced quarterly and delivered to every flat. Our News Letter will, I believe, become an effective means of contact between the tenants and the Council.

The involvement of the Police is vital to our strategy. There are four local Constables working on the ground and they, together with their Senior Officers, meet regularly with representatives of the Council, the Community Association and Youth Club workers, to discuss the problems of the Estate and policing methods on it. The Beat Officers hold regular weekly evening surgeries at the local library. The response of local residents to their Beat Officers has been very positive and it is thought that the special attention that is being given to the Estate is producing an increased feeling of security.

#### Conclusion

I have given you an indication of the strategy we have adopted for our Doddington Estate. It is early days yet and we may have to adjust our approach in the light of tenant consultation and our experience, but I believe we have made several moves in the right direction. We will only know that we have met with some success when we see the Estate becoming more popular with prospective tenants and prospective home owners.

# 4 POLITICAL APPROACH TWO

by Councillor Nick Snow,  
Chairman of Housing Committee, London Borough of  
Southwark

I hope the paper I have circulated gives a background to the sort of Borough that Southwark is, and the problems we face as the 6th largest Housing Authority in the country. The average income level in Southwark in 1982 was £130 compared to £150 in Wandsworth. If you separate this out between owner occupiers and tenants in Southwark, this drops to £110 for tenants. This is hardly the sort of income to feed and clothe a family, live from day-to-day in the Inner City and to start out on a mortgage as well. So regardless of the initiatives being taken in promoting home ownership, Southwark will continue to be a Borough with a high proportion of low income tenants. Our chief task, therefore, is to Humanise the Legacy we have inherited and not to absolve ourselves of our responsibility by disposing of it!

Our post-war legacy is enormous. Of our 62,000 dwellings, some 18,000 are post war, "non-traditional" dwellings by our reckoning. I should say that as far as we're concerned its only traditional if it has load-bearing brick external walls: many of our estates are off what is known as the "cross-wall" type, which the DoE tell us is a traditional form of housing construction. They must know something our tenants don't.

Whatever our tenants personal circumstances, they are fairly fed up with the housing the Council is renting to them. One in six has got their name on the transfer list, which isn't bad going when you think that we don't have an open transfer list and they have all had to produce some reason - overcrowding, medical or so on - to even get on the list. Rehousing is often seen as the answer by tenants. On paper, we do 4,000 lettings a year so in five years we ought to polish off both our waiting and transfer lists? Of course, it isn't as easy as that. The good properties - the houses with gardens (those that haven't been Right-to-Buyed yet) and flats on our popular estates - don't fall vacant anything like as often as the flats that nobody wants.

As I have suggested, Southwark housing is a massive concern. Our "turnover" on the housing revenue account was £132 million in 1983/84. On capital we have a HIP allocation of £26.7 million, against an identified need of £560 million. We have reached the point in Southwark where even if I could sign blank cheques and have the construction industry going flat out, I still doubt in my heart that we could do much more than stop things from getting worse.

One example of what needs to be done is on the Bonamy Estate. This is a classic instance of design and building defects coming together to make what should have been a showcase into a slum in fifteen years flat. The estate consists of 880 dwellings, which lies just north of the Old Kent Road, was built to a low-rise high-density design in the late 1960s. The interaction of design and construction defects means that the estate cannot provide adequate homes for people to live in. The key points in the Council's approach to the problem are:

- full tenant participation through the 'Project Team' concept with the Tenants Association actually participating at every stage: this has been proved to work in practice and will be the model for all future comprehensive estate renewal/upgrading programmes;
- conversions of flats/maisonettes to houses with gardens by 'decapitating' the estate, ie demolition of upper floors;
- removal of decking;

- renewal of mains, services, etc, where these have failed;

- new build on the adjacent Bramcote Grove site (Phase 1 is in programme): it is essential that the whole of this site is available to meet the housing loss arising out of the decapitation.

The Bonamy Project is working, and it would be easy for me to sing its praises all morning. I'm not going to, for two reasons: first, because I'd need to be able to set up another 20 projects to have any grounds for complacency; and second, because I want to concentrate on what I understand by 'humanising' - because it's not the one we've heard .....

Frankly, we just cannot expect to cope with all the Bonamys in Southwark as quickly as is needed. Obviously, this is the ultimate goal, but there is still the major problem of 'Humanising the Legacy' in the meantime. I think this problem needs to be looked at from three viewpoints - from a 'Professional' (technical) viewpoint, a 'Community' viewpoint and a 'Housing Management' viewpoint. In the context of the accompanying diagram, I will try to explain some of the 'Humanising' initiatives we are taking.

## (1) THE TECHNICAL VIEWPOINT

The Technical viewpoint looks at solving the problem and assessing the best use of resources available. Accepting that the main problem cannot be solved, we can look at interim measures - Environmental Improvements, security packages, energy saving measures, and so on, and we certainly have such 'mini-programmes' running across our estates. 'Humanising the environment' if you like. But even that has a drain on already inadequate resources, and in that situation many tenants feel that Officers ignore their own particular problems and take unilateral action on HIP expenditure to suit themselves. We have attempted to tackle this by 'Humanising the HIP'.

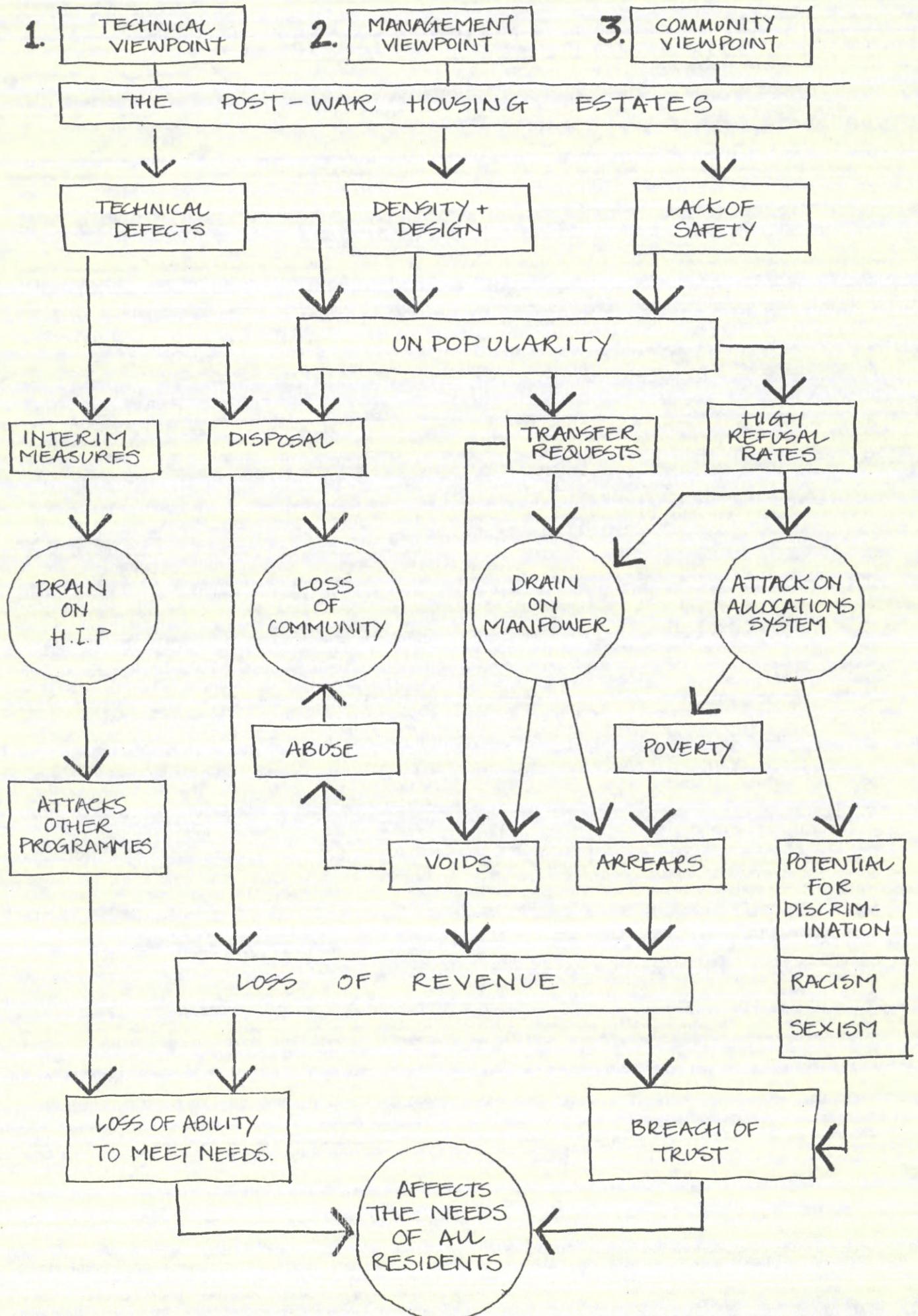
Last year we assembled our HIP bid in partnership with the Borough's Tenants' Association representatives through our 6 District Committees. They were asked to identify, with the help of Officers, all the 'major works' needed on their estates, and to prioritise them into 'immediate' and 'future years'. From this we developed the requirements for a 5-year programme. The first years 'bid' was made to the DoE, and we also submitted the 5-year programme to them as well. Interestingly enough, this year the DoE are asking for similar information from every Housing Authority in the country - may be they do read all those forms after all!

Once our allocation was known, we went back to the Districts and asked them to allocate the resources to the highest priorities in the 'bid'. Of course, this doesn't provide more money or get more problems solved. But it does, through tenants participation, help to show fairness - as well as achieve a greater understanding of where the real problems lie. We are looking at ways of extending this participation in future years.

## (2) THE COMMUNITY VIEWPOINT

Many of our post-war estates fail to provide personal freedom at a simple level by failing to provide a safe place to live - by which I mean one in which women, particularly, feel safe.

There are also less obvious ways in which these estates attack freedom. The money spent on repairing defects in the stock is money that can't be spent on providing new homes or on other programmes to meet personal needs. The unpopularity of so many estates



# 6 CASE STUDY TWO

led by Paul Mugnaioni, Director of Housing, City of Glasgow District Council, with Peter McGurn, Partner; McGurn Logan and Duncan (Consultant Architects) and Francis McCall, Chair of Calvey Crescent Steering Committee

## THE PROBLEM

Glasgow has a total municipal stock of 172,000 houses, and the sheer scale of the city's housing problems and needs is enormous.

Recent years have seen a dramatic shift of public sector capital resources away from Council housing and towards the non-Housing revenue (Private Sector) Account. This means that there is now a large imbalance between needs and resources available. We estimate that over £1600 million is required for capital investment in the public housing sector, to 1989/90; yet, there has been a sharp decline in Housing Revenue Account expenditure from £197.5 million in 1980/81 to an estimated £153 million in 1984/85, and this has had a major impact on both the repair and maintenance service and the housing management services provided for tenants. The key factor has been the dramatic 63 per cent cut in real terms in Housing Support Grant to Glasgow from £69 million in 1980/81 to £25.7 million in 1984/85.

At the same time as HRA funding has been cut, the money available to private housing through the non-Housing Revenue Account increased substantially and in 1984/85 the city received £80.5 million, half the Scottish allocation. This has since been cut to £37.5 million in 1985/86. These figures help to show that central government funds are markedly uneven in their allocation. Private housing has been favoured against public, and inner city neighbourhoods have been rehabilitated ahead of deprived peripheral estates.

If the present funding policy persists, then the problems are likely to get worse. Both central and local government have to develop new models of both organisation and finance, to improve public housing quality and management effectiveness. Since present government housing policy has sustained a real commitment to reduce current capital spending on public housing, the crux of the problem for Glasgow is to find a way of maintaining and improving the public sector without increasing public spending.

The proposals for a community ownership programme have grown from these roots.

The cuts in public housing finance have come at a time when local authorities such as Glasgow have been trying to increase tenant participation. Efforts to launch more co-operatives are a key element in this and co-operatives have proved very popular and worked well when tried in Glasgow and other cities such as Liverpool. In the United States, management co-operatives have succeeded in housing estates where conditions were far worse than in Glasgow.

A growing number of commentators have argued in recent years that there has been an increasing remoteness between landlord and tenant and it is this which has encouraged many local authorities to decentralise services to a neighbourhood level. The need for increased resident involvement and neighbourhood redevelopment are obvious in many public housing areas as they were in the inner city a decade ago.

Indeed, the success of the community based Housing Association movement in the inner city has shown that low income communities can produce excellent management and development results.

The opportunity should not be lost to raise tenant involvement through the establishment of a community ownership programme.

## THE COUNCIL'S VIEWPOINT

We wish to foster this initiative and encourage the formation of ownership co-operatives in Glasgow. There are a number of advantages which would be derived from the transfer of municipal housing to local co-operatives and these are as follows:

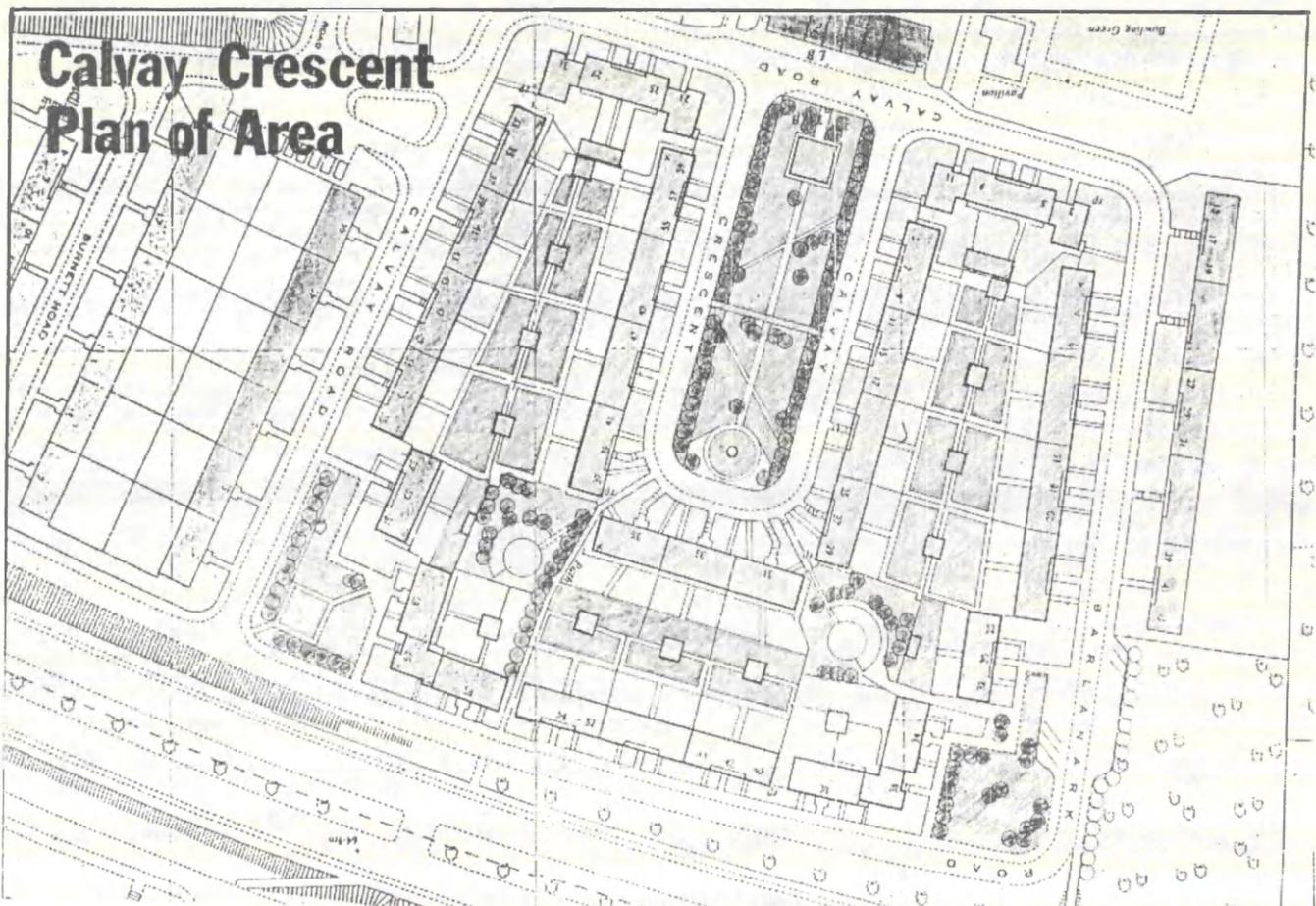
- (a) It represents a further extension of the principle of effective management decentralisation.
- (b) It represents the ultimate form of tenant participation providing a focus for resident involvement and action.
- (c) It directly fosters self-help, management responsibility and helps to stabilise communities which might otherwise be at risk.
- (d) It can help to generate fresh local employment opportunities in deprived areas, through the implementation of repair and improvement programmes.
- (e) There will be no major increase in public sector spending.
- (f) Local co-operative management will hopefully lead to an improvement in local service delivery and the quality of life.
- (g) It will sustain the supply of improved property in socially rented tenures.
- (h) It will provide an infusion of funds from private sector institutions such as banks and building societies into areas of stressed public sector housing.
- (i) It will allow non Housing Revenue Account capital resources to be deployed and invested in multiply deprived areas, other than the inner city.
- (j) It will benefit the current capital financing position of the remaining public sector stock.
- (k) It will reduce the Council's own recurring revenue expenditure.

It is the Council's view that the sheer scale of its housing problems and needs is so great, compared with almost any other local authority in the United Kingdom that such new initiatives must be pursued. It will require the exercise of both discretion and flexibility in order to allow the scheme to operate but this is only reasonable in view of the considerable advantage which the scheme has.

## BACKGROUND

In many respects, community ownership is not a new concept and the co-operative tradition is an old and important one. On the other hand, the co-operative movement's involvement in housing has been relatively limited and is usually associated with industrial pioneers such as Robert Owen and the provision of working class dwellings in the nineteenth century. Perhaps surprisingly, co-operatives played little subsequent role in housing until recently when a number of new initiatives began to be developed, and tenant involvement began to receive greater attention.

# Calvay Crescent General View



In Glasgow's case, the District Council has, since 1980, been pursuing policies summed up in the phrase "the alternative strategy". Briefly, this involves:

- putting greater emphasis on good housing management
- spreading available resources over as many houses and areas as possible
- seeking low-cost and management solutions wherever possible, rather than large-scale capital projects
- making maximum use of existing stock
- harnessing the resources of the private sector.

The Council is also giving increasing emphasis to tenant participation and control of the housing service, with further decentralisation as a crucial means of achieving it. Effective tenant involvement is possible only at a local level.

We believe that it is of fundamental importance to ensure that the housing service is responsive to the needs of tenants. The Council's objectives are therefore:

- To improve decisions by the Council and the Housing Department about housing matters by making them sensitive to and more responsive to the needs and wishes of tenants.
- To improve the degree and nature of contacts and relations between tenants and the District Council as landlord.
- To improve the influence and control exercised by tenants over housing management decisions.

One of the ways in which we have satisfied these objectives has been through the setting up of Tenant Management Co-operatives in the city and, indeed, Glasgow has been in the forefront of these developments. The community ownership programme is a further development which will enable tenant co-operatives to take over ownership as well as management of their housing schemes, and also achieve the objective of harnessing private sector resources. The steps which Glasgow has taken towards setting up these ownership co-operatives have aroused interest from a wide area. Individuals and institutions active in the housing field have already shown themselves keen to learn from the Glasgow experience and, in some cases, to involve themselves in it. Development of community ownership is still at a very early stage but it is important to record the way in which Glasgow has gone about it, so that other housing authorities and agencies might benefit.

#### WHAT IS COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP?

The main form of community ownership currently being promoted in Glasgow is the par value co-operative. This is made up of tenants/members who collectively own the houses in their area, but have no individual share in the equity. They may contribute a nominal share eg. £1.00 for membership, but they do not receive any individual capital gain in the property when they leave. The co-operative, like a housing association, employs its own elected management committee. The rights of both the committee and the members of the co-operative are outlined in the co-operative's constitution, approved by the Scottish National Federation of Housing Associations and registered with the Registrar of Friendly Societies and the Housing Corporation under the provision of the 1974 Housing (Scotland) Act.

A Par Value co-operative is therefore autonomous and self sustaining. Neither the co-operative nor its members will receive any form of direct financial subsidy. Its sole means of income is generated through the rent.

As a means of running housing, a co-operative must be effective. It must be able to provide a better service for the same price or an equivalent service for a lower price than its members could obtain elsewhere. It must be able, however, to generate enough income to cover its expenses.

As a social organisation, a co-operative should create a sense of social solidarity among its members. It should enable them to exercise collective and democratic control over the activities which the co-operative deals with. As with all types of co-operative, a housing co-operative is its membership, the people. The people join together in an association to provide and manage housing for themselves.

Perhaps most significantly, the individual member of a co-operative does not own an individual house or flat. The Council's view is that those tenants who join a co-operative of their own volition, will have exercised a collective right to buy, and that they have willingly replaced those of their statutory rights under the Tenants Charter which are only available to council house tenants, with the rights which are contained in their lease from the co-operative.

Individual tenants would therefore lose the right to purchase their council house, as contained within the 1980 Tenants' Rights Etc (Scotland) Act. However, many of the areas currently being considered for co-operatives are generally areas of low demand and it is unlikely that the proposals will seriously inhibit the right to buy. In many other respects, while the scheme is obviously not home ownership, it displays similarities of attracting private mortgage finance and fosters both self help and mutual responsibility.

A co-operative therefore gives people a large degree of extra responsibility and enables tenants to have greater control over matters which affect their lives. Mrs Marian Wright, Secretary of the Possil Steering Committee, for example, sees a co-operative as a means of restoring their housing estate to its former condition. "We've nowhere left to go and we're going to stand and fight for our homes", she says. "We will fight anyone, overcome any difficulty to improve this area. Once the repairs are in our hands, we'll see they are done. We're going to make it a community again and no one will stop us".

#### CONSULTING THE TENANTS

Not surprisingly, tenants have generally welcomed community ownership because of the increased involvement in local housing matters which this would bring. Many tenants in Glasgow have been seeking not only modernisation of their houses and associated environmental improvements but a far greater say in day to day management policy and practice. They are interested in a greater degree of self determination and self help and are seeking more involvement in local letting and repair policies.

In some parts of the City, the development of tenant management co-operatives and of local letting policies have brought tenants directly into the decision-making process, and further moves towards decentralisation and the improvement of service delivery have been welcomed. The proposal to set up ownership co-operatives has led to a particularly favourable reaction.

Following initial discussions with tenant organisations, a total of fourteen schemes indicated their interest in forming a co-operative within the Council's Community Ownership Programme. Of these, the District Council approved four feasibility studies at:

- (a) Calvay Crescent, Barlanark
- (b) Ballantay, Castlemilk

# Calvary Crescent Existing



# Proposed



- (c) Broomhouse, Baillieston
- (d) Wellshot, Cambuslang

In addition, the District Council agreed to underwrite the costs of each of these tenants groups appointing consultant architects and solicitors.

Between April and July 1984, there were a whole series of public meetings and (with the exception of Wellshot in Cambuslang), each pilot scheme appointed a Steering Committee to represent the tenants in their discussions with each of the consultants and the Housing Department.

Each pilot had a development team of professional expertise protecting the tenants' interests throughout the feasibility study. The Steering Committees gave guidance to their professional advisers and there was continuous liaison between the Steering Committee and local representatives informing all tenants of developments. A central liaison officer within the Housing Department was appointed and regular meetings were organised between the Housing Department, consultants and Steering Committees.

Perhaps the major constraint at this stage was the absence of similar examples of community ownership in Britain. Because the Council was therefore breaking new ground, progress was slower than had been hoped. Nevertheless, tenant interest remained high and, indeed, some tenant groups expressed disappointment at not having had the opportunity to become one of the selected feasibility studies. We therefore retained a reserve list of twelve further community ownership schemes and subsequently a further three feasibility studies were approved at:

- (a) Priesthill
- (b) Southdeen, Drumchapel
- (c) Possil.

These have now been progressed to join the earlier three schemes.

The choice of consultants has been entirely a matter for the Steering Committees themselves. In the case of Priesthill, the Committee chose to use the District Council's Department of Architecture and Related Services while the Department was interviewed and rejected by the Southdeen Steering Committee. Priesthill are also using the District Council's Finance Department but a firm of private solicitors. These arrangements illustrate the degree of choice which the tenants have exercised and represent a whole new style mix of private and public sector involvement. The arrangements are also important in that they serve as a challenge to the old style ideals of the local government professional; the clients are no longer simply the District Council but the communities themselves.

#### CALVAY CRESCENT HOUSING COOPERATIVE

Calvay Crescent is a typical post-war housing development of walk-up flats in the Barlanark area of Glasgow, on the southern edge of the infamous Easterhouse estate. It was chosen as one of the four original pilot schemes and a Steering Committee was elected in early 1984.

The Steering Committee appointed McGurn, Logan and Duncan as consultant architects, and Tilston and MacLaurin as solicitors. The consultants reported in December 1984 and their report may be summarised as follows:

The consultants assumed

- (a) That the environmental improvement work will be fully grant aided.
- (b) That the repairs and improvements to houses will be funded up to a total of 90%.
- (c) That the acquisition cost of the houses would be £350,000 in total for 366 houses. This represents £956 per unit. It was assumed that legal costs of transfer will be borne by Glasgow District Council.
- (d) That a promotional grant will be received of £7,000 on 1 April 1985.
- (e) Two models of rental income were necessary. In one, rental income was increased by 10% at 1 April 1985 and 10% yearly thereafter. In the other, there was a 25% increase at 1 April 1985, with 10% increases thereafter. Allowances were made for bad debts and for void houses.
- (f) It was understood that Glasgow District Council will be providing assistance with management and rent collection in the first two years, but in the cash-flows provision was made for both rent collection and management expenses.
- (g) Interest on borrowing was taken at 11% although it now appears likely that finance will be available at 1% above base rates with a four-year interest only period and then 25 year repayments.

The assumptions were set out along with the cashflows, and the projections show substantial surpluses in the region of £50,000 per annum in the first model. These surpluses are even greater in the second model and all of the indications are that this project, when the above assumptions are applied, and with good management should be extremely successful. The conclusion was therefore that a co-operative at Calvay Crescent would be viable.

Now that the Co-operative has been approved, the Registration Process can begin in earnest. Registration with the Registrar of Friendly Societies and Housing Corporation is essential. The co-operative then becomes a legal entity with which the District Council can legitimately negotiate and to which it can transfer the ownership of the stock and provide capital grants for improvement programmes.

Under Section 152 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1966, the District Council can assist the co-operative in the following way:

- (a) By making grants or loans available.
- (b) By subscribing for any share or loan capital of the association.
- (c) By guaranteeing or helping to guarantee the payment of the principal and interest on any monies borrowed by the association (including money borrowed by an issue of loan capital) or of interest on any share issued by the association.

The District Council can lend on such terms and conditions as to the rate of interest and repayment or otherwise and in such security as they see fit.

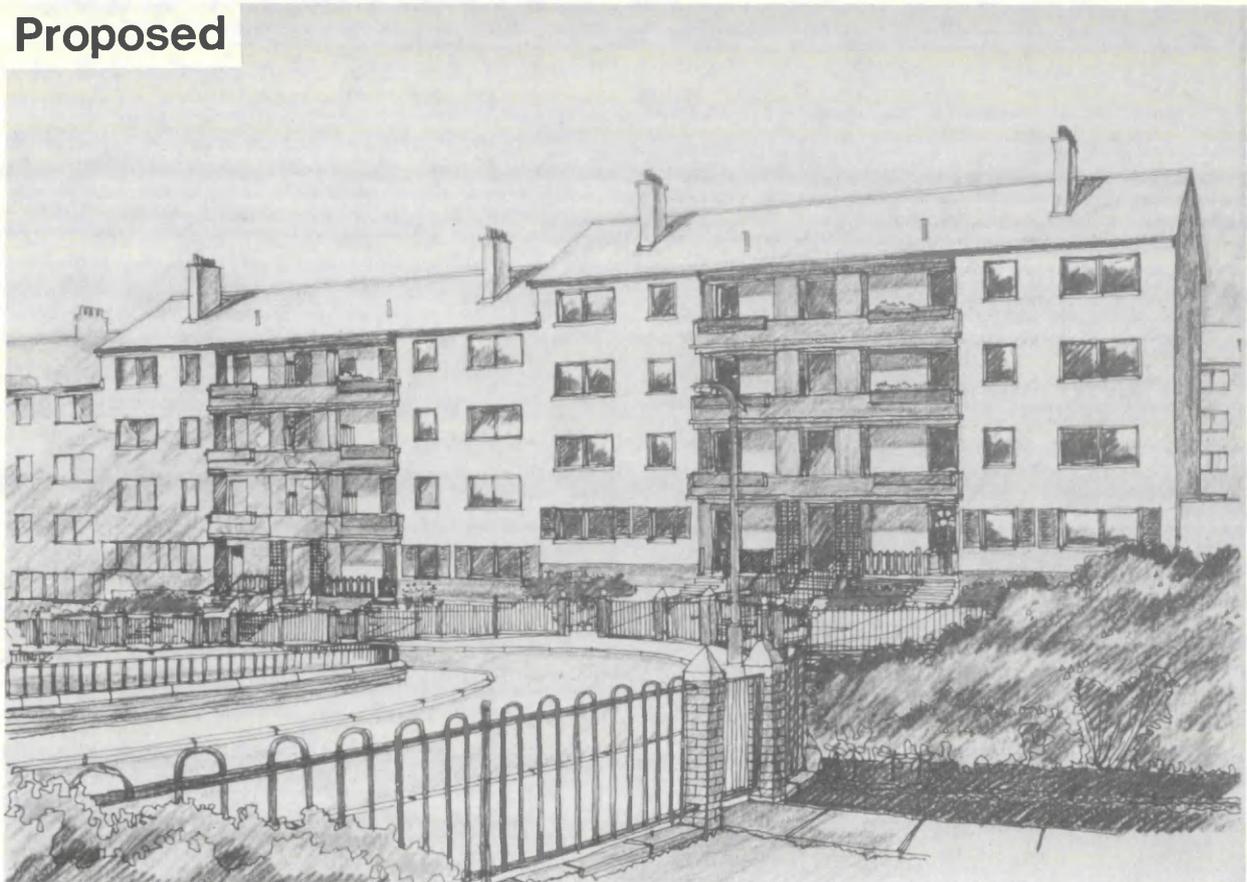
#### IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

A capital improvement programme for each co-operative will be met by the District Council, who will appoint contractors to carry out the entire improvement and repair programme as specified by the co-operative's consultant architects.

# Calvay Crescent Existing



# Proposed





**Calway Crescent Close Entrance Existing**

**Proposed**



The advantages to the co-operative are both simple and essential.

1. The co-operative will not be liable for VAT. This will provide a substantial saving.
2. Since the District Council will be responsible for the improvement and repair contract and the administration of grant and payments, the co-operatives are relieved of both additional administrative and financial costs. This is crucial at a time when they will not have sufficient rental income to cover the outgoing costs.
3. The period during which the agency agreement applies will provide the co-operative with more time to organise and operate their management structure.
4. The Agency Agreement retains control in favour of the District Council when there will be a considerable transfer of funds and administration of grants, etc.

This programme will include the repair and improvement of the dwellings, both internally and externally, and the improvement of the general environment surrounding the blocks in order to provide attractive and personally identifiable open spaces.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The co-operative will, at the end of a two year development period, become fully autonomous. The management structure and organisation will reflect this and closely resemble a community-based housing association with a housing manager, a development officer and clerical/administrative support.

The legacy of badly designed and badly maintained post-war housing estates is probably the greatest problem facing local authorities, but 'demolition fever' is not the answer! There must be a radical shift towards public participation, decentralisation and the harnessing of private sector resources to help local communities solve their own housing problems.

Glasgow has to a large degree achieved this, and this has enabled the Council to claim that its community ownership programme is "a Socialist answer to Cantril Farm".

# 7 CASE STUDY THREE

by Alan Gladwin, Managing Director, Barratt Urban Renewal (Northern) Ltd.

From experiences over the past two and a half years or so, we have learned that the meal messed up by well intentioned chefs over the years is not now palatable. Of course, these chefs have long since left the kitchen, but what are the ingredients for the new urban dish?

The object of the exercise must be to produce living units that people require, in the right location and at a realistic price. There are other finer details to consider, which take into account the broader features of the local economy:

- the effort on employment, training and education
- the reaction of the local residents
- the confidence in our ability to sell in high risk areas.

In any case, people are the main ingredient; not the existing housing or the vacant land.

Local Authorities, who for whatever reason are the major stockholders, are not managing their housing stock very well. They are not able to maintain their stock and, in some instances are not willing to participate with the private sector for political reasons. Central Government rejoice at our enterprise on inner-city redevelopment schemes and then allow the Treasury to increase the VAT rate to 15% for rehabilitation work, thus giving our Finance Director his first heart attack! Both he and we, however, have learned from our recent experience that projects which were viable pre 1984 Budget are not now unless reluctant and hard-up Local Authorities sponsor grant aid from Central Government.

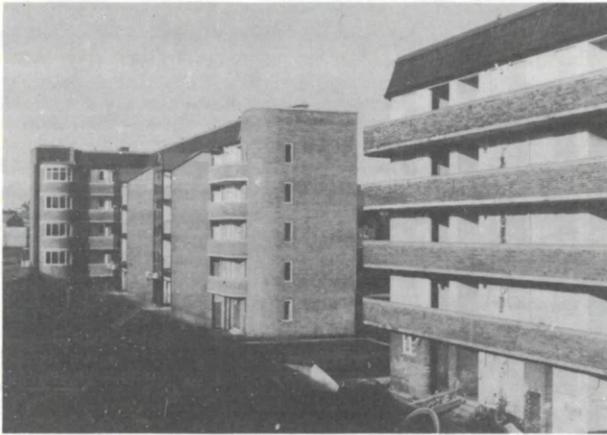
Our first major project in inner-city Liverpool is Minster Court, it involves both the refurbishment of existing Council housing and the development of new build housing to provide dwellings for sale. Thirty six hours after we signed an unconditional contract to purchase the existing dwellings, some of the population decided to light the candles on the cake before the cake had been baked by setting fire to the block. In our opinion, they were merely reacting to a misuse of words by a local television presenter who referred to the project as luxury flats, yet the selling prices were from £12,000!



Based on our previous experience we should have bailed out at that time, but we didn't. We took positive action, we moved into the community and invited the leaders of the sixteen different factions to come and listen to our story. We had already promised that we would employ local labour, that we would take on apprentices at a 1:4 ratio and that we would employ on merit irrespective of colour or creed (so much so that I had the experience of being accused of operating a colour bar against whites). We also made representations to all the local schools in Liverpool 7, 8 and 12 to explain to the pupils (who were the potential vandals) what our aim was. We had at this stage erected a site security fence and had painted it white, our original intention being to invite local school children to use it for a graffiti competition, yet two weeks after the fence had been erected not one speck of paint had appeared on the beautifully white fence. We did, however, sponsor a painting competition on the theme of Minister Court, knowing full well that there were 2,000 school children in the catchment area who each had mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters who hopefully would get the message that we were intent on doing whatever we could to improve the lot of the community. We even sponsored the local boxing club, and gave specific instructions to the boys who we supplied with a new boxing kit that anyone unfortunate enough to be knocked out was to fall on their back to ensure that they clearly displayed the Barratt Oak Tree on their chest. The result of that experience of integration has been 2.5 years worth of freedom from vandalism.

At the official opening of the scheme, we had the joyful experience of seeing a queue of potential purchasers, the first of whom were a couple who had been raised on the old Myrtle Gardens (as Minister Court was previously known) and had in fact departed when the living conditions had become untenable. Never being homeowners before, they became our first purchasers along with 199 others. They all took up occupancy within 12 months of the sales release date.

Much has been said about need and demand; about unit sizes, densities, family size, etc. Our experience indicates that what is of prime importance is location, environment, price and unit mix to satisfy a known need. It is our opinion that stacked accommodation is not for family living; walk-up flats and maisonettes for example. In the case of walk-up flats, we set out at day one to reduce the pedestrian traffic passing people's front doors - we de-corridorised and built in additional staircases, and we reduced flat sizes - 3 bed flats became 2 and 2 bed became 1, improving living, kitchen and bedroom accommodation in the process.



We have learnt that maisonettes are even more of a problem than flats for families, due entirely to one family living on top of another. Stacked living has inherent noise proximity problems. It is not however always necessary to demolish and start from scratch, our alternative has been to lop the second floor maisonettes, re-roof and produce very acceptable family units of between 900 and 1,000 sq ft, enabling us with minor external alterations to produce very acceptable town houses with their own private front and back gardens, and I might add that in most instances using the existing infrastructure.

We have enjoyed two years worth of valuable experience at Stockbridge Village, which used to be known as Cantril Farm. Stockbridge Village is approximately 4 miles north east of Liverpool. The estate was developed in the mid 1960's by Liverpool and originally consisted of 3,300 dwellings transferred to Knowsley Borough Council on re-organisation in 1974 with an outstanding debt of £15M.

The development consists of houses, flats and maisonettes, shops, pubs and 6 schools. The original population was 12,000, planned for 18,000 and is now below 10,000. The estate is typical of its era, it suffered from poor planning with a badly designed system of roads with pedestrian ways and underpass creating muggers alleys. The unemployment rate is high, running at an average of 26%, with the figure for the under 20's up to a tragic 44%. The estate suffered from inadequate estate management through lack of financial and physical resources with rental arrears of some £300,000. There was also a lack of local shops and many other amenities.

As a consequence the locals lost out. A radical approach to the problems was formulated with the formation of a private trust under the chairmanship of Tom Baron with a board consisting of members drawn from Knowsley Council, Barclays Bank, Abbey National and the local community. Permanent staff have been appointed under a Chief Executive responsible for management development and planning.

The involvement of Barrett is as main contractor and the builder of private homes for outright sale and shared ownership. Total remodelling of the environment is being carried out along with refurbishment of existing suitable stock, demolition of stock that is not suitable and new build for all types of tenure.

The planned expenditure over the envisaged 5 year period was around £22.5M. The programme anticipated that the mixed tenure turnover would be between 700 and 1,000 units per year creating employment at peak of around 300 local operatives.

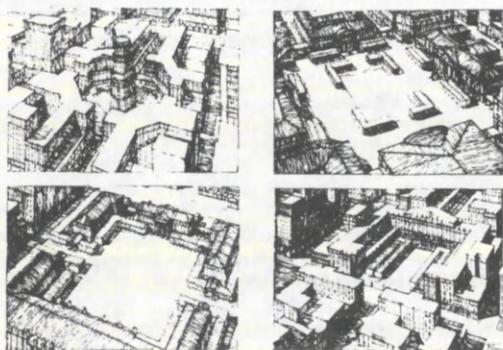
The management of people here was certainly an experience. Setting up and integrating a new tier of estate management, convincing the local residents that being descended upon by a hoard of construction workers was for their own good. I can assure you that in the early days of the project the residents did not believe this.

Unbelievable real estate values emerged relating to garden sheds when a few metres of land was required from existing gardens to install new roads or services. Clapped out abandoned bangers became overnight vintage cars when requests were made for their removal to reshape the area. We had to endure the effect of a BBC documentary where two hours of content was reduced by the editor's scissors to 25 minutes of newsworthy action from the knockers. Notwithstanding all this, the village is taking shape, people are expressing their confidence in the overall plan and have in fact started to invest their own money in purchasing both existing and new built properties. The village centre is on its way.

The first areas of refurbishment have been completed to the entire satisfaction of the existing tenants. Unmaintainable public open spaces have been developed creating more individual privacy and with that an increased feeling of security, a subject I have not touched on before, but one of prime importance when operating in inner city areas.



# MASTER OF ARTS IN URBAN DESIGN



Schools of Architecture and Planning  
Faculty of Environment Polytechnic of Central London

requirements of creating, improving and managing our urban environment. This course equips graduates with these skills.

Specifically, the aims and objectives of the Masters course in Urban Design is to develop in the student:

a: An awareness and understanding of the different philosophies and approaches to urban design; the body of theory which practitioners may draw upon; the historical development of the various urban design traditions.

b: A critical understanding of urban society – its social, economic and political dimensions; what constitutes the planning system and how and why this has evolved to its present form; the process of urban development and the agencies and procedures involved.

c: Appreciation of the various ways in which the urban environment may be perceived, experienced and evaluated, together providing a critical framework for any urban design proposals.

d: Skills of urban design including – formulation and presentation of design proposals; ability to evaluate such proposals critically; techniques of management and implementation of urban design projects; diagnostic and predictive techniques which draw on quantitative indicators of the urban environment and exploit relevant information technology capability.

## ADMISSIONS POLICY AND REQUIREMENTS

The course will be offered for a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 24 students in any intake year.

The course is for those who have an initial education in architecture, landscape architecture or town planning and who wish to enhance an established interest in their understanding and capability in urban design. Some applicants will already be undertaking urban design work, others may anticipate or wish to do so in the future. The admissions policy for the course is intended to ensure that students enter the course with an existing relevant foundation of knowledge and demonstrated academic capability.

Successful applicants will normally possess a first Degree of Honours Standard in:

Architecture  
Landscape Architecture  
or Town Planning

Applicants with other qualifications will be considered but must show evidence of familiarity with the content, and experience of the practice of, one of the required disciplines.

Selection for entry to the course will be by interview and

## INTRODUCTION

The Master of Arts in Urban Design is a CNA approved course run jointly by the Schools of Architecture and Planning within the Faculty of the Environment of the PCL.

The Schools of Architecture and Planning run major courses, mount Continuing Professional Development and other short course programmes and conduct research. From these involvements the staff of the two schools have derived the knowledge and skills which they are now able to offer to the students of the Urban Design Course.

The Planning School has developed strong working links with local authorities and community groups, thus enriching and informing the taught courses.

The School of Architecture has an established exchange programme with schools in the USA, Canada and France and organizes annually a symposium, in association with the RIBA, employing critics, theorists and practitioners from Europe and North America.

The course will commence in September 1985, is of two calendar years duration requiring two evenings attendance with some supplementary day courses and one week European Study Tour.

The course is designed for those holding a degree in either architecture, landscape architecture or planning. The aim of the course is to equip its graduates with an understanding of the theory and concepts of urban design and the skills and capacity to practice it.

## DEFINITION AND AIMS OF THE MASTERS COURSE

Urban Design is defined as the design and management of the urban three-dimensional environment larger than the individual building. The urban designer must be able to draw with discrimination upon the design traditions and skills of architecture, landscape architecture and town planning and be critically aware of the social, economic and legislative frameworks for action.

Those trained in architecture, landscape architecture or planning will possess some of the knowledge and abilities required to work as an urban designer; there are omissions in the training of each. Although subsidiary understanding of the other disciplines may have been developed, this is only to the extent required to complement the main focus of professional activity.

The urban designer must be brought to a level of common understanding of the contributing disciplines and understand the relationships between them and learn how they may be integrated, synthesised and acted upon to deal with the increasingly important

candidates will be expected to show evidence of motivation as well as keen awareness of urban design. Detailed questions regarding the course will be answered at the interview.

Acceptance on the course may be conditional upon successful completion of preliminary work set to provide evidence that the applicant is capable of benefiting fully from the course programme.

## SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applicants are requested to send their completed application forms to: The Registry of the Faculty of the Environment, Polytechnic of Central London, 35 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5LS.

## ASSESSMENT

The methods of assessment used on the course are designed to enable both students and staff to monitor students' progress continuously. A variety of methods of assessment are used, including essays, seminar papers, project work and a dissertation.

## MODE OF ATTENDANCE

The course is offered in a mode which is primarily part-time evening (Monday + Tuesday 5.30 – 8.30 pm). Some supplementary part-time day attendance is required, approximately 8 days in each year.

There will be one week of full-time day attendance at the beginning of the course and a further week of full-time work comprising the European Study Tour in Term 2 of the first year.

## COURSE STRUCTURE

The course lasts two calendar years, each year consisting of three terms of 11 weeks together with 6 weeks of Summer 'vacation' tuition. The course has been devised by dividing its content into three components, with a particular sequence:

3 Taught Units  
3 Projects  
Dissertation

Each unit has a particular role. The taught units introduce the range of subject matter relevant to urban design, largely through lectures and seminars.

In parallel, project work develops practical capability in the context of selected urban design problems, synthesising and integrating what is being gained from the taught units. The evolving capability is then further enhanced in the individual dissertation.

# DISCUSSION

One of the most important parts of any Urban Design Group conference is the discussion period at the end of the day. Unfortunately, this importance was not respected by our tape-recording facility, which broke down and failed to record the many contributions from delegates in the audience.

The Chairman had managed to allow ample time for discussion, and the majority of this revolved around the pros and cons of 'demolition fever'. This in fact became the 'buzz word(s)' of the conference, and was referred to again in Terry Farrell's (UDG President) interview on the television news that evening. Demolition seemed to be the subjective solution to the 'legacy', while devolved management and some surgery or "decapitation" emerged as the objective solution. The involvement of tenants was a common element in most delegates comments, and a great deal of praise went to Glasgow's initiative in transferring housing ownership to tenants' cooperatives.

The role of the private sector in 'humanising the legacy', however, was not universally accepted. Perhaps the DoF's launch of its Urban Housing Renewal Unit the previous day had something to do with the lack of enthusiasm for the privatisation of public housing. Nevertheless, there was recognition of the need to exploit this possible source of investment in these times of huge cuts in public expenditure.

It might have been expected that the discussion period would be spent on each profession blaming the other for the appalling design decisions of the 1960's and 1970's, but this was not the case. It was realised as being irrelevant to the crisis facing us now. True to the Urban Design Group's aims and objectives, the time was spent instead in trying to find ways to work together to solve the problem. So what could have been a very gloomy day indeed, especially after the despair of the Keynote Speech, turned out to be a valuable and refreshing experience.

In his concluding statement, the Chairman thanked the Urban Design Group for bringing together such a varied audience and set of speakers to discuss this most pressing problem. He thanked in particular the Conference Organiser, Peter Studdert, for all his hard work; and he, naturally, thanked the speakers for their valuable contributions which had covered a wide variety of viewpoints and set the tone for a very stimulating conference.

John Kernaghan wanted the conference to end on a positive note, so that the audience would leave determined to begin 'humanising'. He identified four points which he wanted delegates to take away from the conference and bear in mind when dealing with Post-War Estates, because these are pointers for the future.

1. Establish who are the true housing clients and what are their needs.
2. Recognise that cuts in public expenditure can foster innovation.
3. Exploit the positive role of the private sector and diversify tenure.
4. Encourage tenant participation and community development by providing the tenants' movement with a sound funding base with which to take control of its own future.

Only then can the legacy be humanised.

Mike Galloway

# List of Delegates

THE POLYTECHNIC OF CENTRAL LONDON  
FACULTY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

THE POST-WAR ESTATES : HUMANISING THE LEGACY  
One-day Urban Design Group Conference  
20 June 1985

## COURSE DELEGATES

P. ALDEN	..... London Borough of Hackney	A. ROOK	..... Community Land Use
H. ARANOVICH	..... PCL	P. SANDOVER	..... B. Clouston & Ptns.
D. ANSTEY	..... London Borough of Hackney	G. SEWELL	..... London Borough of Croydon
P. ASHFORD	..... London Borough of Lewisham	S. SIVETIDIS	..... London Borough of Southwark
F. AYRES	..... Solon Co-op Design Group	D. SMITH	..... Lazenby & Smith
B. BARNES	..... John Kelsey Assoc.	G. SNEDDON	..... City of Glasgow
A. BEEDHAM	..... London Borough of Tower Hamlets	J. SNEDDON	..... London Borough of Camden
D. BRAMLEY	..... London Borough of Lewisham	P. STUDDERT	..... London Borough of Tower Hamlets
F. BROWN	..... GLC	D.J. TAYLOR	..... London Borough of Lambeth
G. BURGESS	..... London Borough of Harrow	MR. THOMPSON	..... City of Westminster
J. BURRELL	..... Burrell Foley Assoc.	G. TULLEY	..... City of Westminster
W. CHAPLIN	..... London Borough of Lewisham	J. TZOVARIS	.....
M. CHEESBROUGH		G. VASDEKYS	..... London Borough of Croydon
R. CROSSLEY	..... Coventry City Council	B. WALLWORK	..... London Borough of Camden
P. DOE	..... London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham	S. WEARS	..... Phippen Randall & Parkes
P. EARL	..... Housing Studies Group, PSB	C. WILLIAMS	..... Berkshire County Council
T. EDWARDS	..... B. Clouston & Ptns.	M. WILLIS	..... Solon CHS
J. EVENNETT	..... John Evennett Assoc.		
T. FARRELL	..... Terry Farrell Ptnship.		
D. FISHER	..... West Midlands County Council		
H. FRESHWATER	..... London Borough of Lewisham		
T. FURNELL	..... London Borough of Sutton		
M. GALLOWAY	..... London Borough of Lewisham		
S. GLEAVE	..... London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham		
M. GRAY			
D. GRIFFITHS	..... Lovell Construction (Southern) Ltd.		
P. HANNAY	..... Architects Journal		
J. HONOUR	..... B. Clouston & Ptns.		
M. IRVING	..... Assoc. Metropolitan Authorities		
A. JAMES	..... London Borough of Hackney		
S. JAMES	..... Rushmore Borough Council		
T. JANES	..... Stoke Newington District Housing Office		
D. KINCAID	..... Sheffield City Council		
A. KING	..... Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea		
MR. LAW	..... Public Service & Local Government Journal		
D.K. LICHFIELD	..... Nathaniel Lichfield & Ptns.		
A. LINDEN	..... PCL		
S. LYMAN	..... Community Land Use		
I. MANSON	..... Birmingham City Planning Department		
M. MANUEL	..... London Borough of Brent		
K. McGOVERN	..... PCL		
B. MORGAN	..... Dumbarton District Council		
S. MORRIS	..... London Borough of Southwark		
M. NASATYR	..... GLC		
P. NEWDICK	..... London Borough of Croydon		
J. PEVERLEY	..... London Borough of Camden		
D. POWER	..... Manchester City Council		
L. REVILL	..... London Borough of Islington		
C. RICHARDS	..... Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea		
P. ROBINSON	..... London Borough of Brent		
I. ROBSON	..... Ealing Borough Council		

