POST-WAR PUBLIC HOUSING
IN TROUBLE
POST-WAR PUBLIC HOUSING IN TROUBLE

Niels L. Prak
Hugo Priemus
(editors)

PAPERS PRESENTED AT THE CONGRESS
'POST-WAR PUBLIC HOUSING IN TROUBLE'
DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS, OCTOBER, 4-5, 1984

Delft University Press / 1985
Frontispiece: Participants of the Conference during the excursion. Concrete balconies on an apartment building of 1971 in Zandvoort are being replaced.
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FOREWORD

Niels Prak (NL)
Hugo Priemus (NL)

On 4 and 5 October 1984 the "Post-war public housing in trouble" congress was held in Delft, organized by Delft University of Technology, the International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP) and the Netherlands Institute for Physical Planning and Housing (NIROV). The congress was rendered possible by financial contributions from the Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning and Environment and the Delft University of Technology.

The substantive preparations for the congress were in the hands of the research group for "Operating problems of post-war dwellings" under our direction, consisting of ir Pieter Groetelaers, Henk Heeger, ir Ton Hoenderdos and ir Ans Metselaar. The members of this group also played an important role in the practical organization of the congress, as did ir Astrid Sanson (NIROV) and John Léons (IFHP).

The typing of this publication was done by Joyce Koopman and Jos van der Schoot. The drawings were made by Hans Ruigrok, and the photographs (insofar as taken during the congress) are by Hans Schouten (Photographic Service, Department of Building Engineering).

We owe a considerable debt of gratitude to all who contributed to the success of the congress and to the preparation of this publication. That applies in particular to the speakers and presenters of papers who gave substance to the theme of the congress in such an illuminating way. We hope that the congress and the publication will enhance scientific and political interest in the problems of the post-war housing sector.
Henry Spence in the middle of Dutch participants: "What are your problems?"
1. OPENING SPEECH ON BEHALF OF THE DUTCH STATE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING

Johan M. Koopman (NL)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. A meeting of experts from throughout the world is no everyday occurrence. I would like to extend a special welcome for the foreign guests here and wish you all an inspiring and worthwhile congress. The Dutch government's attention has been asked for the problems being discussed here today. For this reason, it seems useful to me to present this congress with some insights into the attitude of the Dutch Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning and Environment towards today's subject. That is, in fact, the reason I am here.

2. There are some 5 million homes in the Netherlands, about three-and-a-half million of which were built after 1945. The share of one-family dwellings in the post-war housing supply is quite large; of the existing supply during the years 1945 through 1979, some two-thirds fell into this category. The supply of high-rise dwellings was created largely during the years 1960 to 1975; depending on the definition used, there are 250,000 dwellings in buildings 9 storeys high or higher, or 350,000 in buildings 6 storeys high or higher. No less than 42 per cent of all post-war housing is council housing. The largest share of council housing has been built by housing corporations - associations or foundations for the purpose of supplying housing and subject to a certain amount of government control; a smaller share has been built by the municipalities themselves.

Three elements of the Dutch situation are worth mentioning at this point:
   - the housing supply is relatively "young";
   - the housing corporations' position is significant (they own some 1,4 million dwellings);
   - "public housing" here is not, as is the case in many other countries, strictly for the lowest income groups, but a significant portion of these homes are also inhabited by the middle-income groups.

But, by way of introduction, these comments are enough at present. I am sure Mr Priemus and Mr Prak will later provide you with more information.

3. What are we talking about today?
   What exactly is the situation at hand?

   In some housing complexes, especially high-rise built during the 60s, a significant increase of vacancies has been noted. In the Bijlmer complex, just
outside Amsterdam, the number of vacancies in 1983 rose quickly to 20% of the 13,000 dwellings there. In Rijnmond the vacancy rate had grown to 5.1 per cent as of October 1 of last year.

But on the average, the vacancy rate in the Netherlands is no cause for alarm, resting as it does around 2.3 per cent.

The problems have to do not only with vacancy, but also with neglect, safety conditions and pauperization.

Can managers deal with these problems, which are often new to them as well?

The Dutch government is also quite concerned about these problems and is therefore pleased with the increasing attention being paid to their solution. Yet these problems must not, as it were, simply be dumped in the lap of the government. They are often local problems involving management, existing in situations in which the housing corporations and municipalities have freer rein and great responsibility.

4. Solving these problems calls for common effort. Yet the effort needed must nevertheless be based on the allocation of responsibility between housing management, municipal governments and the central government.

The national government assumes responsibility for general public housing policy, but cannot feel itself primarily responsible for the ups and downs of each individual complex or corporation. State involvement should consist primarily of the creation of appropriate financing channels, promoting research, the exchange of expertise and exercising control over unsatisfactory or unfair situations.

Yet first responsibility in these areas lies with the housing corporation or council housing administration.

In practice, vast differences in management, vacancy rates under the same sorts of housing and financial situations are regularly noted.

5. The unusual thing about the current situation is that, simultaneously with problems of ageing, drugs and the problems associated with technical supervision, a new market situation has clearly arisen for many managers of low-rent and subsidized housing.

The great emphasis in the extensive new housing programmes since 1980 has largely been placed on large quantities of relatively inexpensive rental housing. This new emphasis has resulted in the statistical housing shortage estimate for the end of 1985 being reduced to around 56,000. The supply has therefore increased greatly!

At the same time, incomes have been frozen or reduced. This situation leads to extremely cautious behaviour on the part of those seeking housing; the advantages and disadvantages of the house being offered and weighed very carefully. The costs and surroundings are considered as well. There are fewer "comers" - and those who do come are noticeably more choosy. For the first time since the war, the client is in a position to make demands.

This calls for very serious answers from those offering the housing facilities, particularly from the housing corporations and council housing administrations.

The great discrepancies in vacancy rates under the same sorts of housing, but under different managements, shows that this situation remains yet to be handled effectively in many locations.

Yet there are unfortunately clearer and more numerous indications that corporations are taking the challenge of the new market situation seriously.
6. Housing management's answer must be directed towards the best possible management approach in a given situation. Much has been published on this subject in recent months, and various discussions during this congress will plumb the matter more deeply. It is important to note that renters are being taken seriously. Solutions, such as those in Jersey City, show that social control cannot exist or be maintained in and of itself; social control must sometimes be organised in close cooperation with good technical supervision. Expensive architectural solutions offer no guarantee whatsoever for solving drug problems, neglect or vacancy. I therefore view quite sceptically solutions which pretend to combat vacancy-related problems with the construction or razing of extra levels in a housing complex.

People are the key:

- serious participation in management by serious renters,
- building confidence in the corporation by systematic maintenance and quick response to calls for repair,
- maintaining that confidence by means of an extremely thorough financial management.

Included here must also be a clear policy for collecting rental arrears which allows no room for rapidly-increasing individual backpayments due. The channels for financing offer equal treatment to the housing corporations: equal maintenance and management norms in the operating subsidies, an equal 33 1/3 subsidy percentage for large-scale maintenance and improvements. The corporation is quite autonomous in its spending and must therefore also bear great responsibility for its financial situation. Drastic reorganisation is, in some cases, inevitable, although these are expected to be the exceptions to the rule.

7. The responsibility of the municipality in these problems can also not be denied: the responsibility, along with the housing corporation, for improving the livability of the housing, especially in the case of high-rise housing. This includes safety conditions in the area and the public spaces; in other words, adaptations in the surroundings of the housing. It also includes a balanced policy which does not lead irreversibly to vacancies: the municipality must not, by placing too great an emphasis on newly-constructed housing or urban renewal, manoeuvre the existing post-war housing supply into an impossible predicament. The municipality is also served greatly by a clear sense of responsibility for the financial management of the housing corporations.

8. The national government takes the problems of the post-war housing supply seriously. The number of dwellings due for improvement annually has been raised drastically to 30,000 low-rent and subsidised homes and an increasing number of private rental houses each year. And flexibility within the total post-war improvement programme will be feasible in 1985. The "plow-back" programme in particular offers chances for housing younger than 25 years. The Housing Multi-year Plan and the long-term estimates assume a further long-term expansion of the improvement programmes. And talks are underway on raising the state subsidy for certain insulation facilities for specific categories of owners to 50 per cent. Research is being directed toward gaining a clearer picture of problems and
the directions in which solutions must be sought. The exchange of expertise and providing information to municipalities and corporations is being actively promoted.

The initial results of a recent study (KWR) in the four largest cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht) show that the lion's share of the necessary restoration costs still lie with the pre-war supply. This impression casts our concern in a somewhat new perspective.

The results of this study must be applied carefully: I am quite pleased with the clear indication given in the report that the housing corporations are in general, good managers: the corporations' renovation costs are the lowest of all categories of owners.

In the face of a problem of unusual proportions - the Bijlmer complex with its 20 per cent vacancy rate among 13,000 dwellings in 1983 - the state has worked together with the City of Amsterdam and the Association of Housing Corporations in the organisation of the management situation, a programme of improvement and a limited rental cut.

By way of conclusions:

In addition to urban renewal projects primarily at the older neighbourhoods, the post-war low-rent and subsidised housing is also in need of urgent attention.

Dutch experience in this area is still rather limited. In comparison with other countries, the housing supply here is characterised by many single-family dwellings and less high-rise. For this reason we hope to be able to learn much from experiences abroad, but also realise that the search for the best solution in Holland is principally our own.

The primary responsibility lies with the housing corporations and council housing administration who, in close cooperation with municipalities, must search for solutions.

The management situation has great influence in preventing vacancy and deterioration.

The national government, by means of dynamic programmes for large-scale maintenance, housing improvements and insulation, is making its contribution, as well as by research into the problems and possible solutions and through the exchange of expertise and information.

It is my hope and expectation that this congress will make an important contribution to our insight and the exchange of expertise, and hereby declare this congress open.
2. POST-WAR PUBLIC HOUSING IN TROUBLE;
Introduction

Hugo Priemus (NL)

In a number of countries great problems have arisen with the management of post-war dwellings. As a result, we are in danger of losing much that we had taken for granted. We encounter many puzzles.

Puzzle no. 1:
We thought that dwellings could be written off in 50 years and that they in fact lasted a century on average. But in some cases housing complexes are being demolished within 20-25 years.

Puzzle no. 2:
We thought that the problems of urban renewal in old districts were concerned with questions of tenure. After all, had not the dwellings been neglected by private landlords, who speculated and had nothing to do with housing goals? Now the problems prove to occur to a severe extent in complexes belonging to housing associations and municipal housing offices, a type of landlord well disposed towards housing goals. Even when the tenure situation is exemplary, extensive management problems may occur.

Puzzle no. 3:
We thought that there was a severe housing shortage, above all on the urban housing market. We had devised complicated rules for the distribution of such dwellings. But suddenly a growing vacancy comes into being in some housing complexes. The distribution offices begin to look foolish. There is steadily growing doubt about the need for extensive new construction programmes.

Puzzle no. 4:
We thought that we had a strict housing policy. Rents were forced down to below the market level. There was still a great deal to harmonize. The harmonization gap was broad and deep. But suddenly vacancy proves to occur at the current rent. Are the rents in some complexes then too high instead of too low?

Puzzle no. 5:
We thought that we were doing a good thing in strongly encouraging urban renewal in old districts. But we were not aware that the quality of the dwellings in those districts improved so quickly that the urban renewal districts became more attractive than many a post-war district. The old districts are usually located more favourably. And with special rental regimes the rents in the older districts were set at a lower level than those of comparable quality in the other districts.
There is reason to doubt this distribution of rents: it would perhaps be more in line with the market to fix rents on the outskirts of the city not higher but lower than in old districts.

Puzzle no. 6:
We thought we could support ethnic minorities above all by directing financial aid towards old districts. After all, it was there that these groups were concentrated. However, now we note that they are increasingly ending up in less desirable apartments in the outer districts. Should not we adjust minority policy a little?

The operating problems that have recently arisen in the post-war housing stock are baffling those responsible for Dutch housing. We thought at first that this kind of thing was possible only in the Bijlmermeer, but many post-war housing estates elsewhere, scattered throughout the country, have proved to present the same difficulties. We do not know what to do. Vacancy and vandalism. Financial losses. Dissatisfied tenants. The first reaction proves to be a technical one: demolition plans, drastic improvement operations. But that means a considerable loss of capital or expenditure of which the useful return in the long run is anything but certain.

We can learn a great deal from other countries. Some of them encountered the operating problems that are new to us at an earlier stage. That will become obvious today.

First of all we acquaint ourselves with the American problems. The public housing sector in the USA comprises only a few per cent of the stock. Here we encounter a strong concentration of the lowest income categories, Negroes and Hispanics. Most of the projects have been built since the war, in the form of large, impersonal high-rises. Housing management is not always efficient. Robert Kolodny, ex-professor at Columbia University, New York City, and now a private consultant (Urban Strategies Inc.) tells us first something about the background of the management problems in US public housing. Kolodny is also here on behalf on the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), the American counterpart of NIROV.

Robert J. Rigby considers tenant management as strategy in distressed public housing. Rigby is executive director of the Housing Authority of Jersey City. Publications on his approach have recently appeared in "Bouw" and "Woningraad" (1).

The succession of American speakers is concluded by Lewis H. Spence, receiver/administrator of the Boston Housing Authority. He was appointed as such by the court when the board of this Housing Authority was sent packing on account of mismanagement. His presentation is concerned with redevelopment plans and crisis management in the Boston Housing Authority. An introduction to his approach has been given in recent articles in "Woningraad" and "Bouw" (2).

In the second part we shall consider the problems in Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

In the papers (second part of this publication) we find further information from Britain, Denmark, Belgium, and the Netherlands, but also - and that is very important - a number of papers from Sweden, where some instructive experience has already been gained with tackling post-war-rises. I hope that in the exchange of experience we can learn a great deal from each other.
NOTES

(1) H. Priemus, 1984, Effektieve aanpak in Jersey City van problemen met flats, Bouw, 39, 15 sept., p. 52-54.

Zelfbeheer van huurders blies hoogbouw nieuw leven in, Woningraad, 14 sept., (no. 14), p. 11.


Registration of the participants in the congress

Discussion with the experts
3. MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS IN U.S.
PUBLIC HOUSING AND POSSIBLE
LESSONS FOR ABROAD

Robert Kolodny (US) (*)

Introduction

Public housing in the United States has been in trouble for at least 20 years. It is now an endangered species. Troubled as it is, public housing is not a prominent issue for most Americans because it constitutes only about 1.5% of the Nation's total housing stock. This is in sharp contrast to social housing in many other Western countries where the proportion is much higher. Council housing in the United Kingdom, the closest equivalent, accounted for roughly one-third of that nation's residential units before the Thatcher Government began to sell it off in earnest.

Public housing is the only portion of the U.S. residential stock owned and operated by government (excepting private housing held temporarily after being repossessed for non-payment of real estate taxes or default on mortgage loans). There are other programs of federal assistance to private and non-profit owners of housing, and there are some subsidies paid more or less directly to tenants. But even if all the federal government's direct subsidy programs are added together, they account for only about 5% of the nation's housing. The great bulk of America's homes are either owned by their occupants (almost two-thirds) or rented from private landlords.

Unlike council housing in England and social housing programs in many European countries, public housing does not serve a broad economic group and eligibility is rigorously income-tested. It serves only those at the bottom of the social order. Fully three-quarters of the families in public housing are minority households (either black or Hispanic). The same proportion are female-headed. Forty-five percent of the units are occupied by low-income elderly (1).

Public housing is not a popular program in the United States. It has been a step-child of the shelter industry and among government social programs for most of its history. The management problems that affect this housing (illustrated most graphically in the accompanying papers on Jersey City and Boston) can only be fully understood against this background.

Dimension of the Problem

No authoritative conclusions are available regarding the extent of the management problems in U.S. public housing. It involves much more, however,
than the existence of single, isolated, difficult-to-let sites. In a number of cases the problems are sufficiently severe to affect the overall operation of an entire public authority. Of the nation's 25 largest authorities, eight are officially considered by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development to be "financially troubled" (2). Four others have only recently been taken off the list. A new category, "operationally troubled" agencies, has just been created, but it is too soon to know how many authorities will qualify.

Despite the widespread view among professionals that public housing is in the deep trouble in many parts of the country, the official reports give a picture that is less alarming than I and a number of my colleagues consider judge it to be. The most recent full-scale review, conducted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1978, concluded that only 7% of the Nation's public housing projects were "troubled" (3). Together these projects contained 15% of all units. To be defined as "troubled" a project had to be in bad or very bad physical condition, or in good to average condition, but having five or more "significant problems" affecting its operation.

A second portion of the stock was designated "relatively untroubled". It made up an additional 26% of all projects and 30% of all units. The projects in this second group were reported to be in average physical condition with fewer than five "significant problems", or in good or very good condition, but with three or four "significant problems". "Significant problem" refers to a condition having "considerable" or "severe" negative impact. Eight problem areas other than poor physical condition were identified in the study.

1. Project design and site;
2. Tenant's attributes and behavior;
3. Neighborhood;
4. Federal agency funding and oversight of the housing authority and/or project;
5. Low-rent housing market;
6. Local/state/federal government impacts;
7. Project expenses;
8. Housing authority and/or project administration.

If a "significant problem" is in truth significant, then the study's findings could be read in a much less reassuring way. An alternate conclusion would be that one-third of all projects, containing fully 45% of the nation's public housing units, had "considerable" or "severe" problems in more than one area. In other words, they were actively or at least incipiently "multi-problem" projects.

A 1980 study commissioned by HUD evaluated the purely physical deficiencies of the 1.2 million public housing units and found that 95% needed some improvements to meet minimum standards required for "basic health and safety" (4). While the estimated average costs to achieve this minimum floor of decency were modest -- $260 per unit in 1980 dollars -- the fact that so few units actually met it suggested the chronic upkeep problems plaguing the system. The study, like the earlier one, took a generally sanguine view, noting that most public housing was basically sound -- well-built and in satisfactory condition -- with only 7% of all projects categorized as "distressed". Nevertheless, the architects and engineers who did the research estimated that it would cost $10 billion (in 1984 dollars) to bring all public housing up to a standard of repair, amenity and energy efficiency that would correspond to what I would describe as the minimum expectations of mainstream American households which get their housing through the private economy.
The inconsistency between the assertions and the evidence of these official reports reflects the conflicting pressures that plague those responsible for public housing. Many of its defenders know how troubled the system is, but they fear that a true portrayal will further erode its public support and just serve to arm its detractors. Officials at the federal level, many of whom have little faith in or ideological affection for public housing, are reluctant to acknowledge the full extent of the system's problems for fear that this will provide ammunition to those who want more money and attention focused on it. In this vacuum, clarity about the dimensions of the problem and the effectiveness of remedies is difficult to achieve.

One part of the problem is clear, although it tends to get buried in aggregate statistics and nationwide assessments. The heart of public housing's troubles lies in the nation's older, large cities and in the larger projects occupied primarily by families (roughly one-third of the stock was designed specifically for elderly tenants; while not without problems, these projects are not the locus of public housing's troubles). The nation has 22 very large authorities (managing 6,500 units or more) (5). Together they account for more than one-third of the nation's public housing units and, even more dramatically, absorb almost two-thirds of the annual federal operating subsidies that sustain the U.S. public housing system. The problems in the system are not confined to these authorities, but they are concentrated here and in a handful of other authorities (those with between 1,250 and 6,500 units). The vast geographic range of public housing (there are about 2,800 authorities altogether) and their enormous diversity in size and surroundings (some operate only 40 or 50 units in rural or suburban areas) make it possible to describe the same system very differently depending on your perspective.

This writer can attest from his own experience to the disarray of a significant number of the largest authorities. Of the ten largest municipal public housing agencies, only two (New York and Baltimore) can be described as reasonably healthy over the last half dozen years. The others (Chicago, Philadelphia, Atlanta, New Orleans, Newark, Boston, Washington, D.C. and Cleveland) have suffered or still suffer from severe financial, managerial, social and physical problems.

Some Sources of the Problems Plaguing Public Housing

The reason for the current extensive disarray in American public housing are many and reinforcing. They can be summarized under the four headings outlined below.

1. The Legacy of Second Class Status Among Governmental Programs and Weak Political Support.

Public provision of housing services goes against the dominant ideology in American political life. Though created during the Great Depression as part of Roosevelt's New Deal (1937), public housing was primarily adopted as an employment and public works program, not as a housing effort. The President himself was lukewarm and the opposition from private builders and the real estate industry was strong. Many legislative compromises were made in the program to satisfy the fear that it would compete with the private sector or reward the "undeserving poor" at the expense of the regular taxpayer. Locations were often in the least desirable areas, finishing standards low, and amenities few (units were sometimes provided stripped down -- without closet doors, toilet seats, window screens). Scant attention was paid to
accessibility to neighborhood shopping, transportation or work places. Many projects were built on slum clearance sites (in fulfillment of a legislative requirement). This was a useful approach in some respects but not without long-term consequences in terms of social segregation and negative neighborhood impact on project life. Despite the large scale of some projects (1,000 - 3,000 units), the program was not geared to building a complete residential community. Little provision was made for commercial services, community facilities or outdoor recreation space, often the result of program rules and financial considerations. Through much of its history, this has been a stingy, grudging program, narrowly limiting what could be done on behalf of the poor. This has tended over time to make portions of the public stock "housing of last resort", retaining only those who have few options.

2. Changing Demographics and Economics

Public housing had two distinct historical phases. In the first it housed primarily the "depression poor", many of them upwardly mobil households who were the temporary victims of economic conditions. The Second World War brought a halt to the program's expansion, rechanneling housing efforts into providing for defense workers. Public housing development did not get started again until 1949 (only about one-tenth of the current stock was built prior to this date). Here too it had to overcome substantial opposition and was finally justified as a handmaiden to the large program of urban renewal and slum clearance authorized in that year. Public housing, it was argued, would provide relocation for residents so their blocks and neighborhoods could be cleared for redevelopment. The struggle to get it authorized after the War gave further evidence of its lack of popular support and the marginal nature of its constituency. But the formula that finally insured passage had profound long-term consequences for the program. Gradually, over the two decades immediately following the War, public housing became a program no longer for temporary and upwardly-mobile poor but for the chronic poor, the urban underclass, the most impoverished elderly, and refugees from urban renewal. In 1950, public housing residents' incomes were 57% of the median income of all U.S. households. By 1977, the occupants enjoyed only 27% of the national standard. In 1952, only 6% of the authorities' population was elderly. By 1977, the figure was 45%. Roughly three-quarters of current public housing occupants rely on government assistance and other social insurance programs, rather than earnings, for their livelihood (6).

Many other factors, of course, contributed to this change. Not the least among them was the general decline of America's older urban centers. The major cities lost large numbers of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs and substantial parts of their population. They suffered massive deterioration of residential neighborhoods and extensive housing abandonment. In part the change in the composition of the public housing tenancy and the decay of housing estates and their surroundings reflects the larger changes in U.S. urban conditions and demography.

The relative decline in occupant incomes put a substantial squeeze on the economics of public housing management. The original formula was neat and simple. The federal government would pay the construction costs by agreeing to make annual contributions sufficient to retire the debt incurred to build the housing. The local housing agency was to pay all operating costs from rents (indeed, for many years most showed a surplus which got turned back to reduce the federal commitment). Once built, public housing was to be self-sustaining but still cheap because no capital costs had to be charged to the occupants. This principle began eroding in 1961 when Washington began to
make supplemental annual payments to some of the struggling larger authorities. It was fully transformed by 1970 when the federal government instituted a full-scale program of annual operating subsidies. These subsidies, which now exceed $1 billion annually (roughly $1,000 per unit per year), total more than the rents collected from all public housing residents. Steeply rising energy costs and general increases in the cost of providing management services have added to the deficits caused by lower tenant incomes. Meanwhile, the aging and physical deterioration of many projects finally prompted Washington to develop a program of large-scale modernization grants for building repair and upgrading. Inevitably, the financial remedies adopted lagged well behind the need, and many public housing developments were seriously undermined before federal policy caught up with reality. There is good evidence, moreover, that for a number of the larger and more beleaguered agencies, the remedies still do not fully match their true requirements. So, they continue to lose ground. The movement towards reduction of public expenditures for social programs in the U.S. in recent years, a product of the so-called fiscal crisis, has put a further squeeze on the program.

3. Social Problems
The rigorous means testing introduced to the program in 1949 (made even tighter by legislation introduced in 1983 that limits most public housing to tenants with incomes no higher than 50% of their area's median) has concentrated in public housing a large number of households which are at the economic margin. All the evidence is that such households are also more likely to be at the social margin. Their economic circumstances make them more vulnerable to social difficulties with fewer resources to fall back on, and vice versa in a vicious cycle. This pattern of marginality is further reinforced by the self-segregation which occurs at the most troubled sites which are inhabited only by those with the fewest options, those who are beyond caring, and those who thrive on the social disorganization. These sites are hard to manage, and as public officials responsible for them gradually give up and abandon efforts to deal with them, they get worse. Problems of social control are even more difficult because of the numbers of youth at many large family projects, the high density and the absence of employment opportunities and constructive outlets for youthful energy. The vandalism, crime and general anarchy that prevails at some public housing projects overwhelms conventional management practice. It is evidence not that the occupants are individually worse people than other Americans, but that the maintenance of social norms is a delicate affair and that even minor shifts in the balance of power can have major impact on the maintenance of civic order. Some public housing is very difficult to manage indeed, and the tenants are blamed even though the causes are a complex and interlocking set of historic, structural and social factors in which tenants are largely victims rather than culprits.

4. Weak Management
Public housing management was easier 25 years ago. Whether it was better is hard to say. The current difficulty of managing public housing may have only highlighted pre-existing weaknesses. Public housing has long been a favorite arena for political patronage. The lack of professionalism and the sinecure mentality typical of some authorities was less visible when the job was less demanding. The difficulty of the work, the program's poor reputation, and the apparent thanklessness of management's daily routines have certainly affected employee morale, and it has probably made the work seem less attractive to potential new recruits. In general, the incentives and rewards are greater in private sector housing and there is less abuse. In the early days, many appear
to have been attracted to public housing because it had the character of a social movement or crusade. At the same time, their power to set rules and discipline residents was much greater prior to the assertion of tenant and civil rights in the 1960's and 1970's. These movements resulted in important advances in equity and social justice and curtailed the arbitrary and paternalistic practices that prevailed at many authorities. But it simultaneously weakened management's ability to deal with truly problem households, and tended to put the manager in the middle: between residents who were demanding more, and the larger public which wondered why it should give more to a program that was increasingly notorious and apparently "so poorly managed".

Even were there solutions to the other pressures, fundamental weaknesses in management would remain. Few authorities are run like good businesses, with accountability matched to appropriate authority and with systems designed to monitor performance. A basic shortcoming, which HUD tried to remedy with a demonstration under its "Urban Initiatives" program, was the general lack of project-based accounting. Most authorities do not keep budgets that can tell them how an individual project or manager is doing. This means that there is no way to pinpoint the sources of problems or keep an individual management team accountable. Labor relations and employee productivity are other problem areas for public housing management. Few, for example, have developed standards for how long typical maintenance tasks should take. Without such measures it is difficult to see how they can effectively evaluate worker productivity.

Some portion of public housing management problems are attributable to the imposition of abstract federal rules and regulations that take no account of variations in local circumstances and real conditions as they are encountered in the field, or, worse, are designed to punish the authorities or save Washington money and trouble at the expense of the system. The latter approach has become more frequent under the current administration in Washington.

Are There Lessons in the U.S. Experience for Other Countries?

There is no question that the United States has the dubious honor of being far ahead of the U.K. and Western Europe in the scope and severity of the problems affecting its social housing. At the same time, the unique history and special characteristics of American public housing make us wonder about how much other countries can learn from its troubles. In the Netherlands and other parts of Western Europe, many estates identified as problems are suffering primarily from "technical" difficulties: building systems or materials which have failed, deficiencies in design, etc. The United States has such problems as well, but they are usually compounded by a number of other, more intractable dilemmas.

Some problem conditions on the Continent can be traced to the recent and unprecedented emergence of housing surpluses in submarket areas. Estates became difficult to let primarily because they are the least desirable in what has become a renter's market. In the United States, there remains an absolute shortage of low-rent housing virtually everywhere. (An exception is the over-building of subsidized housing for the elderly in some places). When public housing is difficult-to-let it is because conditions have become so poor that even needy households turn elsewhere. In most projects with high vacancy rates, units would find takers if only management could put them back into liveable condition.
While the origins of problems can be quite different given such widely differing markets and political systems, their manifestations can begin to look remarkably similar. This is one conclusion that emerges from the Delft Conference. The American program has long been reserved for a group at the bottom of the social order. It has consequently lacked broad-based political support and suffered because of its tenants' weakness relative to other groups. In the United Kingdom, once middle-class and upwardly mobile council housing tenants purchase their units on the liberal terms currently being offered, council housing is likely to become an increasingly lower-class program. The U.S. experience suggests that its problems will grow.

In American public housing, racial segregation was widely practiced and continued well after it was made specifically illegal. Now, as a result of the self-segregation of non-elderly whites who have generally moved out of public housing altogether, even good-faith efforts are helpless to reintegrate the housing because there are so few majority residents to re-integrate with. The patterns of voluntary resorting and the resulting social stratification visible in some European social housing may have been less tied to overt racial bigotry. The result, however, is the creation of mini-ghetto estates largely or entirely occupied by guest workers, racial minorities who have immigrated from other colonies, and the most troubled among the native population. In the absence of the historic pressures of housing shortage, such self-segregation can rapidly turn a development which was less desirable for a single specific reason, such as an outlying location with poor accessibility, into a site that is increasingly shunned by all but the most desperate and therefore becomes a multi-problem estate.

It is a reflex response among U.S. housers to think first about race and the difficulties of managing multi-racial housing estates when they are confronted with troubled social housing developments. This sometimes means that they are inappropriately transferring homeland experience to foreign settings. But it can also mean that they are sensitized to real issues which their European colleagues may be reluctant to acknowledge given the long tradition of social tolerance of what were once quite small ethnic and racial minorities. The coincidence of racial and ethnic "mini-ghettoes" and management problems is not coincidental if the U.S. experience is any guide. This linkage needs to be faced squarely and forthrightly by European housers.

There are two final observations that can be made about the U.S. experience. One is that effective intervention in problem estates takes time and money. Commitment must be sustained and long-term. While the key is often a change in management approach, and the creation of a new partnership with residents as the Boston and Jersey City cases show, these are not costless remedies. Only the central government has the resources to effectively deal with such issues on a national basis. Onetime commitments will not suffice. Washington for many years ignored evidence on the depth and extent of the problem, and we thereby lost the chance to intervene earlier when costs might have been more modest.

A second conclusion is that troubled housing developments require superior or even super-management. They are the most demanding housing arenas in the U.S. Fortunately, there are housers who are challenged by the difficulty and can be attracted if the right mixture of incentives, resources and public recognition is made available. While problems tend to erode the morale and effectiveness of conventional housing management operations, driving away some professionals, in the U.S. the demands have actually upgraded the general level of sophistication and skill in the field and produced at least a few able and even heroic efforts. Papers describing two of these follow (Ch. 4 and 5).
The views expressed in this paper are the author’s own and do not necessarily represent those of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials.


Explanation on dismantling the top storeys of high-rise blocks in Middelburg
4. A COMMUNITY BASED APPROACH TO SALVAGING TROUBLED PUBLIC HOUSING: TENANT MANAGEMENT

Robert J. Rigby, Jr. (US)

Introduction

This paper is about two public housing projects in Jersey City, New Jersey. In the early 1970s they were miserable places to live, places where "troubled" would have been a polite characterization. By the late 1970s project conditions had been significantly turned about. Substantial physical improvements had been undertaken, accomplished and maintained. The projects had become (and remain) places where lower income families choose to live; places where tenants devote their time energy to improving the quality of residential life. Instead of prime candidates for abandonment and demolition, the projects became housing resources with a positive future.

This paper reviews how this turnabout transpired and offers a few implications of the process. It chronicles and comments on the formation of a partnership between the residents of the projects and the Jersey City Housing Authority (JCHA), a partnership which led to an alternative form of managing troubled housing - tenant managing.

No rose-colored glasses are offered. The effort was a long and difficult enterprise. Nor do resulting conditions include any rose gardens. Management difficulties indeed persist; the chasm between the ideal and the reality remains wide. Yet, project tenants have an affordable and reasonable place to live and raise their children. And, a multi-million dollar investment of public funds continues to fulfill at least part of its currently intended purpose.

General background

The basics

The U.S. public housing program is the oldest, most predominant form of federal governmental housing assistance to low-income families and individuals which persists to date throughout the nation. Established in the late 1930s amidst an array of post-Depression governmental initiatives, the program is administered at the federal level by a cabinet agency, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and at the local level by approximately 3,000 local public housing agencies. The prototypical local agency is a not-for-profit, public corporation which is legally and administratively distinct from local, state or federal governments; has a permanent staff to conduct its business; and is governed by an unsalaried "board of commissioners", who are appointed for five-year, rotating terms by the locality's popularly elected mayor and/or
governing body (usually a city or town council).

The most basic relationship and responsibilities between the parties call for the local agencies to initiate, execute, own and operate housing developments for lower income households. And, for the federal department to repay (with funds appropriated by the U.S. Congress) long term debt service incurred by the agency for initial housing project construction and since the mid-1960s, to repay costs associated with federally approved plant and equipment replacement and modernization and to provide some annual operating subsidy (1).

In order to receive this federal assistance the local agency agrees to conduct its activities according to specified rules and regulations established at the federal level and governing a wide array of operating areas, ranging from development construction standards and costs through setting income limits for tenant eligibility and tenant paying levels. Also, the state in which the local agency operates must pass basic enabling legislation (all 50 have) and the locality of the local agency must agree to substantially reduce payments of local property taxes for public housing projects, while still providing these developments the same services (e.g., police, fire protection, sanitation...) as are provided all other real estate (2).

Since its inception, the program has produced approximately 1.5 million housing units, serves a population of almost 4 million low-income residents and represents a cumulative investment of approximately $25 billion of public funds. In aggregate terms, though the program serves approximately half of all low-income households assisted by any federal housing subsidy, production totals represent only 2% of the total national housing stock, (3) a small portion by Western European standards. In terms of distribution, however, in larger, older U.S. cities, especially in the east and north central regions, public housing represents 4-5% of the overall stock, 5-10% of the rental stock and houses 10-25% of respective lower income households (4). It is these urban centers that the public housing program and many of its projects have become "troubled public housing".

The crisis

My American colleagues have already reviewed for the Conference the salient history and dimensions of the "crisis" in which the U.S. public housing program became mired in the 1960s and thereafter. Included here therefore is simply a "postage stamp" version.

For the first two decades of the program's history it was a simple program; it housed "nice" people and didn't cost the federal government very much. Project location and design weren't all that nice, but the program worked well and no one noticed. Between the mid-1950s and mid-1960s most of the "nice" people, a middle class temporarily dislocated by the 1930s Depression (for whom the program was originally intended), moved out (5). Much more poorer households, often minority families on fixed incomes, came to be the predominant clientele, at least in large, older urban centers (6).

This demographic shift undermined the fiscal framework upon which the program was built, namely that tenant rents were to offset operating costs (7). A poorer clientele clearly had lower rent paying capacity. As age, the lack of attention (during initial construction) to long term durability, higher intensity property use (and abuse) generated by a growing population of unsupervised children and serious inflation rates drove operating costs upward, the gap between project income and expenses widened exponentially.

Although far less than desirable outcomes, neither the social (high concentrations of the poor) nor fiscal dimensions of the problem were necessarily mortal blows. However, what became crippling to the program was that apart from a series of meager and piecemeal influxes of additional federal funds, no one did
anything about the implications inherent in the radically altered constituency, function and fiscal integrity of the program (8).

A debilitating cycle of declining services, reduced maintenance, heightened tenant frustration, further escalating costs, vacancies... ensued. By the time relatively substantial (though still inadequate) federal funds were infused into the program, deteriorated conditions had sorely tarnished its image. It was no longer a simple program; it didn't house the "average citizen"; it became much more expensive and was viewed in many large cities as part of the problem rather than the solution.

I would add three additional and often overlooked points. First, a variety of program critique laced with the notion that there is a causal relationship between the (new) constituency of public housing and its condition. Such assessments not only reflect underlying racial and economic bias, but also completely ignore the historical and fiscal dimensions of project circumstances. Although a number of tenant households contributed to the extent of project deterioration, attributing uni-dimensional causality is nonsense.

Second, the elements of decline which beset the public housing program in large cities were not all that different than those being experienced in older urban areas in general. Demographic shifts, declining economic bases, household decisions (by the more affluent) to leave, institutional decisions to disinvest, increasing costs, breakdowns in social controls and community norms... were common elements throughout older urban centers. Public housing projects were simply a more visible, highly concentrated version of these dynamics.

Third, as a program of public intervention, it was supposed to represent a vehicle for addressing the failure of the private sector market to meet socially desirable outcomes, rather than being but another reflection of market failure. As is the case most public programs, it became most noticed when it didn't work.

Local background

The Jersey City Housing Authority, established in 1938, owns and operates approximately 4,000 units (9), located on ten separate sites ranging in age from 42 years through developments completed this past year and in size from 712 units to 40 units. The developments house approximately 12,000 persons, almost half of which are under 18 years of age. All households have incomes below 80% of the area median.

Jersey City's public housing program reflected the economic and social dynamics besetting the public housing program nation-wide. Its circumstances is best described by example. The two projects which are the subject of this paper, A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens, epitomized its plight.

A. Harry Moore is a family complex of seven, 12-storey, brick buildings layed out in an oval pattern on 3 hectares and comprised of 662 units of 1-4 bedrooms: "vintage" 50s architecture for public housing. As of the mid-60s, project tenants were predominantly very poor, black, single-parent, female headed households with an average of three children, most of whom had public assistance (welfare) as their primary source of income; the archetypal large city public housing tenancy (10).

By 1973 site conditions were rancid. Ten of the site's 14 unisttenched elevators were inoperable and had been for almost half a year. Deteriorated utility systems resulted in chronically erratic services. Public spaces, such as hallways, stairwells and building lobbies lay vandalised and debris ridden, an engulfing state of squalor. Approximately 20% of project apartments had been permanently abandoned, with vacancies increasing at a rate of almost 15/month. Crime and vandalism were the behavioral norm; fear and hopelessness, the pervasive ethos.

Montgomery Gardens wasn't much better, just a little less of everything. It is a
complex of six, ten-story brick buildings on 2.2 hectares and comprised of 462 units. It mirrored A Harry Moore in design, population and condition, except: there were no hallway or stairwell windows (a particularly crass architectural innovation); the project population was slightly more heterogeneous in terms of family composition and race, with slightly fewer children; and its vacancy rate was much lower. Project conditions and tenant despair levels seemed to be a year or two behind A, Harry Moore. As one walked through these and other JCHA projects, it was as if one was in a war zone viewing the aftermath of a military engagement.

The former administrators of Jersey City's near bankrupt public housing agency characterized the situation as hopeless. Many, including project tenants, local elected officials and federal sponsors, characterized the administrators as hapless. And indeed, they had done little to alleviate the local miasma. It was quite clear, however, that far more consequential national trends and historical parameters had totally overwhelmed local officials; the agency and its projects were reduced to operational catatonia. In Jersey City the tarnished image of public housing accurately reflected the reality.

The task confronting the JCHA's newly installed administrators seemed quite clear. Site conditions must be changed for the better or the developments will further deteriorate and ultimately be abandoned. Traditional expenditure and design approaches were not feasible options. More important, it seemed clear that even if typical renewal options were available, they would have been insufficient; (e.g., even if additional fiscal resources were applied toward physical rehabilitation, the improvements would be short-lived; vandalism would continue to prevail).

Public housing history and program context notwithstanding, the nature of the problems to be faced was deep-seated within a deteriorating social structure at the housing developments. Any turnaround strategy would need to take into account reestablishing the informal, indigenously enforced behavioral norms and social control at the project level, dynamics vital to the functioning of any community, especially heavily populated low income neighbourhoods. The JCHA turned, therefore, to the often overlooked, and in this case one of the few available resources, the ultimate consumers of public housing, the tenants themselves.

Beginning at A, Harry Moore (an acid test for any strategy and the development in most immediate need and jeopardy), a series of meetings was held between JCHA staff and tenant leaders at which project needs and priorities and JCHA resources were reviewed in detail. The following bargain was struck.

- The JCHA would refurbish the interior public spaces, i.e., lobbies, hallways and stairwells, of one of the seven buildings within the housing complex.
- A core tenant group would organize the residents of the designated building to assist in maintaining the improvements, preventing vandalism and improving building security.
- The residents would do so through a stationary, lobby-monitoring program consisting of rotating teams of three to four tenant volunteers who would monitor building access and egress from 7 - 11 P.M., six days a week; (the task required the active participation of 1/3 of building households, approximately 30). And, each floor (comprised of 7-8 units) would need a volunteer "captain" who would informally "keep an eye on" respective areas, especially after improvements were executed.
- The JCHA would proceed with refurbishing only if the tenants persevered in helping to sustain the improvements.

With an odd blend of skepticism, desperation and hope, both parties began to work. Resident organizing proceeded neighbor-by-neighbor, floor-by-floor. (Ini-
tial responses ranged from; "Get your butt out of here!" to, "It's about time. I'm trying to raise my kids right and we must do something. I'll be glad to help"). As the JCHA refurbished hallway, after hallway, first in basic beige and then in colors selected by the tenants of each floor, it became clear that (for a change) the agency's promises were actually being kept. Resident skepticism gradually turned to circumspection. Tenant volunteers increased. With few exceptions, the residents enthusiastically performed the lobby and floor monitoring tasks and quite effectively ensured that the improvements were maintained.

Besides sending a message to the outside world that "open season" was over in the building being refurbished, a gradually growing ethos of neighborliness also contributed to the organization's ability to curb vandalism perpetrated by tenants of the building itself, usually free-roaming youngsters and friends. Prior to the organizing effort, hallway noise and disturbances elicited only the fearfull flipping of a third security lock. Three or four months into the program, at least some locks were opened and a few interested neighbors started taking the time and trouble to find out who was doing what. Tenants came to know that they would not be alone - and so too did prospective vandals.

The effort also evoked a positive response from some of the agency's maintenance staff. The poor productivity of some workers, particularly the more skilled, had not only been caused by the agency's administrative ineptness, but also by the products of their work being destroyed barely after completion. Seeing this pattern partially abate, offered an unexpected respite from the long standing futility of performing assigned work.

As the organizing and refurbishing effort became more widely recognized - project "grapevines" are impeccable sources of information - the program was extended to the six remaining buildings within A. Harry Moore and was initiated throughout the six buildings at the second referenced development, Montgomery Gardens. Each new building organization in both projects manifested distinctive variations in style, pace, personalities, leadership and effectiveness. The effort also had had its share of disappointments, ebbs of enthusiasm, work schedules falling behind and outright failures (not the least of which was an unsuccessful attempt to extend the initiative to a third high-rise site. Nonetheless, the basic scenario and bargain persisted at the referenced developments and so did its general effectiveness (13).

Regular (every 3 or 4 months) site inspections by local agency and federal officials confirmed that more than three-fourths of executed improvements had been maintained (14). Resident interviews overwhelmingly emphasized that prior to the volunteer effort "everything would have been destroyed almost overnight". A formal evaluation of the program commissioned by the State of New Jersey stated:

Observations and the testimony of tenant leaders confirm that present conditions at the sites are enormously improved over their previous state... The impact of the refurbishing effort is quite dramatic, especially considering the limitations inherent in the original design and construction... There are few signs of missing lightbulbs and the amount of graffiti is slight, even in buildings refurbished and painted more than a year ago (15).

One of the clearest factors evidencing improved conditions was the reduction in vacant apartments, especially at A. Harry Moore; by 1977 over half the 125 vacancies had been rehabilitated and reoccupied (16). Also, according to Jersey City Police Department records, major crimes were reduced from a pre-1974 level of three times the Jersey City norm to a level approximately the City average.

In a little more than two years, a dramatic level of improvement had become undeniable on a variety of fronts. Further, it appeared clear that although still
formative, a positive and effective feedback system had emerged between the JCHA and the project tenant organizations. Beyond the physical and security improvements, a most insightful commentary was offered in the State of New Jersey's program assessment.

The program's significance lies less in its impact on building security... and more in the fact that the lobby and hallway monitors are building blocks in an open-ended organizing process.

The lobby monitoring provides a task around which people can organize... the elements of the building organizations - floor and building captains - create a basic structure which can be embellished. With the assistance of an organizer or through evolutionary process, tenants can begin to expand their focus to include other activities (17).

As tenant organizations became more confident in their own abilities (and in the working relationship with JCHA staff) they began to initiate a wide array of related social and recreational activities - from fund raising cake sales, through holiday parties for young people and senior citizens. As the agency secured some significant federal grants and with security somewhat under control, the organizations' focus turned toward capital planning. (The lobby monitoring function was conducted more informally on each floor in a concierge fashion, with formal lobby monitoring being reinstituted only if a specific rash of crime and vandalism occurred).

Attention was particularly directed toward developing, with the agency, a renovation plan for exterior grounds, including: recreation, parking, lighting, walkways and construction of a community center. (An 18.3 m x 3.1 m mural painted by a project teen-ager outside one of the buildings at A. Harry Moore - which remains ungraffitied to date - was and is a particularly dramatic product of this effort). Even more ambitious was the tenants' decision to take on the toughest of tasks: the daily management of the housing developments.

By mid-1975, capital improvements were well underway; the tenant organizations had persevered, matured and continued to evidence remarkable capabilities. The JCHA, however, remained a "9 to 5" owner-operator. Its day-to-day management performance at the project level continued to reflect its absentee status. Notwithstanding progress in many other areas of agency administration, improvement in routine site management tasks remained marginal and a continued source of tenant frustration.

The agency was aware of an extensive tenant organization effort underway in St. Louis, Missouri for a number of years. Resident organizations within the city's public housing developments (for the most part analogous to Jersey City's) had expanded roles to include not only policy review and informal voluntary efforts, but also the actual management of daily site operations. Besides representing a potential means of improving project maintenance and management, an expansion of tenant roles might also address the agency's concern that over longer time lines the relatively informal and volunteer nature of the tenant organizations would probably experience diminishing activity levels.

Coincidental with these considerations, the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (at the urging of the prestigious Ford Foundation) decided to sponsor (translate: provide funding for) a demonstration program to determine if the St. Louis experience could be applied to troubled housing projects in other cities. After detailed discussion with project tenant leaders and negotiations with federal officials, Jersey City was selected (along with six other U.S. cities) to participate, starting with A. Harry Moore.

The general gameplan was to form a private, not-for-profit corporation comprised of the project's residents. The Tenant Management Corporation (TMC)
would be governed by an unsalaried, democratically elected board of directors, all site residents. This board would hire its own management staff, all of whom must be site residents and who would be TMC, not agency, employees. After an extensive training period, including familiarization with the public housing program, principles of real estate management and housing agency policy and procedures, the TMC would sign a contract with the local housing agency under which the TMC would assume responsibility for the daily management of the project. The local housing agency would continue to provide (federally funded) annual operating subsidy and capital improvement grants as would otherwise have been the case, and continue normal technical, administrative and oversight services. The agency would also maintain ownership of the project and bear ultimate responsibility for its administration. Put simply, tenant management would be a different form of managing a difficult project within the institutional parameters of the local housing agency.

By July of 1976, A. Harry Moore had formed its TMC and elected (with a high voter turnout, 60%) its 7 board representatives, one from each building. Board member training, conducted primarily by third party consultants (key actors in the St. Louis, Mo. effort) and when appropriate by JCHA staff, began in August, 1976 and lasted almost a year. After completing personnel related classes (e.g., hiring, firing, unions, civil service, equal opportunity, due process...) and establishing the TMC's own additional personnel policies, the A. Harry Moore board hired its management staff (July 1977). For the most part reflective of traditional agency positions, it was comprised of:

- A Housing Manager, who would be the Board's chief operations officer and who would supervise, directly and indirectly, all project-based staff, both TMC and JCHA personnel (18);

- A Social Coordinator, who would be responsible for identifying social service needs and linking residents with the appropriate service agency and for developing recreation and youth oriented programs;

- Seven (7) Building Managers (all site residents), who would be responsible for executing management and tenant organizing tasks within their respective buildings (19).

All TMC employees were required to be current in the payment of their own rent and have "demonstrated a willingness and ability to perform community services that enhance the quality of life at A. Harry Moore". Not surprisingly, 8 of the 9 tenants hired were former volunteer floor and building captains since the early days of the turnaround effort.

TMC staff training began in August of 1977, included the principles and practice of public housing and real estate management from the nuts and bolts of daily operations through the vaguer intentions of national housing policy, a heavy dose of on-the-job training and a six-month period of simulated operations. The A. Harry Moore TMC and the JCHA signed a contract for management of the development in September 1978. The terms of the contract detailed respective roles and responsibilities quite consistent with the general model, although delineated much more specifically (20).

At approximately the same time as the A. Harry Moore TMC signed its contract, the JCHA's second targeted development, Montgomery Gardens, began its tenant management effort. Resident leaders expressed somewhat less dissatisfaction with agency management performance and somewhat more confidence in their ability to simply manage the project better than the agency, than had A. Harry Moore. Tenant perceptions were quite consistent with the somewhat lower degree of management difficulty that the development presented. A. Harry
Moore's completion of training and the JCHA actually turning over site responsibilities bolstered Montgomery Gardens tenant leaders' confidence. And the potential transformation of informal volunteer roles into formal, paid management positions enhanced the attraction of the tenant management proposition.

The corporation formation and training sequence followed at Montgomery Gardens closely mirrored A. Harry Moore's, though the entire process was completed in approximately 3/4 the time. The Montgomery Gardens TMC and the JCHA signed a management contract in late October, 1979 (21).

Of course neither site's training period went as smoothly as might be inferred from the narrative. Both projects (and the agency) experienced a fair share of personnel turnover, coordination and scheduling mis-cues, apprehension and impatience.

Role adjustments also presented some tough going, especially for TMC principals. Knowledge of and proximity to the community is probably the TMC's most effective management weapon. It facilitates intervention in numerous positive ways in a host of situations. Yet ironically it is that same community intimacy which cuts back on TMC principals with so severe a second edge. To suggest 'ideas' for improving conditions is one level of participation. To be responsible for implementing them is quite another. It is one matter to recommend management rules and regulations for occupancy. It is an altogether different matter to enforce them - especially upon one's neighbors. As is the case with almost all service professionals (indigenous or otherwise), the time and energy of key TMC actors became inordinately spent, not with supportive and appreciative neighbors and friends, but rather with families who had serious problems and with those who were chronic problems. And lots of them. Though not immediately obvious, until one thinks about it, TMC board and staff never get to "go home from the office".

Rough spots aside, the training period did offer a realistic measure of what was to come. Indeed, during the succeeding 4-5 years of actual management, the mettle of the TMCs was put to the test. The amended form of site management in no way insulated A. Harry Moore or Montgomery Gardens from the management difficulties inherent in respective developments; high concentrations of very poor households, high child density - intensity of property use, multiple problem families, overall site design limitations, especially high-rise, elevator buildings...all persisted. The indigenous nature of the community corporations in no way immunized them from the constraints and limitations prevailing in their organizational environment; limitless federal regulations governing the public housing program, a gauntlet of laws governing tenancy and employment, inconsistencies between and among them in terms of both content and application, multiple and often conflicting program objectives at various levels of government, inadequate fiscal resources and on more occasions than I'd prefer to admit, the agency's own bureaucratic workings, continued to be the context on which the public housing program was and is administered.

Nonetheless, the hard-management performance indicators have been and remain more than impressive. Since their management began, both the A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens TMCs have:

- held vacancy rates (AHM, down from 20% in '74 and 8% in '76) at 2% or less;
- reduced the number of apartment repairs remaining incomplete at the end of a given month from levels of the 150-300 range to a 20-40 range;
- improved the productivity of project-based maintenance staff (JCHA employees supervised by TMC staff) from substantially below to slightly above JCHA-wide levels;
reduced the number of households delinquent in rent payment for more than 30 days from a 20% level to a 3-9% range;

attracted a wider diversity of applicants for apartments in terms of income class (though still within overall admission limits) and in terms of family composition.

Beyond performance indicators being much better after tenant management than before on intra project terms, inter-project comparisons also yield high marks. The performance of both tenant management sites ranks at least equal to and more often better than other conventionally administered JCHA projects, despite the relatively higher degree of management difficulty inherent in the TMC managed developments. Further, although comparison to other local housing agency developments is a more tenuous assessment - one may be measuring the effectiveness (or lack there in) of the local agency vs. the individual project - state and federal officials who have inspected and reviewed housing developments in many U.S. cities have consistently rated site conditions and project management at A. Harry Moore and Montgomery Gardens to be "much better" than counterpart developments within other jurisdictions (22).

In addition to traditional real-estate management measures, the T.M.Cs also must be given high marks on the social side of the performance ledger. Major crimes against people and property haven remained (since 1980) slightly below City-wide averages and well below averages in other low-income neighborhoods (23). Social events and program have been consistently sponsored by respective TMCs, some of which (e.g. summer, youth recreation and special lunch programs) have generated additional employment opportunities for site residents, and some of which have generated additional revenues (e.g. site-based laundry facility), which are channeled back into the community for other activities. Also, examples of intervention by TMC principals into a host of problem situations (prior to reaching a crisis level, when only punitive action is likely) are replete in any given month and have been cited in a variety of formal program evaluations (24). Finally, even these points do not touch on the more subjective yet equally important aspects of residential life - community self-confidence, hope, collective self-respect....

Admittedly, it is not possible to prove a purely unencumbered causal relationship between the noted performance and tenant management. The effort was not a scientific experiment; other variables were also interacting and affecting outcomes during the TMCs' tenure. Not the least of these was the local housing agency having improved and adapted its own administrative, technical and managerial capacity, e.g., more professional staff, securing capital improvement grants, extensive organizational decentralization (especially site-based maintenance, budgets and accounting), instituting the performance measures previously cited and the improved accountability implicit in such. Also (and obviously) there can be no direct measure of what would have otherwise transpired at the targeted developments had tenant management not been undertaken.

Nonetheless given intra and inter-JCHA data and experience available and the assessments of program sponsors, evaluators and other professionals in the field, it seems undeniable that the management performance of both TMCs has been more than impressive by any reasonable standard (including cost) (25).

A recent study of four tenant management programs (including Jersey City) conducted by Robert Kolodny stated that;

A basic finding from the four demonstration sites is that resident management corporations can operate difficult family developments and, operate them well (26).
High marks were also given for "reasserting social control", creation of some "employment opportunities" and an "increased sense of self-determination and self-respect". From this and other assessments, conclusions regarding Jersey City TMC performance seem quite consistent with tenant management efforts in other U.S. cities.

Any strategy for turning about troubled housing projects assuredly must be placed in context of existing conditions and resources and oriented toward the goals of key actors. Though this context will vary significantly by place, population and time, the Jersey City experience seems to offer certain insights into the process of revitalization. They are offered not as blueprints for community renewal, but rather in the spirit of sharing what lessons have been learned, that they may be applied and adapted as may be appropriate to the individual circumstances of successor endeavors.

In the formative, early stages of turning about distressed projects (or neighborhoods), three points seem noteworthy,

1. **Mutual trust and confidence** between key consumer and institutional actors need to be established early on. Though sustaining the interrelationship requires long term maturation, initial actions are crucial. A working relationship is most effectively engendered through targeting mutually agreed upon, highly visible, short term objectives within the capacity of involved parties, (e.g. refurbishing devastated hallways and lobbies).

2. Organizing efforts best evolve around task-oriented issues which have a high degree of individual self-interest and broad community appeal. Only through the investment of time and energy can resident leaders gain the equivalent of what not-so-poor communities can purchase outright. That investment will be made only if at least a significant minority of residents perceive the proposed effort as being worth the time and trouble (e.g. lobby and hallway monitoring to improve safety and security for all individuals in a common building).

3. Revitalizing strategies must emphasize both the rights and the responsibilities of involved parties. Both community and institutional actors must recognize that the process of turning about troubled projects is an unqualified two-way street (e.g. the refurbishing-monitoring bargain).

If initial turnabout efforts lead toward tenant management or a variation thereof, the following points are worth noting. Key lessons relating to the internal community dynamics of the targeted projects include:

A. The design of the TMC should reflect the informal patterns of community leadership and association; it should preserve the social and political relationships which have developed in targeted projects over the years; (e.g. the Jersey City TMCs' board and staff structure reflected precursor building organizational efforts, which reflected project patterns of association and common self-interest).

B. Tenant leadership must perceive tenant management as a vehicle to meet consistently expressed community needs. There should be a clearly perceived and direct linkage between the managing of site operations by tenant actors and the achieving of project priorities, implicit in which is the improvement of on-going conditions found to be unacceptable; (e.g. tenant management was viewed as a means of improving less than satisfactory project maintenance and management).

C. Tenant management is an evolutionary process requiring experience, nurturing and maturation. It should be initiated only after resident organizations have gained substantive organizational experience in less ambitious endeavours. It can become an effective management vehicle only if it is given the time and attention which any organization requires to develop and achieve organizational prowess; (e.g. Jersey City's TMCs were built upon at least two years of active resident participation in improving project conditions; their current effect-
iveness is grounded in almost a half decade of experience).

Key lessons relating to factors immediately external to the targeted projects include:

D. A reasonable level of governmental and fiscal support is an essential component of any management effort; tenant management is no exception. Demonstrating the need for and prudence of public investment and demonstrating the preservation of the products of that investment should not be confused with the broader political decisions to actually make the investment in the first place. Tenant management is an effective vehicle for the former roles; it is no substitute for the latter; (e.g., Jersey City received at least minimally sufficient operating subsidy and capital improvements funds throughout the tenant management process (27)).

E. An extensive training period and the provision of professional technical assistance is critical to the effectiveness of the tenant management program. Legitimate tenant representatives are better able to know the needs and wishes of their communities than almost any non-indigenous service bureaucracy. However, if local residents are to substantially participate in responding to those needs and wishes they must do so amidst a plethora of legal, fiscal, political and bureaucratic constraints. A working knowledge of the "rules of the game", gained through training and technical assistance, is critical to influencing and affecting the quality of community life; (e.g., the Jersey City TMCs had a substantial initial training period and have been provided technical assistance on a more limited, but regular basis thereafter).

F. The parameters for management effectiveness of the TMCs are in no small part set by the general capabilities of the local housing agency. TMCs must be supported by institutional actors willing and capable of carrying out the agency's side of the relationship; (e.g., reorganization and professionalization of the JCHA was an integral component of the tenant management effort).

A final lesson of the J.C. tenant management effort is the unqualified need for a working partnership between project residents (or more accurately, tenant leaders) and key agency actors. In a way, this requirement takes one full circle, back to the need for "mutual trust". Yet in a more important sense it goes far beyond subjective feelings; it establishes the business-like, disciplined and defined relationship necessary to accomplish any difficult undertaking. The degree of difficulty inherent in managing the targeted projects, the constrained context in which the public housing program operates and the long term nature of both the problem being addressed and the solutions being applied makes the partnership between consumer and institutional actors the sine qua non of tenant management.

In Robert Kolodny's study of tenant management in four U.S. cities, he concluded that:

"This study's fundamental finding is that tenant management remains a promising but demanding approach to the many and interconnected problems of public housing." (28)

The time the process took, the energy expended and the talents that were sharply focused in Jersey City are practical testimony to just how "demanding" the tenant management process truly is. It does not offer any easy solutions or quick-fixes. It is unlikely that tenant management could (or should) be adopted as a "national" strategy. It is and should be viewed as an available and tested option to be applied when and where appropriate (with "appropriate" being defined primarily by local actors).

For many projects, tenant management would not work; there is not the will. For many projects it simply is not needed; distress levels are low enough that more traditional approaches may well suffice. And, if there are quicker and
easier, less people intensive approaches to housing management, they should be pursued.

However, the severely distressed public housing project remains a common enough case, especially in older urban centers - where there are not any easy or quick solutions. Broad income transfer scenarios (e.g. negative income taxes or guaranteed national incomes), which might address the problems of being poor more directly, have never been in political vogue (in the U.S.). An alternative supply of affordable, accessible housing, which might permit deconcentration of the poor, is simply not available in the traditionally tight urban housing markets. Nor is there likely to be much increase in that supply. New production programs of federally assisted housing for low income households have been all but terminated (29); the shortage of housing accessible to poorer families and senior citizens is likely to persist at least through the 1980s (30). Substantial increases in federal expenditures for housing for low-income households are also highly unlikely; in fact, since 1981 annual U.S. appropriations for lower income housing assistance has dropped from $27 billion to $9.9 billion (31). And the trend seems likely to worsen.

Thus for those troubled housing projects (and local housing agencies) who are willing and able to meet the "demanding" aspects of tenant management, there are the "promising" aspects. And that promise may extend well beyond improved housing management. In a seminal article on the subject, Richard Baron, one of the founders of tenant management (in St. Louis) states:

"A successful intervention program for distressed low and moderate income neighborhoods must consider the program areas of housing, community development, employment, education ... as integral reinforcing elements of a long term program designed to attack deficiencies in the "bundle" of essential neighborhood resources and to revive household confidence and commitment to a viable neighbourhood". (32)

In reviewing the tenant management experience in St. Louis, Baron suggests and documents how the TMCs represent an on-going vehicle through which distressed neighborhoods can begin to address a multiplicity of interrelated issues. Although Jersey City never quite catches up to its forerunners in St. Louis, its community-based corporations have indeed begun to fulfill at least part of the suggested potential. The TMCs have evidenced a noteworthy evolution from dependent and dissatisfied clients to active and responsible consumers to capable administrators-in-training to serious providers of community services. Their efforts have not only helped salvage a valuable housing resource, but also have generated a sense of purpose and competence which is being applied more and more to the variety of issues facing low income communities.

Amidst the austerity of public, fiscal resources which domestic initiatives do and for the foreseeable future will continue to face, conservation of existing housing resources becomes all the more important. Building upon latent focus of regeneration intrinsic in local neighborhoods - including troubled public housing projects - through making local residents working and equal partners in housing management and community renewal seems a course of action deserving of serious consideration.

In Jacob Bronowski's classic work, The Ascent of Man, the author notes:

"The most powerful drive in the ascent of man is his pleasure in his own skill. He loves to do what he does well and having done it well he loves to do it better". (33)

The record of tenant managed housing projects suggests that community based corporations can perform a valuable role in the revitalization of distressed public
housing projects. I would suggest that with a reasonable level of financial and technical assistance, the role will be executed well and the project residents will assuredly delight in doing it better.

NOTES


2. The actual formula for property tax payment is the public housing agency will pay 10% of the difference between tenant rents and the cost of raw utilities. Since assessment of the value of public housing real estate are at best tenuous and often grossly outdated, empirical comparisons to private sector taxes are all but precluded. A general sense is that the reduction in tax payment is quite substantial.

3. Downs, Anthony, Rental Housing in the 1980s, The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., 1983, p. 2. Hist estimates indicate that the general U.S. housing picture is as follows: 86.6 million households, 1/3 or 28.6 million are renters; 8 of 9 renters or 25.5 million reside in private sector units; 3.1 million are subsidized. Thus the 1.5 million in public housing = 1.5/86.6=2%.


5. Besides general improvement in economic capacity, liberalized provisions for securing mortgages for home ownership and a program provision which required families to move out if their incomes exceeded federally established "continued occupancy limits" fostered the migration.

6. For a detailed profile of the current housing tenancy, please refer to R.J. Struyk, 1980, pp. 47-59. Comparisons between the public housing tenancy and the general U.S. population of the poor and the individual variation of local housing agency populations are particularly strong.

7. U.S. Congressional Record, 81 Congress, Rec. 8099, 3 August, 1937.


9. A visitor from England recently noted that Jersey City's very urban and by U.S. standards relatively large program would be the U.K. equivalent of a "modestly sized, rural housing council" ... talk about humbling experiences.


11. A 100 page critique of JCHA operations, "Consolidated Management Review of the Jersey City Housing Authority", was published by the Department of Housing & Urban Development in 1972. Although failures on the federal side of the responsibility equation were notable by their absence, there were
sufficient, undeniable mismanagement examples to give the newly elected reform mayor a wedge to remove the administrators and board members in office.


13. For a more detailed description of the effort, see: Rigby, Robert, J., Jr., The Residents As Resource: A Public Housing Management Demonstration in Jersey City, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, 1981.

14. Since the former administration had taken little or no action to remedy vandalized building areas or equipment, no dollar savings could be validly attributed to the effort.


16. JCHA experience indicates that a high vacancy rate affects the manageability of a development more negatively than any other variable. Vacant apartments (especially if long-term) represent continued rental loss and become havens for junkies and assorted derelicts, a base of operations for burglary rings, prime targets for arson, and a source of infestation. Continued vacancies are an unmistakable signal to residents and non-residents alike that notwithstanding an acute demand for low-cost housing, people simply choose not to live in this development and probably with good reason.


18. Under the TMC model being implemented, although site-based maintenance personnel (i.e., unskilled and semi-skilled workers, under the direct supervision of a maintenance foreman) would be supervised by the TMC Housing Manager, they would remain JCHA employees, retaining all union and seniority terms and conditions of employment that they otherwise have had.

19. At low-rise (2-4 stories) projects these positions are usually referred to as "Lane Managers", who would be responsible for clusters of 24-36 unit buildings.

20. Beyond obvious reasons of clarity and accountability, the detailed delineation of respective roles was especially important since many of the management tasks requires joint and mutual actions; e.g. vacant units were relet by the TMC, however, they were prepared for reoccupancy in most instances by JCHA centrally-based, skilled tradesmen. The point of emphasis is less what the roles were, which will vary widely, but rather that the determination of who was to do what and when was clearly outlined.

21. Again, for a more detailed description of the TMCs chronology, see Rigby, 1981.

23. Source: Jersey City Police Department records and informal interviews.


25. Cost increases attributable to TMCs are only additional "Building Manager" positions; since almost all were former welfare recipients, net increases in public expenditures are substantially less than their salaries.


27. The history of tenant management in the U.S. includes at least one reported example of a distressed site being "dumped" in the hands of tenant leaders. The physical plant had severely deteriorated and capital improvements funds were not made available. Under such circumstances, no form of project management (indigenous or otherwise) could succeed.


29. In place of relatively more expensive (supply-side) production programs the current U.S. Administration has established a "housing voucher" program (rent certificates), which relies upon the existing housing supply. Program advocates argue: vouchers are more efficient (i.e. less expensive per unit subsidized and improved opportunity for consumer choice) and more equitable (more households of equally low incomes can be helped). Program critics (including myself) argue that: the efficiency of vouchers presumes sufficient supply and open access to private housing markets, propositions unsupported in urban markets, especially for minority & large families; and the enhanced equity presumes equivalent expenditure levels which has not been the case in practice (i.e. theoretically, 1 newly constructed unit cut = 3 vouchers; in practice 1) (1 new unit cut = 1 voucher).


Supplemental Texts


On the way to the flats in Middelburg
5. THE STRATEGIC ROLE OF PUBLIC SPACE

I would like to discuss with you today our efforts of the past five years in Boston to restore public space in the City's low-income housing projects to community use. I chose to focus on the recovery of public space because I have come to believe that the uses of public spaces are of central symbolic significance in the life of communities. The organization and preservation of public spaces is the primary exercise of communal will in any residential community; and success or failure in the task of organizing and protecting public space is read by all, both within and without the community, as the most telling indicator of the health of the community.

It took us some time, in our work at the Boston Housing Authority, to recognize the central significance of the use and condition of public space. I was placed in charge of Boston's 18,000 units of public housing by the state court, which intervened in the administration of the City's public housing after the City administration proved incapable of reversing the accelerating decline of the public housing stock. The legal basis of the lawsuit by public housing residents which prompted the court's intervention, was the widespread existence of serious substandard conditions in housing units throughout the City's public housing stock. The specific charge of the court to me, as administrative arm of the court, was to restore the physical condition of the housing units - not to worry oneself about such matters as public spaces, or the health of the community.

An examination of conditions in almost any one of the City's twenty-six family public housing projects revealed the actual nature of the problem, however. True, there were seriously deteriorated conditions in many apartments. But it was also apparent that many residents managed to maintain immaculate, attractive households, behind the confines of their apartment doors. That suggested that the problem of apartment conditions was at least soluble - since many residents were apparently successfully solving it. Where we faced universal failure was in the condition of semi-public and public spaces. Hallways were consistently filthy, deteriorated, and uncontrolled. And recreation, parking, and public grounds areas were utterly devastated. Finally, as soon as an apartment moved from private to institutional stewardship, i.e., when it was vacated, and turned over to the institutional charge of the Housing Authority, it was invaded and destroyed by youths. The result was an average 30% vacancy rate in projects - a rate that was rapidly climbing. Control of project territory was effectively divided between two groups: occupants were generally able to control the interiors of their own apartments, while public and institutional spaces, i.e.
vacancies, were controlled by violent youths and criminal elements, especially drug dealers and users. The Housing Authority controlled only its own office and work areas.

Daily life for public housing residents under such circumstances was circumscribed by regular encounters with fear and humiliation. Occupants, even small children and elderly persons, did not leave the apartment except for essential appointments or obligations. Traversing public areas or entering hallways frequently risked fearful encounters with drug transactions, or degrading negotiation with crowds of youths for the right of passage. Any new residents were viewed with mistrust and fear, while the appearance of a vacant apartment in an entryway prompted a general exodus, as youths and addicts found a point of intrusion from which to expand their control of territory.

Our first and most immediate task was to halt this dynamic of degradation, which was rapidly converting habitable space into abandoned territory, loosely controlled by juveniles and criminals. The process was far advanced in some projects: 75% vacancy in Columbia Point Project, 60% vacancy in Mission Main. To halt the dynamic, we sought to segregate territory at risk, i.e. vacant units, from secure territory, i.e. occupied units. This required that we relocate families from sparsely occupied areas into more fully occupied areas, establish full occupancy in the latter areas, and secure entirely the vacated areas.

The strategy worked, and worked in ways that went well beyond our expectations. Not only did we manage to physically secure vacant buildings, and gain full-occupancy in occupied areas, but we also managed to make a critically important symbolic statement to the community, that it was possible, at least for the Housing Authority, with all its resources, to recover territory from the juvenile and criminal factors which until then had seemed inexorably to be taking over all public and institutional space, thereby forcing the gradual surrender of previously private space. While the securing of vacant buildings - with the aid of steel plates on windows, welded doors, shutting off of utilities, and similar fortress-like measures - hardly promised rose gardens, it did suggest that a nihilistic enemy could be frustrated in its designs.

With the gradual elimination of hidden places and safe havens for criminal activity, the drug trade could now be forced out into more exposed areas. No longer commandeering vacant apartments, it had to operate in playgrounds, open to observation, or in hallways which could be observed by occupants, or in apartments adjacent to neighbors who might - and increasingly did - anonymously inform police and Housing Authority of the goings on in their hallways. We now moved to drive drugs out of public housing entirely.

We chose to focus on the drug trade for obvious reasons: the threat it posed to family life, the related crime it generated - burglary, assaults, and theft - and the willingness of its participants to resort to violence to prevent detection or prosecution. In directing attention to the latter, we needed to take a further step towards reestablishing control of territory. We needed to demonstrate that those who participated in efforts to recover territory from illicit elements could be protected from retaliation against their persons or property. We had established our capacity to secure buildings, but not persons. Further progress towards recovery of public space would require that the impediments to cooperation among residents be removed - and the threat of retaliation was the clearest and most effective bar to communal effort.

Today, in all but two of our twenty-six developments, drug dealing is either altogether eliminated, or must operate so clandestinely as to have little or no impact on the daily life of the community. Criminal prosecution of drug dealers, but perhaps more effective, sure eviction for families who allow use of their premises for dealing or use, have been effective sanctions against drug dealing.
Project: Cathedral; B.H.A. Boston (photo: Paul Sandwijk)
With criminal violence effectively blunted as a mean of gaining control of territory, the enabling conditions of community were restored. The task of recovering public space for community use now moved from one requiring governmental mobilization with voluntary support, to one requiring voluntary mobilization with governmental support. For until violence was exorcised as the primary determinant of power, voluntary mobilization of power was precluded. Absent government's capacity to mobilize violence sufficient to challenge and check the violence mobilized by criminal factions in support and protection of drug dealing, voluntary efforts were impotent to restore order to the community. In breaching its obligations under the social contract to provide protection from criminal violence, the government had effectively denied the residents of public housing the opportunity to create community. Fear destroyed all communal ties, and ensured a life of alienation and isolation. Residents of public housing rightly presumed that they lacked the power to control anything beyond their own thresholds, and even that power was under siege.

Community control, in the absence of support from legitimate governmental authority, is a romantic illusion, whose consequences are fearfully destructive. A tragic and unwitting conspiracy of liberal illusion and conservative cynicism had created the dynamic of degradation that nearly destroyed Boston's public housing in the late sixties and seventies. Until America's civil rights revolution, public housing authorities had functioned as autocratic overseers of the poor and near-poor. Exercising the power to admit or evict persons without regulation or restraint, they maintained an arbitrary order in public housing for thirty years. But that arbitrary order was frequently rife with abuse, most grossly, racial abuse, as public housing authorities maintained racially segregated projects across the nation.

The civil rights revolution of the mid- and late sixties ended that arbitrary order. Courts were asked to halt the arbitrary governmental subjugation of the poor, and impose rational, racially-neutral standards on authority decision making - conservative bureaucrats, facing unaccustomed regulation and restraint, most often simply abdicated responsibility for the maintenance of even minimal order. Liberal activists, mistrustful of all governmental authority in relation to the poor, presumed that poor communities would enter the vacuum of power that the abdication of governmental authority created, and establish a humane order, responsive to community needs. This illusion betrayed their innocence of the harsh realities of poor communities. For it was not the legitimate community that they imagined, which entered the vacuum of power - it was instead those most willing and able to mobilize violence: youth gangs and criminal elements. Exercising superior force, they disabled the legitimate community in its efforts to control space. In time, the intimidation was so complete, that communal activity was not only forestalled, but trust eroded and community faltered and disappeared.

It required roughly two years in most of our public housing developments to restore the enabling conditions of community. Through that period, some few of the most determined, most optimistic, or - perhaps - most deluded among the residents began to hope for improvements beyond the mere restoration of minimal safety. The second phase of the restoration of public space to community use focussed on providing those few residents support and assistance to begin to realize their hopes.

For the past three years, the Boston Housing Authority has provided significant support to local resident groups, in their efforts to improve conditions of daily life in Boston's public housing. To do so, the Boston Housing Authority established an independent corporation - The Committee for Boston Public Housing - charged with providing training, technical assistance, and organizing capacity to fledgling groups emerging in Boston's housing projects. Since some of the advocacy efforts of resident groups might - in fact, most certainly would -
be directed at the inadequacy of some of the BHA's own services, the BHA divorced itself from direct sponsorship of their activities. Instead, the new corporation had equal representation from public housing residents, BHA staff, and independent representatives of the larger Boston community. As Boston's public housing resident organizations have matured, BHA representation on the Committee has diminished, and residents are assuming a plurality of seats on the Committee.

With money raised from private sources, the Committee has fielded a staff of community trainers, whose task is to aid in the establishment of broad-based, democratically elected representative groups in public housing developments. The notion of organized tenant representation is hardly a new one - the first resident organization emerged in Boston's public housing in the late sixties, and remnants of those organizations participated in the litigation which prompted the court's intervention in public housing administration in Boston. But the Committee's efforts represent the first comprehensive, intensive, and sustained efforts to organize public housing residents at the local project level.

Initial resident efforts have tended to focus on the performance of the BHA itself. Organized campaigns to protest conditions or direct BHA resources to resident priorities have led to BHA/resident negotiations concerning both capital programs and operating improvements. Competence in the BHA response to resident demands was essential, if these advocacy campaigns were to be more than futile exercises in frustration. But where - as in most cases - the BHA response was competent, these advocacy campaigns have provided residents with their first substantial victories, and demonstrated their ability for organized community effort.

Almost without exception, these initial successes in efforts directed at the performance of the BHA bureaucracy have been followed by efforts to recover control of public space. These have taken a variety of forms, from community surveillance programs to improve security, to gardening programs, reclaiming a
Is Harry Spence God?
Or Is He Just Damn Good?

devastated landscape for community enjoyment and use, to recreational programs and festivities, declaring the right of the community to organize and protect community space for common use.

Several principles must be applied to these efforts to recover community space, if they are to be successful:

1) The efforts must be incremental: for communities that have known only increasing degradation for well over a decade, efforts to recover control of public space represent a triumph of faith over experience. Overly ambitious goals entail failure, in communities whose experience of failure has been unremitting, and whose tolerance for failure is therefore slight. The essential skill of community trainers and resident leaders is to encourage hope, without overestimating the community's capacity too quickly.

2) The efforts must involve residents not only in the conceptual planning, but also in the actual physical execution of plans: The recovery of public space cannot be an intellectual exercise only. Evidence of the capacity of communal effort to transform the landscape, and thereby gain ownership, is enormously enhanced by the actual doing of the transformation. Increasingly, the BHA provides materials and technical assistance to residents in recreating the physical landscape, but residents provide much of the labor.

3) Persistence is more important than the imposition of sanctions in overcoming vandalism and degradation of public spaces: efforts to discourage destruction or defacement of improvements to public spaces through the imposition of sanctions tend to produce a fruitless cat and mouse game. Especially in the early stages of recovery of public space, improvements may need to be restored several times before they are left unharmed. But these early frustrations diminish, as community commitment to the protection of public spaces increases.

4) Expansive public spaces may need to be redesigned to create semi-public spaces for which individual responsibility can be more readily allocated: the task of organizing and protecting too extensive a public space may simply tax the emerging levels of cooperation beyond their limits. The reallocation of public space to semi-public spaces, such as fenced yards and gardens, may facilitate its recovery. To the extent possible, however, such semi-public space should allow visual access for the community, so that they are not withdrawn from public participation, into "privatized" isolation.

These exercises in the recovery of public space have a significance far beyond their seemingly modest purpose. For these are in fact exercises in community empowerment, and the recovery of public space for use by the community is visible, tangible evidence of the efficacy of renewed communal will. All members of the community, child, adult or older person, participant or no, can see and feel the beneficial consequences of the reweaving of community ties.
among its membership - just as disordered public spaces read as a license to indiscipline and destruction, so ordered and protected public spaces speak of common commitment to improvement and mutual responsibility. Nor is it only the residents themselves who read the hieroglyphics of public spaces. Neighbors, passersby, staff of the facility, the larger public read a devastated landscape as reflective of the disordered lives of the community's inhabitants; and interpret a restored landscape as the work of a competent and respected community.

Equally, the exercise of communal will which accomplishes the recovery of public space carries with it enormously important political implications for the community itself. This first dramatic and successful application of cooperative effort suggests further achievements which might be possible to a renewed community. The institutional skills of discussion, negotiation, planning, and advocacy which were necessary to this first concrete achievement have application to other contexts - to the fulfillment of the service needs of the public housing community, to participation in the larger political context on which the ultimate welfare of the community rests, to participation in the world of work, from which so many of Boston's public housing residents have so long been excluded. In my experience, these implications are not lost on the residents themselves.

All of this is hopeful - yet I would end with a cautionary question. The context in which the great majority of us learn and exercise the institutional skills which I have described is, in fact, the world of work. I have described the process by which the disempowerment of Boston's public housing communities was accomplished, and the efforts which we have taken to restore some measure of renewed empowerment. But in the end, all these efforts are intended to compensate for the absence of the usual modes of communal accomplishment provided the rest of us by employment. We can, certainly, in cooperation with revived resident communities, ward off the unremitting devastation and isolation that engulfed these communities for a decade. But can we sustain the effort over years, and can that effort make up for the ultimate devastation and isolation visited upon these communities by their exclusion from the only communal activity we ultimately value - that of work? Of this, I am less certain.
The high-rise blocks in Middelburg built in 1971-1972. The plan is to dismantle the top seven storeys and rebuild them elsewhere in small blocks of three or four storeys.

On the first two storeys the dwellings are accessible by galleries. The dwellings on the other storeys are accessible by corridors on the 4th, 7th and 10th storeys; directly or via a staircase.
6. PROBLEM HOUSING ESTATES IN BRITAIN: THE CASES OF QUARRY HILL FLATS AND HUNSLET GRANGE, LEEDS

Alison Ravetz (U.K.)

Text of presentation

The argument advanced in my contribution to this symposium is perhaps a rather unexpected one: it is that there was a systems built, 'mass housing' estate of the 1930s which functioned well, within certain given constraints, and which, though now demolished after little more than 35 years of life, might well have lasted until the end of the century.

I am of course talking about Quarry Hill Flats in Leeds, designed to a certain architectural philosophy that is more common in Europe than Britain. One of the main things to be demonstrated by my 3-year study (carried out in 1968-1970) was that the worst faults and fallacies were in the provision rather than in the tenants and their usage of the estate. Quarry Hill was never 'hard to let'. It was virtually without vandalism until after its demolition had been announced. After a generation, its occupants had learned to live with a paternalistic and unlistening management, and with most of the contradictions of the design. The worst of these, which I outline in the longer paper circulated here, were those to do with children's play areas, with through traffic, and with the conflict between public and private space, or the treatment of the estate itself both as a public place and as a private residential environment.

The main price to be paid for this accommodation of the residents was that the estate as a collective entity ceased to be meaningful to them. A very lively tenants' association had struggled for many years against heavy discouragement, and by the late 1960s had ceased to function. The residents' compromise was to value the flats as good standard dwellings in an amazingly central location. They had also, over the years, managed to establish networks of kin around themselves, which was the more remarkable because council housing allocation systems do not make any provision for this. The special contradiction-in-terms that the residents' reaction presented was that the estate had been explicitly designed as a self-contained 'community', which was precisely the level at which it failed to work.

The final undoing of the estate is generally thought to be the alleged failure of its system construction, to which was added the unwavering conclusion of the local authority, the media and general opinion in Leeds, that Quarry Hill was a terrible dump and an unsavoury ghetto. This opinion was however contradicted by the findings of my study, which also showed that the state of the structure was not a compelling reason for demolition. It had indeed begun to fail within about ten years of construction, but it had been very thoroughly remedied in the 1960s and was still, in the 1970s, performing satisfactorily. Much stronger motives for demolishing the estate were those of the highway engineers, who wanted part of
the site for a motorway (which in the event was never built) and those of the city planners, who wanted to improve and gentrify this long neglected area of central Leeds. In the hierarchy of local government departments, housing came well below the highway engineers and planners, and the housing people believed their case was lost because their consultant engineers would not guarantee a permanent life for the structure.

So what had once been considered to be the largest, as well as the finest, housing estate in Europe was demolished in the mid 1970s. This was all the more ironical in that a still larger estate which was then being constructed a mile or so away would fail much more genuinely and totally within another five or six years.

This was the estate of Hunslet Grange, which was still larger than Quarry Hill Flats, and which resembled it in many ways. Like Quarry Hill, it was designed to be a community, this time of linked 'villages', to which it was hoped the local population, displaced by slum clearance, would return. It was also designed to be a self contained entity, though even more spuriously in this case, since its local high street of shops was demolished years before it was replaced by a new district shopping centre that is completely separate from the estate. Above all, and notwithstanding the then current Quarry Hill experience, it was system built in a cross-wall and concrete panel construction used by three other cities in the Yorkshire Development Group (YDG). The wholesale adoption of 'systems' in British public housing in the 1960s was done without any reference to the outstanding earlier example of Quarry Hill Flats, although this demonstrated all the difficulties that were to arise again, on a magnified scale.

It is also curious that, although the failings of Quarry Hill had often been attributed to the unsuitability of high-density flats for the British working class, such dwellings were again built on a mass scale in the 1960s. But at the time Hunslet Grange was designed, any difficulties were believed to be overcome by the variety of dwelling forms and size that were ingeniously fitted within the envelope. Many of the family sized dwellings were provided with patios, and the 'streets in the air' were believed to overcome any defects of high-density living. Their security aspects were ignored, as were the disadvantages of street decks passing over bedrooms and front doors being on the floor above or below the dwelling itself.

From the start, Hunslet Grange went disastrously wrong, in ways that had never occurred at Quarry Hill. It was much too expensive for local people, so that it rapidly came to have a floating population over a residual core of helpless people (who, among others, included some Vietnamese Boat People). In addition to the high rents which reflected building costs, the heating bills were unimaginably high. The original gas central heating systems had had to be changed for electricity after the Ronan Point disaster of 1968, and besides the intrinsic cost of this, the condensation present in most of the dwellings made it impossible to keep them warm at all. Many of the rooms could not be used because of mould which destroyed all furnishings. Vandalism, though never excessive, developed. In spite of huge quantities of grass, bored estate children found there was 'nowhere to play'. It was common for the annual turnover of tenancies to reach the catastrophic proportion of 40 per cent or more (compared to a national norm of 7-10 per cent) and at no time was the estate fully let.

Of the two estates, we may say that with more effort and care from the authority, Quarry Hill Flats could still be functioning today, its remedial work almost certainly serving it well for another generation; but that there is no way at all that Hunslet Grange could or should have been kept going. Among the reasons that made Quarry Hill Flats relatively successful were the higher building standards of the time (notwithstanding the defects of its building system); the care taken by the management to pick tenants whom they thought suitable for high-density living; and the different nature of English society in the prewar
and early postwar periods. It was then more traditional, more deferential and less mobile than society in the 1960s. Hunslet Grange was the product of a mobile, high-tech, 'throwaway' society, and this is reflected in its unfortunate social history as well as its design and provision.

If we look around the immediate locality of the two estates, we find three examples that remind us how little allied to constructional or design quality the longevity of housing may be. Marsh Lane Flats, built by Leeds City Council 35 years before Quarry Hill Flats, and long since converted to old people's flats, is still flourishing today. The Woolman Street Flats, built by a private company on part of the Quarry Hill clearance site around 1908 have looked for a long time as if they will fall down if they are not pulled down, but they are nevertheless defended by their inhabitants. So also are the East Street flats, contemporary with Quarry Hill Flats, built by a housing trust and now in urgent need of treatment. It is suggested that demolition would be the sensible course, but their residents cling to them to retain them at all costs.

What conclusions are permissible to draw from such a rapid scan of a handful of estates in one city? Clearly we are dealing with a complex problem which has social, economic, political, as well as design and construction elements - all of which are set in a historical dimension. In order to be accurate, any conclusions should probably be qualified many times over. If, however, we do attempt to draw some threads together, we might suggest that scale, as such, and building failure, as such, would not normally be enough to condemn an estate. Even with these things, an estate may become a viable habitat, given the right management approach. However, whereas in the pre- and early postwar periods, a paternalistic management style was more or less acceptable, in the 1960s and later, this was less likely to succeed.

When building failure is too immense, however, it will wreck the whole enterprise. No tenants of any discrimination and ability will consent to stay, and the rest will be hopelessly handicapped by the high rents, heating costs, and generally hostile environment. It is possible for estates to hang in the balance for a period of time - examples are the celebrated estates of Park Hill and Hyde Park at Sheffield.

Attempted solutions to the problem must take the form of design or social measures, or a combination of the two, as outlined in my accompanying text. Whatever their individual merits, they must all be placed within the framework of our present government's policy, so far as possible, privatising the housing market and reducing council housing to a marginal, welfare role. Thus it is attempting to sell off council estates, either to sitting tenants, who may buy their own dwellings at a large discount, or to developers who are taking over some of the hard-to-let and obsolete estates, refurbishing them, and marketing them as luxury homes. The policy is justified, in the last resort, not by reference to actual experience, but by its political philosophy. Neither the policy nor the practice promise much for estates of the Hunslet Grange type, where the dwellings are unbuyable, and the tenants in no condition to buy. The prospect for such estates, therefore, is either expensive demolition, exacerbating housing need elsewhere, or a long unhappy period for their residents, as their future hangs in question.

Documentation supporting the presentation

The foundations of this contribution to the symposium are to be found in my study Quarry Hill Flats, published ten years ago. Quarry Hill Flats, in Leeds, was an estate built between 1934 and 1961, when it was still unfinished and never to be finished; and it was demolished around 1973. It had a life, therefore, of around
35 years. It was the first major British council estate to be demolished, but it has now been followed by a good many others, although perhaps none quite so large or prestigious. When I began researching it, in the late 1960s, one of the most striking features of British council housing was its apparent permanency, and the 'fossilized' condition of council estates. The principle of council or public housing was sacrosanct, and estates appeared to be no-change areas. It was with considerable surprise, therefore, that I came across one isolated case of a demolition in south London in 1969, and in my book about Quarry Hill I could cite only Pruitt Igoe as the ultimate case of 'failure' in public housing.

Estate demolitions are now common in Britain. In some cases they are pulled down to make way for other development; in others because they are structurally dangerous; and in others unlettable. Now some estates are being saved by having drastic surgery carried out on them, or they have been sold into private ownership and are being gentrified. But the causes of the demolition and the various ways of obviating it reinforce the fact that the problems are an amalgam of different issues: social, technical, environmental and political.

A historical case study is useful, not just for its intrinsic interest, but because it enables us to see and dissect all the different processes at work. It cannot of course be assumed that history repeats itself, and in any case example there is a special combination of different qualities. But the cumulative body of observation and research suggests that, throughout the 65-year-long history of British council housing, the same themes and issues recur. A useful confirmation of the continuity of the problems is provided by the Tenants and Town Hall study, published by the Department of Environment in 1979, which documents many of the same situations that were found at Quarry Hill.

In the Quarry Hill study I was at pains to point out the amalgam of what I there called socio-environmental problems. This is well accepted now, but was less so ten years ago. The study demonstrated two major points:

1. that any 'failures' were at least as much in the manner and form of provision as in the tenants;
2. that over and above such failures in provision, there were fundamental contradictions in the enterprise that were larger than the providers themselves could control.

Discussion

During the estate's lifetime, both the housing authority and the public at large tended to represent the tenants as the major problem. In actuality, they never presented particular problems at any time. Vandalism was not in evidence until the public announcement of demolition was made, when it appeared in a muted form. The estate was never 'hard to let'. Most residents ignored the very real environmental drawbacks and were well contented with their homes. The central location had much to do with this. While it was being demolished, the demolition contractors, to whom it was just another job, were puzzled when elderly people came wandering onto the site and burst into tears. They were former residents grieving for their homes.

The one set of problems that the residents did consistently speak up about was that to do with the open spaces, and particularly children's play. Space for children is found to be a problem on all council estates but it is particularly acute on flatted estates. Here, the original plans for children's playgrounds, which were quite generous if unimaginative, rapidly gave way to total degradation. In the other open spaces, the council made spasmodic and generally useless attempts at
Quarry Hill, 1939 (photo: placed at the author's disposal)
Quarry Hill, 1937 (photo: placed at the author's disposal)
landscaping, but they wilfully ignored the expressed wishes of the residents themselves. After a number of years most of the spaces were quite unused, while the residents ceased to involve themselves collectively in anything to do with the estate. At the time of my research, it was mainly those tenants with very young babies who were actively critical of the amenities of the estate and wanted to remove themselves. It appears that if they survived this critical stage of their family development, they adapted quite well to the estate, their children becoming old enough to form informal gangs and exploit the estate, barren though it was, to their own ends.

In general, the residents made a sensible personal adjustment to the shortcomings of the estate, while consciously appreciating a good modern flat in a prime central location. It may be argued that the providers of the estate themselves contributed most of the problems by bad design and faulty assumptions. The building system was a pioneer example of what came to be known in the 1960s as system building. The invention of Eugène Mopin, it was imported from France and designed to very high tolerances which were not achieved. Because of its innovatory nature, it proved to be slow rather than fast to build, and during the building period it attracted much attention and ridicule locally, which contributed to the social labelling of the estate for ever after. Because of poor quality control and bad design details, the fabric began to show signs of failure within about fifteen years. It underwent a total refacing in the early 1960s, and this was accompanied by fresh landscaping that left for the residents even less usable open space. The massive cost of this was detrimental to the general housing programme of the city. It also became the primary excuse for demolition ten years later. This was on the grounds that, although the structure was still performing quite adequately, it could not be guaranteed a 'permanent life' in engineering terms. This was particularly ironical when the nearby estate of Hunslet Grange, which was then under construction, should be found to be unsafe and uninhabitable within another ten years.

The second main aspect of provision that was problematical was the concept of 'estate'. Laid out with a large degree of perimeter planning, Quarry Hill presented the appearance of a fortress to outsiders, prompting the idea of imaginary horrors within. This contributed directly to the social labelling of the estate. It should also be considered with the traditional English prejudice against high flats. The amenities that were planned to compensate for high-density living were never finished. Besides the playgrounds, this applied to the shopping parade, sports facilities and community hall. In the event, the most useful and lively part of the shared estate was the laundry and ironing rooms, but the potential of these was never exploited. Women were forbidden to take their children there, for instance. However, the fact that certain items had been in the original plan, and were indeed suggested by the layout and empty gaps of the estate, gave rise to resentment on the part of the tenants for promises not fulfilled. At the same time, the management held grievances against the tenants for their ingratitude for all the extra trouble and expense that had been bestowed on them.

This is connected to a third fallacy in the provision, which was that enclosure, a distinct architectural form, and a community centre would trigger a sense of 'community' and corresponding behaviour. In practice, however, the authority was never cooperative towards the active tenants' association that did flourish for many years; and when the tenants collectively and individually put forward proposals for improvements, they were not listened to. The tenants' association, for its part, was distressed and discouraged by the small minority actively participating in organised events and, as is still customary among such organisations, they had crippling internal divisions over leadership and finance.
All of these factors contributed to the conclusion of the public authority, endorsed by public opinion, that the Quarry Hill estate was a 'failure'; and it is probably true to say that the failure was felt to be mainly a social one. In so far as design was considered, it was concluded that flats were no use for the English working class.

The larger contradictions within which the estate had to operate were those of public housing in general. It must be remembered that public (council) housing in Britain had been explicitly derived from the Garden City movement of the early twentieth century. This meant that council estates were supposed to consist of model dwellings in model environments. Hence arose the contradiction that new, high-standard and consciously designed - and therefore expensive - housing was provided for some of the poorest layers of society. In practice, as on council estates elsewhere, Quarry Hill was not at first used for the poorest people. This was because of the high cost of building, which resulted in higher rents, and the deliberate policy of the housing management which hand-selected 'good' tenants to combat the adverse effects of high-density living. As time went on, some of these first residents became very prosperous, but vacancies came to be filled with poorer people, as the rents declined relative to newer property built in the city. The effect of the gap between model provision and low incomes is that either the new estates do not cater for their intended clients or, if the really poor are placed in them, they are then deprived of an unfairly large part of their disposable incomes.

The second major contradiction is that posed by the public and private facets of estates. The architecture of Quarry Hill was flamboyantly public, and indeed, the building of the estate was largely justified because it was regarded as an architectural contribution to the city centre. This was reinforced by the management, who strongly discouraged any tampering with architectural effects by mere living patterns of residents. For instance, they were forbidden to dry washing on their balconies, though these were of little use for any other purpose. Yet at the same time the public were actively discouraged from entering the estate. Among other things, this was detrimental to the few shopkeepers, for whom the estate population barely provided a living. Tenants were repeatedly told that further investment in the estate was not justified when they had the whole city centre on their doorstep, even though the whole concept of the estate pivoted on the shopping and community centre. It is a recurrent problem of British council estates that the degree to which they are or should be self-contained neighbourhoods, or the degree to which they are simply part of the whole urban fabric, is never established.

The public-private dichotomy was particularly clear at Quarry Hill in the case of roads. For no very good reason, the roads passing through the estate were all public highways with normal speed limits. As they were through roads, they were used by heavy lorries to avoid traffic jams and they were of course extremely hazardous to the children of the estate. The residents repeatedly and unsuccessfully petitioned for speed limits or closure. What finally closed the roads was nothing to do with quality of life in the estate, but the drastic remodelling of the highways surrounding it.

Conclusions

The range of problems at Quarry Hill, though peculiarly concentrated, must be considered to fall within the 'normal' range. Leaving aside the design and construction faults, it was by no means an especial problem estate - within Leeds as
in many other British cities, that distinction is reserved for outlying, suburban estates, typically with small houses rather than flats. The first reason given for its demolition was the structure, although it might easily have been retained for an indefinite period. The next reason was more plausible. For the highway engineers wanted to take part of the top of the site for a motorway spur (which in the event was cancelled). In the ranking order of highway engineers and housing managers, the latter come out bottom, so arguments that were put forward for retaining the housing were lost. It is significant, however, that although only part of the estate would have been directly affected, it was assumed by all that the whole of it must be demolished. This was another instance in which the faulty design provision pre-determined the history of the estate. Another, latent, reason was that the city planners were then devising schemes to upgrade this central part of Leeds, long since neglected and degraded, and to bring back into it cultural, recreational and better class housing uses. The unsavoury working-class image of Quarry Hill lay in the way of this. Journalists and councillors who now went inside the estate for the first time recoiled in horror. There was a burst of concern for the poor people 'who should not be allowed to live in such conditions'. They were, of course, oblivious of the fact that the population in question had, over a generation, successfully adapted to these conditions, gathering networks of friends, neighbours and relatives around them.

The parallels and contrasts between Quarry Hill and Hunslet Grange are revealing. In respect of its scale (which was even larger), its patent system building, its provision of a variety of dwelling sizes for a balanced community, and the trendsetting quality of its dwellings, Hunslet Grange was a 1960s version of Quarry Hill Flats. In one main respect only was it dissimilar, in that no attempt was made to provide a community centre, the formalistic idea of community having meanwhile been dropped. There were a variety of clubs and institutes in the vicinity that had been spared in the general and total clearance. Hunslet, unlike Quarry Hill, had not been a festering slum, but a traditional and respectable working-class district of Leeds - immortalised in Richard Hoggart's Uses of Literacy. It was intended that after the clearances its own people should return to inhabit the new estate, which was described as a cluster of 'villages'. In the event, few did return, because the rents of the new flats and maisonettes were inappropriately high for them.

Two points, in particular, in the comparison of the two estates need attention. One is the 'junking' of the estate within fifteen years of its opening, compared to the 35 or more years at Quarry Hill Flats. At Hunslet Grange, the structural faults, added to the initial building costs, were reflected in high rents and still higher electricity bills, meaning that the failures of provision completely dominated the estate's subsequent development. Unlike Quarry Hill, it never for any length of time functioned as a viable habitat for its population (although, even so, the council tried persistently to blame its faults, including damp and condensation, on the bad habits of the tenants). Three other cities besides Leeds constructed flats in this system (the Yorkshire Development Group, or YDG) and although some of them were better laid out and landscaped than the Leeds example, all are now being demolished. At Hunslet Grange, the structural and design faults, not surprisingly, led to severe social stress, so that at no time was the estate full, and in some years the turnover of tenants reached a pathological rate of forty or more per cent, compared to the national norm of 7-10 per cent.

The second point to consider is how, with the recent example of Quarry Hill, the same mistakes could be committed and magnified. At a superficial level, the answer is that there is no feedback mechanism in public housing. There were no established channels of communication between tenants and their councils, and it
was uncommon for either academic or official research to influence action. At a
deeper level, this suggests that the validation of public housing lay in its own
internal reasons, which might be, variously, ideological, political, commercial, or
technical. The quality and performance of what was provided, therefore, were
not given much thought at all.

During the last 4-5 years, housing policy has changed in some fundamental
ways, and in large degree this is owing to public recognition of the problems and
wastage of the Hunslet Grange type of development. The overall cost of demoli­
tion of systems built estates is reckoned to be of the order of £10,000 millions.
To this must be added the cost of replacing estates that have become obsolete or
unlettable, without necessarily showing structural failure. Many of these are
estates that were contemporary with Quarry Hill Flats, but there is little or no
analysis to tell us precisely in what aspects they failed, and whether such failure
could have been avoided, given better management and maintenance. The design
lessons that have been read from this experience are to avoid such large-scale
development in the future; to concentrate on rehabilitation rather than new
build, or when doing new build, to do infilling, using low-rise, 'cottagey', though
still high-density housing. Building systems, though not on the whole such hazar­
dous ones, are still used in such housing.

This swing has somewhat opportunistically coincided with the economic recession
which would in any case have halted large-scale clearance and redevelopment.
At the same time, our present government uses the reaction against 'mass hous­
ing' to help validate its policy of privatising as much of the housing stock as
possible. This is consistent with their traditional policy of confining public
housing to a residual, 'welfare' role. Thus the 1980 Housing Act gave council
tenants the right to buy their dwellings at large discounts - the government's
assumption being that everyone would from preference become an owner occupi­
ier, and that this is healthy both for society and for the built environment. At
the same time, several authorities have sold off some of their problem estates to
developers who then gentrify them (often fencing them off from their surround­
ings) and market them as luxury homes.

Since no purchase by tenants can be expected on the really bad estates, which
include the systems-built, high-rise ones, this leaves the majority of such estates
to be dealt with, either by demolition, or radical remodelling, or through action
schemes such as those the government is encouraging through the Priority
Estates Project. The exorbitant fuel costs and damp problems of such estates
have now been given some official recognition, for instance through an increased
fuel grant for claimants living on designated estates. However, in the current
economic and political climate, where councils have their funds cut and are
forbidden to levy extra funds of their own, it can scarcely be hoped that all
system built and problem estates could be dealt with in the near future, or even
saved from becoming much worse than they are at present.

The present policies, therefore, do not present a total solution, and indeed
their main plank - the extension of owner occupation - has every appearance of
trying to 'solve' a problem by abolishing it: that is, by eliminating the types of
estate in question by changing either their tenure or their design. This would be a
reaction based on a partial interpretation of experience rather than a compre­
hensive grasp of actual achievements and failures, as these have been displayed
in the story of Quarry Hill Flats. As I concluded in my book, the environment
that this epitomised was, if not a natural one, a normal one for the twentieth
century. As such, it played and still plays a critical part in social housing. We
may conclude, therefore, that while the partial solutions offered at present seem
unlikely to repeat the spectacular failure of the recent past, they cannot fully control the situation because it has not been fully understood.

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Quarry Hill Flats

**Model Estate**, Alison Ravetz, Croom Helm, 1974

Hunslet Grange
Brochure of official opening of Leek Street (Hunslet Grange) Flats, City of Leeds Housing Dept.


Hunslet


General


*The Planner*: special issue on urban renewal, vol. 70 no. 4, April 1984 (Journal of the Royal Town Planning Institute).
Zandvoort: Renewal of balcony and gallery slabs and renewal of the bearing consoles of these slabs

The spectators in Zandvoort
I would like to explain, first of all, the nature of my qualifications and interest in the subject of Post War Housing in Trouble. Since I graduated from University in 1970 I have found myself drawn into the tenants' movement in the UK because community action groups have often been in desperate need of technical and expert help. I was not a technical expert in housing defects, but few of my colleagues (with one or two notable exceptions) were interested in aiding the inhabitants of the many desasterous housing projects which were built since the Second World War.

Much of the work I have done has been on an informal basis - but it led to the formation of the Support Architects Co-operative which was committed to working as architects for user controlled projects and, more recently, the development of the Association of Community Technical Aid Centres (ACTAC). ACTAC joins together a wide range of agencies which now provide technical advice to working class organisations.

Such provision of supportive and sympathetic technical advice is essential as a means of empowering the inhabitants of public housing because they often come into conflict with unsympathetic, remote and officious professionals.

The rebellion of tenants against unjust treatment and poor standards and conditions can be a positive force for change. This energy, if directed in a constructive way, can be a means to humanise and improve housing and ensure that it does not decay again. Unfortunately such energy only comes from people standing up for their rights which brings them into conflict with professionals responsible for managing housing. The professional response is invariably defensive and hostile. This defensiveness and hostility is less obvious than it was. Often it is obscured by apparently progressive but invariably manipulative policies of tenant participation. Schemes for tenant involvement which are imposed in a paternalistic way and which do not grow out of the energy and initiative of local people are invariably introduced for reasons of social control. There are examples today in the UK of experimental schemes to involve tenants and humanise housing management which have the objective of increasing rent income, letting unlet flats, controlling social disorder - but at the lowest possible costs to the state. Fundamental material conditions are only marginally improved.

As part of this process there is a mystification by experts of the difference between technical and social problems on housing estates in trouble. Often troubles are blamed on social factors when fundamental physical problems are largely to blame.
Underlying causes may well be political or economic but they manifest themselves as problems in social or technical terms. For the housing manager responsible for an estate with many empty houses, high rent arrears, serious vandalism, etc., the problems seem primarily social. For a tenant living in cold damp conditions with mildew in the cupboards and huge heating bills, the problems seem essentially technical. Of course it is almost impossible to separate technical and social problems, they are intertwined. Often it is a chicken and egg problem; which came first: the technical defects or the social breakdown?

However, in going through the literature it became apparent, that while most experts are willing to acknowledge the complexity of social problems, technical issues are often seen in an entirely separate way as problems which can be tackled or solved in objective scientific ways. The assumption is made that the social and the technical can be treated separately. Indeed in inviting me to participate in this Conference Niels Prak suggested that "in Holland we find a clear distinction between purely technical cases (e.g. unequal settling on inadequate foundations) and cases which have to do with less desirable types of housing, poor maintenance and social problems."

I would like to question that a clear distinction can be made and argue that, in Britain at least, technical judgements as to what is satisfactory and what is not, what is a failure and what is not, are strongly influenced by social attitudes and judgements of professionals.

This can be made clearer, perhaps, by the explanation that architects, engineers and others will say that a building is technically unsatisfactory in terms, say, of fire safety, risk of collapse, weather tightness and so on, in one situation, but say that the same conditions are quite satisfactory on an estate which houses low income, poorly organised working class tenants. In other words, the problem is basically one of standards.

We have problem housing estates because those in positions of power and influence are willing to say and go on saying that standards (which they themselves would not tolerate) are adequate for a low income section of society. The problem is made worse by the fact that many of the people in that housing are prepared to put up with low standards (though, of course, there are many who are not). In Britain it seems that only due to the activities of a vocal minority in tenants' campaign throughout the country, that the PROBLEM is recognised at all.

This can be illustrated by the following three examples. Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes has had to be fully rehabilitated only a few years after it was built in the mid 1970s. Low rise, 2 storey terraces with gardens it does not appear to be a typical problem housing estate. It has been necessary to spend as much again as the original cost of the scheme to repair roofs, damp proofing and numerous other defects. Such defects were plain to see, but it was only through lengthy agitation by the tenants that ensured the work was carried out. Initially the tenants were fobbed off by officials claiming that nothing was wrong.

Again a similar reaction could be found at Moss Side District Centre in Manchester, a typical late 60s system built deck access scheme. There were numerous major technical deficiencies. When called in to advise the tenants it was necessary to break into an empty flat and pull up floorboards to identify some of the problems. The local authority had refused to recognise there were technical deficiencies and had refused to make drawings and constructional information available. Social changes were made, families moved out and students moved in but the technical problems still continue.

Finally Ronan Point in Newham, East London. In this well known case, as a result of the gas explosion which killed several tenants, the tenants are still involved in a struggle with professionals to ensure that the tower blocks are
Ronan Point (photo: placed at the author's disposal)

Noble Street flats, 434 Council houses in Newcastle upon Tyne, built 1956-1958, demolished 1975
demolished and they are adequately rehoused. Due to the untiring efforts of architect and anti-system building campaigner, Sam Webb, it at last seems likely these infamous buildings will be pulled down.

The latest factor in the saga has been a test carried out in the now empty Ronan Point, where 'experts' set fire to one of the flats. The test had to be aborted after a few minutes because dangerous deflections in the floor slab above the fire could have led to a progressive collapse. The tenants thought their campaign vindicated and they were right to claim the building were unsafe. Even then the experts insisted that the buildings were safe.

I see these as examples of how technical problems and standards are often interpreted in an elastic way in order to avoid meeting tenants' just demands. I am not denying that social problems exist, but claim that they have a material basis. It is important to remember that however complex the social problems, whether they are due to ghetto-isation, stigmatisation, official or occupant neglect, crime, delinquency, the breakdown of informal social control, racial disharmony, or whatever, these problems have a spatial focus. We are talking about problem housing areas because the social problems are related to actual buildings. At the end of the day we come back to the physical fabric of the houses and environment. Decisions were taken by politicians, administrators, professionals, to create such environments with a particular form and a particular standard.

While I am not arguing the determinist line that such forms have caused social breakdown, I do believe that dissatisfaction with the nature and standard of physical environment should be our principal concern. In the cases I will illustrate, the residents have good reason to be dissatisfied, but the response of the professionals in charge is always very mixed. Opinions about supposedly objective technical standards and evaluation vary with the political climate and often the complexity of the social problems is allowed to obscure the serious failures of the buildings.

I would accept that there are cases with technical failure without serious social problems, but I would challenge anyone to come up with an example of a housing scheme that had social problems that did not also have serious physical defects.

The last point in this argument is that I always have a sneaking suspicion, based on my experience of housing officials, that it is always easier to blame social problems - because this somehow makes it, at least partly, the fault of the tenants. It also passes the buck and the cost for solving the problem to other departments and takes the pressure off the prospect of enormous costs of physical remedies.

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8. THE FRENCH POLICY FOR THE REHABILITATION OF LARGE HOUSING ESTATES

Michel Bonetti (FR)

Characteristics of public housing

Of the 22 million housing units at present existing in France, over half have been built since the end of the war. Government-subsidized housing, or HLMs (1), represents approximately one-third of post-war construction, or 3 million housing units (18% of all main residences). Accordingly, close 10 million people are lodged by the HLM organizations in large housing estates ("grands ensembles" or "cités") sometimes containing as many as 5,000 housing units. These housing estates, which are small towns in themselves, seldom have adequate utilities and facilities for their size. It should also be mentioned that in France, nearly inhabitant in two owns or is in the process of acquiring ownership of his accommodation, and half of the accommodation units are detached houses.

This means, then, that one-third of tenants benefit from public housing. Three-quarters of those owning or acquiring ownership of their accommodation live in detached houses, while 80% of tenants live in condominiums. This means that 38% of the tenants of condominiums live in 'HLM' housing units.

Although public housing is at present encountering major problems, surveys on household accommodation conditions carried out by the INSEE (2) show that the level of satisfaction among tenants is more or less identical, whether they live in public housing or in other housing units.

The proportion of overcrowded HLM housing units amounts to 20%, which is slightly below the average for rented housing (23.3%). Only 12% of the tenants in the HLMs consider their conditions of accommodations inadequate or highly inadequate, as against 18% of tenants on average.

40% of the tenants of HLMs would like to move, as against 39% of tenants in general, this desire frequently being linked to the desire to dwell in another type of building. 36% of tenants in HLMs express this desire, but the desire is also frequently mentioned by the tenants of other housing units built since war.

The tenants of HLM housing units do not complain more than other categories of tenants about the size of the accommodation units or their poor quality; on the other hand, they complain more than the others about noise (36% as against 29%).

This surveys shows, moreover, that the recent improvement in quality of HLM housing units is noticed, since only 11% of the tenants in HLM units built between 1974 and 1978 complain about the poor quality, as against 24% for units between 1949 and 1974, and 42% for units built prior to 1949.

However, at the same time, the desire to live in another type of building remains very strong, being expressed by 38% of HLM tenants.

The desire to acquire ownership is also increasing, being expressed by 32% of
tenants in recent housing units (HLM or others).
The tenants of recent housing units largely feel that the rent they pay is too high (35% of tenants); this feeling is, moreover, as strong in HLM units as in other sectors.

The rise in HLM rents as a result of the financing reform implemented in 1974 gives the impression to tenants who do not benefit from any "Aide Personnalisée au Logement" (3) that HLM housing units no longer provide satisfactory financial incentives. They feel that the price they have to pay for the improvement in the quality of housing is relatively expensive.

At a deeper level, between 1950 and 1970, access to public housing represented a major step up the social ladder for the working class, since up until 1960, most tenant buildings had no sanitary facilities and were very small.

Since the sixties, however, the standards of comfort developed but the HLM organizations have become widespread, while the HLM housing estates have deteriorated prematurely, for want of financial resources to carry out routine maintenance.

At present, two phenomena are observed. Of those who obtained HLM accommodation between 1950 and 1970, the only tenants remaining there are those who have been unable to acquire a detached house; in other words, only the poorest remain. However, for this population, which suffered extremely difficult post-war housing conditions, public housing meant a marked improvement in their position, and they are still relatively attached to it. As a result, they find it all the harder to tolerate the present deterioration of their housing.

For the new tenants housed during the seventies, public housing no longer represents a form of social ladder-climbing, but signifies, on the contrary, the impossibility of obtaining another type of accommodation. These tenants represent a new generation born since the war, which has not known the hardships of the previous generation and is accordingly far more demanding. It is all the more demanding in that housing supply has improved greatly; the proportion of households considering themselves poorly housed fell from 30% to a mere 13% between 1955 and 1978. This new generation now uses public housing as transit accommodation for a period seldom exceeding four years. The general rise in the rate of turnover of HLM tenants (at present around 20%) covers up the fact that there are in reality two types of population, a relatively stable old population, which has sometimes been there since the building was built, and a highly mobile recent population.

Tenant turnover is in fact even more rapid on recent housing estates. The phenomenon is, moreover, speeded up by the rise in rents in this type of housing. The only tenants remaining are those benefiting from "Aide Personnalisée au Logement", who are usually the poorest, This results, in particular, in increased social and racial segregation and the aggravation of social conflicts.

The deterioration of the old housing produces a similar phenomenon, leading to increased tenant turnover, which in turn increases the deterioration of their accommodation, since tenants invest less in housing which they intend to leave. To this must be added the effects of the economic crisis, which results, of course, in pauperization of those segments of the population living in an already precarious position. However, the most serious problems are due to the deindustrialization of some regions and the decline of some economic sectors such as the iron and steel industry, the textile industry and the car industry. Certain large housing estates were set up to meet the needs of newly established industries, as in the case of the iron and steel industry at Dunkirk and Fos, or the car-industry to the west of Paris (Mantes and Possy). In these areas, 20 to 30% of housing is at present unoccupied, and there are plans to destroy it.
The deterioration of the large housing estates

The buildings on the large housing estates have deteriorated prematurely, since certain buildings which are scarcely 15 years old have to be rehabilitated, when their reimbursement is not yet even completed. In some cases, the cost of the works to be carried out amounts to the cost of a new building. However, on the whole, the main structure is in sound condition and the loadbearing structures are intact. The deterioration affects mainly the finishing works, such as surfacing, door frames, and pipe waterproofing. Progress in sound and thermal insulation standards means that a greater proportion of available resources must be devoted to such work.

Communal areas (stair wells, entry vestibule, outside areas, etc.) have generally deteriorated much more than the accommodation itself.

However, it is above all the energy crisis which has rendered rehabilitation necessary. Since the HLM buildings were designed at a time when energy costs were low, the oil price hike resulted in a major increase in heating costs, which sometimes amounted to as much as the rent (up to 400 or 500 francs a month).

Although emphasis is frequently placed on technical rehabilitation of the buildings and most of the financial resources allocated for rehabilitation are devoted to such work, this is not the main problem. Besides, it has been observed that the deterioration might resume again only a few years after carrying out technical rehabilitation of a building. Deterioration is above all due to the use of ill-adapted management and maintenance methods. The resources devoted to maintenance are inadequate, and the fact that work is not carried out as soon as a problem occurs results in rapid deterioration and leads to a major rise in costs. In certain organizations, the maintenance budgets are identical irrespective of the condition of the estate or the nature of the work required. The tenants' associations feel that rehabilitation merely offsets inadequate maintenance. Here, as elsewhere, the tenants' requests are seldom taken into account.

It is very seldom that the inhabitants are encouraged to take part in maintenance by providing them with equipment or materials.

Building deterioration is in reality greatly influenced by the way in which the buildings are allocated and the way in which the tenants are treated.

In periods of housing shortage, housing allocation was performed as a function of bureaucratic criteria by the various government departments, without taking into account the needs of the applicants. In this way, the applicants ended up in areas far from their job, their family and friends, in flats which they had not selected. At present, young couples who have lived in an HLM housing estate and desire to remain there do not have priority and must enroll on waiting lists; this prevents several generations from succeeding one another in the same place, which would provide them with a spatial attachment.

The HLM organizations generally refuse to allow those tenants who wish to change flats within the same housing estate, even if vacant flats are available.

The administrators seldom consider the dynamics and social composition of the district. They do not encourage grouping by affinities, and they bring together in one area people who have little chance of establishing social relations. Frequently, even, conflicting cultural groups or races are made to live together.

When social composition is taken into account in allocating housing, it is frequently with a view to applying pseudosociological standards. Certain organizations apply quotas for the allocation of accommodation to immigrants, refusing to accept more than 15% of foreigners, on the pretext that beyond this percentage racism becomes rife. Now, we have examined housing estates where up to 30 or 40% of immigrants resided without any major problem, whereas elsewhere there were violent racial conflicts even though the percentage of immigrants was very low.

Nothing is done to promote appropriation of the space by the inhabitants, and
there are frequently regulations prohibiting alterations to the accommodations by the tenants. One organization even carried out a rehabilitation project to destroy the alterations made by the tenants (according to the local joke, the tenants immediately restored their alterations immediately after the project was completed).

In such circumstances, deterioration of HLM housing can be interpreted as the inhabitants' response to the treatment to which they are subjected. Their lack of attention for their environment is a reflection of the organizations' lack of attention towards them, and the administrative indifference towards their requests for repairs.

Intentional deterioration caused by certain tenants, particularly the young, can also be interpreted as a need for communication, or even an attempt at appropriation to the extent that this is their only means of expression. The built-up environment serves as a medium for social relations and relations with those in positions of power in our society. It is no accident that the chief objects of such destruction are instruments of communication (in particular, letterboxes and telephone booths).

At another level, it might be postulated that certain inhabitants, unable to sublimate their destructive impulses in socially valid activities, project them against the environment, which, paradoxically, prevents them from turning their impulses against themselves or against others. For a population threatened in its economic survival and having problems of social integration, this is, as it were, a defence mechanism.

The impossibility of changing this environment means that the environment cannot have any historical dimension; one cannot read in such an environment the successive stages of its history and that of the people who have dwelt there. Its history is identified with its deterioration, gradual destruction and, therefore, death. Now precisely, the function of housing, with its potential perennial existency, is to protect us from death and the anguish inherent in the passing of time. One can easily imagine that this need for protection is all the stronger for people whose economic and social situation is more precarious.

Public housing has also reduced habitation to the single function of accommodation, thereby eliminating many other functions (economic activities, odd jobs, playing spaces, etc.). Everyday activities such as drying the washing or emptying the dustbins are frequently complicated. This situation is all the more hard to bear in that the population living there frequently comes from rural backgrounds, with a large number of children and with no space in which to carry out such activities. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the HLM organizations regard themselves as housing administrators, since this is the only function for which they are allocated resources. Other services are managed by a host of other organizations (social, cultural, educational, health, local bodies, etc.). Although all these organizations are public organizations, each operates according to its own logic and interests, and these organizations seldom collaborate with one another. Their interventions are not adapted to the problems and practices of the population concerned, which as a result feels excluded from the facilities made available to it. For example, while the population in the HLMs is basically working-class, the cultural activities are basically intended for the middle classes. These facilities are frequently closed on the weekend or during school holidays, at precisely those times when the inhabitants might make use of them.
Les Minquettes, Lyon (in 1984)
(Photos Ans Metselaar and Ton Hoenderdos)
Rehabilitation policy

The signs of deterioration of public housing appeared in the early seventies, but the development of rehabilitation projects coincides with the oil crisis. The sudden increase in rates led the HLM organizations to carry out thermal insulation work and adapt the accommodation to changing technical standards. State energy saving policies contributed extensively to this phenomenon. The claims of the tenants' associations were also very much centred on reducing tenants' rates. When thermal insulation work was carried out, the organizations took advantage of this to perform some additional work, especially for sound insulation.

Even now, thermal insulation represents half the cost of certain rehabilitation projects. We may point out in passing that it is also the energy crisis which made it possible to restrict the speed of motor cars, thereby improving road safety, in spite of opposition by representatives of the car industry.

It should not be forgotten that rehabilitation is of considerable economic importance, since it represents at present 50% of the activity of building construction firms (taking into account rehabilitation of old housing).

For certain HLM organizations, rehabilitation is a way of enhancing the value of their estate and introducing major rent increases, even though rents have for some years been increasing at a slower rate than the rate of inflation, due to the exercise of State control.

Although this technical conception of rehabilitation is still prevalent in the building trade, it soon came up against another conception, according to which improvement of the built-up environment was inadequate to solve the problems of the large housing estates, and that at the same time the development of social life should be promoted, especially by having the inhabitants take part in transforming their local districts. This was the origin of the "Habitat et Vie Sociale" (Housing and Social Life) policy in 1975, with the object of analyzing all the problems faced in such districts and working out rehabilitation projects through extensive collaboration with the inhabitants. These projects provided an opportunity for experimenting with various methods of collaboration and participation by the inhabitants in project conception. They illustrated the problems encountered by such an enterprise. Collaboration with the inhabitants showed up the social, political and cultural rifts running through the population and the institutions. Political considerations have frequently paralyzed the development of such projects. The tenants' associations have sometimes claimed a monopoly on tenants' representation. Local-body representatives were often worried by the increasing power obtained by the associations through such projects. The representatives of the social and cultural organizations each endeavoured to obtain additional financial resources, although without developing any new projects and generally refusing to collaborate together, each claiming its specific field of action and its operating autonomy. The administrative organizations were blamed for all the problems that arose, and their representatives were frequently attacked during meetings with the inhabitants. They were ill prepared to face up to such situations. They were ready to listen to requests and suggestions from the inhabitants, although they were not prepared to change their methods and system of organization, still less to allow the inhabitants to take part in decision-making.

In reality, these projects resulted in changes in building rehabilitation projects to allow for certain requests by the inhabitants, and frequently the redevelopment of outside areas and the construction of additional facilities.

The approach to such questions is still dominated by improvement of the built-up environment, with the treatment of social problems remaining secondary, or even being regarded by certain administrators as a means of providing such districts with a new life.

Above all, however, in spite of the intentions of the promoters of such
projects, there has been no real reduction in the gap separating building development from the development of social life, these fields being managed by different institutions and specialists unaware of one another's existence.

The main achievement of these projects lies in experimenting with methods of concerted action and discovering the problems it poses. The projects have shown the large number of institutions on which the dynamics of a district depends, and the need to change their mode of operation and relations if one is to deal with the problems of these districts. The projects have, as it were, changed the nature of interventions in such districts. It is now realized that the inhabitants' problems were in fact due to the way in which the inhabitants were dealt with by the institutions; in other words, the problems are inherent to the relations between the inhabitants and the institutions, and are largely conditioned by the management of such institutions. This method of operation leads to situations which the inhabitants have to face every day, and as a result of which they suffer.

This type of project was virtually halted after 1978, being replaced by the PALULOS procedure by which rehabilitation was limited to its technical aspects and to an amount of 70,000 francs per housing unit. In reality, numerous PALULOS projects suffered resounding failures. The tenants were seldom consulted and frequently opposed the execution of the works or withheld rate payments for several months, and in some cases for several years.

With the election of a new government in May 1981, a new system was set up, the Commission Inter-ministérielle pour le développement social des quartiers (Interministerial Commission for District Social Development), originally presided by Mr. Dubedout, then mayor of Grenoble.

This commission learned from the 'Habitat et Vie Sociale' (HVS) projects and took into account the economic crisis in defining its activities.

In an initial stage, the Commission selected about twenty HLM districts, representing 35,000 families, in which social problems are particularly acute. Instead of accompanying rehabilitation with a programme of social and cultural action, as was the case under the HVS projects, this system, has, as it were, reversed the process, setting as objective the social development of local districts, with rehabilitation being in theory only one aspect of the problem and a means or support for this development.

Operational teams grouping various specialists (town planners, architects and sociologists) have been set up in these districts under the leadership of a project manager. The main task of these teams is to coordinate the activities of the various institutions taking part in innovative projects in these districts, by assigning a preponderant role to municipal authorities, whose role is reinforced by the policy of decentralization instigated by the new government. In this respect, it is significant that the chairman of the Commission is mayor of a large town and not a member of the government. The Commission is placed under the supervision of the Prime Minister and has to coordinate, at the national level, the action of the various ministries involved (town planning, health, social action, education, youth and sport, etc). The Ministry of Town Planning (previously known as the Ministry for Equipment) played a preponderant role in the "Habitat et Vie Sociale" projects, which marginalized the involvement of the other ministries and strengthened the emphasis placed on building rehabilitation. The new system provides a better balance between the various government departments involved.

The Commission has virtually no specific credit allocations, but will use the financial resources available to various ministries.

The government has decided to concentrate the experimental activities of the various government departments on the districts selected by the Commission, to avoid dispersal of activities. Various systems have been set up by the government:

- Local support missions for the social and job integration of young people;
- Permanent office for information collection and guidance;
- Priority education zones.

All these actions are also implemented in the districts concerned. Experiments with respect to new communication technologies have also been tried there (initiation to data processing, telematics, video-communication network).

In the present situation of economic crisis, emphasis is placed on the social and job integration of young people, since this is the major problem on such housing estates, with worsening unemployment, fuelling delinquency and housing deterioration. Up until 1980, the development of social life was based on the promotion of socio-cultural activities, whereas now an endeavour is being made to reconvert social and cultural centres so that they may develop training campaigns and create economic activities.

In this way, rehabilitation may support the social integration of the young. In certain districts, building cooperatives have been set up, hiring unemployed youths, and certain HLM clients have agreed to entrust them with part of the rehabilitation work to be performed, in spite of opposition from the building contractors, who regard this as a new form of competition when they are already in a crisis. These cooperatives are in effect worksite-schools, having in priority pedagogic objectives and aiming at allowing the youths to obtain qualifications and subsequently find work more easily in a conventional firm. The fact of having young people take part in rehabilitation their own district is also likely to alter their relations with their housing environment and facilitate their appropriation of this environment.

Social development of local districts also implies a change in building management and maintenance methods. The allocation of housing accommodation, rent management and maintenance of communal areas are all factors conditioning the social life and evolution of the built-up environment.

For the allocation of housing units, then, an endeavour is made to take into account the wishes of the applicants, the location of their job and transport possibilities. An endeavour is made to rehouse on the spot young couples who have lived on the housing estate and wish to remain there. Concerted work is carried out by those organizations having allocation rights and the social services. Care is taken not to concentrate in the same buildings immigrant workers, large families and families having serious problems of social integration. Negotiations are established between the various parties involved.

As part of a rehabilitation project at Marseilles (Cité du Petit-Séminaire), the architects negotiated with the inhabitants for two years, so as to rehouse them as a function of their affinities, the type of accommodation they desired, the floor they wished to live on, and so on.

An endeavour is also being made to set up economic activities in these districts, in spite of the present economic crisis.

The separation between housing and work results in numerous problems, since relations established in the working environment cannot be extended outside that environment; it is illusory to try and develop a social life based partly on such relations. The absence of any economic activities turns these housing estates into dormitory towns which are deserted during the daytime. An endeavour is being made to set up craftsmen or public services on the ground floor of the buildings, or even to convert certain flats into offices.

What is in fact taking place is an endeavour to reconstitute "normal" economic and social activities in such districts. At the time when these large housing estates were built, it was thought that substantial savings would be made by building dormitory towns reduced to the single function of reproduction of the labour force. In practice, this concept has proved aberrant, even from an economic viewpoint, not to mention the effects on the population concerned. Such estates were built in a period of economic expansion, and it is in times of economic crisis that the cost of such projects began to be paid.
Rehabilitation methodology

By way of conclusion to this brief analysis of the rehabilitation policy implemented in France over the last fifteen years or so, we shall outline the methodological principles which should serve as a guide for rehabilitation projects.

The methodological principles in question are in some respects based on experiments studied by us and our discussions with numerous authors faced with these questions.

In the first place, experience shows that technical rehabilitation, however essential, is in itself useless and costly if it is not based on thorough consideration of the process of deterioration and the dynamics of the districts concerned. Merely a few years after completing such projects, deterioration continues apace, irrespective of the technical quality of the work performed and the financial resources invested, since this deterioration is the reflection, at the building level, of economic, social and institutional processes. If housing management and maintenance methods are not changed, if institutions do not change their method of organization and their relations, and if the tenants' requests are still ignored, the same causes will inevitably keep on producing the same effects.

In spite of this, we do not believe in an implacable social determinism making mock of any attempt to intervene and change the course of affairs. The wide range of situations encountered in such districts shows, on the contrary, the impact of the various policies carried out by the organizations responsible for administering these districts.

Prior to any project, it is necessary to make as refined as possible a diagnostic of the technical problems and other difficulties faced by the inhabitants. One must determine to what extent certain technical defects are related to social practices, since the origin of the problem may be located at another level. For example, it has been observed that the moisture on the walls in certain flats located in tower blocks was not due to faulty ventilation but was caused by the inhabitants' fear of opening the window, which made them giddy. To solve this problem, then, changes had to be made to the windows.

It is essential to take into account the tenants' demands, but such demands are hard to analyze since they may result from the displacement of problems of another kind. The inhabitants frequently demand improvement to the sound insulation. Now, studies carried out by the CSTB show that there is no direct correlation between the quality of sound insulation and user satisfaction. The large number of complaints about noise is chiefly an indicator of social tensions and the inhabitants' isolation. The complaints about noise made by young people or immigrants are the expression of a rejection of these populations, and there is no use improving sound insulation if measures are not taken at the same time to deal with this type of conflict. Care must be taken not to create new problems in meeting certain requests, An HLM organization thought it would satisfy its tenants by cutting down noise from a motorway with the setting up of a noise abatement wall, but the complaints grew worse, since the noise made by the neighbours then became intolerable.

Any change in the internal distribution of housing units may lead to disturbances concerning intra-family relations, and apparently functional changes are likely to compromise social practices to which the populations concerned are highly attached. For example, by eliminating a communicating door, which was apparently little used, between the kitchen and the bathroom, dissatisfaction was caused among the mothers of young children, who could no longer watch their children in the bath from the kitchen.

The practices of the inhabitants and their manners of taking possession of space are highly varied and contradictory, even though the housing units in question are often identical. Certain questionnaire surveys may show an apparent
consensus as to the work to be carried out, whereas the hierarchic classification of the questions raised may vary greatly and requests may be related to contradictory motives. This explains the disappointment of certain building owners whose tenants continue to complain on completion of a rehabilitation project, when it was thought that their requests had been taken into account. It is not enough to know what the tenants want, one must appreciate the multiple underlying meanings of their requests. All this pleads in favour of customized rehabilitation projects with specific work for each housing unit.

The technicians are often astonished that the tenants complain about numerous problems without ever making any concrete proposals and rejecting the proposals made to them, or accepting such proposals without necessarily ceasing to complain. In actual fact, the inhabitants are frequently so deprived that they cannot imagine that their position might change, and in any case they cannot produce proposals alien to their cultural and social universe, which does not necessarily mean that they accept this universe. It is therefore not surprising that their proposals should spontaneously be highly normative.

Besides, since they are not used to people asking for their opinion, and still less taking it into account, it is very hard to get them to take part in project design. The first work to be carried out is to show them that alternative solutions exist and that their point of view matters, although at that stage one must be sure that the institutions will take it into account.

The inhabitants will not participate naturally and spontaneously, but only after long preparatory work supported by the existing social networks. It is not enough to hold several meetings with the representatives of the district associations concerned, to be able to claim that the population is taking part in the project. This preparation requires one or two years' presence in the field to obtain an understanding of local dynamics and issues.

For each project, the most suitable methods of information and concerted activity must be invested, social groups with ideas must be identified, and the most effective relays for informing the population must be found.

The types of work to be carried out must be hierarchically classified, with distinctions being made concerning. Work about which the population must be informed, but for which the designing must be performed by the design office.
- Work implying collective choices and decisions by the inhabitants as a whole.
- Work concerning only certain social or cultural groups, or even a few families.
- Work to be defined with each tenant, concerning the interior arrangement of the housing unit.

The failure of certain projects designed to have the inhabitants take part in rehabilitation is due to the fact that the population has been regarded as a uniform whole liable to take an interest in the overall design of the projects, whereas people have highly varied centres of interest and can only by mobilized for what concerns them directly and concretely. It is therefore necessary to break the project down into several sub-projects adapted to the specific situation of each sub-group, and to look for people who could be interested in it.

By supporting local initiatives and identifying attempts by the inhabitants at self-organization, their development can be promoted by providing technical or financial assistance.

It is often better to make collective premises, equipment or financial aid available to the inhabitants rather than carry out major costly work programmes which do not meet their requirements.

It has also been realized that the conditions in which rehabilitation projects are designed and carried out are at least as important as the nature of the work performed. The workers' activities in the housing estate are looked on as house-breaking, and cause veritable traumatisms. By not informing the inhabitants about the work undertaken or not answering their questions, the project may be regarded negatively. What may seem positive or even necessary to the techni-
clans is not so for the inhabitants, unless the solution in question meets the problems they have to face every day and unless they feel involved in such projects.

A rehabilitation project is an extraordinary opportunity for stimulating thought as to the future of the district, bringing to the surface conflicts and tensions, expressing difficulties and initiating collaboration between the various institutions operating in such districts.

References

(1) HLM: Habitation à loyer modéré (Government-subsidized housing). These buildings were set up with State credits by public corporations (municipal or departmental bureaus), but also by public limited companies.

(2) Villac and Alii: "Household accommodations in 1978". Collections de L'INSEE, M85.

(3) "Aide Personnalisée au Logement" (APL) = Owner-Tailored Housing Aids. The HLM financing reform, by eliminating "l'aide à la pierre" (property subsidy) ownership aids) meant that rents came closer to market prices. This rise is offset by the "APL" only for tenants in the lower income brackets having a large number of children.

Les Minquettes, Lyon (in 1984) entrance
(photos Ans Metselaar and Ton Hoenderdos)
In all weather ........
9. BELGIAN POST-WAR HOUSING IN TROUBLE
An overview

Jean-Francois Mabardi (B)

Probably as elsewhere, problems of post-war public housing in Belgium are difficult to identify with accuracy in such a short study. The nature of the encountered difficulties varies but we can quote however the most important as follows:
- the lack of available information on the subject; this is a serious handicap even if there are some interesting partial studies and if the National Institute of Statistics provides some figures and data on housing. The last in-depth survey about housing was carried out in 1971/72 by the "Institut National du Logement"; (see table 1)
- the natural reluctance of officials or of institutional representatives to volunteer information on failures; on the other hand, there is a normal tendency of the complaining parties to dramatize situations;
- the interaction of the numerous factors involved and their constant evolution. These factors are generally related to
  - the location and relationship of housing to other activities;
  - the design of private and public space;
  - the technical deficiencies;
  - the managerial limits;
  - the contextual effects.
Trouble generally occurs when more than one of the effects mentioned above are combined and develop into a crisis situation.

As a preliminary, it is necessary to give - quite briefly - an idea of the general situation of public housing in Belgium. How can it be characterized, is there any significant evolution in opinions, in figures or in facts?
The first characteristic is given by the survey of 1971/72 when compared with the previous survey of 1961/62. The situation seems at least alarming (Table 9.1.)

A new survey would be most welcome in order to observe the evolution which took place during the period 1972-1982. Such a survey could also show whether the residential buildings built during this last decade have improved the situation. In fact, the increase of the total number of dwellings between 1962 and 1972, as shown on table 1, did not compensate the ageing of the housing patrimony. Till recently maintenance and rehabilitation were not a major target of the housing policy in Belgium. Such a policy can explain the important number of obsolete housing units. Fortunately, these last few years rehabilitation (heavy or light) is gaining the favour of decision makers and could reverse the process even if, - as a Belgian official (1) observed - "more than one reform is needed to expect a real revalorization of the housing stock in Belgium".
Table 9.1.: Quality of dwellings, Belgium, 1961/62 and 1971/72

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1961-62 1000 units</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1971-72 1000 units</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dwellings in good condition</td>
<td>1,681</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1,483</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionally inadapted</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insanitary Improvable</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not improvable</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,165</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3,376</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Revue Habitat, No. 85

Belgians have the reputation to be anxious to build or to buy their home. As the saying goes: "Le Belge a une brique dans le ventre", which means that most Belgians have a brick in their belly! Is it a disease, an atavism or a quality? On that point opinions diverge according to the ideological background. This characteristic has provoked long and sometimes harsh discussions on how to orient housing policy in Belgium. Whatever one may think about the socio-economical benefits of encouraging private property in the housing sector in Belgium, the observed proportion of owners living in their own dwelling is quite high when compared to other EEC countries, such as France, the Federal Republic of Germany or the Netherlands. In 1970, the figures are quite explicit: Belgium 55%, France 45%, the Federal Republic of Germany 36%, the Netherlands 35%. However, the proportion has not always been as high as 55%, as it was in 1970. For example, in 1947 38.9% of the Belgian population were owners of their home. Since then the percentage has steadily increased and has even reached 61% in 1977 (2).

Which are the aims of the housing policy in Belgium? These are mainly:
- to promote ownership by lending money to build or to buy ready-built dwellings; diminishing the interest rate or giving subsidies are stimulating elements which are under the control of state recognised credit institutions and sometimes come directly from the housing ministry. The "Fonds du Logement" was created for that purpose in 1929. Its creation follows a long series of measures such as the act of August 3rd, 1889 organizing the system of loans at a low interest rate. At present other institutions exist and contribute effectively to this first and main objective of housing policy. From 1951 to 1977 the proportion of dwellings subsidized by this first system represent from 23% to 40% of the total residential buildings.
- to promote the production of low-cost housing by public institutions. This was the main reason for the creation of the "Société Nationale du Logement", in 1919 and later on - in 1935 - of the "Société Nationale Terrienne", The objective of this last institution is to encourage low-cost housing in rural areas.
### Table 9.2: Production of dwellings, Belgium, 1951-1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dwellings built by Société Nationale du Logement</th>
<th>Dwellings built by Société Nationale Terrienne</th>
<th>Dwellings built with a premium</th>
<th>Total of subsidized dwellings</th>
<th>Total of residential buildings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>units per year %</td>
<td>units per year %</td>
<td>units per year %</td>
<td>units per year %</td>
<td>units per year %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951/</td>
<td>6,215 15</td>
<td>904 2</td>
<td>16,364 40</td>
<td>23,483 57</td>
<td>60,552 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>6,559 13</td>
<td>953 2</td>
<td>17,774 36</td>
<td>25,286 51</td>
<td>69,408 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961/</td>
<td>7,834 16</td>
<td>1,595 3</td>
<td>13,927 30</td>
<td>25,406 49</td>
<td>50,233 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>10,989 18</td>
<td>2,132 4</td>
<td>19,527 33</td>
<td>32,648 55</td>
<td>59,613 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971/</td>
<td>11,492 15</td>
<td>2,277 3</td>
<td>17,250 23</td>
<td>31,019 41</td>
<td>75,029 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The combination of these two different ways of subsidizing affected more than half of the dwellings built in Belgium from 1951 till 1975. The situation is quite different in the period 1976-1977. This is due more to a surprising increase of the private investment than to a decrease of the granted subsidies.

From 1951 to 1977, the proportion of subsidized dwellings built by public institutions fluctuated between 15% and 22% of the total dwelling stock built in one year; the increase was real up to 1978 when the quantity reached more or less 17,000 units. In 1979 however a very tangible change occurs. We notice a considerable decrease in construction which falls from 17,000 units in 1979 to less than 5,000 in 1983.

Most of the examples quoted in this paper are chosen from the stock of dwellings of the Société Nationale du Logement. Therefore it seems necessary to provide more information about this particular institution.

The Société Nationale du Logement is a public service in charge of the construction of low-cost housing, to be rented or sold to people answering to certain income criteria. The Société centralizes the financial, technical and architectural control and advice of 284 decentralized and autonomous bodies, covering 507 out of the 589 existing "communes". These recognized local companies are responsible for the management of the project, for the construction, the renting and the maintenance of the dwellings under their jurisdiction. This is done with finance they receive from the central Société Nationale, these funds however have to be repaid. They are organized in cooperatives or under another juridical status. They cover a part of territory and have a stock of dwellings varying from 75 units for the smaller ones to about 6,800 units for the largest.
Table 9.3.: Production of dwellings, Belgium, 1978-1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of dwellings built by S.N.L.</th>
<th>Number of dwellings built by S.N.T.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>12,750</td>
<td>4,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>10,246</td>
<td>3,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>4,979</td>
<td>2,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>...?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 9.4.: Local companies and housing stock in every province, Belgium

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>number of local companies</th>
<th>number of houses</th>
<th>number of apartments</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antwerpen</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26,307</td>
<td>23,472</td>
<td>49,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brabant</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>31,726</td>
<td>39,895</td>
<td>71,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West-Vlaanderen</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39,415</td>
<td>4,802</td>
<td>44,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oost-Vlaanderen</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26,851</td>
<td>12,211</td>
<td>39,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hainaut</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>46,263</td>
<td>15,754</td>
<td>62,017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liège</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23,731</td>
<td>21,247</td>
<td>44,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limburg</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16,932</td>
<td>3,395</td>
<td>20,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3,138</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>3,603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namur</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3,871</td>
<td>3,822</td>
<td>7,693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>284</strong></td>
<td><strong>218,206</strong></td>
<td><strong>125,091</strong></td>
<td><strong>343,297</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After this brief description of the main characteristics of the institutions responsible for public housing in Belgium, it is time to have a closer look at the users of the particular dwellings. Who are they? Who can afford this kind of housing? The study of Martine Durez-Denai (3) partly answers these questions. The housing policy normally is concerned with the low-income category of the population. Durez analyses the socio-economic situation of the beneficiaries of public housing. The study compares the representation of high-income, middle class and low-income on national level with the representation of these same categories amongst the population of public housing. This comparison shows that in public housing indeed the higher incomes and the low-incomes are poorly represented whereas the middle class reaches a very high proportion.

The access to a subsidized dwelling can not be obtained by any individual or family whose income exceeds a certain amount. On the other hand, tenants rarely are requested to leave their subsidized house, or apartment, when their income has reached the imposed maximum amount. A common example can easily illustrate this situation: a medical student, for instance, can without any difficulty have access to public housing for his income during his studies is low and he satisfies the imposed criteria. After a certain number of years he becomes a practician disposing of a very comfortable or even a very high
income. He will, nevertheless not be forced to leave his dwelling.

In 1974, the income of 12.2% of the families occupying public housing was higher than the authorized amount. This percentage climbed to 33% in 1976. Data for the following years are not yet available, but we can readily assume that the proportion is even higher today.

The new rental regulations 1979 and 1980 stipulate: "Rental regulations aim to establish a fair distribution among the tenants of the building charges, taking into account their income and the family composition, but also assuring the balance of the institutions' "financial situation".

Until 1979, an eventual raise of rent never exceeded 60% of the basic rental charges. Today this limit has been cancelled. The re-adjustment of the rental charges has had a double effect:
- during the period of preparation, which was quite long, tenants as well as those responsible for the management suffered from the climate of uncertainty and uneasiness;
- cards were completely redistributed. Basic rental charges where, in general, increased at the rate of + 35 to 55%.

In most cases the rise of rents coincided with the increase of other charges such as maintenance, heating, etc.... Thus dwellings became inaccessible to some families whose income became insufficient, but also the dwellings became financially less attractive to others. A new balance should be established. Meanwhile, the institutions who already find it very difficult to balance their budget will have even more difficulty to do so. Low-income families are confronted with insuperable difficulties. It is true also that those disposing of higher incomes are inclined to leave their subsidized housing of their own free will.

To summarize, we can state that we are witnessing one of the most acute crisis in public housing. The conjunction of factors external to public housing and internal difficulties create the conditions requisite to deflect this particular type of housing from its main goal. This, in my personal opinion, is the main reason why post-war public housing is "in trouble" at present.

In the first group of factors (external to public housing) we can classify:
- the increase of unemployment;
- the increase of the cost of living which is not compensated by an increased income;
- the increase of energy prices (impact on transportation and heating);
- the ageing of the population.

In the second group: internal difficulties include:
- the ageing of the housing stock which derives from the lack of maintenance combined with a considerable decrease of new constructions;
- the increase of charges (heating, maintenance...);
- the increase of the basic rental charge.

This evaluation of the existing situation in public housing is being confirmed by a survey of 1980 which records and analyses the tenant committees in a sample of 87 recognized companies (4). In a very short lapse of time 27 tenant committees have been created to study the following problems (in order of frequency):
1. the rent (7x) and the rehabilitation up of the housing estate;
2. the charges (4x);
3. the heating (3x) and the rental deposit (3x);
4. the repairs (2x) and the education equipment

We may conclude this first part of our study by saying that the access to decent housing is the central problem.

In the present organization of production and management of public housing (which we could undoubtedly imagine in a different form) several factors contribute to exacerbate the problems. The second part will give an overview of these problems. They have been classified as follows:
- location deficiencies,
- design deficiencies,
- technical deficiencies.
- managerial deficiencies.

In an important contribution to the understanding of inhabitants' behaviour in their housing estate, R. Schoonbrodt (5) analyses their reactions to different spatial characteristics and mainly to the spatial discontinuity of the estate. Most of the housing estates ("cités") are designed (or were designed) as entities of their own. They have an architectural unity which can easily be identified. They are generally separated from the continuous built area. The project built around the 50s and surrounded by fields is a perfect illustration of the peripheral location (Fig. 9.1.). "Avant-garde" at that time, it proposed an urbanization of the whole area which is not yet completed 34 years later.

One of the conclusions of this brilliant study, carried out between 1976 and 1978, is that the discontinuity, clearly identified by the great majority of the inhabitants, is regarded as positive (identification, easier control of space, the sense of belonging). This view of things remains positive till the moment distances become a handicap to join other activities, services or equipments.

The change of the positive appraisal is not due to an increase of the distance which remains stable in time but is the consequence of the change of the image of town versus countryside, combined with the increase of transportation cost (public and private). Furthermore, due to restrictions in public transportation, some connections have been suppressed and others offer less frequent passage.

When rental and transportation costs become too high with respect to income, tenants have only one solution: to move. In the present circumstances we can hardly imagine a local reinforcement of equipments and service; moreover we must not forget that in Belgium these housing estates are rarely of large dimensions.

Architectural design is at the origin of numerous feelings of dissatisfaction. It acts on two levels; private space (the family and the individual retreat) is one, collective or public space is the other. At the first level, if there are still some difficulties to furnish some dwellings; if dangerous windows, staircases or balconies still provoke many accidents, these problems are not the most frequent ones. The general lack of space due to the imposed standards and budgets is far more general. The demand for more room, for more square meters is constant and the response has been the renewal of some buildings by combining 3 to 4 apartments into 2 new ones. Another proposal was to demolish the rear facade of an apartment block and to rebuild it with deep bow-windows recycling a three bed-room apartment into a two bed-room apartment.

What is more effective is the design of collective space as staircases, corridors, collective parkings, playgrounds, open space. The typical model of the 'cité radieuse' setting the inhabited storeys on piles, was often repeated with the idea of liberating space for playgrounds, promenades and so on.

Very soon after the construction it appeared that the disposition of the building caused a terrible draft so that it became almost impossible to use the surroundings (Fig. 9.2.). This kind of problem had quite an influence on the life of the group until measures to correct the effect were proposed and taken. In this specific case, the space under the building was transformed into individual garage boxes. The drafty space being closed, the appropriation of the surroundings became possible (Fig. 9.3.).
Fig. 9.1.: Urbanisation project not completed 34 years later
At this point we could briefly pay some attention to the phenomenon of violence and of vandalism. Here I would like to mention the article of Marc Kayaert (6), concerning the progress of violence and vandalism and commenting, in a general way, on the different opinions on the subject. He does not consider the urban environment and housing to be a causal factor, but a social reality which favours delinquency in so far as this reality is associated with certain characteristics of the personality and other social factors. The "dark number" reminds us to beware of stereotypes and to encourage more serious studies which are far more enlightening. This opinion has been confirmed by a study report of Francis Haumont (7). They both indicate closed settlements and settlements of high density to be favourable to vandalism. It is true that, according to our interviews, this is the case in the high density housing schemes of Liège and Antwerpen.
Fig. 9.4.: Garages organised under visual control

Most common is the reaction to underground collective parkings. They are regularly the scene of vandalism and are quickly divided in separate and closed individual garages, when there is enough room to do so. The latest trend is the covered but open parking lots between the apartment blocks, allowing visual control. Thus complaints are considerably reduced even when late arrivals during the night happen to wake up some of the tenants (Fig. 9.4.).

Here we notice a general trend, perhaps to compete with vandalism and delinquency: to redistribute the collective space in the form of private space. This redistribution also permits to meet exaggerated maintenance costs. This is the case for the very generous project shown on figure 9.5. This project has no
vandalism problem but it has, on the contrary, maintenance problems representing considerable supplementary charges for the community. An alternative could be a take-over of this maintenance by the community members (collective work, rotation-roll,.....) but this undoubtedly is wishful thinking.

Fig. 9.5.: Generous public spaces leading to unaffordable maintenance costs

More spectacular of course are the technical shortcomings. When a whole facade has to be replaced or when all the external parts of the walls of 150 houses are to be taken down and rebuilt, the immediate impact is not necessarily negative?! In fact, such a problem, in more than one case, created solidarity among the inhabitants who didn't know till then who their neighbours were. The situation created a new - sometimes very intense - social life, leaving most of the time a permanent imprint on the life of the group.

However, together with this immediate and quite positive effect, technical deficiencies also have an important delayed effect: the cost. Sometimes payment is made by the insurance company or by a special subsidy so that the incident, after some time, can be reduced to a bad memory. Unfortunately, in most cases costs are paid through a loan which increases the rental charges, reinforcing the principal problem: the access to public housing. The situation can become dramatic if, after a couple of years, these repairs have to be repeated due to the lack of maintenance or, even worse, due to a deeper hidden defect.
Replacement of the whole facade

Insufficient isolation seems to be nowadays a quite general disease among an important number of buildings dating from after World War II. This lack of insulation is the cause of high heating costs. The normal reaction to high energy prices has been to reduce not only the heating but also the ventilation, reinforcing the condensation phenomenon. The condensation, at its turn, affects the construction elements (lintels without insulation, contact through concrete slabs, breastwalls without insulation, flat roofs, etc....). The humidity and the resulting mustiness are the cause of surface damage (wall coverage, floors, plinths) and even more profound damage to roofs, concrete elements, anchorage systems.

I have to admit that this overview is quite discouraging and, still, we have not reached the bottom of things.

However, it would be interesting to terminate this paper by observing the problems of maintenance and management which again lead us back to the central problem.

During the visits and interviews for the preparation of this paper, I noticed that the maintenance of the public housing stock has become a heavy burden to the recognized agencies. These agencies can not any longer face the enormous costs. The medium term results of the lack of maintenance are major repair (even more costly) or else a declaration of obsolescence. Some agencies, however, managed to take up the charges, thus preserving the stock which is constantly renovated. Most of the agencies have this last reasonable attitude. Unfortunately certain more important agencies, responsible for a large building stock have been tempted to create their own maintenance service. Very soon these services function like inefficient bureaucracies, adding even more to the rental charges of the dwellings.

To conclude, let me insist on the major features of this rapid overview:

1. The central problem is, and will remain, the accessibility of decent dwellings to low-income groups, presenting a political and a financial aspect. The impact of the new rental regulations applied since July 1980 and which I think
are not favourable to the underprivileged, is at present evaluated (8) (9).

2. Better relations between decision makers and inhabitants seem to be essential, for such relations would in many cases permit the landlord to prevent instead of to cure.

3. Last, but not least, it is imperative that the art of building which seems to have gone out of our practices and our schools, should gain selfconfidence so as to contradict Dante who asserted that what is called "modern" can not last.

I wish to express my gratitude to
Mr. Nicaise, Mr. Vandervelde and Mr. Desombere at the Société Nationale du Logement,
Mr. Verlinden and Mr. van Empten at the Maatschappij Heuvelhof,
Mrs. Keynens from the City of Liège,
the Director of Volkshaard, Mr. Leybaert,
for their kindness and precious help.

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Niels L. Prak (NL)

The Dutch have the same problems as the others: vandalism, high vacancy rates in areas of housing shortage, and rapid turnover. It is still not clear how much of this can be laid at the door of architects and planners; but let us admit that the highly individualistic production-methods of housing are bound to lead to a number of failures. Lack of standardization precludes the ironing-out of defects due to design, in contrast to the automobile industry.

Some of the projects were considered to be so hopeless that they were demolished. We have collected some data on these demolished houses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>housing form</th>
<th>number demolished</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>single family (terraced)</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>50,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multistorey walkup</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>38,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high-rise (with elevator)</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>9,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td><strong>966</strong></td>
<td><strong>100,0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One thousand dwellings out of a total of three-and-a-half-million post-war units may still be considered an acceptable proportion. The number of dwellings in the serious decline is much larger though. And the decisions to demolish were taken in the sixties; today, with severely restricted budgets and cuts in subsidies the usual decision is to alter and rehabilitate, rather than to take down. Contrary to expectations, half of the demolitions concern low-rise housing.

The reasons given for demolition of post-war dwellings are instructive too:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>reason to demolish</th>
<th>number</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>functional defects</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>54,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foundations</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>24,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other technical defects</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>18,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>planning defects</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td><strong>966</strong></td>
<td><strong>100,0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
About half of the demolitions are due to purely technical reasons, the other half to functional and social problems. The two categories will turn up again below.

Some examples:

1) **Hanzewijk, Kampen**, built in 1953-1958, on sand, below which occurred a layer of compressible peat sub-soil. On the advice of the Delft Laboratory for soil-mechanics, which tested the soil-conditions, the originally planned pile-foundations were replaced by cheaper conventional footings. Settling started in 1962, seemed to have stopped in the seventies, but started again in 1982. Partial demolition of some blocks, and putting piles below a number of others (an extremely costly operation) are now being considered.

2) **Palenstein, Zoetermeer** built in 1969-1970. Prefabricated concrete balconies were hardened by steam, to speed up production. The resulting concrete was porous, absorbed more rain than normal, and started to flake, through frost and rusting reinforcement. Each flat has two balconies: one for the living-room, one for access. Both had to be replaced.

These are two examples showing technical defects. The others are from the more interesting and alarming category with functional and/or social problems.
3) **Linnaeusstraat, Leeuwarden**, built in 1947-1955. A type called "three-on-two" in this country: three duplex apartments built over two single-storey flats on the ground floor. In this design it cannot be avoided that a ground-floor bedroom is underneath a first-floor livingroom, with all the concomitant noise. Soundproofing was poor, the apartments were relatively small in size, which made them unpopular in the post-war housing market. The municipal authorities used many of the vacant dwellings for families coming from slum-clearance projects. The differences in life-style between these new tenants and the original inhabitants caused an exodus among the latter. Maintenance was poor, vandalism increased and the units deteriorated rapidly. They were demolished in 1977. These 414 dwellings are by far the largest Dutch demolished housing project and have skewed the previously given statistics on demolition considerably.

![Linnaeusstraat, Leeuwarden, demolished in 1977](photo: Leeuwarder Courant)

4) **Grevelingenstraat, Den Helder**, built in 1958. Four storey walk-ups with gallery-access of modest quality, at a low rent. A number of the inhabitants show antisocial behaviour, ranging from littering and damage to aggression and theft. The housing corporation wants to rehabilitate the project; part of this operation is replacing the access-galleries by vertical stairs, so 8 instead of 28 flats have a common means of egress. The corporation believes that the anonymity of the gallery-access is partly responsible for the indifference of some of the tenants towards the shared semi-public areas.

5) **Peperklip, Rotterdam**, built in 1981, on an isolated site at the edge of Rotterdam harbour. This isolation, and the complete lack of facilities for teenagers, is seen as one of the three main problems. Teenage groups from the inhabitants damage, provoke and sometimes terrorize the project. Second, a large proportion
of the approximately 400 dwellings was allocated to recent immigrants from the Caribbean; social integration between these (often coloured) tenants and others did not occur, and the different life-styles often clashed. Third, the design is criticized, because the three semi-circular high-rise 'towers' at the end contain duplexes (therefore large numbers of children) and the four-storey walkups have three- and four room apartments. The noise-level inside the interior courts due to the hard reflective surfaces and the semi-circular shape, is described as un­bearable. A rehabilitation scheme envisages subdividing these large dwellings into small units, and conversely, joining some of the smaller apartments elsewhere to larger units, to redistribute the tenants more in accordance with the overall layout of scheme.

Peperclip, Rotterdam

6) Schottenstraat, Middelburg, built in 1970-1972. High-rises with internal corridors, difficult-to-let in a housing market dominated by terraced units. Efforts to find tenants resulted in an overpopulation with families from minority-groups. Lowered social control, vandalism, prostitution and drugs led to a flight of the higher-income tenants. The internal corridors became dangerous. The housing corporation is going to take 7 upper floors of these prefabricated flats apart and re-erect them in another part of Middelburg. The internal corridors will be replaced by external galleries.
7) Bijlmermeer, Amsterdam, built between 1966 and 1973, a concentration of 10-storey high-rises in a satellite-town of 110,000 inhabitants. Two of the many reasons for the high-rises were the concentration of inhabitants around subway-stations and prefabrication.
High-rise in the Bijlmermeer

"Built-in street" in the Bijlmermeer - known as walking in the dry -
The high-rises were designed for middle-class inhabitants of Amsterdam, who were tired of the overcrowding, the dirt and the lack of trees and lawns in the inner city, and would prefer to move to a sort of high-rise garden-city. The flats were consequently spacious and luxurious, with central heating and central hot-water supply. But the middle-class inhabitants showed little interest, and a considerable number of flats was 'difficult-to-let'. They were filled, after some time, with ethnic minorities of low income, in particular with black immigrants from Surinam. The area now houses people from 40 different nationalities. The clash between the different life-styles is one reason why many people want to move. The turnover is about 25% each year; in October 1983 they had a vacancy-rate of 2,200 or 17% on 13,000 high-rise flats. Complaints about the estate are the dirt, the litter, the vandalism, and, above all, the unsafety of the public areas. The planners wanted to create an environment free from the dangers of automobile traffic; they succeeded in producing an ideal operating ground for muggers.

Unsafe was compounded when the Amsterdam police clamped down on the drug-traffic in the inner city. Junks and dealers immediately fled to the Bijlmermeer, partly because many of them had friends and relatives among the Bijlmermeer tenants. Finally, the Amsterdam municipality started to interest itself in other districts and other problems in the middle of the seventies; maintenance and the extension of facilities suffered accordingly.

8) Hoptille, Amsterdam, built in 1982 as a correction on the Bijlmermeer; 5 floors with internal corridors. The housing was allocated to people of quite different backgrounds, bachelors in their twenties, ex-prisoners and "normal" families. Social control was non-existent, vacant flats were burglarized and the installation work ripped out, the internal corridors became unsafe, dirty and vandalized. The present vacancy-rate of 40% is double that of the adjacent Bijlmer. It is intended to subdivide the corridor and replace it by staircase-access.

The common features of these eight cases are obvious: clashes in lifestyles, increased vacancy-rates, growing vandalism and rapid deterioration of the project. These are also shared by the housing in the USA, the UK, France, Sweden, Denmark and Belgium, described in other chapters of this book. A first question that has to be asked is whether the commonalities are not in the eye of the beholder? Not all vandalism can be ascribed to a single cause (Ward, 1973), a high turn-over in a project may occur for a variety of reasons (Rossi, 1955); here, too, dissimilar root-causes may hide behind an apparently uniform process.

We have to confess we do not know. We proceed in the Netherlands on the assumption that the similarities between cases are too numerous to be fortuitous. And that the various suggestions for an explanation (Bradbury, Downs and Small, 1982) all have a certain credibility. After comparing Dutch and foreign cases, we have constructed a multi-causal model (Prak and Priemus, 1984, see p...) which hopefully takes into account the main relevant variables. This model will be used in collecting data about Dutch projects in trouble. But even with the best of theories, it will be hard to find out what is really going on. The various parties involved: tenants, landlord, municipal and central government, are bound to accuse each other, and quite different views arise depending on who tells the tale. Housing is a politically sensitive area and no one can be reasonably asked to tell the whole truth if his own future may be jeopardized. And though each factor contributing to the decline may demand its own specific remedy, not all are feasible or even possible.

Most landlords of subsidized housing, being public agencies, are constrained in their choice of options. The mechanisms of subsidizing, as well as their own history and experience, make them prefer a technical solution, such as rehabiliti-
tation or the replacement of access galleries by external stairs. The law and their own bye-laws forbid them to discriminate against particular tenants and to evict ring-leaders or ethnic groups. A complete rehabilitation provides an excuse to uproot all tenants, and allows a reshuffling of the cards. If such an operation succeeds in giving the project a new lease on life, it is probably not due to the visible efforts in wood, paint and concrete, but to the invisibly altered social composition of the group of tenants.

This brings us to a moral question. Public housing is for the less privileged. In the last century, it was only the 'nobility' of the working class which was allowed to rent a dwelling in the model settlements; most workers had to stay in the slums. The twentieth century has seen a great increase in public housing and a correspondingly growing number of tenants. But there remains a group at the bottom rungs of the social ladder: sometimes coming from a slum area, sometimes from a Mediterranean country or from our former colonies. They are the people whose lifestyle is not accepted by their neighbours. It is my impression that they are nudged out in the tenant-managed housing projects of Robert Rigby or in Boston. In the Netherlands, they are a problem too; some housing managers have proposed to concentrate them in blocks of their own, others want to disperse them, so that their isolation prevents them to become obnoxious.

Both solutions smack of containment and repression. Does public housing live up to its ideals if it turns a deaf ear to the needs of this residual group?

References


Rossi, P.H., 1955, Why Families Move; a Study in the Social Psychology of Urban Residential Mobility, Glencoe, Ill (Free Press).

You know, I still find it difficult to think of it as our home.
Reception in the Town Hall of Delft
In order to ascertain the reasons for post-war public housing difficulties in the United States one must examine the historical and philosophical bases of public policy - in particular the significant role played by reformers in formulating national policy. To a considerable extent American legislation was drafted by Anglophile 'housers' whose theories were predicated upon British and European experience. The reformers' attention was concentrated upon national policies in Britain and, in particular, on London; local implementation problems and strategies were ignored. Constrained by their preconceived notions and narrow range of experience, the reformers perceived only what they were predisposed to see.

Because federal programmes exercise such pervasive control over numerous aspects of American society it is important to analyse the way in which national policy was created as well as its consequences on such areas as postwar public housing. But, in the past, inquiry into the nature of reform and public housing was generally confined to the American context. There is a serious limitation in this approach, in that it tends to oversimplify the phenomenon by ignoring a most significant strand in American reform - the emulation of Britain which coloured the nature of the debate, determined the type of solutions proposed, and affected the probability of the public housers achieving success in the legislative arena.

Although not fully appreciated in the past, a direct continuity can be discerned between the work of reformers in the early twentieth century and the 'programme' developed by the Roosevelt administration in the mid-thirties. Moreover, the legislation proposed by 'housers' during the New Deal prefigured the pattern of postwar public housing.

On the eve of the Great Depression the status of housing reform in America was uncertain at best, lagging well behind Britain and several European countries both in terms of an awareness of the magnitude of housing problems and an acceptance of collective solutions. Reformers in the United States were idealistic Anglophiles, politically naive and ineffective in their sporadic dealings with government officials and legislators. Business lobbyists exercised far greater influence over government policy. Nevertheless, the 'public housers' assumed a major role in drafting national housing legislation during the thirties - a dramatic transformation resulting from several factors: the impetus for change provided by the Depression, the forging of links between reformers and labour unions, and eventually the ascendency of moderates in the public housing pressure groups who reached agreement with moderate elements in Congress and in the economic lobbies, resulting in laws with a decided pro-business, economic
thrust.

In the early thirties, the housers formed the National Public Housing Conference (NPHC), with the goal of promoting 'good housing through governmental loans and public construction accessible to those people who cannot be adequately housed at present at rents they can afford to pay', Modelled after the National Housing and Town Planning Conference in Britain, its principal activities were propagandizing and lobbying.

The other major housing pressure groups formed in the early thirties were the Labor Housing Conference (LHC) and the National Association of Housing Officials (NAHO). The LHC founders confronted a most difficult problem: after reviewing European programmes they had concluded that labour support was essential, particularly in dealing with Congress and attempting to counterbalance the lobbying strength of business associations. Yet union leaders, particularly in the building trades, were generally conservative and, while favouring home ownership for their members, were not disposed to advocate government aid. Moreover, they would not support programmes simply because they had proven successful in Europe. If anything, this caused grave misgivings.

In the end, however, by resorting to economic persuasion, Catherine Bauer and other LHC members were able to convince union leaders and the rank and file that government aid for housing was essential. Among the inducements were promises of labour representation on local housing authorities and payment of union wage rates for public housing construction. The most telling argument, though, was that such projects would create jobs, thus alleviating the crippling unemployment rate - over 50% - which plagued the building trades. NAHO was formed in November 1933; while the NPHC was heavily endowed with New York liberals and the LHC with Pennsylvania union people, NAHO was somewhat more conservative and mid-western in its orientation. It was created not as a lobby or pressure group per se, but ostensibly as a service organisation to assist government officials in developing programmes for housing and slum clearance. Nevertheless, it was in some respects the most effective housing organisation in the political sphere during the New Deal era. NAHO's political acumen and adroitness were evident in its formation of the Housing Legislation Information Office in 1934 and, later the same year, in its creation of the International Housing Commission. Led by Sir Raymond Unwin, Ernst Kahn of Frankfurt, Alice Samuel of Liverpool, and coordinated by Ernest Bohn, President of NAHO, this conference drafted 'A Housing Program for the United States', which served as the basis for subsequent federal legislation. It is noteworthy, however, that the only major omission in the draft (which they presented to President Roosevelt) was the failure to consider the political and legislative strategies necessary to implement such a programme.

The significance of these events was that the shape of the legislation enacted in 1937 and 1949, and the resulting housing programme, were determined as much by pressure groups - known as the 'Invisible Congress' - as by the Federal government. The public housers, though, were consistently outmanoeuvred during this process and, in the end, co-opted by economic interests and their lobbyists. Foreign observers have often been puzzled by the fact that several years of congressional debate were necessary before the Housing Act of 1937 was passed and later, why housing legislation was defeated for four successive years until finally being enacted as the Housing Act of 1949. A great deal of the housing legislation which was initially scuttled - but eventually enacted - can be explained in terms of the interplay among these pressure groups and their legislative manoeuvring behind the scenes in Washington.

American issues and motivations are usually economic. Even congressional debate is frequently cast in economic rather than social terms. The most powerful lobbies have traditionally been those with strong financial backing. The effectiveness of pressure groups varies widely and is dependent upon a host of
variables: their degree of political awareness; the nature of their relationships with legislators and administration officials; the lobbying, parliamentary and promotional tactics employed; the amount of media support which can be generated; the extent to which they can form effective coalitions and their ability to assist congressmen or administrators with research, drafting and other important tasks.

In several of these areas the housers were deficient, and would have had little impact were it not for the fact that they eventually aligned themselves with labour unions.

In opposition to the 'public interest' housing groups was arrayed a formidable bloc of established, smoothly functioning business associations, represented in Washington by a small army of prominent, well-connected lobbyists. Among the leading organisations were realtors, bankers, builders and materials suppliers. These groups were in general agreement that the proposed state intervention represented an unwarranted intrusion into what was, in their view, a purely private activity. This remained their position throughout the many long years of debate over the public housing issue.

Not only was there well-organised opposition from business and real estate lobbies, but proposed national housing bills encountered sabotage from economically-orientated federal agencies. Moreover, the President failed to get behind the measure. Roosevelt was torn between loyalty to his business friends, and obligations to his wife and her colleagues from the liberal pro-housing contingent. The President's background was basically rural, and he felt that all Americans should have the opportunity of home ownership; accordingly, he was most uncomfortable with ideas, emanating from Europe, of government building high density multi-family units for the poor.

In the midst of this political battle the housers displayed an embarrassing degree of political ineptitude and naivete. To bolster their 1937 congressional campaign the NPHC brought to America Captain Richard Reiss of England, who toured the country, advocating legislation modelled after Britain. Unfortunately, he was manipulated by Treasury officials and other opponents of public housing and his testimony served only to discredit the cause. The LHC fared little better. In selecting Congressman Ellenbogen to sponsor their housing bill they failed to appreciate the impotence of a legislator who was not a naturalised citizen, could not vote in Congress, and thus lacked political clout.

After considerable debate centering on the economic aspects of the bill, the Housing Act of 1937 was finally passed. This represented the first time the United States had developed a permanent national housing policy. It was initiated almost exclusively by housing reformers and politicians from eastern and midwestern cities, but the resulting legislation was substantially modified by real estate interest and their congressional representatives. Its thrust, as a result, was almost entirely economic.

America retreated from public housing as a national goal during World War II. Government directed its efforts towards the war and the related problems of defence and veterans housing. Mobilisation of the nation's factories induced massive migrations of 'Okies' and blacks from rural areas to urban centres in the North and West. As the cities became more crowded with the new arrivals, blacks were forced into ghettos. The white flight to the suburbs, widespread segregation, and the use of racial covenants led to the emergence of serious racial problems in the housing field. Yet this explosive situation was largely ignored by both government officials and reformers. Generally quiescent during this period, many housers retired or joined other causes, while the remaining housing groups turned 'centrist' - even to the point of encouraging builders and developers to join the fold. Both NPHC and NAHO changed their names; the former dropped the word "Public" while the latter added 'Redevelopment' to its title.
In the postwar years the federal and local governments preferred to focus attention upon middle class and veterans' programmes, yielding once again to the strident alarums of economic interests opposed to public housing. The Congressional Record reported that, though no public housing programme was enacted in the early postwar period, more than 9,500 pages of testimony had been recorded by congressional committees on housing from 1944-1948. When national legislation was finally passed in 1949 it was largely because FHA programmes required extension. The public housing provisions in the Act had been substantially emasculated prior to enactment and the bill emphasised the pro-business economic programmes of urban renewal. The postwar years, despite much rhetoric devoted to housing the poor, were characterised by a concentration on middle income programmes to the exclusion of public housing. Most administration officials and congressional leaders lacked any firm conviction about the need for public housing. This ambiguity - on the part of the President, Congress, the states and the cities - was demonstrably evident in the budgets of the early fifties: whereas slum clearance (which was beneficial to business and property interests) was allowed about $250 million annually, the appropriation for public housing was only $20 million. Even when urban renewal was in full swing, during 1954-55, total spending on public housing (by the federal and local governments) was $ 89 million, representing 0.3% of all social welfare expenditures under public programmes. The public housing budget constituted an annual per capita expenditure of 54 cents, as opposed to per capita spending of $26 for veterans, $39 for social insurance and $68 for education. Instead of 810,000 units which Congress, in the 1949 Housing Act, had allowed over six years, the actual construction total never reached one-third of the target during that period.

Public housing in America from the outset was tied to humanistic sentiments regarding an ideal natural order which the hopeful reformers attributed to society. Their perceptions were articulated in terms of what ought to happen rather than in terms of the probability of achieving certain defined social objectives and their consequences. Reform goals (based upon perceptions developed by Anglophiles of British solutions) were related to the reformers' idealistic world rather than to the actual one.

Whereas the housing movement in Britain was characterised by a preoccupation with social reform, the concern with public housing in America was principally economic as it evolved through a number of phases. While the focus shifted from time to time, there was a clearly discernible continuum in American reform, from charity organisations, to model dwellings and philanthropic capital companies in the second half of the nineteenth century, to self-help concepts expressed in limited dividend ventures, restrictive legislation and a concern with sanitary housing in the early twentieth century, to defence housing in World War I, a concern with town planning and the garden city in the 1920s, and finally to social concerns and the advocacy of slum clearance and public housing in the years since 1930.

But in the final analysis, what was not done may have been more significant than what was done. A number of basic concerns were never addressed by the American housers; the institutional order was not questioned. In this sense the housers' social perspective and preoccupation with public housing deflected the issue from the central questions of industrialisation, urbanisation and the wage system - and the basic inequities in each. Perhaps we should now question whether, in the American situation, a national housing policy was realistic at the time, why major regional variations - an undeniable fact of life - were ignored, whether it was wise to advocate decentralisation without considering the political implications of local control, whether the solutions devised for Britain in the twenties were applicable to America in the thirties and forties, whether - at the most basic level - the housers failed to perceive the fundamental differences between Britain and the United States with respect to governmental systems, the
role of local authorities, the importance of value systems based upon individualism, laissez-faire and 'free enterprise', the dominance of economics rather than social policy, and the influence of pressure groups on both national policy and local implementation of federal programmes.

'Solutions' which had been accepted at the national level in Britain were adopted whole-cloth and shipped back across the Atlantic to be transplanted in a considerably different environment. Scarcely any serious discussion was devoted to differences in governmental systems, to the peculiar nature of federalism in the United States or to the difficulties inherent in managing large 'projects' in ethnically diverse, racially segregated cities.

America's reform ethos was based upon voluntarism and laissez-faire: direct links were evident from municipal reform to New Deal housing programmes, and later to urban renewal. Reformers were generally liberal, middle and upper class 'volunteers'. Politically naive and lacking administrative experience, they would have made little headway were it not for alliances with labour and compromises with economically-motivated pressure groups. In this co-optive process, reform-based housing bills were emasculated and re-orientated to serve financial interests inimical to public housing.

Though not foreseen by 'housers', the results were inevitable given the obdurately predictable nature of the anti-public housing lobbies, an acceptance of the existing system, a concentration on economics and on placating private interests. Postwar public housing, developed in dense, socially isolated blocks of minimal dwellings utterly devoid of amenity, was infused with a punitive aspect as a natural outgrowth of laissez-faire. Because of a preoccupation with national policy and ideology, those who initiated public policy in America gave insufficient attention to implementation and problems of the local housing authority. Yet this was the area of critical importance after national legislation had been enacted; it was here that national goals were modified or subverted by parochial attempts to 'localise' federal policy. As a consequence of this confusion of social and economic objectives America's public housing programme was plagued by cultural contradictions, was predicated upon false assumptions, was inappropriate to the postwar tenant group, and thus was predestined to failure.

As a consequence of its British-based reform orientation public housing in America was placed in an untenable position. It could not, at least in its existing format, be fitted neatly into the mould of the American free enterprise system. At the same time, it was saddled with a burden of social reform which it could not possibly carry. The public housing system developed in the United States encouraged institutionalised projects and high-rise collective living arrangements for low-income families with numerous children, while it discouraged upward mobility by evicting successful tenants - who represented the only effective role models available for the bulk of remaining residents. Concurrently, the larger society rewarded individualism and competition, while relying upon a free market system for allocation of resources. The result was a cultural contradiction and an insoluble dilemma for the housers and for public housing.

Summary

In order to ascertain the reasons for post-war public housing difficulties in the United States one must examine the historical and philosophical bases of public policy - in particular, the significant role played by reformers in formulating national policy. To a considerable extent American legislation was drafted by Anglophile 'housers' whose theories were predicated upon British and European experience. The reformers' attention was concentrated on national policies in Britain and specifically on London; local implementation problems and strategies
were ignored. Limited by their preconceived notions and narrow range of experience, the reformers saw only what they were predisposed to see.

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12. EQUALITY, INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN PUBLIC HOUSING

Anna-Lisa Lindén Thelander (Sw)

1. Housing, equality and integration in the 80s

Housing policy's principle target areas can be seen to have three facets, namely: resident welfare, division of responsibility and cost of housing. In this study the set aim has been to analyse welfare goals and actual goal accomplishment, through an analysis of the structure of the country's housing market and household consumption of housing.

Before the shaping of housing policy in the 1980's three central questions above all, have been discussed most closely as being guiding principles for the investigation of housing policy: standard of living space, technical standard, and equal and integrated tenants.

With the exception of a few regions in the country, the housing shortage that was the main policy problem up to the 1970's, has been built away. We have, in this country, the amount of housing that is needed so that a shortage is no longer prevalent. Nor can we anticipate an increasing number of households in the future, which would entail that a housing shortage reoccurred. The level of formation of new households has been high in the post-war period. Since the middle of the seventies this has decreased and is now at its lowest level in twenty-five years. During the coming decades we can expect a further decrease in the growth of households, reaching null-growth some years into the 1990's. The increase in households has, above all, been the result of a marked increase in the number of single person households, whilst the number of large households has decreased. The change in the structure of households is explained, in the main, by grown children setting up house on their own at an earlier age, whilst the number of children per family has decreased since the war.

The growth in development of the stock of flats on the housing market up to 1980 had led to a clearer profile of the role of the various categories of owners in the provision of housing. The proportion of the housing market comprising local authority owned multi-occupancy housing has increased, as has also the number of flats in privately owned houses. Flats in multi-occupancy blocks managed by other categories of owners have decreased. It is also within these categories of ownership that we still find the oldest flats and the largest proportion of those which are partly or un-modernized. Within the stock of flats we can in the future expect extensive reconstruction through demolition, modernization and the knocking-together of flats. With the present poor level of new production of flats within these categories of ownership, we can expect a further high profile of housing stock between, in the main, only three categories of ownership: privately owned houses, municipally owned multi-occupancy blocks, and a smaller number of "bostadsrätt" flats. Within these three categories of
ownership a further differentiation has occurred according to flat size.
Local authority multi-occupancy blocks account for the largest proportion of small flats (3 rooms plus kitchen or smaller), whilst up to 90% of large flats are to be found in privately-owned houses. The profile of housing stock within only three categories makes it necessary to direct attention mainly to households of different sizes, households at different stages of their life cycle, or households with differing financial capabilities.

The basic standard of a maximum of two people per room (kitchen and living room not included), as an aim of housing policy has been reached in 94% of households. During the period 1975-80 household's level of ambition went, if anything, in the direction of overconsumption of housing space. 11% of households increased their amount of space above the basic standard, in part by exchange, and in part by staying in their dwelling when grown children had moved away from home. The generational circulation of population in an area of family houses is about 30 years as against 15 years for multi-occupancy housing. The majority of households with children that today live in houses can be expected to remain in these houses after the children have moved out and set up on their own. For this reason the proportion of households with a standard above the basic should increase during the next ten year-period.

During the period 1975 to 1980 a mere 25% of households exchanged their overcrowded conditions for the basic standard or above. The ideal standard of space and accommodation is seen to be difficult to obtain given the present policy aims. Of 153,000 overcrowded households in the country, 94,000 (62%) are families with children. Moreover 70,000 of these are large families living in multi-occupancy blocks and for the most part local authority tenants. For a number of these households overconsuming is not a passing phase in the family cycle, but is of longer duration. 38% of overcrowded households have no children. These households are mainly to be found in small flats in older privately-owned properties. The level of overcrowding in such properties is likely to decline in the future, partly through the disappearance of households because of death, and partly through demolition and modernization of the oldest properties.

A large proportion of the overcrowded households are of foreign extraction. Within local authority housing this applies to every third overcrowded household. If we analyse this state of affairs more closely it can be seen that overcrowding in immigrant households decreases the longer the time spent in Sweden. This applies to various national groups, even if the variation between nationalities is great: Southern Europeans and Finns are, to a greater extent, more overcrowded than North Americans, Swedes resettling in the country, Middle Europeans and South Americans.

The explanation of this is to be found, above all, in that both the first two immigrant groups consist largely of the poorly-educated, the industrially employed and those with a cultural background in countries where housing standards, compared with Swedish, lie at a considerably lower level. Within the other national groups there is a greater representation of other social classes and a standard of living in the country of origin that is nearer the Swedish. An exception is made for the households of Asian immigrants, where the size diverges markedly from other groups. Over half of these immigrant households are large, which is an explanation of the overcrowding.

The measurement of the floorspace standard still has a number of shortcomings. The result of a square measure standard sank during the early 1970's and after 1975 first increased somewhat in multi-occupancy blocks. In the whole of the 1970's it increased in privately-owned houses by 10-25 square metres, whilst the number of rooms in flats was held constant. Overcrowding in multi-occupancy blocks is generally the cause of significantly worse opportunities for organizing household domestic activities than is the case in a correspondingly one family house.
In 1980 86% of the dwellings had a modern standard. Half-modernized and unmodernized flats were to be found primarily in the oldest flats in privately-owned multi-occupancy blocks and houses. In 1974 the secretary of state announced that the continued modernization of existing flats would lead to all existing properties being of a modern standard in the immediate future. With regard to standards no change was seen from 1974 up until 1980. On the other hand one can expect a change in the near future as, in the main, single-person, old or very young households are to be found in the oldest and unmodernized flats.

Equality and integration between different types of households is emphasized strongly as an essential goal of housing policy in the eighties in the Ministry of Housing's directives to the 1983 housing policy investigation. At the same time we have never stood further from the objective of integration in households' real housing consumption than we do just now. Segregation has increased throughout the seventies in every aspect of integration, that is to say both generational integration, and integration of households according to size, economic resources and ethnic affiliations. This is naturally partly dependent on the difference in composition of the housing stock that occurs between categories of ownership. Within the total housing market it is certainly possible to fulfil needs according to household size, although in different types of houses, forms of tenure and categories of ownership, and not within individual categories.

"Bostadsrätt" flats have today taken on the role of "pensioners' dwellings". The largest proportion of residents are over fifty years old. The role of "pensioners' dwellings", moreover, has been strengthened through out the seventies. Privately-owned houses are the form of accommodation for families with children. The largest age groups are to be found in the range from 25 to 65 years old, with a peak between the ages of 25-45 for parents of small children.

From the point of view of integration the largest age-range distribution is to be found in privately-owned houses, whilst the local - authority - owned properties, where a large proportion of the residents are under thirty, are the most segregated according to age. This gives local authority housing the character of high-turnover temporary accommodation, being merely a part of the tenant's housing careers.

The category of residence according to size of household has increased throughout the seventies. The proportion of one and two-people households in multi-occupancy blocks increased, as has the proportion of families with children in privately-owned houses.

The economic segregation between households within the various categories of ownership has also increased during the seventies. In privately-owned houses we find the households with the highest level of earnings and the highest disposable incomes. Against that we find in multi-occupancy blocks the largest proportion of single person households and a lower level of earnings with the related lower disposable household income. This can partly be explained by the fact that privately owned houses with their higher rents require a higher disposable household income. It leads, of necessity, to a greater proportion of the adults working. We find a larger proportion of young households in both multi-occupancy blocks, and in local authority housing company properties in particular. Part of an explanation of the lower disposable incomes amongst these households could be their weaker attachment to the labour market due to social or medical reasons, studies, or periods of unemployment.

Ethnic segregation has also increased during the seventies through an increase in the number of immigrants in local authority housing. As was stated earlier, however, the type of house immigrants choose, the form of tenure and by that the size of flat, becomes more like the Swedish household's choice or property the longer the period of residence in Sweden. From the perspective of the
naturalization of immigrant households, segregation can therefore be seen to have a time limit. The end result is therefore a high proportion of immigrants in rented flats, especially in local-authority-owned properties.

2. Demographic and social change in estates - A case study

In the report an account is given of a method of diagnosing the development of a housing estate within a local area by means of time series data and social indicators. The method is generally practicable as a help in distinguishing the bases for communal planning of housing provisions and urban renewal. The method is applied to two housing estates in Västerås and, at the same time utilized as background material to Report No. 10.

Many of the sixties, housing estates have been stigmatized as problem areas for no good reason. Among such can be classified:
- characteristics of the housing estate and its environment;
- characteristics of the population of the area.

In quite a number of instances conclusions about social problems have been drawn from a cross-sectional analysis of population structure and characteristics in the residential environment. Often enough the estate is seen to have 'poor surroundings', 'too many immigrants', 'too many single-parent families', 'too many alcoholics' etc., to stigmatize it as a problem. Neither of the criteria mentioned are in themselves sufficient as indicators of social problems.

As a starting point for the analysis of social problems and their extent in Södra Vallby, a description is given of the distribution of flats on the housing estate compared with an equally old estate in Västerås. In this context the housing estate's qualitative characteristics, such as the surroundings and other communal facilities are not looked at in this report. A high turnover of residents on a housing estate is often overlooked as a problem indicator. In the analysis the characteristics of the population structure on the estate are given in a time series analysis, together with how the changes have a direct connection with migration to and from the housing estate. We can in general assume that a high turnover is the first indicator of a negative development of the estate's population structure and gradually its social climate. The process can be described as levels in a spiral of migration (figure 1). As regards Södra Vallby there are signs that the last levels in the process are being reached.

The housing estate of Södra Vallby quickly got itself the reputation of being a problem area. The distinct indicators of problems in the area which were read by the local authority administration and the housing company, showed that the tenants on the estate were receiving social welfare in abnormally high proportion and that the costs for wear and tear and damage were exorbitant Pettersberg, the equally old and neighbouring estate to Södra Vallby, which has practically the same status on the housing market, serves as an area of comparison. Pettersberg is a housing estate that has 'aged' at a normal rate for multi-occupancy estates with rented flats.
High turnover of residents

Changes in age-structure

Changes in household structure

Increased proportion of households with financial problems

Increased proportion of households with social problems

The housing estate acquires a poor and unattractive reputation

The weakening of social control in general

Environmental conditions on the housing estate deteriorate badly

Increasing removals

Figure 12.1: Levels of change on housing estates with increased proportion of social problems

As regards distributions of flat sizes Södra Vallby is typical of Swedish housing estates produced under the 'Million Programme'. The estate was ready for occupation at a point in time when reconstruction in the central parts of Västerås was extensive and immigration from abroad was still considerable. Through housing department principles and an accumulation of immigrant households Södra Vallby became, from the beginning, a segregated housing estate with a high number of foreign citizens, many large families, and a certain concentration of households with social problems.

The population structure of Södra Vallby has never moved in a direction that is usual for an area of multi-occupancy blocks. Rather the social segregation has been strengthened through a considerably increased proportion of immigrant households. Even the representation of nationalities has changed, with a decline in the share of Swedish and Finnish households and an expanding group of Turks and Syrians. After 16 years the age-structure is the same as when the tenants first moved in, with a medium age of 24.

Large households and much over-crowding is still to be found, despite a 36% decrease in the estate's population. This decrease is the result of people moving away and not of changes in the estate's population structure. Factors encouraging removal and housing department factors have brought with them an increas-
ing number of Swedish households moving out of the area and few Swedish house-
holds electing to move in.

Abstract

The conditions promoting equality and integration in housing are poorer than they were earlier due to the clearer profile of the housing stock between cate-
gories of owners, forms of tenure, and households' actual housing consumption. The trend in the seventies was towards inequality and segregation in housing, rather than towards the ideal objectives of equality and integration of the housing policies of the eighties. With the exception of a few regions in the country, the provision of housing in the future will lie, above all, in new production of flats as replacements due to slum clearance and the knocking to-
gether of flats through modernization. Increased integration of types of house-
holds within different categories of ownership demands, besides a redistribution of housing costs, a new production of flats which reduces differences between categories of ownership in the provision of flat sizes, technical standards and types of properties.

Social welfare spending on the population of the estate of Sodra Vallby is very high proportionately in relation to Västerås as a whole. From a closer analysis of social assistance cases one finds that the frequency of assistance to foreign households is completely normal in comparison to the other foreign households in the region. The concentration of immigrants causes the costs to become high. The Swedish households have, on the other hand a higher frequency of assistance than what is normal. Södra Vallby is an estate with social problems for Swedes to a greater extent than for immigrants.

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13. LEISURE ACTIVITY AS A DETERMINANT OF VANDALISM

Pascal De Decker (B)

One of the features determining the so-called failure of post-war public housing is the appearance of vandalism in fairly high proportions. Jane Jacobs (1961) may have been one of the first who stressed the importance of monotonous neighbourhoods, with little movement, as promoting crime. More recently the study of Oscar Newman (1972) has become classic. His thesis is that high-rise public housing is a causal factor with respect to crime (vandalism, burglary, ...), because of the fact that these conceptions destroy the integrating social mechanisms (e.g., social control) (1).

Other publications also stressed the importance of the environment (see Jeffery, 1977), and more specific on high-rise building as a causal factor with respect to crime. In Great-Britain there are, among others, readers of Clarke and Mayhew (1980) and Ward (1973), and a study of Baldwin, Bottoms and Walker (1976); in the Netherlands there was Hoefnagels (1974) (2), and, recently, also in Belgium, authors stressed the built environment as a factor affecting crime (see Vermeersch, 1981/1982; Thange, e.a. 1978; Putman, 1983).

The thread running through it, is that either the planning of the housing projects (monofunctional), or the type of dwelling (high-rise) is causal with respect to crime and other kinds of anti-social behaviour. Very often it is believed that changes in the environment can reduce its negative features (see Riley, 1973; Newman, 1972; Jefferey, 1977; Hoefnagels, 1974; Jacobs, 1961).

Thesis

Our opinion is, that the conclusions presented above are examples of what is called 'architectural or physical determinism'. Following Gans (1972) we put forward that the conception of the physical settlement creates potencies with respect to social action (e.g., friendship in the neighbourhood; social contacts; crime); but it creates only potencies. The result (e.g., a socially integrated neighbourhood) depends upon the will and the possibilities of the individuals living in it. If they do not want to .... the physical setting cannot do anything.

These considerations lead us to our thesis with respect to vandalism. Vandalism, committed by youth in public housing estates, has less to do with the physical construction in which they live, than with their leisure activity potential determined by their socio-economical position. They do not have the possibility to overcome the disadvantages of the neighbourhood. Boys out of their age group, but of a higher socio-economic status, can overcome these disadvantages.
more easily.

The defense of this thesis will be developed out as follows. First there is a description of those who do acts of vandalism, of who destroy property. This is followed by a comparison between youngsters of the different social classes in relation to some features which are important with regard to our subject. There will be a comparison between their rough crime patterns, housing conditions, attitudes towards school and work, and last but not least leisure activity potential. Out of this comparison will appear the importance of the socio-economic position with respect to vandalism.

Vandalism: Who? Where?

According to Ward (1973) the stereotype of the vandal is that of a working-class male adolescent, and that his act is the 'wanton', 'senseless', or 'unmotivated' destruction of property. He and his behaviour constitute a 'social problem'.

The description of Hauber (1981) is quite similar. He points out that vandals are boys - especially boys - between 10 and 20 years old, frequently failures at school. They act in the so-called peergroups. These are groups of youngsters of a neighbourhood who have formed a play group. These groups do not have a detailed structure. Normally there is a leader and the group develops its own norms and values.

Knowing who are the vandals brings us to the question of what is damaged or destroyed. Again according to Hauber - see also many of the other authors - the objects are more often public property than privately owned. The victim is anonymous; thus there is no direct confrontation between offender and victim. The control on these objects is normally very low, so that the chance to get caught is very little. Very frequently the object is not yet finished - e.g. a building yard - or the maintenance is bad.

Recently in a study, Vernon and Greenberger (1978) propose an 'aesthetic theory of vandalism', suggesting that what is beautiful, vulnerable, simple and well-maintained is not damaged or destroyed as quickly.

The official crime figures are incorrect

The first point in the comparison between middle-class and working-class boys deals with their crime figures. Here, crime is 'little crime', e.g. theft of small amounts, joy-riding, fights, vandalism. These crimes include the major part of all crimes by youngsters (see Jongman and Veendrick, 1973).

The stereotype here is quite analogous to that of vandalism: the major part is committed by youngsters out of the working-classes, living either in deteriorated neighbourhoods near to the city center, or in public housing estates. However, recently new orientations in criminal research put forward a totally different picture, showing that youngsters of all social classes commit approximately the same amount of 'asocial deeds', defined as crimes. But the type of crime differs with the social classes, linked with the opportunity to deal with them. Boys from the higher classes commit more 'crimes' like joy-riding, stealing at home, ...; boys from the working-classes deal more with vandalism, stealing elsewhere, fighting; they cannot steal at home because there is nothing to steal; they cannot do joy-riding because there is no car.

Because it is not the place here to explain the research mechanisms which present this new picture, a short view on the two most important directions. First there are the 'dark number' studies (4). The development and the establishment of the stereotype of lower-class crime comes out of the official figures
police registrations; condemnations), traditionally used to calculate the association. Dark number research shows that these figures are incomplete and selective. Incomplete means that the major part of the criminal deeds remain unknown, 'dark'. Research figures suggest that on the average 70% of the youngsters commit delicts, little crimes, and that only 15% of them end at the policeoffice (Walgrave, 1980). Selective means that the defenders of the law deal with the different social groups in different ways, favouring the higher classes. Studies show e.g. a selective police observation, directed toward lower-class neighbourhoods; when caught, lower-class boys are more often punished; there is also the 'middle-class' attitude of police and judges.

Second, there is what can be called a 'historical approach', looking for the backgrounds and motivations of the definitions of an act as criminal. It is argued that the major part of the actions defined as criminal are lower class. Anti-social behaviour of the higher classes - e.g. pollution, tax fraud - remains unpunlized (6). Crime is a social definition, usually defined by those in power, i.e. the middle classes (see Taylor et al, 1973; Bianchi et al 1978). Thus, the law in itself is already a selection out of all the anti-social behaviour, whereby the lower classes, being out of power, are given differential treatment.

To complete the picture of the dispersal of crime we present two studies looking for differences between neighbourhoods. First, there is a study by Veendrick (1976) in the Dutch city Groningen. He did not find any differences between the neighbourhoods, except for those with a high concentration of students. The higher amount of delicts there were for the major part unappreciated jokes. Secondly, there is a study of Freedman (1975), done in New York City. In a comparison of very different neighbourhoods he did not find any differences with respect to juvenile delinquency.

Attitudes

Downs (cited by Cohen, 1973) made a study of youngsters in late adolescence, committing malicious vandal acts for excitement. He discovered a disassociation of working-class youth with school and work, and its subsequent adoption of manufactured excitement as a solution to the problems society has created for this youth. Cohen stated further on the argument that a stream of working-class boys goes through the school system without showing any allegiance to its values or absorbing the aspirations it tries to inculcate. He quotes an East End boy: "The school was always trying to turn you into something you were not. It was a waste of time". Some of the boys start an opposition against school, but most frequently they just retreat. Hargreaves (cited by Cohen, 1973) adds the important feature of the powerlessness of the boys at school. The boys leave the school as soon as possible, knowing they do not have a splendid career in sight. They end mostly in low qualified jobs, dull and tedious. Their attitude towards it is quite similar to the attitude towards school. Money is therefore, and quite rightly, just about the most important occupational criterion (Cohen, 1973).

Concluding one can say that the boys are dissatisfied with school and job. In fact, as a source of excitement only action is left. They cannot play football all day, and they do not like the youth services, with their patronizing attitudes. Boys out of the middle-classes have adopted a totally different attitude towards school and job. School is the key to success; a job gives status and money, major aims in a middle-class society.
Housing conditions

Through the attitudes of the different social classes are quite different, their structural housing conditions are quite similar. The majority of the middle-classes live in a suburban neighbourhood, at the fringe of the city. The location of public housing estates, containing a part of the lower classes, is quite similar. Between these two housing conceptions there is only one different feature: the construction of the individual dwelling. Middle-class dwellings are built less dense, and are detached or semi-detached; public housing is very often high-rise. We have to draw attention to the fact that the comfort of public housing is better than that of the dwellings where those families would have lived otherwise (e.g. in the old neighbourhoods near to the city center).

In suburban housing and in public housing the services are located in a similar way. There may be some shops, some public administration, but with respect to leisure activity there is (nearly) nothing. This means that meaningful leisure activities have to take place elsewhere. In this situation the position of the boys from different classes differs.

Leisure activity potential

Regarding those last remarks it can be argued that we are telling exactly the same with regard as e.g. Hoefnagels, saying urban planning is criminal, by the dispersal of the different functions. It is true that there is a contradiction between the theory of modernistic thinking and practical realisations. In his philosophy, the planner saw a very mobile society, where everyone could easily move from one place to another, when they wanted to. Looking at reality some can do this, those who have enough money, hence middle-class and upper-class people. Their children do not participate vandal acts in large numbers. There are several possible reasons. First, they have learned, they are socialized with respect to property. Secondly, when they are living in high-rised luxury buildings they do not have the opportunity to participate in vandalism without being seen. These buildings are well controled, with doormen, camera's in corridors and elevators, ... Thirdly, they are more mobile; they get e.g. earlier a motorbike, and mostly there is the mother, who has the second car and can bring the children to the place they want or she wants. Let's say that these boys are not tied to the neighbourhood in their leisure time. When they are old enough they can drive the car - very frequently one of their own - by themselves.

Quite different is the situation of the boys living in public housing estates (6). Mother is often out at work, there is no second car and there is less money. They cannot go out to play tennis, or ride horses. They are not interested in all kinds of cultural activities. In fact they are more tied to the neighbourhood (7), and there, there is nothing to do; at most there is a clubhouse where they find boys in the same situation. These boys pass their leisure time mainly by just hanging around, they are bored; they cannot get the things they want, because there is not enough money, they are not talented, they are not mobile. This is a situation of frustration, with their own position, with society. Within this context vandalaism has to be seen. These boys cannot, unlike boys from the middle-classes, offset the disadvantages of the neighbourhoods.

Within their value-system, according to Cohen (1973), vandalism is good, it is satisfying and it brings excitement. It gives those boys a feeling of doing a nice job (8). Vandalism, as an act of rule breaking, has an expressive and an instrumental function. Expressive means that, by doing it, the offender gets certain values, it gives him a certain status within his peergroup. Instrumental means that the act solves certain structural problems, that is the impossibility of doing what they want to do (see also Armstrong and Watson, 1973; Taylor and

Putting this together we can say that vandalism has a lot to do with the impossibility of the boys living in public housing estates to overcome the disadvantages of their neighbourhoods. This impossibility is related to the socio-economic position in a broad sense. We like to finish with an example of Taylor (1973), well knowing that not all acts of vandalism are so 'kind', but expressing well our reasoning. For the manager of a supermarket children playing 'train' with the caddies is an act of vandalism; for the children it is amusing, meaningful, exciting; also because they know it is illegal.

Abstract

This paper deals with the problems of juvenile vandalism in high-rise public housing estates. The thesis is that the reasons for vandalism have little to do with the conception of the project. Out of a comparison of the conditions of life of boys of different social classes it appears that the socio-economic situation of the family is a far more important factor with respect to vandalism. This position creates possibilities - for boys from higher socio-economic groups - or impossibilities - for boys from the lower classes - to overcome the disadvantages of the housing situation. The suburban higher class housing, as well as the public housing estates are monotonous, have little leisure possibilities. Some can compensate this, others cannot.

Notes

1. See also Niner and Watson (1978); for reviews and critics see Bottoms (1974), Mawby (1977), Mayhew (1979) and Wilson (1980).
3. See Cohen (1973) for a broader picture.
5. The youngsters of the different social classes commit approximately the same amount of crime, but in front of the judge 97% are boys from the working-classes (see Jongman, 1981).
6. Quite similar is the situation in the old, nineteenth century neighbourhoods near to the city center.
7. Social science has, for the last years, in an atmosphere of growth and of new orientations, weakened the attention to the local neighbourhood and has overlooked the importance of it for some categories of the population, e.g. women, children, elderly. In the Netherlands, recently some publications draw attention to this (see e.g. Van Engelsdorp Gastelaars and Maas-Drooglever Fortuyn, 1982; Ostendorf and Vijgen, 1982).
8. The conception of the estates, with the stigma, the definition of ugliness, boreness, can function as a factor of neutralizing the negative feelings of the boys, whilst they are doing an illegal act. They see it as they do not harm anybody, because nobody likes those estates.

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THE BRITISH EXPERIENCE OF DEFECTS IN NON-TRADITIONAL AND INDUSTRIALISED DWELLINGS

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Introduction

The AMA (Association of Metropolitan Authorities, England) has been made aware by its member authorities of large scale defects problems in the local authority housing stock.

The enquiries we have made have shown that the defects are concentrated in non-traditional dwellings of the 1940's and 1950's and industrialised dwellings of the 1960's and 1970's.

That is not to say that defects do not exist in the traditional housing stock. However, considering that we have far more traditional dwellings in the stock, the defects problems associated with these dwellings are relatively small. Nevertheless, we do intend to produce a further report on defects in traditionally built dwellings in the future.

Non-traditional dwellings of the 1940's and 1950's

The term 'non-traditional' covers about 150 types of dwellings built between 1945 and 1955. Approximately 500,000 of this type of dwelling were built during this period. The concept 'non-traditional' is relatively limited and refers generally only to the external walls of two-storey houses. The buildings were in fact built along traditional lines apart from the external walls which may have been prefabricated reinforced concrete, poured in-situ concrete, or of timber or steel frame construction.

We turned to non-traditional dwellings immediately after the last war which was responsible for the destruction of 200,000 homes and a further 250,000 dwellings were rendered uninhabitable. 3½ million houses were damaged. There was at that time already a backlog of unmet housing need and slum clearance programmes and aspirations after the war were rising. The traditional building industry was in disarray and there was a shortage of skilled labour and traditional building materials. Housing was an important political issue and an ambitious housing programme was set.

To raise output substantially in a short space of time meant that we had to turn to non-traditional dwellings and the Government set up special research teams whose work was published in the Post-War Building Studies. During this time, contractors were encouraged to produce systems for approval and special grants were made available. Prototypes of the new types of dwellings were built and various technical assessments were made. However, in the time available, any assessment of performance in use was impossible and there were no proper...
costings for full production runs.

The new Conservative Government in 1951 also approved the non-traditional methods and made similar claims for their success. The Conservatives increased the housebuilding target to 300,000 a year and this was in fact reached by 1954. Once the heat went out of the housing debate however, the new dwellings were quickly forgotten and no accurate records were kept of locations, reported difficulties or subsequent design modifications. The pre-evaluation work therefore and the post-assessment was very limited indeed.

We have traced the rise and fall of this type of dwelling and their associated defects in our first housing defects report 'Non-Traditional Dwellings of the 1940's and 1950's' which was published last July. This report estimated that the cost of dealing with the defects in this type of dwelling would cost no less than £5,000 million.

**Industrialised and system built dwellings of the 1960's and 1970's**

After about 1955, the housebuilding programme was allowed to decline and it was not until the early 1960's that it was again realised that we were facing a housing crisis. This was particularly due to the backlog or slum clearance programmes. To deal with this housing crisis, it was again recognised that the traditional building industry could not cope and we turned to industrialised dwellings. Industrialised dwellings were initially associated with high density schemes and, bearing in mind that we were often demolishing dwellings at 40 to 60 to the acre, the prospects of replacing them with 12 to 14 houses per acre was unrealistic. Also, central government was keen to prevent urban sprawl and concentrate rebuilding in the city areas. Furthermore, some cities felt that overspill development would not be in their best interests or the best interests of those rehoused and would move them further away from their employment and break up established communities. At the same time, the architects were keen to seize upon what they saw as a move away from the dull monotony of early post-war development and there was a chance to create variety and impact upon city skylines. The building industry also woke up to the new possibilities created by the new volume market and hoped to turn production into a factory industry to reduce dependence on skilled labour, reduce costs, and reduce the interruptions on site caused by adverse weather conditions.

The main motor force behind the new industrialised building programme, however, was the central government. Already the housing subsidy system meant that the higher you built the more subsidy you got. This was taken much further by both Labour and Conservative Governments and a target of 40% of industrialised building was set for 1970. Local authorities were also told that they would be given faster approvals if they used industrialised methods and the Ministry of Housing and Local Government regional offices set up contacts with large builders by serial contracts for many local authorities. Central government therefore virtually directed the housebuilding programmes of many local authorities.

The Government saw the need to achieve their housebuilding targets. The Conservatives had pledged to build 350,000 houses a year but the Labour Government, taking over in 1964, promised 500,000 houses a year.

The Government also established the National Building Agency to approve systems for development and 89 systems had appraisal certificates that the dwelling would last for 60 years. Sadly, this has proved not to be the case and many authorities that put their trust in the central government or in the NBA have found this trust was misplaced. Local authorities were specifically advised not to attempt to appraise the systems themselves as this would be unnecessary duplication.
Once again, as the housebuilding drive slackened off, the new methods were soon forgotten and there was no post-assessment or monitoring of performance. The problem is quantified in our report "Defects in Housing Part III: Industrialised and System Built Dwellings of the 1960's and 1970's". We think the cost of defects will be a further £ 5,000 million for about 1 million dwellings.

Common problems

Both the non-traditional and industrialised housebuilding phases were responses to a housing crisis. The traditional industry could not cope as there was insufficient skilled labour and insufficient supplies of traditional building products. Both periods were marked by inadequate pre-evaluation and research of the new methods and materials. Both periods suffered from the worst form of experimentation and there was little or no attempt to carry out assessments subsequently.

Differences

The main differences between the non-traditional and the industrialised building phases was that the latter has proved very much less popular with tenants. Industrialised methods dictated unusual built forms which themselves had an impact upon the people that lived there which was not foreseen. Consequently, we have seen deck access blocks and high rise systems which are simply not appropriate for the type of people that they were built for. By contrast, most of the non-traditional dwellings were good space standards in favoured locations and were generally in low rise semi-detached forms with good gardens.

There are some similarities in the defects but, as might be expected from such widely from different forms, there are also considerable differences.

Common defects

Firstly, I should mention the temporary prefabs built after the last war. 150,000 of these dwellings were built and it was clearly understood that they only had a limited life of 10 years. Nevertheless, 20,000 or so remain today.

By contrast, we have 500,000 dwellings in various forms of non-traditional construction, many of which were also similarly prefabricated and, in fact, met similar design criteria yet were expected to have a permanent life.

Common defects include corrosion of metal reinforcement in the prefabricated reinforced concrete systems and the spalling of external concrete and the gradual disintegration of concrete members. There has also been movement of panels at joints, deterioration of concrete finish and particular problems of condensation associated with concrete systems. High alumina cement was also used in some cases. In the systems using timber and steel frame, we have found not only a corrosion and deterioration of the frame itself, but also particular deterioration of claddings. There has also been a problem of fire spread through the cavities and in the roof space. Indeed, the roofs have generally been a problem and we have had to replace asbestos cement roofs or other sheet types. There have been innumerable other smaller problems, such as dangerous flue systems.

Defects associated with the one million or so industrialised dwellings covering about 150 systems include rain penetration, differential movement between claddings and house frames, condensation, major roof problems (particularly for flat and low pitch roofs), sound insulation, spalling concrete, and the use of suspect...
materials such as asbestos.

There have also been the problems arising from the built form and many imaginative solutions have been taken, including removing the entire top floor of some accommodation down to installing entryphones at the entrances of blocks of flats.

Some local authorities have found that the problem of physical defects has been so compounded by the unpopularity and the problems of built form that they have decided to cut their losses and demolish dwellings only 15 years or so old. In fact, at least 10,000 dwellings have already been demolished. This alone will cost £300 million, although the entire cost of defects in industrialised dwellings is estimated by us to be £5,000 million.

Timer frame

I will just briefly mention timber frame housing as at one time it did look as though this was going to be the method of the future. We published our report "Timber Frame Housing - A Cautionary Note" last September which followed on from concern in the press and media. We obviously do not know whether timber frame housing is going to be a defective method in the future but we are convinced that, as yet, there has been insufficient pre-evaluation to ensure that it does not become so. We also believe that present training is inadequate and a lot of workmanship errors do occur, and furthermore, that consumers are not aware of how they should properly look after the dwelling. A recent Government report, although widely thought to give timber frame housing a clean bill of health, in fact says nothing about the newer forms of more insulated dwellings other than it is impossible to predict whether interstitial condensation will become a problem.

Recent government action

The Association believes that £10,000 million will be necessary to deal with the defects of non-traditional and industrialised dwellings. However, since 1979, Housing Investment Programme (capital) allocations have been cut in real terms by around 50% and further programme reductions are envisaged for the next two financial years. We believe this is wholly unrealistic.

For 1984/85, the Department of the Environment did show some willingness to redistribute resources between authorities and to increase the regional officer of the Department of the Environment's discretion outside London. However, it is clear that most of our authorities with large defects problems nevertheless received a decrease in their HIP allocation. We believe more money is necessary, not a redistribution of existing resources.

The Government has made some provision for owners of some types of dwelling but this scheme and the new proposals for assistance are confined to private owners. However, the vast majority of these dwellings remain in public ownership and no additional finance has been forthcoming for remedial works.

We believe the Government proposals safeguard the position of private owners and, whilst being welcome, are discriminatory and the granting of further statutory rights will simply pre-empt some of the existing resources.

The proposals also only relate to non-traditional dwellings (and not all types). We believe a programme of compensation by the central government is necessary - to reflect its responsibility for sponsoring both industrialised and non-traditional methods in the past.
The future

We believe that it is quite possible that the same sort of rush into untried methods and techniques may occur again. What we now see is a contraction of the housing programme to an all time low level. Yet we know that the backlog of unfitness and disrepair is increasing all the time; the numbers of people on house waiting lists is also increasing; the numbers of families who are homeless has increased consistently over the last few years; and, of course, we have a massive problem in the public housing stock. We think in a few years time the central government of whatever colour will have to recognise that housing activity must be increased, but again, the traditional building industry will not be able to cope and we will be tempted to turn to some sort of non-traditional method.

The main problem seems to be the pattern of investment in housing which is constantly going up and down rather than any consistent level of investment which allow our building industry and the associated skills to expand and contract gradually to cope with any fine tuning. We therefore need a long term investment programme in housing which is not only higher than now, but is also consistent and does away with the system of annual allocations.

The building industry is also fragmented and there is little management and maintenance feedback. Professional divisions unfortunately reinforce the departmental divisions of local authorities and some review of practices and procedures is urgently necessary.

We must also question the whole basis of appraisal of new products, new systems, new materials, and new components in the building industry. We do not seem to give adequate research resources to the building industry and the appraisal is rarely long term or thoroughgoing.

Needless to say, most of our problems can only be solved by the injection of further resources. However, the structure and nature of the building industry has to be of concern to all of us here.

Summary

The Association of Metropolitan Authorities has attempted to quantify the problem of defects in non-traditional and industrialised dwellings which had been built in the post-war period. We have found that there are roughly 1½ million dwellings in this category, many of which suffer from major structural defects. We have estimated the cost of dealing with these defects at £10,000 million and local authorities have already demolished or scheduled for demolition over 10,000 dwellings only 15 years old.

The Association has traced the development of these dwellings in order to ascertain what went wrong. We have found that research and evaluation of the new types, new materials, and new products was very limited and that central government coerced local authorities into adopting new methods in order to meet certain national housebuilding targets which have political appeal but were always unrealistic.

As well as looking at the past, we have also attempted to look forward and now have some ideas about how defects can be avoided in the future and what changes are now necessary in central and local government procedures, the building industry and the professions involved.
Visitors to the Bijlmermeer
Only 20 or 30 years after being built, alarming reports are being received about the post-war neighbourhoods. In the Netherlands after the Second World War, more than three million homes were built, which is more than double the number which existed before that time. These homes were built mainly on planned new estates at the edge of existing towns and in a number of new towns. In the Fifties and Sixties a considerable amount of these new housing estates were commissioned to be built by housing corporations. In a number of post-war neighbourhoods, complaints have been heard regularly about the worsening of the residential atmosphere, architectural and physical defects, destruction, loss of status of the neighbourhood etcetera. This has all increased the need for a basic knowledge of the factors which are the foundation for this sort of occurrence. Imperfect insight into these factors can lead to measures being taken which have an effect that was not desired or only partially desired, and in some unfavourable cases can even have an effect which is totally opposite to the original intention. In the investigation which will be to be discussed here, it will be stressed that decay of areas of the town is the result of a number of factors which are more extensive than a number of theories would have us believe. This all-embracing explanatory theory of what we shall call "decay in neighbourhoods" for short, is no mechanistic single-factor theory, but a multi-factor theory in which the behaviour of the (municipal) public authorities plays an important role. Put simply, it looks as though the (municipal) authority, by making all kinds of ad hoc decisions and operating on prejudices about existing neighbourhoods, have brought to life that very process of decay which they - paradoxically enough - tried to avoid through their management (1).

Processes of decay do not occur in every part of the town. Some parts of the town, for example the central shopping areas, possess the faculty of selfregeneration, so that it is rare that the municipal authority is forced to introduce a structured renovation programme. Owners, and also occupants, of these shop premises tend naturally, as it were automatically, to make improvements to the premises. Serious processes of decay usually occur in the marginal areas of the town centre, the transition zones as they are known. In many towns, these zones are filled with nineteenth century buildings, which have attracted the attention of the authorities because of wear and tear, insufficient maintenance and all kinds of other occurrences. However, it is not only the nineteenth century (residential) neighbourhoods which are susceptible to such processes of decay, but also the areas built between 1900 and 1940 in the framework of the Housing Act. In
general, it can be said that neighbourhoods run the risk of downgrading over the course of the years. This process begins, even before the first stones of the neighbourhoods are laid, i.e. as the result of deficient town planning, supplemented by homes which are mediocre in quality. Dependent on a wide variety of factors, during its history a neighbourhood can exhibit the tendency to deteriorate and slip into decay.

Questions

The questions from our investigation can be summarised as follows:

- are all the symptoms to be perceived in post-war neighbourhoods ones of decay?
- what are the causes of decay possibly occurring in neighbourhoods?
- how can imminent decay, or decay which is already in progress, be prevented or even delayed?

These questions, simple in themselves, are not as easy to answer. First of all we must define the most important variables so that they can be applied. Therefore we will define the phenomena "neighbourhood" and "decay".

The term neighbourhood

Without going into too much detail here, it can be said that a neighbourhood is regarded as a socio-spatial system made up of a spatial and a socio-cultural subsystem. The spatial subsystem is considered to be made up of the following components: natural and artificial surroundings, while the socio-cultural subsystem is considered to be composed of three parts: demographic, social and cultural structure. Each of the components can be split into numerous elements which lend themselves to direct observation. In the diagram: Elements of the socio-spatial system: neighbourhood, the implementation of the term neighbourhood can be found (fig. 15.1.).

The term decay

Decay indicates a process of deterioration. Over the course of the years, neighbourhoods can change in structure and form and, as a result of this, lose their appeal. We have specified the term 'decay' more precisely by indicating the various aspects which are important here, and have thus introduced the following definitions:

a. Objective and subjective decay. Objective decay means decay which can be seen from "objective" data, such as, for example, statistical data; and subjective decay is used whenever there seemed to be decay, as perceived by the people concerned (for example: inhabitants, public authorities) (regardless of whether this was objective or not).

b. Absolute and relative decay. The term absolute decay is used whenever the situation in a neighbourhood is viewed from two different points in time and deterioration can be recorded (separate, therefore, from situations elsewhere); and we speak of relative decay whenever a neighbourhood deteriorates in relation to other neighbourhoods. So, theoretically speaking, we can talk of relative decay, in spite of the fact that there is no absolute decay in a neighbourhood, that is, whenever other neighbourhoods "make progress".
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System</th>
<th>Subsystem</th>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NEIGHBOURHOOD</td>
<td>Natural surroundings</td>
<td>Soil, soil condition, air, flora, fauna vegetation etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Size, type, age, property, condition occupation, vacancy, price, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Artificial surroundings</td>
<td>Public services, shops, economic, administrative, socio-cultural, educational, medical hygiene, traffic and public transport facilities etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Town planning structure</td>
<td>Shape, structure, composition, spread, location, grouping etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Socio-cultural subsystem</td>
<td>Demographic structure</td>
<td>Number of inhabitants, composition according to sex, age, status, education, profession, income, ethnic group and race etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social structure</td>
<td>Social position, contacts, networks of contacts etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural structure</td>
<td>Clothing, language, customs, standards, values etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c. Spatial and social decay. Decay can occur in both the spatial and the socio-cultural subsystem of the neighbourhood. Whenever deterioration can be perceived in, for example, housing, parking lots, the structure of the roads, shops etc. of a neighbourhood, we speak of spatial decay. Whenever, for example, the number of inhabitants decreases the neighbourhood becomes more one-sided as regards the composition of the population and whenever the social status of the inhabitants decreases, we are dealing with the term social decay (Fig. 15.2.).

Fig. 15.2.: Types of decay

All types of combinations of the terms used are possible, and from the practical side of the investigation, it will be necessary to distinguish all possible types.

Theories

This more precise definition of terms was necessary before being able to grasp the essence of the question, i.e. what are the root causes of decay? Existing knowledge concerning this is, as is shown from our study of the literature, highly deficient. The general experience was that systematic investigation of the occurrence "decay in neighbourhoods" from a sociological perspective has not actually been carried out. Of course, theories explaining the decay in the neighbourhoods have been developed on an ad hoc basis, taking primarily socio-geographic, economic and geographic, and financial and geographic attitudes as their starting point. Without any attempt at completeness, we point out the following theories:

1. Representatives of the Chicago School maintain that the creation of new (large-scale) elements in a neighbourhood or new purposes for existing premises, fosters a negative process of mutation in the residential premises (2).
2. Ratcliff, Gries and Ford emphasize that decay occurs, because certain housing is no longer attractive, as a result of economic ageing. In other words, there is a lack of demand (3).
3. In opposition to this theory, there is one in which it is suggested that decay can be ascribed to an excess of demand, that is an excessive demand for cheap housing. In such a situation an owner is able to let his premises without difficulty, although they are in a bad condition (4).

In the Netherlands, several theories have also been formulated about the phenomenon known as decay. So Deben maintains that the explanation for decay must be sought in, on the one hand, changes in community life which have effects on the loss of function and other uses of buildings and land and, on the other hand, (as far as 19th century residential areas are concerned) in the mediocre quality
of architecture and town planning of the residential surroundings and the housing constructed at the time (5). Kruyt ascribed decay to at least three factors: a) physical wear of the buildings, b) insufficient execution of maintenance and c) that during the ageing process, when the maintenance costs have become relatively high, the (residential) property from the point of view of investment has become less attractive and is neglected.

Priemus suggested a many-sided working theory to explain the decay in housing, which takes as its starting point 6 causal categories which are linked together. They are a) the technical and functional ageing of the housing and residential surroundings; b) the social ageing of the housing and residential surroundings; c) decreasing returns from the exploitation of housing, because natural or artificial rigidity in the prices of residential services; d) the shrinking investment horizon for the exploiters; e) the increasing prospects to be found in purposes other than residential ones and f) planners' blight (7).

Research design

In our investigation, we took as our starting point a conceptual scheme which aimed to include 'all' relevant variables which can have an explanatory meaning for the decay in the neighbourhoods. In this conceptual scheme, the developments in the structure and the functioning of a neighbourhood are ascribed to the following determinants: a) forces which are at work in the system 'neighbourhood' (internal forces); b) forces which exert influence on the neighbourhood from outside the surroundings of the system (external forces); c) forces which result from the relationship between neighbourhood and surroundings.

In more specific terms, we can describe the conceptual scheme according to its main components as follows:

- **System-imminent forces.** Over years, buildings are susceptible to ageing and wear; similarly the original inhabitants age during the course of the years and develop different life styles.
- **Attitude and conduct of the parties involved.** Decay can be called into existence, and even furthered by the way in which one reacts towards a neighbourhood or deals with it. But it is possible that a certain opinion of a situation leads the responsible administrative authorities to regard a tenant as a problem, and implement 'treatment' which is aimed at solving problems, but which, in fact, promotes them.
- **Limits of action.** Decay can be caused by the fact that the methods necessary for the improvement of situations are not available. This can be the absence of a legal framework, the lack of personnel or insufficient financial resources. It is not rare for a community to plead lack of funds to carry out the desired changes. The same can be said of inhabitants in a number of cases, who claim to have insufficient means to improve the housing or pay a higher rent.
- **Processes within a community.** The relative status of a neighbourhood is heavily influenced by the developments in other neighbourhoods in a community. Whenever there are changes in a community, planned or spontaneous, in the composition of its inhabitants, work opportunities, housing situations and the like, these can (jointly) result in decay being promoted or strengthened in a certain neighbourhood.
- **General social developments.** All developments which influence decay in neighbourhoods, directly or indirectly, can be included here. To define the idea: factors such as changing housing needs, an interest in living in the country, purchase of one's own home, new demands concerning the residential environment and many other factors. Rural and provincial town authorities, welfare policies etc. also belong to these general factors.
Fig. 13.3: Research Design

Independent variables

Determinants

External forces

General framework

Limits

Internal forces

Behaviour

System-imminent forces

system imminent forces

Decay

Dependent variables

General social developments

specific municipal developments

Limits

(administrative) authorities

Inhabitants

Groups of inhabitants

Interest groups

Socio-cultural subsystem

Demographic structure

Social structure

Cultural structure

Natural surroundings

Spatial subsystem

Artificial surroundings

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This conceptual scheme, reproduced in the diagram Research design (fig. 15.3.) takes as its starting point the fact that decay is the result of the combination of the labelled main components, which, according to varying situations, make a varying contribution to the explanation of the phenomenon.

The investigation

In order to state, in more definite terms, which factors can be regarded as the causes of decay, a thorough investigation was carried out into the occurrence, development and current situation in a residential area (social housing) of a medium-sized Dutch town, Deventer, which was built shortly after the Second World War. By means of an analysis of the creation of plans for the neighbourhood, developments in the neighbourhood since its earliest days and the current situation, as well as by means of interviews with responsible administrative authorities, civil servants of the local services and of all sorts of other parties concerned (housing corporations etc.) and moreover a detailed inquiry among residents and ex-residents, we aimed to obtain as detailed a picture as possible of the way in which the neighbourhood has deteriorated, and which factors are responsible for this. The method followed was therefore the analysis of the life history of a single neighbourhood.

With the aid of information obtained from statistical material, planning analysis, systematic observation, interviews, analysis of administrative documents and an inquiry among the residents, we were able to establish that in the district under investigation there is evidence of decay: statistically, an increasingly one-sided composition of the population, a decline in the average social standing of the inhabitants, an increasingly large percentage of people living on social security benefits, an unprecedentedly high turnover, and also a relative deterioration of all types of elements of housing, residential surroundings and town planning configurations. The responsible administrative authorities judged the developments taking place in the neighbourhood as negative and spoke about a neighbourhood in decay, which could hardly be saved; also the residents and ex-residents thought the present situation was worse than it used to be, particularly because of the increase in the number of foreign workers, people living in caravans and families moving in from other parts of the town because of renovation projects. As far as could be ascertained the negative developments had occurred in greater measure in this neighbourhood, than in any other neighbourhood in Deventer. Furthermore, it could be established that the decay occurred and was felt particularly in the demographic and socio-cultural structure of the neighbourhood while this was true to a lesser extent for the spatial structure (with the exception of housing, which was criticised because of system faults).

Verification

With the aid of the research design, attempts are now being made to stop the causes of decay in the neighbourhood, which have just been mentioned. Some general conclusions are:

1. In the first place, it has been established - how can it be otherwise with such a complicated question - that decay is not defined by one or several factors, but is a combination of a great number of factors. These factors strengthened one another and produced a downward spiral.

2. In the second place, it appeared that general social developments, which are difficult to quantify, play a role in the decay. General factors such as changes in living preferences, increase in welfare, increased mobility and also, for example
An increasingly one-sided composition of the population (photo placed at the author's disposal)

Deterioration of housing and residential surroundings (photo placed at the author's disposal)
the creation of new residential areas based on a more modern understanding of
town planning, made the neighbourhood relatively less attractive.

3. Within the general social framework, the municipality tried to realise an
internal arrangement of the area by means of an objectively or vaguely structur­
ed social administration, welfare administration, housing administration, services
administration etcetera. They started from a more or less basic knowledge of the
phenomena and allowed themselves, because of limited means, to act according
to priorities. When deciding these priorities, a certain degree of arbitrariness
could often be felt. Various things were often suggested because of social
pressure, official hobby-horses, suppositions about great chances of success for
the administration and political influence. As a result of one thing and another
consideration for the neighbourhood remained secondary to that of other neigh­
bourhoods.

4. A very real factor in the explanation of decay in neighbourhoods is the
measure to which the phenomenon is related to the original situation. So it seems
that plans for this neighbourhood had been brought about by a 'dubious' procedure
and that at the time of the treatment of this in the local council there were
fears of a less attractive residential area in the future. The whole plan was of a
conventional structure. It was surrounded by several great barriers, such as a
main road, a municipal boundary line and a railway line. It was composed of one­
family houses with the use of prefabricated constructions (communal hallway
flats) at the edges. The streets were planned at right angles to one another and
the green belt and recreation facilities were situated at the outer edge. More­
over, the rents were not very high for that time, and the first homes were predo­
minantly inhabited by workers from the Groningen en Drente fen districts who
had been attracted to the area because they started to work with a local firm.
Moreover, there was a caravan encampment near the district, and from the very
beginning this neighbourhood was given a certain image by the people of Deven­
ter. In fact, it can be said that the decay which occurred later was already
depth-rooted in the initial situation and that the suppositions which occurred
about a less attractive area in the future, seemed at a later stage to give
evidence of a clear insight into what was actually happening.

5. The conduct and behaviour of groups which jointly determine the admini­
stration of an area seem to be of exceptionally great importance in the
explanation of decay in neighbourhoods. The opinions which exist in the munici­
pal executive, official services and departments and also in entities such as
housing corporations, district works, socio-cultural works, education et cetera,
have a great influence in the judgement made about the neighbourhood and the
actions that are seen to be justified in this connection. From our study it
appeared that, from the very beginning, the neighbourhood was labelled in a
rather unattractive way, and that neither the municipality nor the housing
corporations could achieve very much in this neighbourhood. Consequently, the
situation was more or less left to run its course and people hoped that the
conflicts would not erupt. Maintenance work, improvements to the housing and
the living surroundings, adjustments to the traffic and parking problems and
many other things which could have increased the attraction and habitability of
the area were not carried out. Some large-scale activities were carried out or at
least planned, such as a road running right through the middle of the neighbour­
hood which would join up with a town by-pass; there was also a multi-functional
building, which people hoped would 'liven up' the neighbourhood. One factor
which stood out among others was that the administrators ascribed the negative
developments in the neighbourhood to the residents. Many of the people, so it
was asserted, were anti-social people with little initiative who spoil housing, who
are greatly in arrears with their rent and live off social benefits. This one-sided
and negative attitude was, however, used as a rationalisation for their own short-
comings. The consequence of this was that this attitude prevented people from
seeing the causes which had to be sought in the administrative authorities
themselves. All in all, this resulted in a picture of decay which, according to
administrative authorities, was ascribable to the residents, but which was
furthered by the negative attitudes (and actions linked to this) of the ad-
ministrative authorities. Of course these authorities were not solely responsible;
the behaviour of some residents in the past has not done the neighbourhood any
good. Sporadic incidents such as the burning out of houses, the use of gardens for
parking caravans, bad maintenance of front and back gardens, bad treatment of
green areas etcetera have encouraged quite a lot of people to move. The vacant
houses were frequently given to problem and rehoused families, partly because
other people did not want to live in the area. The well-known vicious circle came
into operation, and one thing caused the next with the final result that the area
became socially problematic.

6. The fact, that the administrative authorities had done so little to prevent the
deterioration was ascribed, by themselves, to the lack of means, particularly
financial means. The municipality had a public budget deficit: a so-called article
12 municipality. This argument can always be used in situations where people do
not actually want to do anything about the situation. Moreover, within the body
of the civil servants in this type of municipality, there is always a tendency to
put everything off because there is no money for it. This mentality can, however,
become responsible for the fact that people are insufficiently aware of regula-
tions on government subsidies, which could possibly offer a solution to the
problem. So, only at the time of the investigation was it made clear to the
municipality, by means of interviews with the investigators, that there were
regulations on government subsidies for residential and district improvements,
which were available for post-war districts. The general outcome was that the
administrative authorities were using the lack of means as an excuse rather than
as a convincing argument.

Interpretations

The conceptual scheme, presented in the investigation, seemed to be a good
method of obtaining an overview of a rather wide-ranging set of factors which
affect neighbourhood decay. After the end of the investigation, it seemed to be
desirable to put the results of the investigation into a more general sociological
framework. Jürgen Habermas' theory about communicative actions seems to be
an interesting interpretation framework (8). He points out that in the develop-
ments of modern community life (the modernisation process) the economic and
the state subsystems made themselves independent of the every-day milieu. The
basis for the handling of the economy and the state is based on the internal
dynamics of objective, instrumental action. The independent subsystems of eco-
conomy and state have interests (profit and power) different from those of the
residents, when building homes and new estates. Whenever the creation of com-
munities (and therefore also of neighbourhoods) is primarily determined by the
instrumental objectivity of the state and of economics, then a colonization of
the milieu occurs, that is, it is permeated by cognitive-instrumental procedure-
orientations and parts of the milieu become the domain of bureaucratic institu-
tions. Consequently, living, as an element of the milieu, comes under the juris-
diction of the objectivity of economics and the state, and turns into (commer-
cial) buildings and (instrumental) plans. From this perspective, decay in neigh-
bourhoods is closely related to the attitude and behaviour of the economic and
state subsystems.
Preventing decay

The investigation (also) aimed to make recommendations about the way in which decay in neighbourhoods could be avoided, or at least delayed. The insights into the causes made it possible to distinguish three types of measures:

a. measures to prevent decay;
b. measures to slow down decay;
c. measures to cushion the effects of decay.

In the investigation report many measures, which can be taken in all similar situations, have been summed up. Furthermore, for the benefit of the effect of the process of decay in the neighbourhood under study, on the basis of the investigation results, the aims were drawn up in detail. This took place according to the combination of methodologies - the empirical inductive method and the logical deductive method - and resulted in around 300 recommendations for improvements to the neighbourhood, and further, in ten golden rules for a short term effect on the neighbourhood.

In the meanwhile, in the neighbourhood where the investigations were carried out, improvements to living conditions and surroundings have taken place (principally under the influence of vacancies which occurred and self-help measures on the part of the residents). But the negative image has not been removed by these efforts. Purely technical measures are not in a position to divert a social process (sufficiently).

Summary

Some post-war neighbourhoods are now beginning to fall into decay. In connection with the prevention, or at least the delay, of this process of decay, it is of importance to trace the causes of the process. In a post-war neighbourhood in Deventer (a medium-sized town in the Netherlands) attempts have been made to study this process of decay more closely. The central questions of the investigation were:

1) To what extent can symptoms of decay be traced in post-war neighbourhoods?
2) What are the causes of occurring decay?
3) How can imminent decay, or decay which is already in progress, actually be delayed?

The investigation used a conceptual scheme in which decay was attributed to the conduct and behaviour of some important actors (namely residents, residents' organisations, political authorities, organisations for social housing et cetera) as an explanation of the occurring decay.

Notes


Being a small country, the Netherlands are open to all sorts of influences from abroad. Consequently post-war housing problems have international aspects as well as peculiarly Dutch traits. Since ample documentation from the United Kingdom is available, parallels with Britain, which are indeed striking, will be pointed out (For the U.S.A., see references 2 and 3).

Symptoms

More or less grave maintenance problems are experienced in numerous residential neighbourhoods, mostly built in the sixties (1,20). Problem areas are on the whole characterized by a housing stock mainly consisting of flats of the gallery access type in the most heavily subsidized sector (comparable to British council housing, in Dutch: ‘woningwetbouw’), owned by housing corporations. As long as the housing shortage was very acute, prospective tenants were easy to find. But as soon as supply on the housing market became greater and more varied, the blocks of flats in question came to be regarded as a third-rate or at best second-rate solution. This resulted in a considerable turnover of tenants. Those who left were in many cases replaced by households with minimum choice, including problem families and foreign workers.

Partly in consequence of the great turnover of tenants, the number of relations between neighbours in such blocks were below average, which made for anonymity and lack of social control. This course of things manifested itself in careless use of facilities such as lifts and refuse chutes, in graffiti on walls and in neglect and vandalism of the housing environment in general (21). In this way downward spirals occur: the blocks in question become less and less popular and maintenance problems continue to increase.

While the quality of the dwellings and their environment is by many people regarded as inferior, the total cost of housing for the tenants in such flats is generally higher than for people living in rented one-family houses (6,5,16). This is due to the service costs, which are nearly always higher for flats than for houses.

There are indications that the problems sketched tend to be greater in high-rise flats than in low-rise. In addition, large size and uniformity of the blocks seem to have adverse effects on tenant satisfaction (1). This tendency is illustrated by the example of the Bijlmermeer, a uniform high-rise area of very large scale, which was intended to be an ideal community, an example for the
rest of the world, if the municipal propaganda media were to be believed. Their enthusiasm was echoed by almost the entire local and national press, until the first blocks had been erected, which were immediately labelled as 'barracks', and 'a thousand flats in a row, and all alike'.

As hundreds of these mass-produced flats were completed, it became evident that most Amsterdammers did not agree with the planners that this was really Utopia. Tenants for the Bijlmermeer had to be recruited from people who were not at all on the municipal housing list of urgent cases.

The flats were occupied well before the parking garages were completed. When this happened there was much opposition to the obligatory use of this facility, for which no one had asked and which meant a considerable amount of extra rent. Not only were high-rise blocks relatively unpopular and expensive, a number of them turned out to be poorly built into the bargain. This meant that major repairs became necessary after no more than 15 years. Owing to faults in the construction or composition of reinforced concrete, galleries and balconies had to be repaired, which meant great nuisance to tenants and extra maintenance costs. This is a legacy of a period in which priority was given to rapid construction and new construction methods and building materials were applied without knowledge of their long-term consequences.

At present problem consciousness seems to be greatest in cases where housing corporations are faced with various kinds of acute problems at the same time: high tenant turnover, vacancies, vandalism and necessity of major repairs to buildings and rehabilitation of the housing environment (1,20). However, it is to be expected that problems of general decline are latently but inherently present
in many post-war blocks of flats in the council-house sector. The first symptoms of this decline are becoming visible in the wear and tear that facilities such as lifts, refuse chutes, boxes and entrance lobbies are beginning to show.

Explanations

Sociological research has shown that the explanation of the course of things sketched above is mainly to be found in the way of life and housing preferences of the Dutch (4,10), and in the neglect of these preferences by decision makers. From the fifties (4) onward it has been clear that there is a widespread preference of dwellings that are immediately accessible from the street, with no interference of entrance lobbies, galleries, stairs, lifts or passages that have to be shared with other households in the block. In addition, so-called communal gardens are not liked very much by most people and little used, while at least 70 per cent of the Dutch people prefer a house with a private garden to a flat (10,13). The fact that the home can only be reached via facilities that cannot be controlled by any individual tenant or household makes for irritation and dissatisfaction. Very large and uniform blocks are experienced as forbidding and repulsive, they make it difficult for people to feel at home once they left their flat (6).

That the majority of the Dutch people consider a flat to be inferior to a house was known to most leading public housing experts in the thirties, when there was an ample supply of housing. Outside the big cities, the housing stock was almost exclusively of the low-rise type. In the post-war period, when there was a great housing shortage, more and more flats came to be built, also in smaller urban and urbanized communities. Some experts, i.e. within the Ministry of Housing, welcomed this development. Others wondered whether in the long run flats would prove to be a good investment. They expected that as soon as there would be more supply on the housing market, more vacancies would occur in flat blocks than in one-family houses, and that a new wave of suburbanization would develop as soon as this would be made possible by building and planning policy (4).

Early in the sixties there were also indications that high-rise blocks were likely to prove particularly vulnerable as an investment (6), since high-rise has all the disadvantages of flats in general and in addition a number of specific drawbacks, viz.: extra high service costs, the lift as barrier between the home and the street, noise caused by strong winds, bleakness of access galleries in bad weather, and great disadvantages for families with young children.

As regards the cost of housing there is a general tendency for high-rise to become in the course of time relatively more expensive since wages of maintenance personnel and replacement of technical equipment are subject to increase in price level (5). With the further development of permissiveness in the sixties and seventies it has become evident that the anonymity prevailing in housing environments characterized by large blocks of flats in a number of cases invites vandalism and minor crime (1,20). The concepts developed by Newman concerning defensible space (1) and the consequences of a lack of it prove to be relevant in such cases.

Reasons for large-scale building of flats

In the sixties there was a high-rise boom, caused by a combination of factors (6,20). 'Progressive' architects and town planners, influenced by internationally known opinion leaders such as Gropius and Le Corbusier, had long cherished the idea that high-rise was the best solution for housing the urban working classes. According to this school of thought, 'communal' facilities in blocks of flats would
foster 'community life' (7). In the Netherlands some prominent professors of architecture and town planning advocated large-scale construction of high-rise. One of them made a master plan for a new town with a target population of 100,000 with 60 per cent of all housing accommodation in high-rise (later this plan was radically changed through citizen action). The town planning office of the municipality of Amsterdam, regarded as the primus inter pares, planned the Bijjmermeer with a target population of 110,000 and 90 per cent of the dwellings in high-rise (the second part of this project was changed under pressure of the housing corporations, who refused to be saddled with more 9-storey blocks) (1).

An important contribution to a climate of opinion favourable to flats was made by the Commissie Hoogbouw-Laagbouw (Committee high rise-low rise). This commission was appointed by the Dutch Institute for Housing and Town Planning (NIROV) at the request of the Minister of Reconstruction and Housing (7). Its task was to study the problems with regard to the choice of the types of residential building, and more especially the number of storeys. The report of this commission was published in 1961, when the then Minister of Housing and the Building Industry highly praised "this thorough study, which I hope shall have a beneficial influence on housing standards in this country."

I will discuss here two aspects of the report, viz. the part that was meant to be a sociological study, and the recommendations that were made as to specific points to which attention should be given in designing and building the various types of mass housing.

The sociological analysis, if it can be called so, is faulty. Essentially it is a pseudo-scientific apology for some designers' ideologies that were current at the time. Thus it is stated that "the designer" through his intuitive insight may be ahead of his time in creating multi-family housing with an environment that gives the tenants more freedom and privacy than traditional low-rise solutions. It is claimed that the housing environment thus created is more in harmony with modern social relations, which are characterized by a greater radius of action. These assertions are made without regard to empirical data or socio-psychological insight in the way various types of housing environments are experienced. Repeatedly it is suggested that high-rise is modern and progressive, and that low-rise is old-fashioned and conservative.

The commission makes a number of recommendations for conditions it considers essential if walk-up flats and high-rise respectively are to be made "comparable with" one-family houses. These recommendations are as such commonsense enough, for example that if families with children are to be housed on a large scale in highrise, a permanently supervised playground should be available. Other recommendations deal with aspects such as: good sound insulation, selection of tenants in flats, creating opportunities for gardening and hobbies, and the provision of private balconies of ample size to compensate for the absence of a private garden. However, two points seem to have been overlooked. The first one is that it remains to be seen if flats that come up to all the requirements mentioned will be experienced as really equivalent to one-family houses. In my view this would be equivalent to thinking that a person with artificial legs can walk just as well as one who has his or her own legs. In other words, a functional analysis does not do sufficient justice to the psychological experience of a situation in its totality.

The second point is that if all these provisions should be made, flats would become even more expensive than they are now. It should be noted that none of the recommendations in question was given the form of a regulation in a building code or a condition for government subsidies. Not even a checklist was given. In fact the report mainly served as an excuse for building great quantities of flats that were both inferior to and more expensive than one-family houses.

With regard to the cost of high-rise, experts in building technology in the early sixties manifested a great deal of wishful thinking. At a study conference in 1961
they came to the conclusion that high-rise residential building could be provided at the same price as other types of housing accommodation. But insufficient attention was given to long-term maintenance cost, about which data were available from Great Britain (5).

Early in the sixties one of the Ministers of Housing made ending the housing shortage the main aim of his housebuilding policy, which was to be pluriform and expansive. Industrial building was encouraged, and it was thought by many experts that this mainly meant building great quantities of uniform flats in straight rows.

Macro-sociological factors

Not only empirical data on housing activities and housing preferences but also macro-sociological insight lead to conclusions that are quite different from those drawn by the Commissie Hoogbouw-Laagbouw. Round 1960 the Netherlands entered an era of rapidly rising incomes, increasing amounts of leisure and mass-motorization. Under these conditions it was to be expected that, as had happened before in the United States, large sections of the urban population in the higher and middle income groups were going to prefer low-rise suburban housing environments to urban neighbourhoods dominated by big blocks of flats. Indeed suburbanization in the Netherlands in the sixties and seventies developed much faster than had been expected by leading town planners. Gradually they became conscious of the fact that if well-planned new towns and urban neighbourhoods were to compete with small villages in the vicinity it would be necessary to give more attention to low-rise and to variation in house design. Thus a reaction set in, which sometimes went to the other extreme of overdoing variation in house-type and small-scale design (nicknamed "the new cosyness"). This policy change is the result of various factors. In the late sixties much housing market research was done, which confirmed conclusions on housing preferences that sociologists had come to as early as the fifties. In the second place there was the unfavourable experience of municipalities and housing corporations with flats. And in the third place there was the participation movement of the late sixties, which made for the creation of housing environments of a more populist nature than had been current in the previous period.

Tenants' motives for preferring flats

Research has shown that there are essentially two kinds of motives for people preferring a flat to a house, namely the nature of the dwelling as such and special qualities of location (6,9,8). Flats are preferred by people who want a dwelling in which all the rooms are at the same level, so that upkeep is easy. This quality is then considered more important than living on the ground and having a private garden. Such people mostly live in small households and they do not attach importance to gardening or having ample space for hobbies in and around the home. Among them is a number of aged people who are less fit physically. A bungalow, which might be an alternative, is usually too expensive as it requires relatively much land. In very small communities, where land is quite cheap, many aged people do live in bungalows, or in old farm houses with bedrooms on the ground-floor, which is practically the same thing.

Advantages of location are either a very fine view, easy access to highly appreciated facilities, or both (6,7,9). In these locations land tends to be very expensive, which encourages flat building. Examples of such locations are the promenades of seaside resorts, centres of big cities, and some locations near
railway stations.

In a number of cases the two motives converge. Potential tenants for a super-high block in the centre of Rotterdam are mainly people with one and two-person households with jobs in this centre. Many of them now live in highrise flats at the edge of urban communities. However, it by no means follows that all one- and two-person households and all aged people consider high-rise to be the most suitable type of housing accommodation for themselves.

In a recent investigation in a block of high flats in the West of Holland at least half of the households without children preferred a house with a garden. It would seem that the demand for small one-family houses (with three rooms) is at present greater than the supply.

As regards the wide and attractive view from the flat, mentioned by advocates of high-rise as one of its main advantages, the following remark can be made. As soon as a number of parallel blocks is built, as has very often been done in the Netherlands, many people on the lower floors and in the middle of the blocks have only a view of the monotonous galleries of the next block. The inequality of the views enjoyed by tenants in different positions within the block is often neglected by experts.

**Storeys preferred**

If they have free choice, people living in high-rise tend to prefer either the highest or the lowest storeys (6,9). The highest is preferred because of the view, and even more so because there one has no neighbours living on top of one's own flat. The lowest storeys are preferred because there one is not dependent on the lift for getting out to the street. Naturally this storey is preferred as a lesser evil by many families with children.

It follows that tenants' preferences as to the storey within a flat can only be met to a limited extent, depending on the total number of storeys.

**The impact of high-rise on townscape and landscape**

Tall buildings tend to have a great impact on the environment because of their great visibility, of the shadows they cast and of the strong winds around the edges of the buildings (15,6). Visually a tall building tends to dwarf its surroundings. Especially in historic city centres great care should be taken to prevent irreparable damage to the townscape by high buildings.

Some town planners have mentioned as one of the advantages of high-rise that the density is greater, less land is used, and more open country can be preserved than with low-rise (7). However, it has become evident that especially in the flat country of Holland tall buildings can be seen over great distances and their appearance is felt by many people to spoil the country atmosphere. It is a well-known fact that advocates of nature preservation resent tall buildings that can be seen from nature reserves. In this connection the term "pollution of the horizon" has been coined.

A tall building of a unique design located at an important node may become a major landmark, as the Eiffel Tower and the so-called skyscraper in the South of Amsterdam. However, such conditions tend to be rare. In the Bijlmermeer way-finding is difficult because of the uniform appearance of the blocks and of the open spaces between them. At one place in the Hague tower blocks that are identical are each marked with large-scale figures, so that the visitor is able to tell them from each other.

Research among students at the University in Brussels has made it clear that the numerous tall buildings in and around the centre of that city hardly play a
part in cognitive maps. It is the historic places and buildings that matter and that give identity to their surroundings. For that matter the Quartier Nord, where a number of tower offices and apartments has been erected, is the part of Brussels that is most frequently mentioned as the ugliest and most disliked part of the metropolis.

An investigation in the Antwerp region has shown that residential buildings are considered by most people less pleasant to look at as they are higher (14). The idea of a number of architects and town planners in the fifties, viz. that neighbourhoods could be made more attractive by inserting tower blocks for variety's sake is not shared by the public.

Parallels with the United Kingdom

Just as in the Netherlands, there was in the United Kingdom a high-rise wave in the sixties (17). There is an extensive documentation on the phenomenon, its causes and reactions of tenants.

Short (19) writes:
"There was the implicit assumption that the architects, the builders, the housing departments and the central government knew what should be built for people. For the majority of council house tenants high-rise blocks were totally unsuitable. Parents could not keep their eyes on the children. Vandalism was rife, and community ties were difficult to create, let alone maintain. The high-rise solution was a building solution, not a people's solution. The ultimate failure lay in the failure to consult the tenants either before or during the process of construction."

Dunleavy (18) points out that virtually all the available sociological evidence suggests that the vast majority of the British population would prefer to live in a house rather than in a flat. Although more and more people have experienced flat life, this overwhelming preference has changed little. Results of surveys showed that residents are much more satisfied with their flats as such then with their estates (the same was found by Dijkhuis in the Bijlmermeer (1). It should in be noted this connection that two well-known experts had previously voiced the opinion that the quality of the environment in the Bijlmermeer was much better than that of the flats).

Residents in British high-rise estates are highly critical of their appearance (18). They dislike concrete surfaces, dark colours, and an institutional or monumental appearance, which leads to frequent comparisons of high-rise schemes with prisons, barracks or even concentration camps. Small-scale building, traditional materials, space around buildings, grass and trees, colour and brightness are greatly valued.

Vandalism and associated minor crimes appear to be more frequent in high flats than in other types of housing (18,19). Loneliness and social isolation are also mentioned as adverse aspects of high-rise life. Space and storage standards are generally low. There are also residents who worry about fire safety at heights above the level which the local fire brigade can reach with their equipment.

Dunleavy's general conclusion is (18):
"In general then, high-rise flats can at best be characterized as a clearly second-best form of house accommodation. In the long term the effects of high-rise may be proved to be seriously detrimental to the interests of elderly or adult households as well as to those of families with children."
Some theoretical considerations

So far I have discussed a number of conclusions derived from empirical data. The question arises: what is the theoretical relevance of the facts referred to. What concepts are relevant here, and how can they be interrelated? It is evident that the problems described are to a great extent due to residential dissatisfaction of tenants, especially with regard to the immediate environment of their homes. What are the causes of this dissatisfaction, and what are its consequences?

Comparative study of various kinds of house forms has led me to the conclusion that not only privacy within the home is important but also some control of its immediate environment and easy access to public space. In blocks of flats the immediate environment of the home cannot be controlled, as it is not the private property of the individual tenant and is also used by other people in the block and by visitors. And between the home and the public space are a number of barriers which impede freedom of action. Tenants are forced to use intermediate spaces between the home and the street, spaces which they cannot control. And in many cases they do not like the design of these intermediate spaces nor the materials used.

These conditions make it difficult for flat dwellers to develop attachment to their environment. There is a strong contrast between the private, personalized interior of the flats and the impersonal, institutional atmosphere of the galleries, staircases, lifts, corridors and entrance lobbies that have to be crossed on the way to the outside world. Irritation and indifference result and conditions favourable to vandalism are created. This is the more so as the number of tenants and visitors using the facilities is greater. By contrast in a one-family house, even in a terrace, there is usually a private front and back garden which is controlled by the tenants, and in which they can express some aspects of their identity, while from this space-controlled by himself-the tenant has immediate access to the street. The garden presents opportunities for various kinds of activities, while contact with the earth and with the street is immediate and spontaneous. These conditions are favourable for attachment to and affection for the space around the home. Moreover, there is generally some visual control of the adjacent public area. Thus in a row house one can normally park the car on the street in front of the house, without too much danger that it is broken into. In high-rise such visual control is usually impossible as the ground-floor is used for storage space. Thus the key words are privacy, physical control, visual control and easy access to the outside world. This view corresponds with ideas about human habitation developed by philosophers and phenomenological psychology.

Thus the philosopher Vanderkerken stresses the dialectical character of the home, which is at the same time turned inward towards privacy and intimacy, and outward towards contact with the earth and the outside world. The psychologist Linschoten formulates this dual relationship as follows: "Being at home means living in the border area between inside and outside, using it so to say like a musical instrument". In this connection the results of research done by Van Naelten & De Pessemier (14) are also relevant. They showed people slides of various house forms and came to conclusions as to the visual qualities of the outside appearance of residential buildings that give the majority of people the greatest satisfaction. These were:

- The roof of the house should be clearly visible.
- There is around the house a private territory that is well defined.
- In this territory there are networks of easy readability.
- House and garden create a strong impression of physical and psychological security; the design is as a rule traditional; the efficiency of this kind of shelter was proved long ago. Familiarity with the design increases feelings of security.
- It is evident at a glance that all sorts of rest and activity are possible in house and a garden.
- In spite of the conventionality of the design, personalization is possible even in the slightest detail.

It is evident that more often than not the design of high-rise flats and also of very large blocks of walk-up flats of uniform appearance is a complete negation of these desiderata. And it is impossible to meet them all in any single block of flats.

From the above it does not follow that all people living in large blocks of flats are dissatisfied. There are a number of cases where the problems sketched do not occur. It is desirable that a comparative study of mass housing in high-rise and middle-rise should be made in order to find out what combination of factors cause the success or failure of housing people in flats. Possibly the decline of high-rise blocks can be prevented by a policy that combines tenant selection, good upkeep and other factors that contribute to satisfaction with the housing situation, while cumulation of unfavourable factors is likely to be the cause of acute problems. An example of the latter situation is Hoptille, a middle-rise project which was meant to be a reaction to the large scale of the Bijlmermeer. The designs create the impression that the architects have not paid sufficient attention to recommendations made by experts on the prevention of vandalism and on defensible space. In Hoptille there is an internal corridor that gives access to the entrances of over a hundred flats. In this way extremely favourable situations for vandalism are created, as a very large tract characterized by great anonymity and lack of visual control is situated right in the centre of the building. In addition a number of problem tenants were housed in Hoptille. The result has been that within a few years part of the building had become a ruin, and had to be rehabilitated.

**Remedies proposed**

Under the circumstances it is by no means surprising that officials of housing corporations and housing departments of municipalities have proposed numerous ameliorative measures, some of which are already being carried out (1,20).

These can be classed as follows:

A. Technical improvements
B. Reductions in rents and service costs
C. Prevention of vandalism and crime
D. Better adaptation of flats and their environment to the needs and preferences of tenants
E. Tenant selection

A. As such can be mentioned better sound and thermic isolation, better central heating, and repairs both of minor damage and of faults in constructions of reinforced concrete. All these measures are intended to make the flats more efficient as "machines to live in".
B. Large-scale reductions in rent have been made in the Bijlmermeer and a number of other projects. Costs of central heating can be reduced by providing equipment that can be regulated for each flat separately, instead of for the block or project as a whole.
C. It is hoped that vandalism and crime can be reduced by better supervision, both by house-masters and police. There are also proposals to use more vandal-proof materials and for closure of areas that are to be regarded as indefensible space, such as internal corridors and multi-storey facilities.
D. This is the most important category, it includes:
- In some university towns, conversion of flats to student housing.
- Provision of more lifts and better maintenance of lifts.
- Reduction of the scale of certain components of the housing environment, e.g., replacing long access galleries by shorter galleries.
- Making entrances of blocks accessible for motor-cars by the provision of service roads.
- Knocking two rooms into one large one, so that flats become more attractive for small households instead of for families with children.
- Redesign and re-arrangements of open spaces round flat blocks, so as to adapt them better to the use by residents and give them more identity.
- Converting four-rooms flats to the double number of two-room flats.
- Giving identity to blocks by means of colours or symbols.
- Doing away with wind nuisance around blocks.
- Effective participation of tenants in rehabilitation and maintenance.

E. This will only be possible if attempts to make the flats more attractive are successful; otherwise they will remain areas of minimum choice, for which tenant selection is very difficult.

It will be seen that most of the measures enumerated here mean that the existing housing environment of large-scale blocks is given qualities that are more like those of the conventional, small-scale type of housing that is preferred by the majority of the population. In addition of the existing costs of the projects in question, which are comparatively high as it is, this will involve considerable extra expenditure, for the government, for the housing corporations or for both. It is clear that a housing policy that had from the first given priority to adapting dwellings and their environment to well-known wishes and preferences of the population would have prevented a great deal of trouble for tenants, housing corporations and housing authorities, and would have been much cheaper.

The way in which the money needed for the operations described is going to be provided is a special subject that I will not deal with here.

In conclusion it should be noted that even if all the measures or the majority of them will be taken, there is no guarantee of their success. For the popularity of blocks of flats not only depends on their qualities as such, but on the situation on the local and regional housing market. If low-rise housing or small-scale walk-up apartments is available at about the same rents as large-scale blocks of flats, it is doubtful whether the latter will really be popular so that their decline can be stopped.

Therefore it is likely that a drastic reduction in size of large blocks or even their entire removal will be the best solutions as soon as this is financially feasible. An important argument for such drastic solutions is also that their disappearance will mean a considerable improvement of the visual qualities of the surrounding and countryside.

The moral of my story is: provision of types of housing and housing environments that are congruent with the wishes and preferences of residents is the best policy, and will in the long run prove to be good business. It is desirable that the gross mistakes that have been made by disregarding this simple principle should be corrected as drastically as possible.

Summary

Problems of post-war housing in the Netherlands are largely those of uniform large-scale blocks of flats, either of the gallery-access type, or high-rise, and often both. Recent developments can be characterized as more or less rapid flat
devaluation in an increasing number of projects. One of the factors causing this development is a greater and more varied supply on local and regional housing markets (20). In this situation many flats prove to be unpopular and relatively expensive, while maintenance problems, especially for non-profit housing corporations, are increasing rapidly.

This course of things is mainly due to two sets of factors, viz.:

1) **Technical shortcomings** of flat buildings owing to hasty construction and lack of long-term experience with building methods and materials used.

2) **Wishful thinking on the part of housing and planning experts** as well as responsible politicians, with regard to the long-term costs of flats and the popularity of this kind of housing in comparison with more traditional types of housing accommodations (7).

It should be noted that all the time results of sociological investigations were available showing that flats were preferred to one-family housing by only a small fraction of the Dutch population (10,4,6). Moreover, data from other countries justified the idea that in the long run flats, especially those in high-rise, would be more expensive than more conventional housing (5). Thus the high-rise wave of the sixties was a result of mistaken ideas of efficiency in mass housing construction and of architectural ideologies rather than of realistic insight into the most economic and effective way of meeting the housing demand of the population.

In view of the problems that housing authorities and housing corporations are faced with in consequence of flat devaluation it is understandable that all sorts of measures are proposed to improve the situation (1). Some of these ameliorative measures are already being carried out. Besides repair of damage to materials and constructions, most of the intended improvements can be regarded as attempts to subdivide large units into a number of areas of smaller scale and more varied design. The idea is thus to give more identity to dwellings, spaces and buildings, to reduce anonymity, and in general to achieve a better adaption to the needs and preferences of residents. It remains to be seen to what extent this kind of flat rehabilitation will make the housing in question attractive enough to compete with other house types.

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The strict separations of housing, recreation areas and traffic (metro line)
The experts in the Bijlmermeer
Introduction

In recent years, at regular intervals, newspaper articles have turned up in the daily press, reporting how terrible things are in some of the largest non-profit housing areas on the outskirts of some of the bigger provincial towns and Copenhagen. As a starting point such articles often take some violent incident, during which a particularly rough attack or a rape has been eye-catching enough in some editor's opinion. Sensationalism often points to very simple causalities. In a number of problems, however, there is a real background behind the reports, problems not only occurring in recently built Danish public housing areas but known in practically all West European countries in these years.

In this paper I shall try to give a rather brief account of the development in non-profit housing in Denmark after World War II, both of the extent of building and of its nature. I shall also try to deal with the subject of problems troubling several of these housing areas today, and I shall encircle the "solutions" to these problems so far.

Subsequently, I shall expand a little on a more fundamental discussion about a strategy of solutions, which - in a number of variations - have turned out to be the most successful ones. This discussion will be based on both Danish and Swedish experiences.

By way of introduction, however, it is necessary to call attention to the fact that the Danish problems in recently built public housing areas are far less extensive and severe than those known in other European countries.

The development in non-profit housing after World War II

After World War II Denmark, like most other West and East European countries had to face a considerable housing need. But the economy was exhausted until the late 1950s, so the housing areas initiated were - just as before the war - rather limited in individual extent.

In a very few cases more than 400-500 apartments were built at the time, and usually the housing areas were traditional in design, choice of materials and construction methods. 3-4 Storey blocks in parklike surroundings, usually built in connection with existing housing areas and neighbourhoods.

At the beginning of the 1960s, however, - a.o. in consequence of a governmental initiative (the Assembling Circular 1960) - competitive industrial production methods were developed which more than anything else could speed up the building process of the new housing areas. At the same time there was a strong
economic recovery which, among other things, resulted in a considerable demand for housing. This resulted both in a tremendous revival of the building of single-family houses, which were not industrialized although conformed to "standard-houses", and in a boom in the building of large series of multi-storey housing areas, primarily built by non-profit housing corporations. There were long waiting-lists at the non-profit housing corporations and, thus, they could expect that no matter how big the building quota would be in the immediate future, there would still be sufficient demand for apartments.

The planning of these large housing areas - some of them comprising up to 3,000 apartments - was carried out with considerable expertise and many attempts at foresight. A consistent traffic differentiation was introduced, a number of common facilities were provided: laundries, meeting rooms, workshops, hobby rooms, and gradually throughout the 1960s, bigger and bigger apartments were built. Finally a large amount of the apartments finished at the beginning of the 1970s had the size of 120-130m²: 5 rooms and a large kitchen, two toilets and a bathroom, often with two balconies/terrasses, and equipped with a refrigerator and a freezer. Very often the housing areas were rather high, 6-12 storeys, but on the other hand they usually had big green outdoor areas.

The residents of these housing areas moved in over a rather short number of years. Immediately as the guy derricks went along on their trail and the installation of electricity, water and heating was brought to an end, the residents moved in. Even the biggest housing areas were finished in the course of a few years. And in the majority of cases all apartments were tenanted. Everything went as planned up to the middle of the 1970s. The critical voices that could be heard around the housing areas about the problematic social consequences, could be ignored - so far there were no danger signals or problems. But in the middle of the 1970s the trend was reversed. Some of the housing areas began to have trouble in letting the apartments. To begin with, these were the housing areas designed as large urban units, far from already existing urban areas with the working places and a greater variety of service facilities. In these housing areas, which had only been filled up for a few years, the decay-processes started, both physically and socially, much faster than anywhere else.

A strong contributory cause to the turnover was the fact that the large apartments had gradually reached a rent level which was comparable with the expenditure of home-ownership. But while the costs of a privately owned dwelling are frozen from the moment the owner moves in according to the present Danish regulations of financing and taxation, the financing conditions of the non-profit housing corporations entail that the rent continues to grow for many years after the moment the resident has moved in, concurrently with a scaling down for interest subsidies.

In the course of the 1970s the building rate decreased rapidly. The total annual building activity in 1973 of 55,000 dwellings, which was the peak of the entire building activity after World War II, comprised 13,000 public housing apartments and 42,000 home-ownerships, primarily consisting of single-family houses. Since then, the decrease has resulted in the fact that today (1983) 10,000 public housing apartments are built and 11,000 owner-occupied dwellings. The private production of apartments has almost been at a stagnant state for the past 10 years, but is now beginning to accelerate again. And now smaller apartments and houses are built. Today very few apartments are bigger than 80m², whereas the single-family houses - ten years ago of about 150m² - have a size of about 120m².

An interesting fact, is that especially non-profit housing has been modified. Generally speaking, there is no high-rise building anymore. The only exception is the supplementary building in connection with urban renewal as well as building in connection with already existing housing areas, where the low building form would not fit in. But otherwise, the accent has been put on various kinds of low-density building.
Problems in non-profit housing

This process has resulted in the fact that a number of large, coherent housing areas, which were finished during the period from 1965 until about 1975, now have to face problems of a large turnover of residents. In certain places about one third of all residents move every year. This puts a heavy pressure on the social structure of the housing areas, resulting in, among other things, less respect for and protection of the dwelling, the staircases and the building one happens to live in. There are also problems in re-letting the apartments. Frequently up to 10 pct. of the apartments are empty on annual basis. This increases the pressure on the social structure caused by the turnover of residents, and it makes the housing area visually repulsive, at the same time as there began to be empty apartments in the non-profit housing areas. The economic crisis in general intensified; unemployment in particular increased considerably during this period. From a few percents at the beginning of the 1970s it increased to more than 10 pct. at the beginning of the 1980s. Unemployment especially hit the weakest groups society, those who lived in a frail balance between making a living for themselves and accepting public assistance. For a great majority of this group the balance was now disturbed so that the social security system had to lend a hand and more or less take care of a number of functions, such as a place to live. And this is where the new housing areas come in, the empty apartments immediately available to the social services. The result was that, already strained from a social point of view, they were strained even further, and that the problems of these areas haven been intensified in several aspects. Apart from that, a number of these areas have also been stricken with a far too rapid physical decay. This is both due to experimental failure with new materials and construction and to more commonplace forms of jerry building. The decay is increased through the economic problems the housing areas have to face because of failing payments of rents. (In Denmark the individual non-profit housing area is an independent economic unit). There are more limited resources for maintenance, and no resources at all for improvements of the housing areas.

The result of all these processes is that today there is an accumulation of social problems in several recently built multi-storey housing areas, problems which are not primarily based on conditions within the housing areas, but which through economic and social selection mechanisms from the surrounding society are gathered in these areas, and which - in combination with the decay processes characterizing the physical environments - create an aggregated, violent and very complex situation, which here and there may seem almost hopeless.

Solution strategies up till now

The problems of the Danish non-profit housing areas have not been recognized until recently. Therefore, the present spectrum of solutions available is not very comprehensive, - nor are the attempts to find solutions to these problems. But a picture begins to emerge of two main strategies from the variety of attempts made so far.

The first strategy is to maintain the present residential composition and the influx of residents noticed so far, an influx often characterized by groups in a poor social position. This agrees with the social objectives of the non-profit housing areas, stipulating that also the badly situated groups receive reasonable living conditions. The improvement efforts in the scope of this strategy aim at making the areas, and perhaps also the individual dwelling, as vivid and attractive as possible. Normally great importance is attached to the building up of social infrastructures. The organizational life of the housing area is supported, social activities are initiated, both for the groups causing the problems, for
children and young people, and for the more silent groups, the elderly and the unemployed. The effort aims at giving the housing area the kind of history and self-respect often lacking completely, to encourage the social life to bloom again and - if all goes well - to build up gradually more self-supporting social networks, in which the majority of residents can find a place and a function.

In Denmark the efforts in connection with this strategy have been concentrated on some of the biggest and most severely tried housing areas. Frequently these efforts have taken the work of the social sector as a starting point. But in the main they have been efforts of a limited extent: relatively few social and/or community development workers for a rather limited period of time. And it is still impossible to appraise the lasting value of this type of effort, so that a troubled housing area does not just relapse into its former condition as soon as the social resources introduced from the outside are withdrawn again.

The other strategy aims at changing the composition of residents in the troubled housing areas. As a principal rule such a strategy will be based on the idea of "filtrating" the worst situated persons and families from the total group ready to move in, and on giving notice of the termination of the contracts held by those who are classified as "trouble-makers" among the residents. This can be carried into effect more or less openly by making requirements about the capability to pay the rents or about the stability as residents in earlier dwellings or employment. In Sweden in more and more places "Stability-criteria" are applied; for instance, it is customary to demand five years of non-stop employment or residence. This means residents capable of establishing and maintaining stable social relationships. In the Danish context the main stress has been laid on income-requirements, which - for whole municipalities - are put forward for people moving in from other municipalities. Requirements about well over three times as much annual income of the household moving in, as the annual rent would be, have been practiced until recently, when this requirement was reduced to twice as much as the annual rent. However, these requirements were not stipulated by the non-profit-housing corporations. On the contrary if anything. Because even the poorest new resident in a non-profit-dwelling means a rental income (often to be paid by the municipality) to the housing corporation. So far the problem of the empty apartments has been estimated to be bigger than the problems of physical and social decay. On top of that, the strategy is in contrary to the social objective forming the basis of the non-profit housing corporations. The indirect effects of the income-limitations on the composition of residents in non-profit housing have not yet been evaluated.

In Sweden, however, the latter strategy has been tested over a period of ten years in a private estate agency. At the beginning this agency worked in the field of the privately owned stock of dwellings, but - once they had produced very convincing results - they were also engaged by non-profit housing corporations. In broad outlines, the idea of the strategy is to stake on a very intensive (and capital-absorbing) effort in the external environment and the empty apartments to be let. The outdoor environments are being made attractive. Large parking areas close to the dwellings are transformed into parks and perhaps garden areas with beautiful plantations and intensive care. Existing green areas are equipped with supplementary big trees and carefully attended. Benches, sheds and fences are repaired or replaced. Everything possible is done to make the outdoor areas look neat and clean. The staircases are repaired, and the walls are painted with ingenious motives, wherever there is room. The apartments are newly furnished with e.g. a very high quality in kitchens and bathrooms. The objective is clearly to attract residents with a higher income than those accommodated so far. Parallel with all these improvements the new residents are filtrated to satisfy the demand for social stability. A strict order is introduced into the housing area so that anyone (usually single persons) or any family, bothering the other
residents with noise, filth or other nuisance, receive a warning and perhaps a subsequent notice.

This strategy was successfully tried out in a very footworn and disreputable housing area on the outskirts of Gothenburg. The result was that in the course of three years of extraordinary efforts on a broad and collective front the area was completely stabilized and today functions without any extraordinary efforts.

A discussion of strategy

There can hardly be any dispute about the fact that a re-alignment and improvement of the physical environment, both as far as the outdoor areas are concerned and with a view to improvements of entrance areas, staircases and the individual dwelling, is greatly needed in many of these housing areas. Such improvements will often be absolute prerequisites for letting these apartments at all. And perhaps such intensive efforts can also have an impact on the future of these areas: that more attention is paid to beauty than to ugliness. Nor will it probably be disputed that efforts, performed by social workers, community development workers, the police, the church and perhaps other forces, and directed towards an establishment or rebuilding of social networks in such areas can only improve the situation (or, at the worst, maintain the status quo).

There are many indications that even a rather intensive effort along these guidelines is not enough to solve the problems often accumulated in the large, recently built non-profit housing areas, and there is considerable evidence that the biggest problems are not due to the physical environment - but due to a want of social relations in these housing areas.

In view of this phenomenon the question arises whether it will be acceptable to diverge - in one way or another - from the traditional social objectives, and to carry out a filtration of potential residents, and to enforce a more rigid policy towards those residents, who present themselves as a nuisance to their neighbours by messing about, or otherwise molesting their neighbours and housing area.

In favour of such a policy is the fact that in many ways it would be cynical and even naive to imagine that quite ordinary citizens within a non-profit housing area should be able to solve, through the neighbourhood and neighbourly relations, often rather complex and serious social problems. This notion is mostly based on the impression that problems of alcoholism, household rows, violence, a disorderly lifestyle, neglect of children, etc., in former non-profit housing areas could be solved to a certain extent without interference from public authorities. There is no doubt that this has been possible in neighbourhoods with a history of 10-15-20 or even more years, and in connections, where the families were much less stressed in terms of time, than they are today. Another contributory cause is the fact that today there is another general attitude to the solution of such problems. They are left to the social administration of the municipalities: "to someone else".

In this connection it would be cynical to burden ordinary people, - workers and subordinated officials living in non-profit housing areas - with the task of solving such difficult and, from a human point of view, strenuous problems in their spare time. And it may also be difficult in the sense in that especially these people, who cannot afford to "escape" to privately-owned dwellings in untroubled areas, should be the ones who are forced to live in constant fear of assaults and wanton destruction of property in and around a dwelling for which they pay a comparatively high rent. All this, no doubt, speaks in favour of the "filtration-strategy".

But the "filtration-strategy" is not without problems. The major problem, from a social point of view, is the question of what will become of those expelled, those, nobody wants to take in? The probable course will be that they will take to - or be referred to - a few areas/dwellings, which will soon assume the cha-
racter of ghetto areas, in which the problems will be even more overt than to-
day. Explosive, destructive pockets of society no good, and where the next gene-
ration will probably end in an even more desperate situation, where, in the ex-
treme, an open breach with the social welfare strategy, - the staple ideology of
Danish Social and Housing Policy for decades - will be the result.

Thus it is not very likely that this will be a politically acceptable solution to
Danish society. But the money-transfers from rich municipalities (without pro-lems) to the poor municipalities (with problems) that have taken place so far,
will no longer suffice. The problems cannot be solved with money any longer-
more. It may become necessary to discuss a distribution of social problems now.
Perhaps in the most direct form, in that every municipality must carry a certain
share of problematic persons and families. The former income limits were the
first steps in this direction, taken by municipalities with many non-profit-housing
areas, so as to avoid importation of social problems from other municipalities.
These limits, however, did not change the social structure already built up in the
"importing municipalities". A more indirect strategy may therefore be required,
a strategy, in which all municipalities are expected to have a certain amount of
non-profit housing of various size - and above all - various prices. There is still
far to go before this goal has been achieved, at least to some extent. There are
many municipalities with only a few percents of non-profit dwellings, whereas
other municipalities have about 50 pct.

However, in comparison with other countries, Denmark is in the lucky position
that the problems of the recently built housing areas are much smaller and more
easy to grasp. Thus, it should be possible to solve the problems - if they are
recognized, and if we have the courage to make a generous use of resources and
ideas, before it is too late.
18. IMPROVING RUN-DOWN ESTATES THROUGH LOCAL HOUSING MANAGEMENT

Patrick Allen (U.K.)

In the United Kingdom more than half of the eleven million dwellings constructed since 1945 have been built by public housing authorities. The high number of new dwellings completed in the post-war period led to high hopes that as a result, many of our housing problems would be solved. During the 1970s however such hopes faded as new problems emerged with modern, and in some cases even brand new, public housing that was so unpopular that local councils were unable to keep the dwellings occupied. The phenomenon developed despite ever lengthening waiting lists of applicants for public housing and the estates or properties concerned began to be described as "difficult-to-let". By 1983 local housing authorities in England were classifying more than 300,000 dwellings (some 6% of their total stock) as difficult-to-let.

The emergence of unpopular council estates took place against a background of local government reorganisation which produced much larger, and in many cases more centralised housing authorities. The average size of dwelling stock managed by each housing authority grew from 1400 properties just after 1945 to more than 14,000 after 1975. In the urban areas housing authorities became responsible for thirty, forty or fifty thousand dwellings and in the largest cities of all still vaster numbers; for example Birmingham with 129,000 dwellings, Leeds and Sheffield both with more than 90,000 properties. As a result relations between public landlord and tenant became much more complex and remote.

These changes coincided with the consequences of the move in the 1960s and 1970s away from cottage housing arranged in small traditional estates, towards increasingly sophisticated and complex designs and layouts. Industrialised building systems were to bring the benefits of mass production to housing construction. Multi-storey, high rise tower blocks were going to solve the problems of land shortage in urban areas. Deck access dwellings, providing "streets in the sky" in the optimistic jargon of the day, were to establish new communities away from the dangers and pollution of road traffic. As a result of these changes individual estates became much larger, in some cases with as many as 2,000 dwellings in linked blocks, and were built to high densities. Priority was given to capital spending, with central government setting targets and aiding the development of new-build programmes through legislation and financial support in subsidies and grants. The numbers game dominated and while there were strong political pressures to build large numbers of new homes as quickly and cheaply as possible, too little attention was paid to the question of
management and maintenance once the dwellings were occupied.

The initial reaction to the problem of council dwellings that were unpopular was to look for explanations in the realm of design. However it rapidly became clear that although there were design or structural factors involved in the unpopularity of particular estates, these were by no means the sole causes. Estates of similar size, design and layout were often significantly different in the ease with which properties could be let, the rate at which turnover occurred and so forth. It was certainly not a simple matter of particular designs such as deck-access or tower blocks being unpopular. They were not all unpopular and nor were all conventional houses with gardens easy to let.

Research by the Department of the Environment in the 1970s suggested that there was rarely one single factor that explained an estate's unpopularity. Instead estates usually become unpopular as a result of a combination of factors such as poor location, design or structural problems, lack of amenities, poor upkeep, and overstretched management and maintenance. Areas of unpopular dwellings become characterised by a high rate of applications to transfer away. Properties that become vacant may remain empty for a long period of time as offers to new tenants are refused and this in turn leads to greater problems with theft, vandalism and squatting. These factors feed upon each other so that the estates get caught in a downward spiral, developing a still worse reputation which is difficult to dispel. All but the most desperate households are deterred from accepting such accommodation and concentrations of deprived families develop.

A key finding from the Department of the Environment research was the relative neglect of housing management on many of the estates studied. Even estates with built-in problems as a result of complex design or layout were virtually without detailed day-to-day management. The housing department staff working on estates were generally in the most junior grades, often dealing with as many as 500 or even 1,000 tenancies each. The bulk of their time was spent on rent accounting and chasing rent arrears, leaving them with little time to devote to the problems that tenants faced in coping with vandalised facilities, a backlog of repairs, heating and damp problems and so on. The function of housing management often had only a low status within the structure of the local council. The heads of housing departments were often not at Chief Officer level. Instead Housing was subsumed within other departments such as the Architects or Environmental Health Departments and as a result took very much the junior role. There were many large modern estates that had been designed with no input from the housing department other than the specification of the overall dwelling mix. Planners and architects had made all the major decisions and there had been only limited feedback from the practical experience of housing managers.

The findings highlighted the fact that the vital role of housing management in the welfare and development of communities had been very much undervalued in many local authorities. The role is perhaps no less significant than the ones readily assumed - and therefore reflected in terms of prestige and power - for the education and social services departments. There is a need for more intensive and accessible housing management with improved co-ordination between management and maintenance.

Following this research on difficult-to-let housing, the Department of the Environment set up in 1979 the Priority Estates Project to experiment with ways of improving run-down and unpopular council estates. Four independent consultants have worked with tenants and local authority staff on initiatives on housing estates in the London Boroughs of Hackney, Lambeth and Haringey and the Greater Manchester boroughs of Bolton and Rochdale. The consultants have also visited and advised many other councils in England that have launched similar initiatives on run-down estates. The key element of the Priority Estates Project approach is that management and maintenance staff should be moved out of cen-
tralised Town Hall offices and based instead in the housing estates themselves. There they can work more closely with residents, develop a loyalty to and interest in their particular patch and be easily recognisable to residents as the persons responsible for housing matters on their particular estate. To be successful estate based staff must have direct control over the organisation of the main management tasks of repairs, letting, rent collecting and arrears control. Ideally they should also be in a position to act as the client for the range of other local authority services such as refuse collection and the upkeep of common areas that affect the environment and smooth running of an estate.

Equally important to the success of estate-based housing management is the need for effective consultation with tenants and moves to involve tenants directly in running their estates. Many councils in the past have carried out rather half-hearted consultation with tenants and then been disappointed by equally half-hearted responses. Such consultations invariably reach only the more vocal and outgoing minority and do not tackle the range of tensions and different interests which can be so destructive to an estate. In the Priority Estates Project these tensions and differences are tackled by combining a survey of all households on each estate with discussions with small groups of residents, representative of the population of the estate, randomly selected and invited, with each invited group meeting two or three times.

A general survey of households provides the opportunities to
- canvass the views of every household
- provide a positive reference for deciding changes
- make everyone feel involved in what is going on
- give and create a sense of commitment and incentive
- give everyone an indication that the landlord is taking interest in them.

Small group discussions provide an opportunity to
- explore in detail people's views and why they hold them
- get tenants to meet each other, get to know each other and begin to understand each other's point of view
- come up with an informal thought-through agenda for management, maintenance and environmental improvements.

Although carrying out such consultations is time-consuming, and may be costly, it can more than pay off in developing long-term co-operation and trust between estate-based council staff and residents. In the Priority Estates Project the initial consultation process on each estate led on to the development of tenant interest in helping to carry through the programme of priorities that they had drawn up.

The main benefits that have emerged from basing management teams on the estates that they serve, and from extending the responsibilities of the local housing manager include:
- swifter identification and response to problems that develop
- better contact with staff in other council departments who find it increasingly useful to work with someone who is on the spot
- more support for and effective supervision of staff and contractors
- greater awareness of what is going on on each estate. This enables a more flexible use of both staff and financial resources and has led to more imaginative and sensitive management.

For localised housing management to be effective the local estate manager must have control over the main management functions. The most critical of these are repairs and maintenance and lettings. The quality of the repairs service almost always feature strongly in tenant's complaints about their estates. Most repairs are fairly minor but labour-intensive and there is a need for day-to-day
flexible jobbing-repair staff. The establishment of an estate or area based local repairs team can have a dramatic effect on productivity and rapidly lead to the clearance of repairs backlogs. With a local repairs team there can be daily liaison with the estate management staff to ensure that work is programmed more efficiently, and unclear instructions on job-tickets and reports can be speedily sorted out. The presence of the repairs team on the estate, if possible with materials also kept locally, can lead to savings on time spent travelling, and reduce the number of abortive calls. The Priority Estates Project has demonstrated that localised repairs can lead to higher productivity, a high level of tenant satisfaction and the development of a patch loyalty by the repairs team.

Although the quality of the repairs service is often the item of greatest concern to tenants, the speed with which vacant dwellings are relet and occupied is also of critical importance to the successful management of run-down estates. Quite apart from the loss of rent and rate income to the council, if dwellings are left empty and boarded up for long periods, crime, vandalism and squatting becomes more likely. In most local authorities lettings have traditionally been centralised to ensure that allocation policies are applied fairly and equally throughout the local authority area. However the consequence of this on rundown estates is that by the time offers of accommodation are made the properties have been vandalised and either rendered unlettable or else are in such a state that all but the most desperate applicants refuse.

The experience from the Priority Estates Project is that the vicious circle of vacant dwellings leading to vandalism leading to repairs then more vandalism before the dwelling is relet, can be broken by the introduction of local letting schemes under the control of the estate-based staff. The advantages of maintaining a local list for run-down estates include speedier reletting of properties, which reduces void times and the loss of rent income, together with the guarantee that people who apply locally are actually willing to live there. Relatives, friends and local people are often willing to move onto a local estate, unpopular with outsiders, because of their roots in the neighbourhood. Such lettings provide an opportunity to strengthen local ties and to stabilise the turnover of population on such estates. In addition to increasing the speed of reletting, the local estate office can introduce a more personal element - often by accompanying prospective tenants to view the dwellings and to reassure them that repairs needed will be carried out. By "marketing" the properties in this way estate-based staff can often dramatically increase the number of offers that are accepted. Local control over lettings also enables greater flexibility in responding to demands for internal transfers and to particular circumstances, for example by taking positive steps to control the child density on an estate.

Improving priority estates involves a great deal more than traditional housing management alone. The housing department has to ensure that the whole variety of council services that affect an estate are delivered in the right way and at the right time. There is a great deal to be done in ensuring that the housing department can effectively exercise this client role on behalf of its tenants. In a typical situation refuse collection is provided by the cleansing department, lighting on the estate by the engineers' department, public open spaces are maintained by the parks department and so on and so on. Sometimes six or seven different departments are active on an estate and all their efforts contribute to how well the estate is managed and the quality of life for people living there.

Each of these departments have their own budget and are likely to resist interference from the housing manager claiming a right to do things differently. But the priorities of each department will not necessarily relate to the needs of the estate. There is a need, therefore, to bring effect to the exercise of a client role by housing through the development of area budgets, controlled by the local housing manager. The local manager will then know that in the course of a finan-
cial year there is so much budgeted for cleaning and caretaking, so much for repairs and maintenance and so on. Control over an estate budget will enable the local manager to more effectively co-ordinate the services that affect the estate. In time it may become possible to wire between headings so that both staff and tenants are more aware where monies come from and how they are spent. In this way it is much easier to bring home to people that resources are finite and that, for example, additional expenditure on repairing vandalised lifts must be at the expense of some other planned item.

The development of local housing management with estate or area budgets has considerable implications for traditional structures within local councils. The local housing manager needs to be a 'project co-ordinator' as well as a skilled and experienced housing practitioner. The local manager needs to be at sufficiently senior level to enable him or her to effectively exercise the client role with other departments in the council. The careers of both local authority officers and elected councillors are at present very much orientated towards loyalty to a department rather than to a patch or area loyalty.

The solutions to the problem of run-down public housing estates involve attitudes as well as money - and they concern many organisations beside housing departments. Their success depends on the support of tenants as well as that of councillors and staff. Improvements can only be maintained if the active commitment of tenants is achieved. Ideally this should include some element of tenant involvement in the running of the estate. The achievement of tenant commitment is made easier with better staffing ratios and the siting of staff in local offices that are more accessible. However, it also requires a change in traditional attitudes through a willingness to keep tenants well-informed about developments, and to be guided by their views and priorities. Consultations through public meetings and leaflets are not enough. Residents must feel personally involved in the continued upkeep and improvement of their estate. The legacy of disillusionment and mistrust on the least popular estates must be overcome to achieve this. Once done, the tenants on an estate are an enormous resource that can be utilised by the local council.

The conclusion of the Priority Estates Project is that the most important elements in restoring a run-down and unpopular estate to good management are:

- a full time estate office open to residents 5 days a week
- local letting of empty dwellings through the estate office and opportunities for transfer for residents wishing to move within the estate
- a local repairs team to carry out all day-to-day repairs that do not require specialist services
- support for tenants initiatives and formal liaison with tenant representatives over decisions affecting the estate
- a local budget whereby both the estate manager and the tenants can know how much can be spent in a year on running an estate and be able to check performance against the budget.

Complex housing estates, where up to 2000 households live, cannot be satisfactorily managed from remote district offices or a distant Town Hall. Staff based on the estate will be working from day to day with the same problems as the tenants. In that way the accumulation of rubbish and the neglect of repairs and all other problems that are of direct importance to tenants come to the attention of the estate staff. The introduction of local housing management can thereby bring new hope to the public housing estates that are problematic and also demonstrate a new approach for the management and maintenance of the public stock as a whole.
Summary

The emergence of unpopular public housing in Britain followed local government reorganisation that produced larger, more centralised housing authorities, and moves away from traditional methods of construction to industrialised building systems with tower-blocks and deck-access dwellings. The focus on building quickly and cheaply meant that insufficient attention was paid to the problems of management once homes were occupied.

Government research indicated that unpopularity was generally the result of a combination of factors and concluded that housing management had been undervalued. The Priority Estates Project was launched to experiment with ways of improving rundown estates through local housing management, basing staff on the estates they manage and giving them direct control over the key functions of repairs, lettings and rent collection. The development of local housing management included a new commitment to tenant consultation and involvement.

The Project has demonstrated that a localised repairs team can generate higher productivity, tenant satisfaction, and the development of area loyalty. Local control of lettings gets empty properties filled more rapidly, can strengthen local ties, and stabilise the population turnover. For local management to be successful estate-based staff must also have control over other services - such as caretaking, refuse collection, and upkeep of open spaces - that affect the estate. The development of estate-budgets controlled by the local housing managers is seen as one way of securing effective co-ordination of these services.

The development of local housing management has implications for the traditional structures within local councils and requires changing attitudes towards tenant consultation and involvement. The model however suggests a new approach for the management and maintenance not just of problem estates but of the public housing stock as a whole.
19. EVALUATION OF PUBLIC HOUSING ADMINISTRATION IN SWEDEN

Göran Lindberg (SW)

Background

Compared to other countries Sweden has a very large public housing sector. Of all dwellings in the country, 20 percent are owned and managed by public housing corporations or trusts (Thelander, 1984). If one restricts the analysis to multi-occupancy blocks, which in Sweden comprise slightly more than half of the dwelling stock, the proportion is 34 percent. This dominance is further evidenced by the special legislation which makes the rent level in the public housing sector the norm also for the private rental sector.

Today's situation is in glaring contrast to the conditions that prevailed prior to 1950. At that time the housing market was dominated by many individual, small private landlords. The housing standard for the broad stratum of the population was among the lowest in Europe. Overcrowding, especially among families with children, was considerable. The need for a housing market without speculation and exploitation was felt by the majority of the Swedish population. Because of the strong position of the Social Democrats during this period (they were in government from the early thirties to 1976), the preference of this party for collective solutions determined for the housing policy. The dramatic changes which the housing market underwent during these decades and which made it special from an international perspective, give basis to the claim that housing policy can play an important role even in a capitalistic society.

Important questions in this regard are if the development has been successful in reaching the goals of the housing policy, and if these goals appear as desirable when they are fulfilled as when they once were stated in the political debate. The housing market of the seventies in Sweden has not been exempted from serious disturbances and crises, signs which have called in question some of the goals and the methods of the housing policy.

Among these called into question are the roles attributed to the actors on the housing market by tradition and by law. This is an area of inquiry which housing policy has not payed much attention to earlier. Perhaps it was supposed that a new ownership-structure, with a strong collective element, would more or less automatically lead to other and ameliorated relationships between the tenants and those in charge of the management and caretaking of the houses.

The development has shown, however, that there exists no guarantee for a blissful correlation between collective ownership and the tenants' influence on their conditions of residence. Many people, especially on the political right, are of the opinion that collective solutions bring a degeneration of the relationships in this respect.

More than any other, this issue has dominated the housing debate in Sweden dur-
ing last years. The public housing sector has been attacked in the political debate as never before.

Proponents of public housing are still basically convinced of the superiority of collective solutions, but they have also begun to realize that everything might not be well in the area of tenants' democracy. This has brought about a new self-examination, which concerns the organizational side of the public housing corporations, and the views of the role and participation of tenants in the management of the houses. It has become more and more obvious that these aspects are connected. In order to achieve a greater level of influence and sense of responsibility on the side on the tenants, public housing corporations must make extensive organizational changes.

**Housing management from the tenants' point of views**

The question at issue in the investigation summarized below is whether the organization of housing corporations has any consequence for residents (A full Swedish account can be found in Lindberg, 1984).

The point of departure is that the dwellings in the public housing sector are owned by local authorities through special housing corporations or trusts. The approximately 700,000 dwellings in the sector are divided between about 300 different independent local authority housing corporations. These communal housing corporations are non-profit-making, but in general function as private corporations, subject to the same rules and laws as other corporations or trusts.

The size of the individual company varies from a couple of hundred dwelling units to close to 50,000 for the very largest. The variations depend mostly on the population sizes of the different municipalities.

Prior surveys (see Lindberg-Sahlin 1980, Lindberg 1982, Karlberg 1983) have made clear that most of the corporations were founded in the years immediately following the Second World War. The organizational ideas of the time have had a profound impact on the corporations, which is still very recognizable in their organizational structures. Such a connection between the organization at its founding and its present state is not an odd observation (see Stinchcombe 1965). In this case, what might be labelled "the machine bureaucracy" (Mintzberg 1979) stands as a model for most of the public housing corporations. This means among other things a strong tendency to centralization and to specialization of work tasks. It also means that the superstructure of the corporations is usually built up through functional work groups, and that the prime method of control is the standardization of the work process.

The study calls into serious question whether this type of organization is well applicable or well-suited to the field of housing management.

**Method**

Five dimensions of organization were selected as being especially interesting with regard to the question at issue, namely: degree of division of the work process or specialization; type of departmental division i.e. the corporations' superstructures; degree of centralization of decision making; location of personnel (concentrated or spread out); and the degree of self-sufficiency (i.e. to what extent the company uses its own personnel for the administrative work).

The eight housing corporations which have been studied were chosen to represent a wide spectrum of circumstances and organizational solutions. Within each company two housing districts were chosen, which, as a rule, dated from different periods. Guided interviews with the residents were then undertaken. In total the material embraces 200 such interviews, of which a number had several parti-
Participants. They were recorded on tape and later transcribed. Further interviews were done with a number of the personnel, both on the administrative and the operative sides. An inventory of the housing areas was made via on-the-spot surveys and through map and photographic material. Demographic material and other statistical information on the areas' inhabitants could be gathered from readily available sources (The Central Bureau of Statistics, local government offices and the corporations themselves). Further material has been produced by a questionnaire study in 1979, which was distributed to most corporations in the country.

As a first step every housing company was individually analysed. The reports from these analysis were never published, but in some cases copies were sent out to those corporations which had been chosen for examination. In the next stage of analyses a number of pre-determined administrative functions were selected for examination in terms of the above-mentioned five dimensions of organization. The functions examined were: daily management; the VVS functions of sanitation and heating; the reporting of repairs; repairs; and the maintenance of flats. Originally the question of collective washing facilities was included, but the analysis showed that this was only slightly affected by the dimensions of organization detailed above, even although it was often experienced as problematic by tenants.

Results

The most important results have to do with the influence of the degree of specialization, the super-structure and the degree of self-sufficiency. The investigation lacks information on the consequences of the centralization of decision-making, as this notion was not satisfactorily examined during the field work. The pattern of distribution of personnel was found to have little independent meaning, but conclusions here are uncertain on account of the variations in this respect being small.

As regards specialization it is apparent that has farreaching consequences for tenants. Under the old system of caretakers, daily maintenance, break-downs and simpler repairs were taken care of by one and the same person in proportionately smaller administrative units. This leads to greater care being taken over the smaller details; better relations between landlord and tenants; greater flexibility regarding maintenance and the smaller repairs; and more economical use of resources on a small scale. What can be critical is the mobilization of resources and expert knowledge when major or far-reaching administrative decisions are required.

The bulk of the corporations studied have, however, taken for granted the view that specialization produces large-scale benefits. This has brought with it an increased demand for co-ordination and control. The old method was direct supervision by a foreman, although this has been on the way out for a long time within the field of housing. Instead corporations have endeavoured to meet the demand for control by pushing through a standardization of work processes.

The consequence has been that it has become much more difficult for the housing administrations to pay due regard to the varied service requirements which arise because people do actually live in the buildings.

As regards the superstructure of the corporations, there are in principle two main patterns: public authority housing departments divided either according to function, or on the basis of area. This corresponds to the distinction between process organization and purpose organization of classical administration theory.

Within the study there are corporations of both types, and those divided according to function predominate as they do among municipal housing authorities in reality. In recent years interest in area division has manifestly increased and
many corporations are planning to reorganize along those lines. The area divisions in the study cannot be said to constitute particularly pure forms, although with some reservation they have, nevertheless been accepted as constituting cases for certain comparative analyses with authorities divided on functional lines.

Our results indicate that area-based administration does not, in every case, automatically lead to all the advantages that one would theoretically associate with this organizational model. Above all it is thought to be important that within area administrations there is really given reliable scope for independent action which is not challenged by some central authority within the department. Dual control leads to a lack of clarity about who is really responsible for what within the company.

Hanging together with the above is the realization that the theoretically expected consequences of changing over to area administration do not arise with anything less than that the degree of specialization of the operative personnel at the building maintenance level is reduced and that the decentralization of decision-making does not stop at the level of district manager.

There is no guarantee that because an administrative unit is small a hierarchical organizational structure can be avoided. This is something that hitherto had not had sufficient attention paid to it in the drive to decentralization which is spreading throughout the country. We have devoted further and special attention to this problem in the studies we began in 1983.

One of the greatest difficulties with functional administrations, when one sees them from a resident's perspective, is that the problems of the residents often come in different configurations from those which correspond to the different departments of the authority. This can mean that the residents must go high up in the hierarchy before they meet anybody with total responsibility for whatever it is they seek. But managers seldom get round to devoting much attention to details, and they have to screen themselves off from too much direct contact with tenants.

The employees at lower decision-making levels seldom have, on the other hand, authorization to devote themselves to anything other than their specialized roles. Tenants with problems that affect the company are referred to a special department where there are clerks who record faults which are then handled by the organization in a bureaucratic manner. Finally, and often with commendable speed, something concrete is done in the tenants' flat, for example. As regards small routine faults the system technically functions well, although when it is a question of something more skilled where the company does not have its own competent staff, it functions less satisfactory.

To sum up one can say that on account of the above conditions, functional administrations run the risk of leading to particularized and impersonal relations between the corporations' employees and the tenants, and that both parties develop an irresponsibility towards that which cannot, within a narrow interpretation, be defined as being part of their own roles.

A tentative result in connection with this is that paradoxically it is probably the corporations with small administrations that appear to be the most bureaucratic and unreasonable in the eyes of the tenants. An explanation of this can be that small administrative resources lead to enforced attempts at minimizing contact with tenants with, for example, rigid rules or dismissive attitudes towards everything that lies above a low set level of service.

Generally one expects that functional administrations will work best in surroundings that are comparatively simpler, more homogeneous and more stable. If, on the other hand, the surroundings are complex, heterogeneous and mobile, it is possible to imagine this form or organization having considerable problems with carrying out its business. Several of the research results can be interpreted as supporting with this expectation.
Set against the background of the degree of specialization and the scope for independent action as the most significant factors in the relations that can develop between personnel and tenants, presumably the geographical placement of maintenance workers, for example, plays a subordinate role. It is also wrong to imagine that sensitivity to the needs of tenants can be increased only through a spreading out of personnel into small maintenance areas. The geographical factor is subordinated to the standardization of work processes.

With regard to the authorities' degree of self-sufficiency it has shown itself to be important to distinguish between the maintenance of flats which is undertaken at specific intervals in accordance with a plan, and special repairs which are demanded to the unanticipated collapse of the physical system.

From the point of view of tenants there is no evident benefit to flat maintenance being carried out by permanent staff belonging to the company. A high degree of self-sufficiency in this respect can mean that by virtue of its position as a monopoly, the company in this connection, assumes an unnecessarily authoritative role.

A low degree of self-sufficiency in special repairs is seen, on the other hand, to have a number of negative effects if it is not combined with competent management that can determine when it is advisable to call in specialist help from outside or when to be satisfied with the permanent employees' provisional repairs. There are many observations in the interviews with residents that suggest this interpretation.

Final remarks

As was stated in the description of the methodology, the study was of a qualitative kind, based on a comparatively small amount of material. The conclusions that have been drawn in the analyses must of course be followed up by other studies of both a quantitative and a qualitative character.

The scientific value of the completed investigations lies, at least in part, on the side of the concepts. Through the information that has been provided both about how housing corporations are in fact organized, and the variations that are to be found, it has become easier to undertake future studies in this area.

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Twenty years ago the Stockholm region increased rapidly. Many households moved to the region from rural areas in Sweden or from abroad. The standard of living increased due to economic growth. The problem was how to build new homes fast. During the sixties about 158,000 homes were built in the Stockholm region. New standards and production methods were introduced. A high utilization of land combined with industrialized building created dense and monotonous environments. Today 23% of all homes in the region are from that period. In all Sweden about one million homes were built during a ten year period.

Many of the dwelling areas built during the "million-program" have social problems

Very soon social problems arose in many of these areas built during the sixties. This was mainly due to the fact that so many people moved into those areas within a short period without connections to each other or to the area. People from different cultures had to begin from scratch side by side in a brand new environment.

Many areas lacked basic service and good public transport. Today most of them still lack places of employment. Many people have to commute more than two hours a day. Children, pensioners, housewives, unemployed, are left in an incomplete and worn environment.

Today - in the beginning of the eighties - many of the "million program areas" are stabilized and have found some kind of identity. But some of them still have big difficulties. They remain unattractive in many ways, but the rents are comparatively low and the flats are easy to get. This causes a social selection process. People with enough resources move to "better" areas. People with limited resources replace them and the areas move socially downwards. The mix of immigrants - up to 60% of the population - and Swedes in bad social conditions can be explosive.

The restoration of the areas of the sixties will become a big planning problem for the nineties

The future might lead to still greater problems for the dwelling areas from the "million-program". These areas are in a gap between older areas just now being repaired and restored, and newer ones, built with much more care and quality.
The planning problem in the region today is how to restore the urban area, both socially and physically, instead of planning for many new and sometimes large additions. In this context the areas built during the sixties will be one of the big headaches.

Vårberg is an example of the "million-program housing" areas

Varberg is situated on one of the south-west underground branches, 25 minutes from Stockholm city and close to Lake Mälaren. It is number four in a row of nine areas built between 1963 and 1975. This thoroughly planned row was one of the big parts of the "million program" housing around Stockholm.

The scheme for Vårberg and the other areas originates from the Master Plan of 1952 for Stockholm. It is based on the idea of neighbourhood units and the possibility to work and have a centre near the home.

Around a neighbourhood centre and an underground station high-rise flats are surrounded by low-rise flats and on the periphery there are terrace houses, semidetached and detached houses.

Fig. 20.1.: The SW-sector of the Stockholm region
In Vårberg 70% of the homes are flats. There is the usual Stockholm mix of public, cooperative and private housing.

Today about 8,000 inhabitants live there. Of these about 12% are immigrants. Most people who live here commute daily to other parts of the region to work.

Fig. 20.2.: Map of Vårberg

Rapid changes in the population structure change the requirements for service

During the ten years between 1970 and 1980 the age structure of the population has changed dramatically. The number of children to the age of 6 years was halved during this period and the number of teenagers has doubled. Such changes have caused difficulties for the planning and realization of different kinds of services.

The children of Vårberg, who in 1970 did not get a place at the day nurseries and in 1980 drifted around in the shopping arcade without having anything to do, are soon going to look for a place to live and a place to work. In Vårberg there are very few small flats, so the young people moving away from home also have to move away from Vårberg.

The changes in population structure also causes difficulties for the commercial centre in the area. The demands are no longer as great. And the future will not
be better. One big task will be to establish a situation where the goods and services offered are adjusted to the demand.

![Demosimeter Diagrams](image)

The demometer is a pie chart showing the number of residents per age year up to 97. Numbers are read off from the radii. The demometer is also constructed in such a way that total populations in different age groups can be compared visually by comparing the areas enclosed by the curves linking values for different age years. Every seventh year of age has been marked by a continuous line to facilitate reading. This has served to segregate generations, e.g. parental generations aged 21-27 years and their first children aged 0-6 years. Households split up at age 42-48. Children are then 18 years old, and they will have left home by age 24 (90 per cent).

Fig. 20.3.: Changes in age structure in Vårberg 1970-80

Vårberg Centre

The Vårberg neighbourhood Centre is situated in a large dull hall which is also the entrance to the underground railway. There are two supermarkets, some shops, some other services and upstairs there are offices and a youth centre. The centre was built 15 years ago in 1968, and was one of the first indoor centres around Stockholm. The architecture is anonymous and in a schematic "international style". Now, 1984, the hall is worn and neglected with obvious signs of decay. In spite of that the hall is the only building with some character in Vårberg and gives this part of Stockholm a touch of identity.

The sixties in Sweden was a time of commercial expansion and optimism. Next to Vårberg lies Skärholmen with a regional centre built for 300,000 inhabitants. In spite of that the Vårberg Centre opened with more commercial service than could be expected in such a situation. The Centre was criticized by the newspapers because there was "a lot to buy and nothing to do". But people immediately developed a number of activities to make the hall a place to break down isolation and create a social life. Endless organisation discussions and practical difficulties killed the enthusiasm. Drugs, rowdyism and vandalism took over in the hall.
Revitalization or death?

The owner, an association of builders, now wants to "revitalize" the centre. That means to build a separate entrance to the underground so the hall can be closed after shopping time, and to extend the shops into the "dramatically oversized" hall. The environment will be improved with greening, a play sculpture etc. More parking places, instead of the small park, and a lowprice clothes markets should attract external customers. Furthermore the owner wants 1,000 new appartments to be built nearby to increase and renew the circle of customers.

If nothing is done, the service level will decrease even more. Shops will disappear and cuts in public service will make the situation still worse. More stress on the society and the households may increase social problems and
View of Värberg from the artificial hill made of surplus masses (photo: placed at the author's disposal)

High-rise flats, parking houses and a non-used playground (photo: placed at the author's disposal)
The neighbourhood centre is situated in a large dull hall (photo: placed at the author's disposal)

Security guards watching over the underground station (photo: placed at the author's disposal)
it is probably useless to develop the Vårberg Centre commercially in this already over-established area, as Vårberg is a blind alley for car drivers. A similar revitalization of other centres in the neighbourhood can mean elimination of the weaker ones.

Renewal built on local life

Instead a renewal of the Vårberg Centre should build on local life, habits and needs for those people who stay in Vårberg all day and have the centre as a goal and a meeting-point. Those who go by car have so many other possibilities to choose. To let social and cultural activities take place alongside and even dominate the commercial ones would give the centre a new life and a new character, to develop an identity, a common life and a collective responsibility. Is a strict commercial centre even good for commerce?

One way to find shortages, resources and possibilities is to compare a suburb like Vårberg to the traditional European town with its vital asocial network, rich public life and long history. The purpose with such a dizzy comparison is to strengthen and develop identity and town life in the suburb, to restructure it to something more townlike with some traditional town elements as the High Street, the Square, the Market place, etc. To rebuild it into a small town is of course impossible and to make it look like that would be unfair.

Possible actions and solutions for improving the social life and the service in the future

- An active plan to establish a social network which could deal with different kinds of activities that the people who live in these areas can take part in.
- To try an established local housing authority.
- It is essential to find means to facilitate the creation of new jobs.
- In the Stockholm-area the public administration is - like in most cities - concentrated in the central part. One way of creating jobs in urban areas, could be to look into the total distribution of the public administration.
- Decentralize the political decision-making process. Such decentralization gives people better possibilities to influence their own situation.
- Establish plans for local services based on predictions of future changes of the population structure. There is a need for planning services both public and commercial in order to reduce the impact of dramatic changes at certain periods.
- Today each kind of service is planned by different bodies. Cooperation between them could give quicker adjustments to new situations and a better use of total resources.
- When the population decreases the commercial and public services will also have a weak basis. New ways of supplying the inhabitants with public and commercial services have to be taken in consideration, for example solutions which are used in sparsely populated areas.

This paper is based on a rich illustrated document "Vårberg, a suburb from a regional perspective", published in 1984 by the Regional planning and economic development office in Stockholm. It is only published in Swedish and can be ordered from Regionplanekontoret, Box 12337, S-102 29, Stockholm, Sweden. Tfn 08/737 25 07, The price is 23 SEK.
21. INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITIES: THE CASE FOR INTENSIVE HOUSING MANAGEMENT

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Introduction

Contemporary trends of housing in Britain

Post-war housing policies in Britain have carried forward from the nineteenth century a clear distinction between public and private forms of ownership. Public sector development has been intermittent and has been withdrawn as soon as it was felt that the private sector no longer needed support. This principle has inhibited consistent, long-term management of the total housing stock and had the effect of tying public sector housing to the welfare system in general.

Currently 60% of households are home-owners, with 27% living in local authority housing, 2% rent from housing associations and the remainder rent from private landlords. Wide variations exist between geographical areas.

What distinguishes the post-war period in the public sector is the extent of investment in industrialised building methods to produce high rise and high density developments in an effort to balance the competing demands of housing need, economy and land shortage. Since the mid-seventies, contraction in the public sector together with the increased support for owner-occupation embodied in the 1980 Housing Act and consequent privatisation of the better public sector stock, has endorsed the built-in tendency for public housing to become a residual provision of poor quality housing occupied by increasingly diverse kinds of tenants.

This condition is not aided by a traditional concentration in the public sector on the physical or structural features of various types of housing and a relative inattention to on-site, day-to-day management. A preference for administration rather than management, sale of the better stock and the likelihood that an increasing number of the remaining local authority tenants will be linked to the housing benefits system is confirming the residual status of public housing. These conditions make the self-perpetuating cycle of investment in, followed by contraction of, the public sector the more likely to continue.

However, this process of residualisation is not confined to the public sector. Private sector housing increasingly contains a proportion which is poorly maintained and owners for whom the costs of owner-occupation outweigh the benefits: producing immobility, inertia and areas of declining quality. This was most forcibly emphasised in a recent publication (1) which identified a dramatic increase of disrepair amongst owner-occupiers:

half of the 9.5% of dwellings in England and Wales classified as unsatisfactory housing were owner-occupied, and a further third privately rented.
Cutbacks in capital allocations have meant that new house building in the public sector has virtually ceased: the resources available for repairs and maintenance have also undergone the same contraction. Of course, a large proportion of those resources further and support such work in the private sector, which means that large scale co-ordinated and programmed rehabilitation work is rendered virtually impossible.

The current emphasis on privatisation is being promoted by means of a stick and carrot strategy. On the one hand, tenants are being encouraged to buy their council houses through guaranteed mortgages and large discounts on sale values. On the other hand, restrictions in the housing investment programme together with tighter controls on the flow of funds into and out of the Housing Revenue Account are resulting in rent increases which effectively nullify the advantages of a local authority tenancy. At the same time the housing benefit system shields the poorer tenant from the worst effects of rent rises but only by progressively removing the tenants control over their own finances.

Currently, 700,000 council houses have been sold and not replaced constituting a net loss to the public sector. The Government has just initiated a major advertising campaign to raise the level and rate of sale. A recent survey showed that 71% of all households, across the political spectrum, support this policy (2).

Local authority tenants will tend, as a result of these policies, to be those least able to buy and, what remains in the public sector will be the least desirable of its stock; the capacity of local authorities to maintain and improve much of this stock is also being restricted. A larger proportion of public sector provision will be represented by buildings which are unlikely to be sold and for which demolition will be an increasingly attractive and expensive option.

Given these general changes in the role of public sector housing, local authorities are being forced to consider alternative sources of finance and management in an effort to maintain standards. These alternatives, housing associations, co-operatives, co-ownership schemes etc. will diversify the forms of tenure available between public and private. At the same time the private sector is becoming fragmented and diversified through a number of processes:

- increased new building at the expensive end of the market on in-fill sites at the edge of towns, nudging at the green belt areas;
- systematic programmes of conversion of large houses into flats, mainly for smaller households;
- demolition and greenfield site development of small scale estates of flats and housing, for a specialist market requiring services and managed accommodation.

High rise housing: legacy and opportunity

The reputation of the high block has led many commentators, tenants, councillors and other decision makers and takers to conclude that the only resolution of the problems of the high block is to demolish them all. Our recent National Survey showed that there are over 4,750 of these blocks highly concentrated in the six main Metropolitan areas of Britain:

West Midlands (765); Greater Manchester and Mersyside (377); Glasgow and Strathclyde (358); Durham and Tyneside (146); Greater London North (1,005); and Greater London South (794).

The contemplation of demolition on such a vast scale numerically and geographically ignores the resounding disbenefits of such a decision and the massive opportunity costs involved.

Thankfully, there have been several redeeming and innovatory schemes introduced in high rise in recent years which indicate that management and ownership considerations play a vital role in the regeneration and cost-effective use of
such housing resources. Such local initiatives are represented in the matrix below, and we were able to consider several of these options in the case studies undertaken as part of the high rise research project.

In Britain housing ownership and management varies independently, yielding a variety of combinations cutting across the traditional and major tenure distinction between that of owner-occupation and local authority tenancy. These possibilities are shown in the matrix below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIVATE</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>PUBLIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OWNER -OCCUPATION</td>
<td>PRIVATELY RENTED</td>
<td>TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO-OWNERSHIP</td>
<td>COMMUNITY LEASEHOLD</td>
<td>LOCAL AUTHORITY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUSING ASSOCIATION</td>
<td>PAR-VALUE (NON-EQUITY) CO-OPERATIVE</td>
<td>TRADITIONAL LOCAL AUTHORITY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although we were not able to cover all the nine possibilities we were able to identify in high rise the following kinds of initiatives:

- **OWNER-OCUPATION**
  - 1. MARTELLO COURT, EDINBURGH

- **HOUSING ASSOCIATION**
  - 2. TRIDENT HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM

- **COMMUNITY LEASEHOLD**
  - 3. GLENKERRY HOUSE, POPLAR

- **TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE**
  - 4. ALL SAINTS, WANDSWORTH

- **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT LOCAL AUTHORITY**
  - 5. ESSINGTON HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM

- **LOCAL AUTHORITY**
  - 6. CANDIA AND CRETE, LIVERPOOL
  - 7. MIXENDEN, CALDERDALE
  - 8. 10, RED ROAD, GLASGOW

- **TRADITIONAL LOCAL AUTHORITY**
  - 9. GAYTON AND SLEAFORD, TOWER HAMLETS
For the purpose of this paper we have only selected three case studies for more
detailed consideration. Each of these illustrate very different possible reponses
to the problem of the high block:
2. Martello Court, Edinburgh
3. Essington House, Birmingham

1. Glenkerry House: an equity sharing co-operative

| LONDON: GREATER LONDON COUNCIL GLENKERRY HOUSE, POPULAR CO-OPERATIVE/EQUITY SHARING SCHEME |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| BUILT:                          | 1977                            |
| CONSTRUCTION TYPE:              | N/K                             |
| No. STOREYS:                    | 14                              |
| No. UNITS:                      | 78                              |
| UNIT TYPE:                      | 74 x 1, 2, 3 & 4 bedrooms flats |
|                                 | 4 x 3 bedroom ground floor maisonettes with gardens |
| No. HOUSED:                     |                                 |
| HISTORIC COST OF CONSTRUCTION   | £1.48m                           |
| (EQUIVALENT COST AT 1982 PRICES | £2.51m                           |
| FACILITIES:                     | DOCTORS SURGERY (FLAT 5) NEVER OCCUPIED ENTRYPHONE SYSTEM |
|                                 | RESIDENT MANAGER (FLAT 1)       |
|                                 | COMMUNAL CENTRAL HEATING SYSTEM  |
|                                 | SEPARATELY RENTED GARAGES NEARBY (PROPOSED) |
|                                 | LIFTS                            |
|                                 | 2 DRYING ROOMS WITH TUMBLE DRYERS |
| OWNERSHIP FREEHOLD:            | G.L.C. HOUSING COMMITTEE         |
| LEASEHOLD:                     | ) 50% GLENKERRY CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING ASSOCIATION |
|                                 | ) 50% INDIVIDUAL EQUITY SHARE    |
| MANAGEMENT:                    | GLENKERRY CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING ASSOCIATION BOARD OF MANAGEMENT |

This is a 14 storey block of 78 flats and four ground floor maisonettes built by
the Greater London Council completed in December 1977 at a cost of £1.48m. The block is served by two passenger lifts at either end of the block, has a secured entrance to the flats, whilst the four maisonettes have separate, individual front doors which open into the pavement which runs along the front of the building; one of the maisonettes is occupied by the co-operative manager and this serves as an office as well. There have been a number of minor problems deriving from design and construction faults but these have been corrected and the block is now quite sound.

It was originally intended that a doctors surgery should be contained within the block but this has not occurred. The flats are quite large and provide accommodation for households of between two to six people.

In 1977 the Greater London Secondary Housing Association (G.L.S.H.A.) was asked by the G.L.C. to propose a form of co-operative for Glenkerry and they
proposed a new kind of scheme known as Community Leasehold which would combine co-operative management, joint leasehold and individual equity shares for occupiers. The management structure arising from this scheme is shown synoptically in the diagram at the end of this case.

The community leasehold was created by the G.L.C. selling a 99 year lease to the Glenkerry Co-operative Housing Association (set up by G.L.S.H.A.) for the price of 60% of its initial valuation, the Department of the Environment making a substantial capital grant. The co-op to sell to each resident member a sub-lease (99 years minus one day) for 50% of the district valuers valuation of the dwelling. Mortgage finance was provided by the G.L.C. On leaving a member can sell their share to a nominee of the co-operative at half the current value. Each leaseholder/member pays to the co-operative a ground rent and a service charge to cover the costs of management, maintenance and facilities such as heating. The service charges are currently just under £1,000 per year on average. Leaseholders were chosen from nominations of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the G.L.C. and direct applications to G.L.S.H.A. Selection was based on an explicit desire and willingness to belong to a co-operative and ability to pay the service charges, and therefore unemployed people or those relying on social security payments were ruled out. By the end of 1979 nearly all leases had been sold and valuation increased by 25%. Apart from this no other financial requirements were imposed, however the final group of owners were relatively young, aged between 20-30 years and with a high proportion of middle class people.

During its period of operation three major problems have emerged at Glenkerry: a high rate of mobility as people leave capitalising on the envisaged price of flats; arrears and debts on service charges, and a low level of participation in social activities promoted by the management committee.
The handing over of the building to the co-operative involved transitional arrangements with an interim Board of Management appointed by G.L.S.H.A., this was replaced by a committee elected by all resident/members in the early part of 1980. G.L.S.H.A. provided a short but comprehensive education programme to give members a grounding in both the theoretical and practical aspects of co-operative housing. Other elements of the interim arrangements were that the G.L.C. agreed to provide a two year guarantee against normal maintenance defects and a 15 year warranty against inherent defects with G.L.S.H.A. acting as a managing agent to ensure that the G.L.C. meets these obligations.

GLENKERRY HOUSE: MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

![Diagram of the management structure](image-url)
Martello Court is a 23 storey block of flats situated on the edge of Muirhouse Estate on the NW side of Edinburgh. Muirhouse area was part of the post-war development programme incorporating both high and low rise housing and has experienced a range of problems associated with such estates in the past 20 years. The tower itself, although one of a number of blocks above 6 storeys, is by far the tallest in the city. Indeed, it is the tallest in Edinburgh and its prominence on the city skyline together with its violent history no doubt contributed to the notoriety it gained as "Terror Tower".

Built in 1964, it provided accommodation for 88 households in 2-bedroomed, 4 person flats and, in accordance with the general policy of the time, was tenanted by families with young children mixed with younger married couples and other childless couples.

This tenant policy appear to have been a main factor in the block's deterioration; however, such problems were undoubtedly aggravated by the block's unusual arrangement of continuous balconies running round each floor which provided unrestricted access to each flat from the areas of semi-public space. In effect, this feature, together with the location of the block next to the local shops, the openness of its entrance areas and the existence of a large flagstoned area at the foot of the building which was floodlit at night, made the block into a virtual extension of the street. The tenants suffered a variety of harrassments from mugging to arson and at least one-third of the flats stood empty and boarded up by 1978 when the remaining tenants formed an association to lobby the Council for rehousing. In response to pressure from this group, the Council decided to completely vacate the block which then stood empty and derelict for
Martello Court, Edinburgh
(photo: placed at the author's disposal)

Porter's Lodge Martello Court, Edinburgh (photo: placed at the author's disposal)
nearly 18 months providing a focal point both for continuing vandalism and for criticism of the District Council's high-rise housing problems.

In late 1979, when the Council came to consider disposal of the block, it carried an existing debt of £360,000, with an annual cost to the Council of £47,000. Demolition was considered as an option but the proximity of the block to other buildings, combined with its particular method of construction (note: no structural problems existed), put estimates at upwards of £250,000. This would have increased the interest charges on the block for £79,000 per annum on the rates then current. Council proposed putting Martello Court up for sale on the open market, and in October 1979 the Court was duly advertised as 88 flats with vacant possession.

After much initial interest, only 5 schemes were put forward by the closing date. 3 schemes involved sale of the block to property developers at an unacceptably low price; a fourth involved comprehensive design changes and restricted letting policies and a £1,000,000 loan from public funds, a fifth by J. MacKay Associates, was a self-financing, innovatory proposal, which was to provide the Council with a return which would write off the existing debt; converting the block into 86 low-cost homes for first-time buyers.

The Council selected this fifth scheme put forward by John McKay Associates.

Main goals were to upgrade the block as a whole and secure the Court. A new eleven foot wall was erected encompassing the Court, together with a new vehicle and pedestrian entrance which could be secured when necessary. A new entryphone system was installed; a porter's lodge on the first floor was provided, whose duties would involve monitoring and surveillance of the block. Lifts were overhauled. Flats were refurbished to a high standard, providing modern services, kitchen and bathroom facilities; general decoration was left for prospective occupiers. Car parks and landscaped garden areas were provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COSTS</th>
<th>Refurbishment costs &amp; Fees</th>
<th>£480,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Price of Block</td>
<td>£250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Costs</td>
<td>£730,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVENUES</td>
<td>Sale of 60 flats at £9,250</td>
<td>£555,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sale of 19 flats at £10,250</td>
<td>£194,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sale of 7 flats at £10,500</td>
<td>£73,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sale of 20 carports at £750</td>
<td>£15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Net Interest on a/c</td>
<td>£30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Revenues</td>
<td>£868,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profits to be shared</td>
<td>c. £138,250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

61% Council's share £84,000
39% J. McKay Assoc. £54,000

Note: 1. Local authority guaranteed to provide mortgages for all prospective buyers subject to normal mortgage criteria; no Building Society was willing to lend on this scheme.
2. Local authority guaranteed to provide remortgage facilities for those who want to resell.
3. Independent managers provided a comprehensive service agreement, costing £200 p.a. per unit.
4. New occupiers were selected from the Council's waiting list or were local couples living in the rented sector.
5. Initial risk capital of £259,000 was raised by J. McKay from the Bank of Scotland and guaranteed by the Council. Block was not sold to J. McKay, but £250,000, the actual sale price, was lent to J. McKay as guarantee for the earlier loan from the Bank of Scotland.
6. Outstanding debt of £360,000 was virtually covered by the overall receipts of £250,000 plus £84,000 = £334,000 from the scheme.

The project was self-financing, providing benefits for all parties, the Council, the new occupants and J. McKay Associates. Success depended greatly upon the trusting and co-operative relationship between the major protagonists, a cooperation between the private and public sector, which found a solution to a problem.
3. Essington House, Birmingham: special local authority scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BIRMINGHAM</th>
<th>ESSINGTON HOUSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BUILT:</td>
<td>1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSTRUCTION TYPE:</td>
<td>BRYANT WALL FRAME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. STOREYS:</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. UNITS:</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIT TYPE:</td>
<td>30 x 1 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 x 2 bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITS PER FLOOR:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. UNITS AS HOUSING:</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER UNITS:</td>
<td>1 x Common Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 x Caretaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 x Warden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISTORIC COST OF CONSTRUCTION</td>
<td>£ 250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(EQUIVALENT COST AT 1982 PRICES</td>
<td>£ 1,227,755 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST OF NEW SCHEME (1982/3)</td>
<td>£ 57,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST OF CAPITAL REPAIRS</td>
<td>£ N/K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST PER UNIT OF NEW SCHEME</td>
<td>£ 930</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FACILITIES:
- Warden Alarm System located in Warden's flat.
- Each flat connected to this alarm via pull cords located in main rooms.
- Alarm system linked to central control, manned 24 hours, in the Housing Department.
- Warden makes daily visits to each flat and organises some community activities.
- Public area carpeted and redecorated.
- Lifts refurbished.
- New entrance lobby with ramp to street.
- Ground floor entrance way enclosed with new closing doors to stairs.

RENTS:
- 1 bed  £17.47
- 2 bed  £20.32

OWNERSHIP: BIRMINGHAM HOUSING COMMITTEE

MANAGEMENT: BIRMINGHAM HOUSING COMMITTEE with SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

Essington House is one high rise block in Birmingham, is a local authority with a total of 429 blocks amounting to 17% of its total housing stock scattered across the city. The majority of the flats are quite small and Birmingham does not consider its high rise blocks as presenting a specific problem; indeed some of these blocks are in very central areas and attract high rents whilst others are attractively integrated into low-rise estates.

Birmingham has operated a 'child no-go' policy in high rise blocks since the late 1970's but has not been able to implement it fully because of the absence of suitable alternatives. Nonetheless, the prevalence of smaller units in high rise in the city has probably made it easier to manage the fit between diminishing household size and available accommodation; better than some authorities with a
less diverse housing stock. Much of Birmingham's success has been attributed to its investment in management through the Social Development Division whose duties include monitoring and identifying housing problems and opening the way for tenant participation and access to information. Much research has emerged from Birmingham, possibly as a result of the existence of this Division, much of it critical of the suitability of high rise for families. On the other hand, some later studies noted the problem presented for families with other types of accommodation, notably the balcony block, and indeed Housing Officers, in common with the officers of other cities, now associate the major housing problem with families in walk-up blocks.

Where possible the authority has a direct policy of including facilities for voluntary and community groups in its schemes and emphasis is placed on the provision of housing and information centres on each estate. Birmingham took the decision some 12 years ago to decentralise its housing management.

In common with other metropolitan areas, Birmingham has experienced a net population decline together with a rise in the number of households. Smaller household size has also, in general, featured a shift of dominant tenure groups with fewer families and a greater proportion of elderly and young singles. Thus while certain socio-economic groups have had no clear status within the public sector and are increasing in number, other changes in population structure have resulted in under-occupation: 59% of all households had one or more bedrooms surplus to requirements. In 1980 the council therefore decided to accept young single persons onto the waiting list and has been attempting to turn over some of its walk-up flats and maisonettes to University students.

Birmingham has an explicit policy to provide as wide a choice of housing tenure and type as possible. In pursuit of this policy and in order to relieve some of the problems of under-occupation while at the same time providing suitable accommodation for the rising number of elderly, the housing department has been attempting to widen its sheltered provision through extension of the warden service scheme. Much of its high rise stock is now more than 20 years old and in need of repair and upgrading, particularly of wiring and heating systems. However, the majority of the buildings appear to be structurally sound and the city has found that tall blocks are very suitable for conversion to sheltered accommodation since they are identifiable different from surrounding housing, can be made relatively secure and present fewer problems of mobility than walk up blocks provided the lifts are kept in good working order. Birmingham has a significant elderly population (15%+) over half of which lives alone. Given this situation sheltered provision has been made a priority. In addition to adapting local authority blocks to this purpose installation of alarm systems in the homes of elderly people has been financed the Inner City Partnership Scheme.

Essington House then was not chosen for this change of use because of any problems with the block itself, but rather for reasons related to the need to provide warden service accommodation within the city. Apart from some of the usual problems associated with the Bryant Wall Frame (extra tying in of walls and floor sections had to be completed before any flats were let) the block has presented no major defects since its construction. Neither has it exhibited any of the social problems sometimes associated with high flats.

Essington already had, before selection for the Warden Service scheme, a high proportion of elderly tenants, a fact which contributed to that selection. Moreover, the property fulfils other requirements being within ten minutes walk of local shops and bus routes and situated on reasonable flat ground. The block already has a resident caretaker and an entryphone system installed as part of the city's policy of gradually providing entryphones for all high rise blocks. The introduction of the Warden scheme was therefore relatively easy in this case. One ground floor flat was turned over to accommodate the Warden while another has been fully furnished to provide a community area. Existing services in the
block were not changed. Normal rubbish chutes are in operation and heating is by individually controlled electric storage heaters. (Gas heating was removed from the block after the collapse at Ronan Point and before any lettings were made).

2-eight persons lifts serve the block and are serviced fortnightly in accordance with the citywide policy. The emphasis in the scheme is on security and comfort. To this end the stairs from the ground floor were blocked off from the general entrance lobby and a separate locking door installed for access to those stairs. In addition a new entrance lobby has been constructed to the front of the building with a ramp leading to the path.

The costs of the scheme are relatively low. Unit price is £950 per flat. Running costs are estimated at approximately £880 per year for heating, lighting and upkeep of the common room, £4,800 for Warden's wages and £1,300 per year for cleaning of carpets and communal areas. Income from rents of between £17.00 and £20.00 per week giving a total rent income for the block of £48,780, representing 80% of revenue expenditure, equivalent to a subsidy of £11,019 (1980/81). These figures are calculated on the basis of aggregated accounts because of the 'pooling' of resources within the Housing Revenue Accounting system. Estimate of expenditure costs on repairs and maintenance on the block data from CIPFA (3) averages would indicate costs of about £192 per unit per year for repairs and maintenance and £66 per unit per year for general management costs. Again for these same figures the block carries approximately £43,000 per year in loancharges - a unit cost of £716 per year. On these figures unit costs would amount to (including service and special maintenance charges of £116.67 per year) £1,091.50. Income on the other hand, exclusive of rates, yields £996.65. No indication was given that this scheme was in any way in receipt of additional money in comparison with other schemes.

Birmingham's vertical Warden scheme operates within the context of an already established emphasis on intensive management. The implementation of the scheme involved co-ordination between a number of local authority departments. Initial discussions took place between Senior Officers from Housing, Social Services, Residential Services Division and from local voluntary groups. Advice was sought from Area Housing Officers, Warden Manager, the Allocations Controller and the City Architect, Engineer, Treasurer, Solicitor and Building Finance Officer.

Once implemented the scheme is now wholly run from the Area Housing Office with the exception of the alarm system, warden and common room which are run centrally by the Residential Services Section. The scheme follows similar developments in other parts of the city and forms part of a general policy to utilise high rise for this specific use for which it has proved satisfactory. Similar schemes exist also in other areas in the Midlands (e.g. Dudley and Solihull). Though accurate figures are not available, it is clear that the scheme comes close to being self-financing and the only special arrangement necessary has been the removal, for obvious reasons, of the right to buy provision. Such a scheme has received all-party approval and has succeeded, in addition to continuing to maintain the use of the building as part of the general resource of the city, in creating a suitable fit between available property and changing population structure.

Whilst this example shows as clearly as other cases the extent to which managing an individual block is crucial to its success, it is also necessary to emphasise the overall context and continuity of housing policy in Birmingham and other features which have contributed to housing management practice. Specifically, long term programmes of systematic repair and refurbishment of its total stock of housing; collaboration between different departments within the Council; flexibility and sensitivity to the housing needs of different groups as demographic changes take place. In addition it is worth noting that until very re-
Recently Birmingham as a city has been prosperous in terms of offering a very diverse range of employment and above average incomes, especially for manual workers, and therefore has not had to confront many of the problems of other authorities. The City Councillors have also been quick to avail themselves of funds for housing as in other areas. Lastly, as indicated above, its public housing legacy has been of a diverse well-constructed stock, in particular high rise accommodation has been utilised and integrated throughout the City.

Although fully-occupied when this information on this case study was collected the official opening of this scheme did not take place until Spring 1983. However, there is no reason to suppose that it will be less successful than other Warden schemes in different settings, because it is specifically high rise.

One of the aspects of sheltered housing generally is through involvement of social services provisions and the emphasis on providing easy-to-run, small scale accommodation, one would expect these schemes to be attractive to small households who do not have any handicap or illness traditionally associated with the kinds of calls and alarm systems installed in these housing schemes. Again, possibly suggesting a considerable unmet housing need in terms of the choices offered in both the private and public sectors. This is particularly shown by the recent developments of Warden schemes for middle and upper income households which are proving very popular in attractive urban areas and locations.

Conclusions

The reputation of the high blocks has led many commentators and decision takers to conclude that the only solution to their problems is demolition.

We have been able to compile and document a list of endeavours which are the outcome of creative thinking; new initiatives which local housing authorities have implemented in respect of high rise housing. In all these studies we have concentrated on management, ownership and physical improvement of these blocks, on an individual, bespoke basis.

We do not seek global solutions to the 'high-rise problem'. Conceptually those who seek such solutions are misguided, seeking to superimpose general solutions to locally based highly differentiated housing markets. We start from a premise that initiatives should be set within the context of each local housing market; therefore specific schemes should not be transferred from one locality without careful re-appraisal. The 'panacea' or 'herding principle' is very strong in Britain: child 'no-go' policies and the installation of entry-phone systems typify this in high rise housing, where both have gone unevaluated despite major capital and current costs attached to these decisions.

From our studies over the last four years, the following points can be made and should be considered:

1. scale of management

Effective management appears to be management on a human scale. Management must relate to and be carried out with respect to a single block. This means individual attention to the day-to-day running of the block.

2. tenant control and responsibilities

It appears that in all cases 'success' is closely related to occupiers having a known specific budget, which has to be managed jointly and is bespoke to the block. Irrespective of ownership interests, a direct link between rents and other charges and available resources to be spent on the block is crucial in this respect.
Occupiers are actually prepared to pay a reasonable rent and service charge to contribute to the costs of an adequate management system. Certain high rise blocks in Birmingham for instance, have a very long waiting list and to occupy a flat they must be able and willing to pay the higher rents than comparable council housing.

Occupiers want to be able to control the mix of occupants who are able to live in the blocks.

Occupiers stress the need to have on-site, day-to-day personnel in the blocks. These are employed by the occupiers and may act as 'concierge'; manager; caretaker-cleaner; secretaries whom the occupiers can contact quickly and with ease. These personnel are directly accountable to the occupiers in the block and not to the local housing authorities or housing associations.

Thus, no vacuum should exist between the paid employee, the owner of the block and the occupiers of the blocks. The last thing occupants want is paternalism!

3. intensive management

Our case studies indicate that intensive management of high rise housing is no more expensive than less decentralised systems of management. In the face of privatisation, intensive management is compatible with public sector ownership as the All Saints Co-operative scheme in Wandsworth exemplifies. Occupants are taken from the council's waiting list and the rents and service charges are paid to the Council via the Housing Trust. Annual management and maintenance costs are paid by the Council to the Trust on the same basis as those allocated to their other housing stock.

4. high rise housing

High rise housing blocks should be viewed as any other large single building; office blocks are the best analogy here. In this respect entrance security systems are an essential and integral aspect of the efficient working of the block. Corridors, lifts, lighting, heating are maintained and serviced on a regular and frequent cycle.

The last thing that high rise blocks should be likened to is 'the street in the sky' concept. The major differences in costing and allocation of responsibilities between the street and its housing and the high block make any comparison inappropriate and untenable.

Unfortunately much of the housing in the high rise blocks reflects more the 'streets in the sky' than the 'office block' image. We argue and urge that resources and initiatives must be geared to the latter if high rise housing is to continue and to make a contribution to particular housing requirements.

5. initiatives and their origins

The character of the initiatives must be bespoke. There are no general recipes nor can they be legislated for, these must come from an analysis of the housing stock and the local housing markets, which by definition are highly localised.

In this respect, housing should be concerned with the improvement of housing provision, it should and cannot be a recipe for social and economic problems. It must involve a belief in the worth, capabilities and independence of the vast majority of tenants. Many current problems are due to past inappropriate management policies and practices.
NOTES:

Any inquiries or copies of research reports produced by the authors can be obtained from the Housing Studies Group, Polytechnic of the South Bank, Wandsworth Road, London, SW8 2JZ, England. A small charge may have to be paid for these and to cover the costs of postage.

The authors are keen to have contact with interested individuals or institutions who have carried out research on high rise housing in Europe, particularly relating to management allocation practices and innovatory forms of ownership or tenancy.

1. English House Condition Survey, (H.M.S.O.), 1982

2. The Harris Research Centre, Observer Survey, The Observer, 16th Sept.

3. Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

4. Details of the scheme can be obtained from the author's request.
Appendix 1

A MODEL FOR THE ANALYSIS OF THE DECLINE OF POST-WAR HOUSING

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The study of decline

Buildings cannot last forever; obsolescence, wear and tear make decline the natural corollary of new construction. Its inevitability for housing was expressed in an official depreciation period of 50 years as a base for mortgage-annuities. Applied to the present housing stock, this means that all buildings up to 1931+ have paid their way. We now know that many post-war projects, less than 40 years old, are not going to reach that age, and will follow Pruitt-Igoe in a premature demolition. The size of the post-war housing stock - in many countries more than half of the total stock - turns this into a major problem.

A new problem too. Subsidized housing dates practically all from this century, and nearly all from after 1918; most of this housing stock is still in fairly good shape and appreciated by tenants for the quality it offers for low, sometimes very low rents.

Its novelty is probably the reason for the scant attention paid to decline in the literature and research. Studies like Alison Ravetz's classic Model Estate (1971+) are exceptional. She stresses management as a key factor in housing decline. The Pruitt-Igoe disaster was blamed on discrimination, poverty, the high initial cost and the design of the buildings (Rainwater, 1972; Yancey, 1972; Meehan, 1975). Bradbury, Downs and Small (1982) have grouped the various explanations of urban decline in the literature in 6 groups of 'theories': disamenity avoidance, tax avoidance, positive attraction (of other areas), economic evolution, biased policy and demographic trends. The explanations are rarely backed up by data; most of them do not rise far above the level of an educated guess. An advantage of their collection is its comprehensiveness: it serves as an antidote against simple mono-causal interpretations.

Ter Schegget (1979), studying urban decline in the Netherlands, stressed the interdependence of factors. Structural defects of buildings may encourage residential mobility, which leads to 'social decline'. Social decline in turn may lead to an influx of marginal tenants, whose unpolished lifestyle accelerates physical decline of the buildings. He lists seven main explanatory variables: the starting-point of the area (location, planning, original costs, target-group); the general socio-economic framework; the social housing system; tenant behaviour; the behaviour of other inhabitants of the city; the press; the behaviour of authorities.

Burgers and Mandemaker (1983) have studied the differences in maintenance in the various sectors of the housing market. Though most owners try to maintain their houses better than most tenants, this does not hold for all. Some owners, forced to buy, are unable to keep up, whilst some tenants, secure in their
Dutch studies of housing decline, like their American counterparts, are based on limited data, usually collected for quite different purposes. Many of the explanations advanced by Bradbury et al., or Ter Schegget seem too general to be of much direct use in the study of post-war subsidized housing in trouble. A study of this specific problem was recently funded by our university and made us take another look at the available and possible theories. We have tried to evolve a model which interrelates the various factors influencing decline. The model is based on the literature and what we knew about some of our Dutch cases; we will use it in the collection of data, which—that hopefully—will in turn confirm, correct or falsify this model.

The model is based on Priemus' earlier (1978) multi-causal theory of housing decline, which stressed the economic relations (ownership, tenancy in non-profit housing, commercial tenancy) and the housing market. It listed six interrelated groups of factors: technical and functional obsolescence; social obsolescence caused by high mobility; diminishing returns; reduced inclination to invest by renting agencies; increased viability of the building for other uses; planners' blight.

This theory was criticized for the stress it laid on the economic side of decline; the present model is in part a reaction to this criticism. The model applies only to subsidized rented housing.

We hypothesize that housing decline has three aspects:
- social decline (relating to the factors in the block labelled 'TENANTS')
- economic decline (relating to the block 'FINANCIAL RESULTS')
- technical decline (relating to the block 'PROJECT')

It is assumed that management (block 'LANDLORD') is of considerable influence on decline, in addition to such contextual variables as housing demand and supply, governmental policies and demographic, economic and technological trends. We first discuss the blocks in the model, and thereafter the three 'spirals of decline'.

Factors in decline

Demographic, economic and technological trends influence the labour market and the housing market. Mobility in both markets is strong in a boom period. Housing demand in certain areas may be reduced by a net population loss. Such a loss may arise when the area fails to keep pace economically with other parts of the country. But an area may also be considered less desirable as a living environment, and other, more attractive areas may draw people away. That happened to the industrial areas around Rotterdam, Detroit and Chicago. An ageing population can also reduce housing demand.

Technological factors which may reduce housing demand in a particular area are e.g. the improvement of the road- and railsystem, which would allow increased commuting distance. General improvements in communications, such as meetings by telephone, may eliminate some journeys altogether.

Governmental policies may condition housing decline in various ways. Planning policy influences the distribution of new construction and hence of housing supply. Rent and subsidy policy set the limits to rent increases or decreases for landlords and tenants. Housing distribution may force a landlord to accept certain groups of tenants. The quality of new construction and/or rehabilitation is affected by a host of rules, codes and regulations; they, in combination with rent and subsidy policies, determine to a large extent which housing is affordable for certain classes of tenants.
Housing supply depends on the existing stock in the area, old, improved or new. The building of attractive and inexpensive housing near to an existing older project may cause people to move to this new alternative. The site of a project may be quite influential for its position in the housing market. If it is isolated with respect to work, shopping or schools, it may become difficult-to-let. Certain general features of the design (e.g. a concentration of high-rise) may also negatively affect demand.

Some effects of a decreasing demand for housing are shown in the block tenants. We hypothesize that a lower demand leads to an influx of lower income tenants, who have few options on the housing market, and an exit of higher income tenants, who can find and pay for something more attractive. (Higher and lower used as relative terms). The increase in lower income tenants sometimes increases ethnic minority groups; it sometimes leads to an increased use of drugs, drug trading, alcoholism, petty crime and vandalism. A number of tenants gets restless in such an environment. Social control in an urban living environment is limited, in particular when it is of a large scale and has semi-public areas which are hard to supervise, such as galleries, staircases and elevators. Beyond a certain point, the project starts to get a bad name; negative publicity increases; tenants are sometimes mobilized in action groups, and sometimes just leave.

All of this has an effect on the project. Increasing turnover leads also to increasing vacancies. Vacant dwellings encourage vandalism. Sometimes the quality when new was below par (e.g. structural defects). Normal minor repairs are no longer done by tenants because of tenancy problems. The landlord sometimes tries to increase his maintenance efforts, but as his losses grow, a backlog builds up which leads to further decline. The downward social spiral leads to a downward technical spiral.

These negative developments are accompanied and aggravated by financial problems. The landlord has to meet an official standard in maintenance. His financial policy is geared to the prevention of losses. With a growing number of vacancies, the landlord is tempted to lower his standards of admission, in order to fill up his building. This accelerates the social decline; often the vacancy rate continues to climb again after a brief lull. The revenue of the project is reduced by rental backlogs partly caused by vacancies. The declining housing quality leads to an increased need for maintenance. Other management costs rise too; the account of the project is also depleted by additional expenditures. The gap between maintenance spending and maintenance needs grows continuously. The landlord sees to his regret that his account gets ever deeper in the red.

The model shows the three aspects of decline which were mentioned above: 'social' decline among the tenants, 'financial' in the central block under results, and 'technical' in the project. We hypothesize that these three aspects interact with each other. They are indicated in the model with heavy broken lines. Increasing mobility entails, according to the first circuit (on the left), lower rent-revenues (more vacancies). It forces the landlord to lower his standards of admission and to admit lower income tenants. This speeds up the moving of higher income tenants which in turn increases mobility again.

Following the second circuit, we see that an increase in mobility leads to lower social control, a higher turnover, more vacancies, more vandalism and a declining housing quality. The last item increases the tendency of tenants to move out (Boyce, 1969, has shown that residential mobility is related to the quality of housing and housing environment) i.e. mobility grows again. The third circuit in the model shows how declining housing quality leads to higher running costs and operating-at-a-loss. This leads to a reduction of maintenance expenditures, and an increasing maintenance backlog. We are back again at the declining housing quality; this circuit is closed too.
Remedies

Central to the model are three factors which operate in two of the three 'downward spirals': mobility, operating at a loss and declining housing quality. In the diagram they are printed in capitals; they are the points at which social, technical and financial decline interact. If the whole process is left to its own devices, demolition seems the last - and only - resort. Fortunately it is not a natural, but a man-made phenomenon. At some point in time, the alarm is sounded, by tenants or landlord, and remedies are applied to counter the decline and increase the attractiveness of the project. Little is known as yet about the effectivity of much counter-measures. They can subdivided into the following groups:

a. technical remedies, such as the repair of concrete, improving thermal and acoustic insulation, general renovation;
b. design remedies, such as subdividing galleries, privatizing public and semi-public spaces;
c. management remedies, such as the appointment of wardens, tenant management, or the sale of dwellings;
d. social remedies, such as the eviction of ringleaders, more policing or patrolling;
e. change of the target group, e.g. by letting the flats to students, working women, bachelors, elder people etc.
f. financial remedies, such as lowering rents or limiting service costs.

It is vitally important for housing to find out which remedies are effective, and which are not; how they combine or obstruct each other; which show undesirable or even unacceptable side-effects; and what are the various types of declining projects to which one or another remedy might be applied with some chance of success. We believe that this requires an international exchange of experience and research, and we hope that our model is one small step toward the solution of the problem.
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In a number of countries the social housing sector was given serious food for thought when some relatively new housing estates had to be demolished: Pruitt Igoe (St. Louis), Quarry Hills (Leeds), la Démocratie (Lyon), Linnaeusstraat (Leeuwarden, NL).

The management of many other estates proves to be very difficult: unlet apartments, vandalism, a deteriorating living climate, drug addiction, petty crime, high maintenance and operative costs, serious constructional and physical faults, negative financial results. In short: a variety of serious social, technical and financial problems.

These proceedings of the conference on 'Post-war Public Housing in trouble' analyse these aspects through papers by persons directly involved in the operation of post-war housing estates; exploring the reasons for these problems, what symptoms can be discerned and what solutions can be envisaged.