PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES TO

HOUSING MANAGEMENT

COLLETTE A. MORTON

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Department of Town
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Synopsis

In the past, housing problems have been considered largely in terms of quantitative factors. Increasingly they are seen as resulting from the underlying philosophy of public provision. For many, owner-occupation is the ultimate in the housing "ladder", however there are around 8 million local authority tenants in Britain who, for one reason or another, remain in the public sector. These tenants have, for long, been subjected to insensitive and author- itarian housing management. Many wait weeks and months for "the council" to do essential repairs. In addition they are often regulated by one sided tenancy agreements which imply that, left to their own devices, tenants are irresponsible, anti-social people. This dissertation is written with the belief that tenants should be given opportunities to significantly control aspects of their environment. Through personal involvement in a local housing association, it is interesting to examine consumer participation in a setting which lies outwith the more conventional public housing sector.

The breakdown of the dissertation is as follows:

Chapter 1: provides a general introduction to the concept of tenant participation.

Chapter 2: considers the theoretical background to the debate on Democracy and Participation. It draws upon works of the "classical" and more contemporary theorists. Its objective is to provide a general context within which to examine the later case study material.

Chapter 3:   looks at the ever increasing role of state intervention

in the present century. It examines one particular

typology of the degrees to which citizens can influence

decision making in local service provision. In addi-

tion, it emphasises institutional and other constraints

to participation.

Chapter 4:   focuses on the ideological underpinnings of British

housing policy. This provides a setting for examining

the current legislative status of tenant participation.

It concludes with a classification of methods for

implementing such involvement.

Chapter 5:   is a case study of a locally based housing association

and its contribution to "user" control. The chapter

opens with an analysis of the movement, and proceeds to

a personal evaluation of the participatory process

within an individual association.

Chapter 6:   examines a local authority management co-operative.

This approach to housing management represents an

ideological shift away from traditional practices

within the "council" sector. Like that of the associa-

tion, this case study examines in detail decision-making

and participation.

Chapter 7:   highlights some of the points made in earlier sections

and draws some conclusions about the possible directions

for tenant participation in the future. It suggests

that there is an urgent need among policy makers to

reappraise the assumptions upon which publicly funded

housing is based.

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C O N T E N T S

Synopsis

Acknowledgements

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the inter-war period, the term housing management has been equated with a service provided as part and parcel of the local authority housing sector. It has always been the responsibility of Them rather than Us, in the proverbial dichotomy between providers and consumers. As a result, management practices have often been quite remote and detached from the needs and expectations of tenants. This in turn has contributed to a deeply rooted mistrust in the relationship between landlord and tenant in the public sector. This manifests itself in a situation in which tenants see authorities as adversaries and in which councils have adopted an often superior and authoritarian approach to service delivery. The chapters of this dissertation are concerned with significantly altering the present relationship and its hostile underpinnings. In order to do so, the study looks in detail at the development of a housing sector which is directly subsidised by the State and examines the philosophy upon which it emerged. As will be seen, its basis lies in the provision of housing for those who choose, or one unable for economic reasons, to become home owners.

The dissertation recognises the rise of tenants' "consciousness" in the last two decades and the concomitant dissatisfaction with their experience of local authority housing. It does however stress the lack of a large scale mobilization among tenants to necessitate a change of direction in the scope of management. Despite the extent and range of problems within the council sector, devolution of control to tenants, who bear the brunt of decisionmaking, has never been

seriously considered. There has of course been much tokenism by local authorities in an attempt to once again restore council housing to its "rightful" position as:

> "One of the glories of radical politics
> in earlier decades"

> (Fabian Society, 1980)

Alongside, there have been more "corporate" based approaches in the form of decentralising a range of local authority functions in an Area Management Strategy (authorities such as Glasgow D.C., Newcastle and some of the London Boroughs have implemented such schemes). However, this approach in its emphasis upon delivery, takes insufficient account of the underlying assumptions of local government. These are based upon the notion that services must be provided for and not with people. It is of course admirable to enable greater access to services and to attempt to take account of "consumers'" views. However, little thought is given to the more radical approach of promoting self-help principles in the housing field. Why not let people tackle the provision, management and maintenance of housing themselves? Working examples have shown that this can be achieved and produce a responsive form of management, based upon democratic principles and tenant participation.

The latter can take a multitude of forms and can lead to a reinforcement of the traditional relationship by means of manipulative devices. It can however, result in a situation whereby tenants exercise a significant degree of control over aspects of housing. It is therefore impossible at this stage to define the concept of participation. It is both a sharing and a learning process, intrinsically related to notions of selfhelp and self-determination. Its practical form and implications can however fall far short of these objectives.

The dissertation has two major components – theoretical and practical. It is not the objective, in examining two approaches to tenant participation, to illustrate all of the points made in earlier sections. The study of the local authority Management Co-op is an attempt to show that tenants in local authority housing can be instrumental in significantly altering the housing experience in this sector. The case study of the local housing association is a product of personal observations within a setting which, in its present form, is relatively recent. The responsibilities of tenants in this case, extend far beyond the management and maintenance of housing. Throughout the work it is proposed that tenant participation is advantageous on many grounds. Primarily however, if based upon a willingness among tenants and a commitment on the part of "officials", it can represent an outright rejection of the assumptions upon which housing management has long been based.

CHAPTER 2

DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION

I. Introduction

The introduction to this study has set out in general terms
the main concerns of the work and hopefully has given a brief and
personal justification for examining the topic in a necessarily
selective way. As noted, the dissertation is particularly concerned
with "user" participation in the provision and management of housing,
with a marked emphasis upon the latter. This is not an appropriate
point at which to examine the detailed institutional framework of
the two empirical case studies. However, it is essential in the
light of the commentary which follows in the present chapter, to set
out, very briefly, the arrangements for tenant involvement in each
of these cases.

In simplistic terms, the community-based Housing Association is
a local housing agency, funded entirely by Central Government via the
Housing Corporation. Most housing associations in the West of Scotland
are engaged overwhelmingly in the rehabilitation of tenement property
in areas of sub-tolerable housing stock. They are run by a Management
Committee of local residents, which has extensive decision-making
powers in all aspects of the financial, developmental and management
activities of the Association. Residents, including owner-occupiers
have the opportunity of "joining" the Association by purchasing a £1
share and in so doing, assume the right to stand for election to the
Management Committee, which usually consists of no-more than 15 members.
The property over which the Committee presides is acquired and admin-
istered by the Association and in theory, the decision-making process
has, as it's central focus, the interests of the community to which it
relates.

The Tenant Management Co-operative at Summerston on the other hand, is essentially part of the local authority housing stock. It is run along similar lines to the Associations, although as will be seen later, factors influencing the development of co-ops, are significantly different from those of Housing Associations. The property within the co-op remains within the ownership of the local authority and it's main function is the management and maintenance of the stock. Each co-operative has it's own individual constitution and this has resulted in a variety of organisational forms and there is, therefore, no detailed blueprint for co-ops in general. Both Associations and tenant Management Co-ops have developed their own peculiarities, however, there exists a common basis for their comparative analysis, and it is to the most important elements that we now turn.

It may be helpful to think of the 'political' organisation of both institutions as microcosms of the wider national political system. In both, periodic elections take place atwhich all members have voting rights and can nominate fellow-members for election to the Management Committee. This raises two important questions which will be examined more fully later. Firstly, there is the complex debate which surrounds access to participation. There are many constraints which militate strongly against an individual's involvement in public decision-making. These constraints are often related to domestic and employment circumstances. Secondly, the vexing problem of trying to evaluate the "representativeness" of those who do participate. The two concepts are indeed related, in that those with the most 'favourable' circumstances may be similar in other respects, for example, in educational attainment and previous experience in local politics and community affairs. It is essential to exercise great caution when using such

concepts that are so easily exaggerated and misunderstood.

In addition to these observations, it is important to highlight certain other areas which will be further commented upon in the course of the theoretical analysis which follows. Factors such as the scale of the unit within which tenant involvement occurs, are an important theme in the later sections of this work. Scale is of particular relevance in considering wider theoretical approaches to participation and democracy. J.S. Mill notes that it is at the "local level" that individuals become familiar with the principles of democracy, which can be applied to a more strategic form of decision-making. As will be debated later, there may indeed by a correlation between involve- . ment in activities such as housing management and wider political life.

A further idea which was introduced by Mill, was that of the advantages of only a minority of people becoming active in decision-making, even at the parochial level. It is clearly a minority of tenants who are involved as committee members in both the Co-op and the Housing Association. This should be kept in mind when considering Mill and similar theorists whose work could be easily interpreted as elitist. Such writers have stressed the importance of an 'educated' electorate for successful democracy. However, in the light of the two case studies, with their local basis and fairly well defined responsibilities, there is no evidence, from discussion with those closely involved, that this aspect is of any significance.

Turning briefly to another important consideration in any study of participation - that is the question of the purpose of public or 'consumer' involvement in policy formulation. As will shortly be examined, there are two main schools of thought regarding this issue.

Firstly, that which views arrangements for participation as closely tied up with benefits which accrue to the individual and community in terms of social justice, freedom and self-fulfilment. Secondly, there are those writers who stress the importance of the policy outcome that results and it's relation to the political and material needs of citizens. It is virtually impossible to separate these from the ideas of Mill above, for, the very fact that there is a distinction between the two functions of participation, suggests that the former justification may produce decisions which are inferior to those arrived at by bureaucratic means which take the direct account of the views of those not formally involved in political life.

Mentioned above are some of the concepts which will be expanded upon later. It is helpful, however, to use them as pointers towards a practical application of some of the theoretical ideas which follow. This selective inclusion of various writers' work is intended to provide a wider, more general framework for analysing participation at the local level, and to present the reader with ideas which can be applied to the observations made in the two case studies. It is to this general framework that we now turn.

II. Perceptions of Democracy - The Classical Era

Any analysis of tenant involvement in housing management is fraught with definitional problems and theoretical pitfalls. Perceptions of democracy and participation vary widely among parties involved in the process of decision-making. It is for this reason, that it is almost impossible to devise a meaning for all of these individuals and groups.

Among the many studies of participation in Western democracies, a broad distinction can be drawn between those which consider the process as intrinsically linked to the principles of self-fulfilment and personal freedom, and those works which concentrate upon the quality of the resulting decisions. The latter school deals also with the maintenance or demise of the prevailing economic and political system. Conveniently, this distinction coincides closely with the difference in theoretical stance between the so-called 'classical' writers and the more contemporary theorists. Pateman (1970) warns strongly against indiscriminately lumping together these "classical" writers, failing to recognise the variety of views expressed within this general category. It is necessary in this work, to be highly selective in the material covered and it is therefore more appropriate to consider the writings of particular theorists rather than attempt to examine this complex body of political thought.

The traditional democratic theorists' philosophy can be traced back to the classical Athenian experience of direct participation of individuals in civic government, as early as 500 B.C. Despite the relevance of this early period to democratic theory, it is more appropriate to begin our examination in a more recent context. Jean-Jacques Rousseau emerged as a major force in 1762 with the publication of The Social Contract a controversial and influential discourse – including discussion of the virtues of citizen involvement in public decision-making. Despite the age of this work it holds great significance for any contemporary work on this subject. Rousseau wrote in the context of a French society which embodied substantial social and economic inequalities. Of great importance to the author was the

notion of the educative function, and the philosophical value of
participation by ordinary citizens in the political arena.   He
believed that, ideally, every individual should be equally dependent
upon all others, in a society within which:

> "no individual shall be rich enough to
> buy another, and none so poor as to be
> forced to sell himself."
>
> (Rousseau Book II Chapter II)

Following from this, all citizens would participate in political life
on an equal basis and no individual would be able to persuade others
to vote for a proposal which would give he alone advantage. Put
another way, every citizen would enter into an unwritten agreement, a
social contract, surrendering his rights to the community as a whole.
Inherent in this work was the assumption that individuals benefit
psychologically from participatory activity, and that in time, they
come to distinguish clearly between personal desires and urges, and
the demands and needs of the wider body of citizens. Rousseau, in
addition, put significant emphasis upon the community as a decision-
making forum and talked of the benefits of participation in terms of
cultivating a "true sense of community" among its members. In short,
there are individual and collective benefits from such activity.
There is also the implication that it is self-perpetuating in that
over time, people become increasingly skilful and resourceful at
introducing imaginative schemes for involvement.

This emphasis upon the local level was echoed by J.S. Mill,
writing in the 1860's. Mill advocated that people should use partici-
pation at this level to familiarise themselves with the principles of
democracy for use at a later date in more strategic decision-making.
However, perhaps the most powerful component of his work –

<u>Considerations on Representative Government</u> (1861) was its focus upon

the skilled and educated electorate as a precondition of effective

democracy in government. The apparent arrogance of this assertion has

proved to be a contentious issue with its implication that individuals

must attain a certain standard of intellectual achievement in order

to make decisions. It should not be confused with the educative

function stressed by Rousseau, although Mill does recognise the

developmental effects of activity.

This brief look at the work of both of these writers, provides

only a taste of some of the characteristics of the traditional approach

to political participation and democracy. However, writers such as

Bentham in the early 1800's had focused upon the power held by people,

in terms of their ability to dislocate an existing administration and

to act as a check upon tyrannical behaviour. Articulated thus, the

indirect, voting power of the public, could be considered as a somewhat

negative power. Considered alongside the work of James Mill, who

advocated the involvement of only a minority of citizens, we can detect

similarities with the views of more recent writers who believe that

the existing electoral democracy that exists in the Western industrial-

ised world, is sufficient to ensure representation of all citizens.

This view could be challenged in many fields of contemporary service

provision, particularly in those administered by local authorities in

Britain, where dissatisfaction has emerged in recent years. Dilys

Hill (1970) notes that in many instances, democracy based purely upon

the periodic election of leaders results in bureaucratic practices in

policy making, and to complacency among the public. This view and

others will be examined in the following chapter, which will concentrate

upon the existing framework for local service provision.

III. <u>Twentieth Century Perceptions of Democracy</u>

Let us turn now to writers of this more recent period who have

advocated theoretical perspectives which differ fundamentally from

those examined above. Hayton (1980) observes that with the advent

of universal suffrage and developments in political science, it has

become possible to formulate theories of democracy which:

> "are based more upon empirical observa-
> tion of participation in political life,
> than upon the philosophical value-basis
> of the classical theorists"

This extract succinctly captures the major divergence between the

two main streams of democratic theory. One of the prevailing observa-

tions in modern works is that interest shown by individuals in public

and political life falls somewhat short of that implied by traditional

theories, which largely assumed that man has an innate urge to

participate in such activities. This factor was analysed by Schumpeter

(1942) who asserted that political participation should be primarily

considered as a means of arriving at good and competent decisions,

and not as an end in itself. This view was accepted by various writers

who followed Schumpeter in the 1940's and 50's. In this period,

therefore, the notion that public involvement was based upon universally

accepted philosophical virtues paled to the margins of the debate,

while more practical justifications came to dominate. Parallel to this

theoretical shift, there occurred an increased recognition of the role

of societal conflict in political thinking. Marx of course in the

previous century, provided us with countless volumes documenting his

analysis of class conflict and the significance of political, social

and economic inequalities in the power structure of society. Marx talked of inequalities in more specific terms, between those with political influence and the majority of citizens at the mercy of the actions of their supposedly representative leaders, who, Marx concluded, competed for power on an unequal basis.

It was not however until the 1950's that this view crystallized into a coherent theory of democracy based upon the question of the stability of the status-quo. Berelson (1954) echoed Schumpeter's emphasis upon participation as a means of achieving public decisions, but he also stressed the need for only a minority of people to be directly involved in the process. The role of the majority is seen as having the power of veto in the form of electing an alternative government. Berelson however refuted the assumption of many traditional works that the public was an amorphous body, and their emphasis upon the individual in society rather than upon the political system itself. We should always keep in mind, however, that societal institutions are the product of individuals who have created them, and it is difficult to deny their interdependancy. For example, it would be follish to consider the existing system of housing administration and management without relating this to the underlying philosophy of its provision. Berelson recommended that direct participation of the masses should be strongly discouraged in order to ensure political stability. What he fails to do is to provide us with a convincing justification for maintaining the status quo. We must assume that this author is satisfied that the prevailing system of representation is adequate to incorporate all views and needs.

In 1956, C. Wright Mills published his influential work The Power Elite, which, in an attempt to clarify certain concepts of democracy,

focused upon power in society. Mills believed that power holders
are those in big business, and not as is commonly assumed, our pol-
itical representatives. Those within this power-elite, hold
significant influence to sway representatives towards creating circum-
stances which are conducive to the former's maintenance. The result
is that the interests of political representatives become synonymous
with those of the power-elite, while those of the voting public are
relegated to a secondary position of importance. Inevitably, a gulf
emerges between the ordinary person in the street, on the receiving
end of service provision, and his so-called representative in the
political arena.

These observations do not augur well for individuals and groups
campaigning for meaningful control in crucial aspects of their lives.
There are, however, several writers who have considered means by
which the public can influence decision-making. Robert Dahl (1956)
wrote within the context of an essentially consensus model of society,
in which there is no inherent conflict and all groups and individuals
pursue certain common goals and work within universally accepted
ground-rules. Differences of opinion in such a model arise in re-
lation to specific issues within a general state of consensus. Dahl
believed that participation is regulated by the actions of minority
pressure groups, pursuing specific ends. He outlined the Madisonian
concept of democracy, based upon the assumption that, in the absence
of external checks, any group or individual with power over others
will tend towards tyrannical practices. This is undoubtedly a contentious
assumption and one which deserves more attention than is possible at
present. To counter such a threat, Dahl advocated a system of government
by "Multiple-Minorities" or interest groups. The main problem with the

thesis put forward, however, is that the author assumes general

consensus, inherently implying that there is no significant polarization

of the objectives of different groups. This is not the appropriate

point at which to examine the rationale behind conflict and consensus

models of society, nor theories of the State. It would be difficult,

however, to assume the absence of societal conflict in the light of

recent experience within the confines of Britain. With the occurrence

of urban riots alongside racial and religious hostility, it seems

essential to acknowledge the existence of considerable conflict.

West (1981), points out that there are writers such as

Dahrendorf (1959) who see various forms of conflict as endemic in

modern society, but nevertheless, occurring within a consensus frame-

work. Dahl's theory on the other hand, assumes pressure-group activity

to ensure the inclusion of all needs in the decision-making process.

What he and others fail to emphasise, are the constraints upon individ-

uals' participation, constraints which are related most often to personal

circumstances and available resources. These limitations will be

examined at a later point in this work, but it is necessary to keep

them in mind when pondering the notion of participation in general.

Dahl in another work of 1962 talks of Civic Man and Political Man,

the former being most interested in pursuing immediately gratifying

objectives while the latter has evolved further and has realised that

political involvement itself is a worthwhile and rewarding pursuit.

Inevitably, however, we come up against the problem of constraints

mentioned above, and the related question of whether to deduce that

such limitations are a function of social and economic disposition.

Such a question provides enough potential interest for a thesis of

its own. Its implications are however directly relevant to the present

study, in that any examination of tenant participation must take into account the constraints upon many individuals who are unable to get involved. C.W. Mills noted in his neo-Marxist work that the majority of people are simply too caught up in the everyday struggles of life to immerse themselves in community politics.

IV. Conclusions

In accepting that such limitations exist, it is difficult to align oneself to either of the two mainstream justifications for citizen involvement in public affairs. The rationale based upon personal and community development is surely valid only where there is equality of access to democratic and participatory opportunities. Equally problematic is the view that direct citizen involvement is a means of arriving at favourable decisions. Unless the needs and aspirations of all are taken into account, can we legitimately say that the "best" possible decision has resulted? Due to factors discussed previously, some voices are heard more clearly than others.

As was also noted earlier, the 1940's and 50's saw a movement away from the former to the latter rationale and towards the political system as the main focus rather than the role of the individual. In the more recent period however, there has occurred a shift in the opposite direction towards the more classically oriented approach. However, even in 1967, Bachrach said that individuals who remain "apathetic" leave themselves open to manipulation by elites. He is thus assuming that each person is equally able to participate and that those who do not, are disinterested. This is a surprisingly naive statement to make in a period which was dominated by the so-called 'rediscovery of poverty' and an increasing recognition of

societal inequality.

It is clear from the work set out above that the entire debate surrounding participation can be analysed using many different criteria, most of which are relevant to the present work. we have observed the major ideological and chronological distinctions that exist between various theorists. Those theories which have as their basis,the effects of participation and democracy upon the status-quo, perhaps have their origins in a rather rosy view of the world in which any degree of conflict is seen as negative, with no recognition of its potential for positive change. On the other hand, the views advocated by James Mill, Bentham and J.S. Mill, are essentially elitist in nature and relegate the role of the majority of citizens to the periodic exercise of voting rights at election time. Despite the major criticisms of traditional works, most sought as their main objective, to work towards a political system which would become increasingly sensitive to human needs over time.

The situation characterised by C.W. Mills, if it reflects reality, makes something of a mockery of representative government and democracy as a whole, in Western societies, suggesting that there exists a funda-mental maldistribution of power and influence which, in turn, must create potential for large-scale conflict. This is in direct contrast to the consensus models which are symptomatic of many democratic and participatory theories.

The following chapter will examine these theoretical approaches further, the discussion focusing increasingly upon the application of theory to the provision of local services in Britain. Hopefully, the present chapter has provided something of a general context for

the reader, as a forerunner to the more specific material which
follows, and as a backdrop for the empirical case studies of tenant
control in housing management.

CHAPTER 3.

PARTICIPATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

I. Introduction

In the previous chapter various general and wide-ranging notions

of democracy and the role of public-participation in political affairs,

have been examined. These have focused on the political system in its

widest sense, associated with voting, national government and other

key concepts which many citizens view as synonymous with "politics".

It is probable, however, that many do not perceive politics in such

terms as closely related to their everyday experience of state

activity.   Put thus,   National politics has become somewhat

remote from this day-to-day experience, and has increasingly focused

upon issues of wider significance, with which most individuals do not

relate. It is of course the function of Central Government to take

this wide view and to legislate within the national framework. How-

ever, the ever-increasing bureaucratic nature of its activities has

nurtured a very poor image in the eyes of the public in general. The

result has been, that local government or "the council" has become the

most common point of contact between the individual and state inter-

vention in service provision, reflecting the relative remoteness of

highly   centralised political activity. It is,therefore, to this

local arena that we now turn, for an examination of "Consumer" or

"user" participation in the provisions of both local and central

government.

II   The Emergence of State Intervention

There has been, in the present century, a dramatic increase in
the level of government intervention in public, social service
provision. This has mainly taken the form of increased activity under
the general category of the welfare state. These provisions, in a
climate of deepening depression, become increasingly important in the
lives of millions of Britons. Public concern for welfare is older
than the present century, but in the period since 1914, we have seen
developing, the framework of a social policy, based upon massive
public investment in housing, health, education and the personal
social services. Obviously, investments have extended far into other
fields, such as regional policy, transport etc. However, it is with
the former policy areas that the present section is most concerned,
particularly with that of housing.

These services have received a very mixed review over the years
since their introduction. They have been praised for their relief
of the most severe poverty, although this is, for many, difficult to
accept in an age in which many still experience appalling hardship.
This is related to the major criticism of services, based upon the
view that insufficient resources have been channelled into their
provision, with the result that widespread poverty remains. Another
view espoused by writers such as Colin Ward (1974) levels the criti-
cism that large scale state intervention in social policy has created
a restrictive, manipulative and paternalistic network of controls,
binding people to authority and degrading them, to a form of serfdom
in the case of public housing.   Ward's criticism is mainly based,
however, on the mechanisms through which public services are administered

and not upon the rationale for their existence. Such perceptions are highly relevant in the sphere of housing management and the degree of control exercised by its consumers.

Dilys Hill (1970) notes that the bureaucratic complexity which has developed with the growth of government activity, represents a formidable constraint against participation by individuals. This is related to the state of one's perception of personal capability and aptitude to become active in political or community affairs. Many people have an enormous psychological hurdle to overcome to feel confident enough to make a simple comment at a public meeting, far less volunteer himself for election to a committee with decision-making powers. The eradication of such a barrier is an important issue in itself if we are to see a significant degree of control placed in the hands of those who bear the brunt of decisions in public affairs. This and other constraints, which will be examined later, are a very real problem for those who would otherwise have much, in terms of valuable human resources and enthusiasm, to share with other individuals and groups. These barriers, in effect, do not allow them to make the commitment that is asked of those who partici-pate in local decision-making.

III Involvement in local decision-making

Until now, we have talked of public involvement in decision-making as though it could be represented by one specific activity. This is an over-simplistic notion. The ways in which people participate vary greatly in terms of the degree of control delegated to them, and by the institutional arrangements for the implementation of this control, both of which are integral to the later analysis of tenant participation in the management of housing. Having acknowledged

however, the diversity that exists, it is interesting to consider

one particular typology of citizen participation which has become

something of a reference point for writers on the subject (Richardson,

1983, Ward, 1974).

Arnstein (1969) claims at the outset of her paper that:

> "participation without a fundamental redistribution
> of power, is an empty and frustrating process for
> the powerless"
>
> (Arnstein, p. 216)

That is, involvement by the public in decision-making must be

accompanied by a definite shift in power and influence towards the

"have-nots" in society, if we are to talk of meaningful participation.

Arnstein writes within the context of her experience of the U.S.

Anti-poverty programmes of the 1960's with particular reference to

the depressed, inner-city ghettos and the hopelessness and despair

endemic there. The basic thesis rests upon the observation of various

methods of introducing citizens into the policy process, related to

increasing degrees of control exercised. However,Arnstein and Ward

(1974) point out that most of the formal mechanisms devolve little or

no real power and are, in fact, manipulative and paternalistic towards

those who believe they have achieved an effective share of control over

their lives. The "ladder" of citizen participation is set out below

in the form of a table which provides a commentary of each "rung" -

an analogy which conveys the idea of increasing influence, attained

by groups formerly powerless.

1. <u>Manipulation</u>   This amounts to a public relations exercise
by existing power holders. It may involve
individuals or a group being given "advisory"
powers, with no significant, if any, amount
of influence being devolved.

2. Therapy		Arnstein views this as dishonest and arrogant. It is essentially related to the social pathology model that assumes powerlessness to be synonymous with mental illness. It is a classic case of treating the symptoms, and not the causes of social inequality. A common example of therapy masquerading as participation, is when tenant groups are used as vehicles for promoting "control-your-child" or "clean up" campaigns, diverting attention away from important matters such as the reasons for segregated housing estates, in the case of the U.S. cities, or for the reasons why there are often long and frustrating waits for essential repairs to be done.

3. <u>Informing</u>

This may be seen as the first positive step along the ladder towards citizen control. Tenants and other bodies are informed of their rights, but are often left alienated and bewildered by a flood of pamphlets, posters and other information which is fraught with complex legal jargon. Too often, the emphasis is upon a one-way flow of material, with little or no attention paid to the views of individuals, whether negative or positive.

4. <u>Consultation</u>

The most common form of consultation is interviewing people to ascertain their opinions on given topics. In many cases, particularly in certain areas which have become 'model' studies of, for example, deprivation, these surveys are so frequent and lack positive outcomes, that many people are becoming disillusioned and are giving responses which they believe the researcher wishes to hear. This is of course a problem which pervades any such research.

5. <u>Placation</u>

This is one of the most insidious mechanisms for so-called participation. It typically involves placing a few of the least troublesome members of a community on an advisory committee or board, where they can be outvoted due to their relatively small number. Arnstein notes that this method was common in the U.S. Model Cities programme. There is potential for influence within this category, but tokenism is still apparent.

6. <u>Partnership</u>

In this category there is a certain degree of power sharing. However, citizens' influence has often been seized, against the wishes of public officials. This stage does however represent a significant development for citizens of a community, in terms of decision-making clout.

7. <u>Delegated powers</u>   This represents a further development of the previous category, but with a greater degree of power devolved to citizens. In many cases, for example, where tenants are co-opted on to a council's housing sub-committee, they may hold a voting majority. The cases where this exists, however, are uncommon. An alternative form may involve 'consumers' having the power to veto decisions taken within the existing power structure.

8. <u>Citizen- control</u>   Within this category, there are schemes where there exists no intermediary between citizens, who more specifically may be tenants or other community groups, and the source of funds for the projects being carried out. In these cases, consumers should have full and sovereign decision- making powers.

The author goes to some lengths to stress that no-one has

complete control, and that

> "It is very important that the rhetoric should not be confused with intent .... People are simply demanding that degree of power (or control) which guarantees that participants or residents can govern a programme or an institution, be in full charge of policy and managerial aspects, and be able to negotiate the conditions under which "outsiders" may change them."
>
> (Arnstein, p. 223)

This view is similar to that which underlies the present work, in that

what is being advocated is not the development of opportunities for

tenant power for the sake of power itself, but simply the means by

which tenants can influence the shape of housing management and assert

some degree of meaningful authority over their fate.

Arnstein herself recognises the shortcomings of such a classifica-

tion but believes that it represents a fairly realistic progression

from a situation of control by bureaucracy, towards one where citizens

can influence important aspects of their lives. There do remain,

however, problems with the typology. It fails to examine citizens'

perception of the various situations described. We should always

consider such personal and group perceptions instead of concentrating

excessively upon academic schemata. This is not necessarily true of

Arnstein's work, but it is a valid caution to apply to any such studies.

It is relatively easy to devise a sequence of 'ideal' developments

but much more problematic to trace the occurrence of such events in

reality. If this was attempted within the case studies of this work,

the result would undoubtedly be a serious mismatch between the

expected and observed process.

At no point in her work does the author of the paper suggest that

the ladder represents a chronological progression, and it is perhaps

most useful to interpret its "rungs" as possible steps towards devolved

control. The reader of the paper is however left with the distinct

feeling that once attained, "citizen-control" is something of a

solution to all of the problems associated with bureaucratic and remote

policymaking. It does seem essential however to ask the question -

given that a certain degree of influence has been gained, can we assume

that the exercise of this influence will reflect the interests and

needs of the community as a whole? It may indeed by the case, that

the resultant decisions are no more sensitive or democratic than those

of the preceding stages. This is a problem which has pervaded the

debate on democratic government and participation over a long period of

time. It has been said that local activists are predominantly drawn

from the most articulate and middle-class sections of any given community.

(Hill, 1970) however,   this is a fairly dangerous assumption to make

given the variety of interpretations that can be applied to these terms.

It is more appropriate, though less controversial, to say that partici-

pants are unrepresentative by their very activity, (simply because most

people remain passive in the policy process).

Despite the inherent problems of a typology like that of the author cited above, such a study does provide a useful and necessary classification of possible means of involving people in a dialogue with the existing agents of service provision. Whether this results in manipulation or effective control is quite another matter.

IV. The Constraints of Local Government

Contributing to the debate of the local government scene and how it affects the fortunes and the motivation for public participation, Tony Byrne (1983) has noted that:

> "British local government does not enjoy
> a high degree of public participation
> using conventional measures"

(Byrne, p. 260)

and in addition, the Maud Report (1967) concluded that:

> "local authorities provide a wide range of
> services to the community and relatively
> few people need to make contact with their
> authorities unless things go wrong. The
> lack of public interest in the work of local
> authorities may well suggest that the public
> are satisfied with the services which local
> authorities provide"

(Source – Byrne, p. 261)

Inherent in the latter quote, is the assumption that lack of involvement can be equated with apathy and it fails to recognise, on paper at least, that there is a lack of opportunity for active participation. We need only look at the lack of innovation of schemes for devolving power to consumers of services, among local authorities, to find a possible explanation for Maud's observation. The reasons are diverse and complex, but worthwhile considering.

One of the most powerful constraints acting against a shift in the power structure in local decision-making, is the failure, by both authorities and the public, to recognise the enormous resources that exist within the latter. These could, and should, be tapped to provide more democratic and responsive policies at the local level. As noted previously, lack of confidence among individuals to take up the challenge of important decision-making, has not helped those who advocate a greater say for the ordinary man or woman in the street. This lack of confidence may however be linked to the political tradition, whereby people are regulated by authority and officialdom from a very early age. From childhood we are subjected to authority in various forms - through discipline in schools, the family, the workplace and in the wider context of state intervention in crucial aspects of our lives, in law and order, housing and health provision. From the bureaucratic point of view, those officers and elected members who hold the reigns of power, are increasingly anxious to retain what they have. This is particularly true in a climate of increased demands for job legitimization in the public sector, and the need for local councillors to justify their existence to the electorate. Despite the deep significance of their actions, there is a great lack of publicity about the work of these representatives when compared to coverage of national political figures and issues. There are of course links between national government and the local scene, in terms of the ideological underpinning of the party controlling the authority in question. However it is the national political scene that dominates the media, even at the parochial level.

There is another side to the problem, just mentioned, associated with an unwillingness to decentralise power in favour of the public,

at the receiving end of policy decisions. Individuals are often left
bewildered and alienated after dealing with local bureaucracy. This
commonly creates something of a psychological barrier against participa-
tion among citizens, for example, a person who's experience of the
local housing department closely resembles speaking to a brick wall,
is unlikely to be optimistic about his or her chances of influencing
policy. Even in a situation that is favourable to the establishment
of a housing management co-operative, many potential tenants may
believe that it represents a con-trick by the council to shake off
some of its problematic responsibilities, despite the benefits that
may accrue to tenants themselves. This results, arguably, from a
history of passive acceptance of policies, formulated by those who
remain unaffected by their implications, associated with the myth
that public services are "favours" bestowed by local and central
government. There is negligible recognition of the notion that state
provisions may be functional to capitalism and the maintenance of
the state itself.

It is appropriate at this point to consider briefly the conception
of the welfare state as a guarantee of "womb-to tomb" security for
those who benefit from its provisions. Among those who are highly
dependant upon these provisions, there is often present the under-
lying notion that it is some shortcoming on their part that has re-
sulted in their dependance on the state. This is tied up with the
whole notion of deference to perceived authority and the feeling
that "They", as opposed to "Us", know right. Thus, there is a long
tradition of individuals believing that they should be thankful for

the provisions made by central and local government. It is, of course,
undoubtedly true that these have radically improved the quality of
millions of lives in the post-war period, however, Ward (1974) talks
of the fallacy of the Welfare State as a means of equalising the
distribution of social and economic income between different groups
in society. With specific reference to public housing, Ward notes
that:

> "In the tangled web of "who-subsidises-who" in
> the housing market, the council tenant receives
> a subsidy of £36 per annum, while the average
> house-buyer receives £61 per year in tax allowance
> on his mortgage interest"
>
> (Ward, p.13).

This fact somewhat dissolves the myth that state provision has an
unequivocally equalising effect on social income. Ward draws further
from the 1958 work of Richard Titmuss, noting that:

> "The middle-class benefits more from the welfare
> system than the working class. ..... the working
> class pays more into the social services than it
> draws out, and .... far from having an equalising
> effect, the social services are actually enlarging
> and consolidating the area of social inequality".
>
> (quoted in Ward, p. 13)

Ward, writing Tenants Take Over in the early seventies, focused
at length upon the differences of security of tenure between council
tenants and owner-occupiers, a situation which has improved signif-
icantly with legislation of 1980. However, there remain pressing
problems in the administration of public housing and other subsidised
sectors, in terms of their failure to encourage "user" involvement
in their planning and delivery. This is despite the fact that there
is evidence, from the survey carried out for the present work and
others over many years, that a high percentage of respondents view

involvement as a valuable exercise to be implemented.

The drawing up and application of schemes aimed at this objective, where they exist, must be closely tied to the question of scale. It is much easier to conceptualise tenants being involved in housing management in a unit, be this a close, block, street or estate, in which they feel they belong, rather than in some arbitrarily defined area which bears little or no resemblance to their perception of neighbourhood or community, wooly as these concepts may be. Since local government reorganisation in the early 70's (1965 for London), the units within which local authority services are administered, are often enormous heterogeneous areas, far detached from any unit perceived by most people. This is symptomatic of the gulf, both psychological and physical, that has emerged between housing officials and council tenants and applies equally well to other areas of government activity. Take for example Glasgow District Council with its stock of around 180,000 units, administered only in very recent years by localised area offices. Central control remains firmly in the city-centre. Fortunately for the people of the city, GDC, by virtue of the size and nature of its housing problems, has proved to be an exceptionally innovative authority. Almost incredibly, it is the only local authority in Scotland to date, that has adopted a policy which includes the encouragement of tenant Management Co-ops. In the same city, locally-based housing associations have become something of a showpiece and are cited as an important component of the city's housing policy (GDC Annual Housing Review, 1982).

The two case studies will provide suitable opportunities for examining the practice of tenant control, against a backcloth of alienation in the public sector. In the sphere of local and strategic

planning, much criticism has been levelled at the opportunities for

the public to comment on draft proposals. There is no guarantee

that suggestions will be incorporated into the final plans, submitted

for approval by the Secretary of State. Planning has often been

criticised by members of the public for its apparent insensitivity

towards those who suffer as a result of displacement or proximity

to land-uses which reduce environmental quality or create hazards.

Similarly, services such as public transport are attacked for their

inapplicability to the needs of travellers, many of whom depend on

its services. The heart of the matter seems to lie in the failure

of service providers to ascertain the public's requirements. In

short, they have failed to encourage consumer participation.

Along with the absence of schemes for public involvement, there

exist procedural constraints that further militate against their

introduction. Hill, in her 1970 book Participation in Local Affairs,

is convinced that the local government committee system operates

against the encouragement of such opportunities on the grounds that

it is intrinsically inward looking. Tony Byrne (1983) also recognises

the potential problems of the system:

> "While committee members may become experts in
> the field of administration covered by their
> committee, they may also become narrow-minded
> and fail to see the work of the council as a
> whole. Indeed, there is the real danger of
> insularity .... with members' identifying too
> closely with "their" service: rivalry, jealousy
> and protectiveness may follow."
>
> (Byrne, p. 151)

The resulting situation is one of departmentalism and the pigeon-

holing of problems that arise. This is very confusing for the lay

individual whose grievance does not fall neatly under the responsibility
of one specific committee and department. The end result may be
that individuals lose heart before they have begun to make sense
of the complexity of the prevailing system. Their frustration is
passed on by word of mouth and, before long, there develops an image
of the council as insensitive and hostile towards criticism.

V. The Limits of local democracy

From the sections that have gone before, it may seem to the
reader that what is being suggested is that user participation repre-
sents a panacea for the individual. Like any aspect of human behaviour,
it has its internal contradictions and pitfalls, and therefore we
shall consider briefly the major areas of contention. At an earlier
point we mentioned the notion of the "representativeness" of people
who become active in voluntary community activities, such as the
committees of the institutions used as case-studies. It is equally
valid to ask this question of our formally elected decision-makers
in local and central government. Many people, probably a majority
in Britain, vote along fairly strict party lines in National elections,
a situation which is, arguably, perpetuated by the media. This is
also likely at the local level, where theoretically, there should
be a greater opportunity for alleviating specific problems. The
question has been raised regarding the rationale behind the election
of representatives:

> "The dilemma is often posed of whether repres-
> entatives should attempt to reflect their
> constituents articulated concerns, or alter-
> natively, to use their own judgement to discern
> their constituents real concerns."

(Richardson, 1983, p.12)

It is extremely unlikely that many citizens perceive electoral demo-
cracy in such terms. When couched thus, however, the choice and
election of candidates is a crucial matter. When the electorate
vote along party lines, the prejudices and aspirations of candidates
are something of a secondary consideration. This is in no way to
suggest that everyone votes in this manner, for there are many whose
political awareness and behaviour extends far beyond this character-
ization. What we must remember, however, is that potential exists
for a form of negative representation whereby our so-called
"representatives" pursue their personal objectives which may be at
odds with those of the local or national electorate.

This danger exists, even more strongly some would argue, at
the voluntary, community level of involvement, where individuals
may pursue personal gain, related to ego or specific practical ends.
The policy outcome may well militate against the "common good" if
such a concept exists. This is also possible in the case of pressure
groups influencing policy and decision-making.

It may be unrealistic to imagine that those who become active,
out of choice, in any form of decision-making, do so solely to pursue
the aims and needs of the community at large. Many individuals feel
a social need, a desire for friendship or just plain curiosity, to
be powerful enough to actively become involved in public or community
life, be this via a community council, an urban wildlife group or
organising jumble sales for charity. This drive may result from
experience of bureaucratic inadequacy or simply having spare time
in which to contemplate potential areas of activity. One thing is
clear and is quoted in a reference to planning by Simmie (1979),
and that is:

"Those who participate in town planning and
consequently influence the distribution of those
resources for which it is responsible, do not
form a representative cross-section of society.
It is becoming generally accepted that nationally,
the poor, the sick, the old, the inadequate, the
immobile and the under-housed, characteristically
do not compete in the struggle for power and
resources."

(Source - Richardson, p. 65)

This statement focuses sharply upon the problem of representation

in the informal sphere of decision-making where we find non-statutory

participation. We should not however be over-pessimistic, for,

as Arnstein's typology illustrates, many formal arrangements for

such activity do not result in any shift in the power structure and

simply serve to legitimise decisions taken by officials. Many indiv-

iduals who support community participation would gladly "risk" the

dangers in order to attain circumstances, which many would argue,

are infinitely more appropriate and sensitive than those produced

by bureaucratic procedures.

So far in the present chapter, we have highlighted some of

the constraints upon individuals' activity in terms of public per-

ception and the restrictions imposed by the prevailing political

system of representation. This is a problem, particularly at the

local authority level, which is the increasingly crucial interface

between the public and officialdom. We have observed that lack of

confidence among the former has been encouraged by the complexity

of organisation, the high degree of inertia and the lack of motiva-

tion to initiate schemes which would alter the pattern of decision-

making. There exists something of a smoke-screen between public

and authority, in the form of the notion that service provision

somehow compensates for inadequacies of administration. We need

look no further than the enormous disparities that exist between

different developments of local authority housing, in terms of

physical quality of the stock, management practices and amenities,

to illustrate the inadequacy of the view that government investment

and provision is synonymous with equality. Widely varying policies

which exist within and between authorities result, for those on the

receiving end of the worst provision, in alienation and a sense of

victimization. For some, there is the possibility of campaigning

for influence, but for many, such activity is difficult or impossible

due to personal circumstances. It is perhaps this divergence that

should give rise to the question of the validity of representation

by fellow community members.

In a sense, this chapter has traced, in a necessarily selective

manner, the development of state intervention in the market, at both

the central and local level. As noted, this has resulted in marked

material improvements in the quality of life of millions of

individuals and families. We can trace intervention back to the

concern, and subsequent legislation, to alleviate problems related

to public health and sanitation in the burgeoning towns and cities

of the nineteenth century. This activity, as it relates to state

subsidised housing was made statutarily possible only by the Housing

and Town Planning Act of 1919. Such developments have meant that

bureaucracy has played a steadily increasing role in people's lives,

without a parallel development of means by which they can take part

in decision-making. There have, of course, been initiatives in

certain authorities and in some national institutions, for example

the Local Government (Scotland) Act of 1973 with its advocacy of

community councils, and the establishment of Community Health Councils

in England and Wales, with the re-organisation, in 1974, of the N.H.S.

however, these groups have no formal decision-making powers and
are therefore unable to be classified as representing a shift in
power and influence. They are perhaps best considered as "advisory"
bodies, falling incidentally, within two slots of Arnstein's ladder
- Manipulation and Placation. They do represent, however, a step
along the road towards a greater degree of consumer involvement
in policy formulation.

The reader will doubtless have noticed that the bulk of refer-
ences in his work, refer to a situation in which power and influence
are shared between different bodies. Richardson, in her 1983 book
Participation, notes that:

> "Participation .... implies sharing in an
> activity, undertaking activities with
> other people."
>
> (Richardson, p. 9)

This is an important implication to note. It assumes the need for
a certain degree of compromise, without which, hostility will occur
and kill off any attempt at consumer involvement. This, of course,
relates to a situation that would lead to a meaningful shift in
influence and clout, rather than to placatory or manipulative devices.

Of particular importance, therefore, is the source from which
arrangements are initiated. Concessions gained as the result of
a public campaign will be most successful if there is a high degree
of sympathetic encouragement from officials. Whether citizens enter
into a participatory arrangement as colleagues or hostile adversaries
of existing power-holders is crucial to the entire debate. The fact

that compromise is a key principle may seem repugnant to those of

strongest belief on both sides of the argument. However, it has

been said that

>"bargaining .... includes any attempts by the
>parties involved to influence the thinking and
>activities of others."
>
>(Richardson, 1983, p. 74)

This notion of bargaining as central to the development of consumer

control is rejected by Saunders (1980) on the grounds that it indicates

an acceptance of the legitimacy of the status quo. Referring to

discussion between tenants action groups and local authorities, he

believes that the former have reduced rather than strengthened their

own political position because:

>"they have confronted the local authority not as
>challengers, but as supplicants. Far from repres-
>enting a challenge to the prevailing pattern of
>resource allocation, they have strengthened the
>pattern of distribution by competing for the crumbs,
>while resolutely ignoring the cake."
>
>(quoted in Richardson, p. 98)

This is clearly an agonizing problem for those with power to gain

and those within the general debate who sympathise with their objec-

tives. The choice is fairly limited, either we can work within

the prevailing organisational framework or strive to fundamentally

undermine its assumption that consumers of services are peripheral

to decision-making, and that the existing system embodies a fair

and equitable distribution of resources. The latter option is some-

what difficult to achieve because of the various constraints upon

many, noted previously. Ward (1974) notes that within the housing

field, rent strikes may be an effective means of improving material

conditions and of demanding a greater say in decisions. However,

he notes the inherent difficulties in such action, saying that

in the case of the Kirkby rent strikes:

> "divisions of interest between the tenants,
> those who were in receipt of some form of
> social security benefit and those who were
> not, those who were committed to militancy
> and those who were not, those who feared
> eviction and those who did not, guaranteed
> a situation in which the "leaders" were
> imprisoned while others went on paying or
> withholding rent as though nothing had
> happened."
>
> (Ward, p. 149)

This author goes on to conclude that:

> "The tenant take-over depends on three
> different levels of activity - that of
> militancy, that of "encroaching-control"
> and that of pragmatic negotiation".

It is significant that a writer so committed to the principle of

tenant control, who has written widely on the concept of anarchy

and housing (Ward, 1983), sees the necessity, in certain circumstances,

of working within the status quo. In addition, he notes that to

be successful, the use of such mechanisms as the rent strike, may

require a greater knowledge among participants, of the wide and

cumulative nature of inequalities in British society.

VI. Conclusions

This chapter has been an attempt to provide a general framework

within which to locate the case studies of tenant control of housing.

We have stressed the phenomenal influence which the state has come
to assume over the lives of millions in this country. It would be
presumptious at this point in time, to expect that this activity
will be sustained at its present level. However, we are dealing
with the present and must acknowledge the past legacy of paternalism
in the provision of state subsidised services. The ideology within
which decision-making occurs at both local and central level is
dominated by the view that officers, in their varied professional
capacities, and elected representatives ought to shape the way in
which provisions affect people's lives. The participatory role of
the public, by and large, is assumed to go no further than the indirect
act of voting for 'leaders' in national and local elections. This
amounts to a "seen and not heard" philosophy. It is however inescapable
that the "public" is a diversified and complex body with a multiplicity
of needs and interests. It includes those who are passionately in
favour of consumer control of services, and those who are quite
satisfied with their lot at present. The complexity of government
organisation, with its emphasis firmly on bureaucracy, is a barrier
to many. In this context, it must seem to the uninitiated individual,
that it is unrealistic to imagine "ordinary" citizens taking control
of activities which have, for long, been the domain of officers and
members.

Having stressed such constraints, this chapter has also con-
sidered the representative nature of those who manage to gain
influence in the community, and in politics at large. It is, of
course, logically impossible to evaluate such a concept, but it is
essential to be aware that negative potential does exist. We can

conclude this section by mentioning the dilemma which revolves around
the two alternatives, of working within prevailing assumptions and
institutions, or striving for more fundamental changes in the distri-
bution of societal power and resources,by means of challenging these
assumptions at the most parochial level. This "choice" is however,
closely related to the nature of individuals' perception of their
claim to control. Peter Saunders' view of the negative aspects of
working within a system when the solution lies outwith, is valid
and should be kept in mind. Fundamental distributional changes
seldom, if ever, occur overnight, and negotiations may provide a
stop-gap solution for many, while seeming manipulative to others.

The next chapter focuses upon the field of housing itself.
It will examine, in a fairly rudimentary way, the emergence of
housing policy in Britain, as it relates to the existing experience
of administration and management. In addition, the chapter will
introduce various means by which tenants have been incorporated
into the policy process, with differing degrees of success.

CHAPTER 4

PUBLIC HOUSING AND TENANT PARTICIPATION

I. <u>Introduction</u>

Having considered in the previous section the concept of consumer

participation in the administration of public services, particularly

at the local authority level, it seems appropriate to turn to the more

specific field of housing.   Some attention was given to housing pro-

vision in the previous chapter: however, the present emphasis encompasses

a more detailed analysis of its origins and implications. The debate

surrounding the presence or absence of schemes for tenant participation

in management functions is complex, and it is not possible, therefore,

to provide an all-embracing examination of State involvement in the

provision of housing. It is, however, necessary to consider its origins

and to examine in some detail the various swings in policy and their

underlying ideology. Hopefully, this will offer a frame of reference

within which the classification of mechanisms for tenant participation

can be analysed.

The two examples of tenant management which have been used as

case studies in this work fall within the category of public housing.

This may be somewhat controversial in a climate where many hold the

view that Housing Associations constitute a "quasi-private" component

of the housing market.   The CDP publication of 1976 <u>Whatever Happened</u>

<u>to Council Housing</u> views their encouragement and the extension of

the Housing Corporation's powers with some degree of hostility, on

the grounds that subsidies are somehow diverted from the "public" stock

into this "private" provision. As the result of perceptions of Asso-

ciations as belonging in the private sector, housing statistics usually

classify them alongside private rented property. For certain purposes

this provides a useful profile of Association activity and how it fits
into the more general housing scene. However, underlying it is a failure
to recognise, whether consciously or not, that the Housing Association
Movement is entirely funded by Central government. It is for this
practical reason that Associations are treated in this study as in-
herently part of the public housing stock, alongside what is traditionally
called council, or State housing. As noted earlier, the stock admin-
istered by the Tenant Management Co-op remains within the ownership
of the local authority and is thus, despite devolved control, unequivocally
part of the public stock.

II   The origins of the Voluntary Sector

The term "voluntary housing" is often used to describe that which
is not provided either by the activity of local authorities as a statutory
procedure, or as a business enterprise by private developers: in short,
that which is motivated neither by statute nor profit. The first
such activity can be traced back to the Twelfth Century with the develop-
ment of parish almshouses. However, it was within the context of rapid
urbanization and industrial growth that the movement provided an in-
creasingly valuable and necessary contribution to the housing stock.

Urban population Growth in Britain: 1800-1910

	1800	1850	1880	1910
London	1,117,000	2,685,000	4,770,000	7,256,000
Glasgow	77,000	345,000	587,000	784,000
Liverpool	82,000	376,000	553,000	746,000
Manchester	75,000	303,000	341,000	714,000
Birmingham	71,000	233,000	401,000	526,000
Edinburgh	83,000	194,000	295,000	401,000

Adapted from Mitchell and Deane (1971)

In 1830, the Society for the Improvement of the Conditions of the

Labouring Classes was established and pursued.

> "The erection of model blocks of labourers' dwellings
> which were far in advance of their time in terms of
> accepted standards for urban working-class housing"

(Baker, 1976, p. 3)

Later in the century, the movement was typified by the emergence of

large housing Trusts such as that sponsored by George Peabody in the

1860s and Sir Edward Guinness in 1890. In 1900, William Sutton

bequeathed £1.5 million to provide houses and flats "for the poor"

(Baker).

It was the flow of funds from such wealthy individuals which gave

rise to the notion of the resulting provision as somewhat philanthropic

in origin. It should be noted that a series of statutes which were

characteristically complicated and ambiguous, emerged from 1851 onwards

culminating in the 1890 Housing of the Working Classes Act which essen-

tially gave local government power to provide housing. However, more

important was the discretionary nature of such powers associated with

the deeply embedded 'laissez-faire' philosophy of the Victorian age.

The result was that most authorities chose to remain passive until

the inter-war legislation which imposed a minimal duty to review their

local situation and submit proposals for housing developments to central

government. The general feeling, as Baker notes, was that local govern-

ment failed to see the need for their intervention in a sphere traditionally

the domain of private enterprise.

Indeed, in the years leading to the First World War, such provision

was left to private investment and philanthropy. And so it was in

Housing Management where the focus was placed firmly upon a "Sensitive

and humane policy". The work and practices of Octavia Hill have come

in the present day to represent the archetypical example of the principles

and philosophy to be exercised in the management of public housing. Hill

advocated a personal management system within her converted lodging

houses in London:

> "She wanted to improve the lot of the poor by dis-
> pelling ignorance and promoting self-reliance and
> self respect .... She herself collected rents,
> going down streets even the police dared not visit
> singly, and saw to the repairs. Through her contact
> with the housewives at the door, she gained their
> confidence and was able to give advice and help
> which might today be offered by a social worker."
>
> (Baker, 1976, p. 8-9)

As we shall see later, these principles still underly the philosophy

of municipal housing provision and lie at the centre of the debate

on the devolution of management powers to tenants. Octavia Hill epito-

mizes those reformers who wished to help others than themselves and

sought only a modest return on financial investment - usually around

5%, the remainder being ploughed back into further provision. Bodies

such as the "Leeds Industrial Dwellings Company" and the "East End

Dwellings Company Limited" were established under such philanthropic

motives. For such bodies, housing was not something that was to be

regarded as a source of maximum financial gain.

Arguably, the development of the so-called 'voluntary sector'

was stimulated by negative factors, primarily the absence of any viable

alternative to the privately rented sector, which by 1914, accounted

for around 90% of all houses in Britain. Also, it can be attributed

to the availability of capital among a few forward-looking individuals

who were willing to forego more remunerative returns on investment.

The scale of the necessary provision however, was impossible for the

movement to meet and it was as a result of this, coupled with the

changing attitudes as to the role of the State, that the latter entered

the housing debate in any significant way. Whatever its intentions,
however, one thing seems clear, it was never envisaged that its share
of tenure would rise to approximately 30% in England and Wales and
55% in Scotland, as a whole.

III   The Emergence of State Intervention

The emergence of government subsidies to housing came in the 1919
Housing and Town Planning Act (The Addison Act). At the end of the
war, only 2% of all homes were owned by and rented from local authorities.
The overwhelming mass of working class housing was owned by private
landlords and even for the middle classes, owner occupation was still
a very restricted form of housing tenure (CDP, 1976). The debate
surrounding the intervention by government in housing provision is
controversial and widely varied. It is easy perhaps to think ot its
activity as based upon the benevolent philosophy of a passionate desire
to eradicate housing poverty and create, in Lloyd George's rhetoric,
"Homes for heroes". It is somewhat less appealing to interpret State
intervention as the result of an intense and growing fear of revolu-
tionary activity among the working classes - in short, to see State
housing as functional to the maintenance of the status quo (see West,
1981;   CDP 1976). This is not the appropriate study in which to
examine this functionalist viewpoint, however, the revolutionary action
taken by the Glasgow rent strikers in 1915, protesting against the
exploitation by private landlords in the city, left the government
stunned and fearing further action. With no choice other than to inter-
vene, it introduced rent control legislation and eventually, a statutory
power to enable a general housing subsidy to be paid to local author-
ities, in the forming the 1919 Act ,   however, Rawles (1959)
notes that,

> "the phrase 'Homes fit for heroes' became
> something of a mockery in the years after
> the war, because housebuilding costs were so
> high that comparatively few houses were built
> under the first Housing Act of 1919, and the
> rent of these were so high that only a limited
> number could afford them."

                                    (Rawles, p. 4).

Of great significance, however, to the advent of State housing was
the appalling overall condition of the housing stock. Gibson and
Longstaff (1982) view this as the major focus of the first State
activity. These conditions were assumed in Lloyd George's recognition
of a need to build a decent housing stock, worthy of those returning
from hostilities. Added to this, the Royal Commission on the Housing
of the Industrial Population in Scotland (the Hunter Committee),
reporting in 1917 noted that:

> "There was a predominance of lightless and unventil-
> ated houses in the older burghs."

                                    (1977, Scottish Green Paper)

It was not, however, until the 1930 Housing Act that there existed
an officially recognised definition of unfitness, despite vigorous
spurts of slum clearance in the late nineteenth century..

    The provisions of the 1919 Act were based upon the assumption
that authorities should survey their housing need and take the necessary
steps to provide housing, predominantly for the "working-classes".
The Act assumed that authorities should take the responsibility for
such provisions and that central government subsidy would cover any
costs over and above a certain minimum to be borne by the local author-
ity itself. It is this general subsidy which was to be a major
enabling factor in council house provision and which has been at the
centre of the debate surrounding such provision up to the present.

The 1976 paper by the CDP team concludes, however, that in the period since the initial State involvement, there has been a long term run-down of its enthusiasm, and in addition, owner occupation has been increasingly promoted as a "norm" in British housing tenure by all of the major parties. For example, it was apparently leaked to the authors of the 1976 paper that Labour's influential 'Housing Advisory Group' rejected the option of cutting mortgage interest tax relief, in favour of cuts in public housing. This in itself represents a significant ideological shift within the once champion party of State provision. The Conservatives on the other hand, have always been openly supportive of owner-occupation and have considered council housing as provision through necessity rather than desire.

> "The ownership of property cultivates prudence,
> clearly it encourages thrift, fosters the sense of
> security and self-dependence and sensibly deepens
> a citizen's consciousness of having a 'stake in the
> country'. The influence is surely one which, spreading
> from the individual to the community and linking all
> classes, must contribute appreciably to the National
> Stability"
>
>   (Viscount Cecil - quoted - CDP '76).

It is not, however, the main interest of this study to examine the development of local authority housing in detail. It does, nevertheless, seem necessary to understand the main thrusts of policy related to its provision.

If we take a broad brush approach, it does seem clear that, from the relative enthusiasm of the period following the 1919 Act, there has been an undoubted shift in emphasis away from publicly funded housing. This has been fuelled most recently by the provisions of the 1980 Housing legislation which has given council tenants the right to buy their homes. Roughly speaking, the period from 1919 to 1945 was characterised

by dramatic swings in the ideology underlying government housing policy.

In the Housing Act of 1923, Chamberlain introduced a flat rate subsidy

for local authority building, which was not over generous. However,

with the election of the new Labour Administration in 1924, Wheatley

provided for an increased council housing subsidy which boosted targets

for municipal building. This mini-boom continued with Greenwood's

Housing Act of 1930, which imposed a duty upon authorities to prepare

five year slum clearance programmes. However, the national crisis

and the subsequent coalition government of 1933 prevented such respons-

ibilities being taken up. The result has been that the 1930's as a

whole, represent a slump in the development of council housing. It

was in this decade that cost constraints were introduced and private

enterprise was thought of, by many, as the major producer of houses.

It is interesting to note one of the most important implications of

reduced subsidies. The estates of the 1930's were of an undoubtedly

inferior quality to those of the 20's, the latter attracting the 'cream'

of the working classes with higher rents and superior design standards.

This situation was ironically exacerbated by the introduction in 1935

of an emphasis upon eradicating overcrowding, the practical result

being that bedroom space was increased at the expense of general living

space.

The post war period, in general, has seen significant and far

reaching changes in trends for State housing. The mid to late 1940's

were something of a golden period for council housing. From the

stringencies of the 30's, Nye Bevan noted in 1945 that

> "To build good houses, for poor people on a huge
> scale is something that has never been accomplished
> in modern, industrialised societies"
>
> (CDP, p. 16)

The aim of the newly elected Labour government was to rectify this

situation. Accordingly, public housing was increasingly seen as a
mechanism for providing homes on the basis of need, rather than the
ability to pay market prices. A high flat rate subsidy was introduced,
and in the Housing Act of 1949 - the "working-class" tag was removed
from municipal housing. It is interesting to note that until then,
public housing had been unequivocally provided for the "working classes",
and arguably, this label has never been totally removed in terms of
popular perception. It is for this reason that many have sought to
rid themselves of its stigma despite their inability to compete in
the market. Others who have the necessary resources at their disposal,
have chosen to dissociate themselves from State education, health and
housing, preferring the services offered in the open market.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that public housing
is a service which is directly 'purchased' by the tenant in the form
of rent payments, unlike health and education services which are indirectly
paid for by fiscal income (Murie and Malpass, 1983). Many outside
the public sector think of council housing as a "free" welfare service,
whereas tenants in the public sector at present pay dearly for its
provision and rightly expect a decent standard of management and mainten-
ance of the property, just as any householder would expect value for
money.

However, despite the potential which was created in the public
sector in 1953 and 1954 when in each of these years, more than 750,000
council houses were started, the late 50's represent a period of depression
in the sector. Macmillan espoused the benefits of the consumer revolution
and accordingly State activity in many spheres was played down - no
more so than in housing, whereby he aimed at increasing the ratio of
private to public new house starts to 1:2 from 1:10. In 1955, local
authorities were forced to seek finance on the open market with its

high interest rates, while access to the Public Works Loans Board

was restricted to those authorities which could not attract finance

on the open market. The result was that quality was sacrificed for

financial savings. The situation was greatly exacerbated by the 1961

Housing Act which once again emphasised central government subsidies

but related these to the state of individual authorities' housing

revenue account. The new system assumed that authorities had a rental

income of twice the 1956 Gross Value of all local authorities' stock.

The result was that those authorities with the best stock and charging

highest rents, received the most generous subsidy. It is not difficult

to imagine the downward spiral which would occur in areas of already

inadequate stock with relatively low rent levels. This direct attack

upon housing subsidies in the public sector was accompanied by an

increasing emphasis upon home ownership as can be seen from the subsequent

legislative developments.

The 1964 Housing Act represented something of a watershed in

Housing Policy as a whole, with its provisions for home improvement

and repair grants in the private sector and the creation of the

Housing Corporation as a funding agency for the voluntary movement

although housing associations could not receive funding until the

introduction of the 1972 Finance Act and the process of registration

of Associations.

There was indeed a significant change in emphasis in the late

60's, with policy focussing increasingly upon the improvement and

rehabilitation of older property, at the expense of local authority

new-build projects. As early as 1953, a government White Paper -

Housing - The Next Step   had introduced the advantages of slum

clearance and redevelopment, a policy which was enthusiastically

implemented in the '60s, with far-reaching social and economic results.

In the '61 Act, the National Building Agency had been created, having

as a major objective the encouragement of industrialised systems building

techniques for use primarily in developments within renewal areas of

the older, urban cores of British towns and cities. The motivations

behind redevelopment were many and complex, however, mainly related

to substandard, dilapidated and crumbling dwellings, many of which

were in excess of 100 years old in the 1960s and '70s. The net result

was that many thousands of families lived in totally inadequate and

intolerable housing, lacking basic amenities such as a W.C. and inside

washbasin. There were, however, more profit oriented reasons, such

as improving the run-down, dowdy image of many of the older industrial

cities such as Glasgow and Newcastle. In addition, there was a per-

ceived need to make such centres more easily accessible for commercial

purposes, by means of building urban motorways. These often bulldozed

wholesale, entire working class communities in the process, just as

the Railway boom of the 1840s had done. However, despite such drastic

developments an optimistic view was espoused by the HMSO pamphlet

Housing in Britain (1970) which stated that over 2,250,000 people

had been rehoused since the mid 1950s, and also that:

> "Those towns with the greatest slum and overcrowding
> problems are given priority by the Government in
> undertaking new building programmes. .... It is
> expected that within the next ten years, the great
> majority of housing authorities will have succeeded
> in clearing slums in their areas, but one or two of
> the larger cities such as Glasgow, Liverpool and
> Manchester may take rather longer to do so."

(H.M.S.O., p. 9)

It is doubtful whether those who compiled this report ever dreamed that
the houses that were being built to replace cleared slums, would them-
selves be uninhabitable to a large extent a few years later, due to
dampness, serious structural failure and vandalism. In retrospect,
however, it is widely accepted that a policy of comprehensive re-
development resulted in serious economic and social implications which
had not been foreseen. Gibson and Langstaff (1982) point out that
delays in implementation of promised renewal schemes, resulted in much
hostility between local people who wished to remain in their area,
and local authorities whose hands were often tied in the process.
In reality, the latter were largely at the mercy of central government
policy direction which left little option but to purchase package deals
of industrialised building programmes. Schemes, such as the Tracoba
system flats in Glasgow's Hutchesontown resulted with well documented
implications (Bryant, 1979, West, 1981).

The view that local authorities depend largely upon government
policy as a whole, regarding housing, is supported by Murie and Malpass
(1983) who note that local autonomy is something of a myth and that
it is in the sphere of housing administration and management that councils
have the greatest scope for enterprise and initiative. As will be
emphasised in the case study of the Co-operative, Glasgow District
Council are at present taking on the challenge of public housing
problems, using such "Management-Solutions" (Shelter, Scotland, 1981).

The passing of the 1974 Housing Act continued the government's
change in emphasis towards rehabilitation, as opposed to wholesale
clearance and redevelopment. The Act has been equated with an attack
upon council housing (CDP, 1976) with its provisions for the transfer
of central government resources to the Housing Corporation to fund

Housing Associations. Perhaps, more importantly, the Act introduced

a legislative framework for area improvement in the form of Housing

Action Areas for Improvement, Demolition, or both. According to a

predetermined tolerable standard, a group of houses with a majority

below this standard could be declared as an H.A.A. The residents,

be they owner occupiers, private landlords, local authorities or housing

associations, were then compelled to improve to the required standard.

It should be noted at this point that the term has a slightly different

meaning outside Scotland, and it is with the Scottish context that

this work is concerned. For such residents and authorities there exist

three main alternatives in the improvement process. Firstly, owner-

occupiers can do the required work with the help of improvement grants.

This has proved to be an expensive and unpopular option. Secondly,

the authority can co-ordinate the works itself. Finally, housing associa-

tions can be promoted by the Housing Corporation and the local authority

in conjunction with local people. Associations then acquire and co-

ordinate the property and its improvement. In the case of Glasgow,

the number of such bodies has risen remarkably from six in 1976 to

over thirty at present. The reasons for their establishment and success

(in improving over 10,000 homes to date in the city) are complex.

However, one cannot ignore the predominance of a particular form of

housing - the tenement, which is highly characteristic of the city.

Its implications, in terms of the multi-tenurial pattern, communal

facilities and the resultant difficulties of co-ordinating improvement

have doubtless contributed to its significance in the movement in Glasgow.

Similarly, the extent of the local authority's housing stock has resulted

in a marked emphasis upon its management and maintenance. Glasgow

Corporation did attempt improvement under the provisions of the 1969

Housing Act, but its large-scale bureaucratic machine did not prove

successful in tackling treatment within a single block or tenement

close (Matheson, 1976).

Despite the euphoric rise however of such activity in many areas,

housing associations are at present fighting a long and determined

battle with Central Government to remain in existence in the face of

severe financial cutbacks. This is despite a commitment made in the

Conservative Manifesto for the 1983 General Election, which said

in relation to Scottish Associations:

> "We have greatly increased the money available,
> through the Housing Corporation to Housing Associa-
> tions, to over £100 million per year. We shall
> continue to encourage the associations to provide
> new and improved housing to rent and buy".

This 'encouragement' has taken the form of a cut in the gross cash

limit of the Housing Corporation in Scotland, from £108 million in

1983/4 to £95 million in 1984/5.

It is not possible to consider fully the implications of this

shift, but among many associations in Scotland, there is a sinking

feeling that it is inevitable that tenants will be given the right

to buy their homes, a situation that exists for English Associations.

At present, Scottish bodies have the right to sell in the form of a

voluntary sales policy, but this has not been widely implemented for

a variety of valid reasons. Many Associations are not yet half way

through their development programmes and have no hope in the near future

of having a stock of modernised houses to let,to those in greatest need.

If the right to buy is introduced, vast public funds will pour 'down

the drain' as it were,into the private sector, which is already

heavily subsidised in the form of tax relief on mortgage interest.

This significant shift in policy illustrates the present predicament of British Housing. For long, the Conservatives have openly supported owner-occupation. Mr. Bill Walker, Tory M.P. for Perth and East Perthshire said in 1983 that in relation to council house sales that:

> "The more people own their own homes within these
> estates, the better the estates will become, the
> more balanced they will become, the fewer vandals
> there will be, and less will be the problem of the
> relationship between management and those who re-
> main tenants."
>
> (Scottish Grand C^{ee} 1983)

However, in the 1977 <u>Housing Policy Consultative Document</u>, Labour's position on the matter was somewhat clarified:

> "for most people, owning one's own home is a basic
> and natural desire".
>
> (H.M.S.O., 1977)

In addition, the Green Paper notes that:

> "in the course of the next decade, a growing number
> of local authorities should have very largely dealt
> with their backlog of bad housing conditions. As
> this occurs, the overall level of public sector
> housing investment should decline in response to
> changing circumstances."
>
> (H.M.S.O., 1977)

Implicit in this statement is the notion that State provision of housing is a stop-gap measure and that its role will diminish. From the owner-occupiers point of view, it seems unlikely that there will be cuts in tax relief. However, for those in the public sector, depending upon the vagaries of government policy, the future does not look as hopeful. The financial cutbacks in Housing Corporation allocations are echoed in local authorities. This has resulted in a situation of uncertainty

among tenants to whom it must seem that their housing needs have become secondary to those of home-owners. The quality of their everyday experience has diminished in terms of physical standards and their ability to influence policy and environment. This is particularly frustrating for those who have had the opportunity to become involved in housing association committees and are now seeing the effects of cutbacks upon development programmes and long term strategies for local areas, the danger being that associations may become large scale slum landlords. Such planning has been possible only with the massive voluntary input of local people. It should not be overlooked, that the housing stock, both in the public and private sector, is the most valuable physical asset of any community in Britain. The long term benefits, therefore, of investment in its maintenance are crucial.

There has indeed been encouraged, a view which perceives owner occupation as superior to other forms of tenure. Even in the media, everyday we are bombarded with images of homes which are a far cry from most council estates, and which are implicitly equated with comfort, affluence and happiness, the latter usually in the form of a family with its 2.4 children. The Housing and Building Control Bill, which has been given its Third Reading in the Commons, will, among other provisions, give tenants of authorities and housing associations, the right to carry out repairs. Chris Smith, M.P. for Islington South views that the Bill reveals that the government has no ideas of where it is going in housing policy. Many authorities have already devolved responsibility for repairing such items as blocked plumbing systems, which may directly contravene previous housing legislation. The false analogy of owner occupation has been adopted by such authorities who have taken the opportunity of reducing their commitments to the upkeep of the public stock. What they are forgetting is that tenants pay

rent in return for a service which includes such repairs. Councils

which have implemented such tenant repair schemes, possibly illegally,

include the London Borough of Havering and Harlow in Essex.

The irony of the situation is that as such local authority re-

sponsibilities are loosened, tenants are denied the opportunity to even

consult with their public landlord in many cases, and to have any say

in wider policy issues, despite the support of tenant participation

that was advocated in the 1977 Green Paper for Scotland:

> "The government supports the encouragement of alter-
> natives to conventional tenancy agreements which
> would give more responsibility to those tenants who
> seek it. This could, at the one time, increase tenant
> satisfaction, and relieve some of the pressures on
> centralised management."

(Scottish Green Paper, p. 83)

As will be noted shortly, this support did not rub off upon the

Conservative government's legislation of 1980. The situation remains,

whereby major decisions are still largely taken by officials and

politicians, despite initiatives within individual authorities. The

experience within housing associations run by management committees

of housing consumers has proved to be an opportunity for many to become

involved in shaping their environment, despite the problems that pervade

such arrangements.

It is in no way suggested that it is easy or straightforward for

local authorities to implement similar schemes. On the contrary, it

represents a basic ideological shift away from traditional practices

and perceptions of the tenant's role. It is to these issues that we

now turn.

IV   The Landlord-Tenant Relationship

> "The landlord-tenant relationship has never been
> a happy one. In Britain, it has always been
> accompanied by mutual suspicion, to which, when
> housing was conceived as a public service rather
> than a source of profit, was added the syndrome
> of dependency and resentment that characterises
> the council estate".

(Colin Ward in Oxford Polytechnic
Papers, No. 57)

It is a fact of life that resentment will be harboured in a sit-
uation whereby an individual or external agency has control over one's
housing circumstances. This is particularly true where the landlord
is an individual, motivated by profit and providing unsatisfactory,
run-down property, and charging exploitative rents. Ward, in Tenants
Take Over notes that:

> "The ultimate logic of the private possession of
> real property is that the landlord can oblige every
> living creature to remove off his property"

(page 8)

Such a situation existed in the earlier twentieth century in a climate
which proved favourable to the development of the private rented sector
in areas of housing shortage, typically being those experiencing rapid
industrial and urban growth. Profit was certainly a motive in this
field of provision, and lack of alternatives for ordinary families
ensured a steady flow of tenants who could, as it were, be "hired and
fired at will" by unscrupulous landlords. Melling (1983) draws attention
to the working-class response to ever rising rents and exploitative
activities by private landlords, in the form of the famous Glasgow Rent
Strikes in the period around 1915. Areas such as Partick and Govan,

with their concentration of industrial labour, proved fertile ground

for the development of housing protest which came to influence national

rent legislation.   It is interesting to note that it was often women

who suffered the worst excesses of inhumane housing conditions and

exploitation by landlords.   However, because of the constraints of

their subordinate role in the home and in society in general, most

were restricted from militating against these problems. The purpose

of this illustration is to point out that tenants have often been mere

pawns in the housing game, with little or no regard paid to their needs

and views. Unfortunately, this applies also to the provision of local

authority housing and the philosophy which has underlain its admin-

istration and management. Housing policies have come and gone as was

noted above, with a great lack of foresight into their practical

ramifications for housing 'consumers'. An example is provided by

the 1980 Housing legislation giving council tenants the right to buy

their homes under certain, wide ranging, conditions. The full implica-

tions of this legislation are not yet known, but it is almost certain

to affect those left in the sector in a number of ways. The earliest

figures show a concentration of sales among the most desirable stock

in terms of physical attributes and spatial location. Further, enormous

assets are lost when property is sold, often at knock-down prices, in

a climate of ever lengthening local authority waiting lists. It may

seem, at first glance, irrelevant to cite such examples, however these

cases have enormous significance for the image of State housing that

is perceived by the public in general at national level. The philosophy

underpinning the present government's policy is encapsulated in the

recent White Paper on public expenditure. In this document, it is

revealed that for the first time ever, in the financial year 1984-85,

public housing investment in the State sector will be exceeded by

the cost of mortgage tax relief.

Many individual authorities are struggling to maintain a decent

standard of provision, however this is increasingly at the expense of

more responsive management of existing stock and the encouragement of

tenant involvement. The result is that too often,municipal housing

administration is still characterised by a relationship in which the

tenant is largely regulated by paternalistic tenancy agreements.

This problem is highlighted by the National Consumer Council's

1976 booklet - Tenancy Agreements. The NCC cites the case of an

appeal court decision against Liverpool City Council, in which Lord

Denning noted with reference to the Council's tenancy agreement:

> "It contained all sorts of things which the tenant
> was to do and not to do. There were long para-
> graphs headed THE TENANT SHALL NOT and THE TENANT
> SHALL, but there was not a single word as to anything
> the Corporation was to do or not to do."

This authority saw no necessity to set out its obligations, or a

minimum standard below which its provision should not fall. The result

in such circumstances, is that tenants have no yardstick by which to

measure the quality of service provision. This is but a single example

of the insensitivity that pervades the landlord-tenant relationship.

It is not suggested that it is deliberate or callous, but it does

illustrate the underlying assumptions of provision. It is worth noting

that Glasgow District Council consulted Tenants Associations and other

community groups, in the drawing up of a new Council lease. A copy

of a Draft Lease was circulated to these bodies for comment.

V The Legislative Framework for Participation

As noted above, the landlord-tenant relationship has inherent

contradictions in both the public and the private sector. Hostile

feelings run high in many cases. It is clear in the early 1980s that there has not yet emerged a widespread acceptance of the principle of tenant participation, among those involved in local and central government.

This situation is reflected clearly in the current legal status of tenant involvement. It is incredible that until 1980 there was no provision for, or recognition of, the need to bring tenants into the sphere of housing management, despite the long and complex evolution of housing protest. In the '70s, the Housing Green Paper of '77 and the Report of the Working Party on Housing Co-operatives in 1975 devoted attention to the subject,but there was no statutory requirement until the 1980 legislation. There have emerged as a result of two recent Acts, substantial differences between the provisions for Scotland, and those for England and Wales. This work is primarily concerned with the former, but a brief discussion of the legislation will illustrate important discrepancies between the two.

The <u>1980 Housing Act</u> referring to England and Wales was a far-reaching and comprehensive piece of legal engineering. It introduced the right of local authority tenants to buy their homes, along with provisions for security of tenure, with a few exceptions such as tied agricultural tenants, student lettings and homeless families' accommodation. However, of most relevance to the present work, it introduced what may be called, elements of tenant participation. The most important provisions are:

<u>Under S.40 of the Act:</u>

Tenants should be issued with a detailed tenancy
agreement by the local authority. In the case of new
tenancies, this is to take force immediately the Act
comes into force and for existing tenants, within a
period not exceeding two years. More importantly,
however, the authority must notify the tenant of any
intention to vary conditions of this written tenancy
agreement. The tenant should then have an opportunity
to make representations to the authority, which the
former must "consider" when making a decision.

<u>Under S.43 of the Act:</u>

Local Authorities must consult with tenants, who
are likely to be affected in any way, by changes in
management practices. Again the latter must be given
a reasonable time within which to make representations,
which in turn must be considered by the local author-
ity in implementing any such changes.

<u>Under S.44 of the Act:</u>

All local authorities must publish a comprehensive
summary of their rules regarding allocation procedures,
exchanges and transfers. In addition, an applicant
on an authority's waiting list is entitled to check
the accuracy of the information recorded by the
authority in connection with his application. This
refers only to information that has been supplied by
the applicant himself. The publication containing
the rules operated by the authority should be made
readily available to any member of the public who so
wishes.

This brief examination describes the situation as it stands in England

and Wales. That of Scotland is significantly different, with pro-

visions being set out in the <u>Tenants' Rights Etc. (Scotland) Act 1980.</u>

Rob Edwards (1980) notes that the Act was the culmination of a decade

of recommendations and promises, to public sector tenants in Scotland,

to produce a tenants' charter. In the end, however, the Act that

emerged has embodied provisions such as the Right to Buy which may in

the long term militate against the benefit of such tenants who remain

in State housing. The Scottish Act, in essence, has robbed tenants

of the right to consultation with local authority landlords. As noted,

the Act relating to England and Wales included opportunities, however

inadequate, to influence proposals for change in tenancy agreements

and management practices. In Scotland, however, public sector tenants

have the right, only to a written lease and to challenge, in court,

any component of this lease which they consider to be inappropriate

or unreasonable. During the Second Reading in the Commons, M.P.,

Peter Fraser, (Tory, South Angus) proposed an amendment which would

have given the right to consultation. This was vehemently and arrogantly

opposed by Malcolm Rifkind - Scottish Minister for Housing, who stated

confidently that there was "no support for tenant participation in

Scotland". Edwards (1979) notes that what the Scottish Office and

COSLA have offered is atrophy instead of enthusiasm. This is reminiscent

of the latter's lack of support for a National Mobility Scheme for

Council tenants. In February 1983, Alan Stewart, the Under Secretary

of State for Scotland, said that

> "one of the points of disagreement between members
> has been whether the government should have added
> to the tenants' charter, statutory obligations
> concerning consultation with tenants. We eventually
> concluded that it was not appropriate to do that
> ..... We attached considerable weight to the view
> that co-operation between landlord and tenant cannot
> be legislated into existence from scratch."

(Scottish Grand Committee, 1983)

The explanation given by Alan Stewart goes on to talk about the lack

of a basis of voluntary co-operation in Scotland and the subsequent

difficulties of "planting an innovation in unprepared ground". More

realistically, it seems unlikely that, after a long history of hostile

relationships, voluntary co-operation will occur spontaneously. In

the light of such a view, Rob Edwards (1980) notes that:

> "Scotland's one million public tenants will not be
> quick to forgive the government for failing to grasp
> the opportunity to give them more say in housing
> management."

By the time of writing, it seems clear that Scottish public sector
tenants have not mobilised to the extent that could have been expected
in this situation. At Bill Stage, the Conservatives even considered
omitting the right to a secure tenancy for Scottish council tenants,
and it can only be guessed at, as to what the reaction may have been.
In the event this was perhaps too large an insult and too great a risk
for the government to proceed with. This however, was not the case
in the decision to abolish outright, the Scottish Housing Advisory
Committee, from which numerous, progressive proposals for Scottish
housing had come in the past.

It is obvious that what had been previously hoped for, in terms
of a statutory requirement for at least consultation between landlord
and tenant, had been dashed. It could in fact be argued, on certain
grounds that the legislation reduced Scottish tenants as a whole to
a state of second class citizency compared to their English counter-
parts. Regardless, both Acts have severe shortcomings and may in the
long term have made the goal of full tenant participation all the more
difficult to achieve.

Perhaps the greatest benefit to tenants from the Acts has been
the security of tenure afforded by its provisions. Associated with
this is the right of dependents to inherit the tenancy. This has taken
a great deal of uncertainty and worry away from tenants who may have
feared that once they died, their offspring would be effectively barred
from remaining in the home. One thing is clear - despite the title
of the Scottish legislation, the government fail to acknowledge that
meaningful consultation, far less participation, is a tenant's right,

within a country which has, as 54% of its housing stock, property which
is owned and managed by local authorities. Even the 1980 Housing Act
with its limited recognition is not over encouraging. The main problem,
as has been the case in previous housing legislation, seems to be the
discretionary nature of its implementation. At no point does the Act
suggest how to evaluate the "consideration" that is given to tenants'
views expressed under the provisions of Sections 40 and 43. Likewise,
there is no specific obligation to listen to the views of tenants out-
with the narrowly defined provisions of these sections. In short the
legislation has produced little more than a placatory framework, rather
than the obligatory inclusion of tenants into the policy and decision-
making process.

VI   Mechanisms for Participation

Unfortunately, tenant participation cannot be represented as one
particular activity or process. However, its general characteristics
can be examined under various headings:

(1)   It can be formal or informal   Participation can take the form
       of a tenant reporting a necessary repair to the housing officer.
       It can also take place within a formal arrangement between
       the two parties to engage in a two way dialogue as a means of
       formulating policy. This latter, formal participation, is
       usually conducted by a group of tenants, e.g. tenants association
       who, theoretically, represent tenants as a whole.

(2)   It can be initiated by either tenants or the local authority
       in question. There is no "best" way for participation to be
       introduced. Ultimately its success will depend upon personal

fulfilment and policy decisions. Tenants themselves are

sometimes unfamiliar with the process by which schemes

can be formulated and implemented. Local authorities on

the other hand may incite resentment by fostering schemes.

This may seem to the former as patronizing. It may be

possible for the authority to stimulate interest in the

idea and let tenants develop it from there.

(3) <u>Participation will involve only a minority of tenants</u>.

It is unrealistic to expect that everyone has the necessary

resources to become involved in decision making, due to the

constraints cited earlier. We should also realise that

many tenants are relatively satisfied with the service they

consume and the manner in which decisions are taken.

(4) <u>Participation involves commitment</u> and it would be wrong

to think otherwise. It is difficult to sit through

Committee Meetings, which sometimes last more than three

hours, without the expectation that the debate is achieving

something positive. It is therefore unlikely that those

who are half-hearted about involvement, will retain their

interest without a certain degree of commitment.

(5) <u>Participation must result in a more equitable distribution</u>

<u>of decision-making power</u>. As noted in Arnstein (1969), many

so-called participation schemes are highly deceptive in that

they do not. This is not to say that anything short of

full tenant control is meaningless. What it does say is

that there must be influence by those entering the decision-

making process, rather than placatory and manipulative schemes.

These observations are by no means exhaustive, they do, however, high-light a few key components to look out for in the case studies.

Fantini (1972) writing in the context of American education, says that 'when universal education tries to meet needs in a diversified society, dissatisfaction will occur.' This idea can easily be applied to housing provision in Britain. Clearly there exist widely differing needs and aspirations among tenants. It should surely be one of the main objectives of participation in the housing field to incorporate these needs in management practices and future policies. There are, however, various methods by which this can potentially be achieved.

We have seen earlier that academic typologies have certain inherent problems. It may be permissible, however, in the present case to introduce an over-simplified, classification of four different types and levels of tenant participation which was devised by TPAS (1980) This categorization, if considered alongside the characteristics observed under the five headings set out above, may result in a rudimentary framework within which to examine participation in a variety of public services. It is with housing management, however, that the present emphasis remains. The classification considers tenant involvement under four sub-headings:

(1) Informing - This is characteristically the first step towards any further degree of involvement. It encompasses a wide variety of activities from dealing with individuals' complaints at a counter in the housing office, to holding public meetings to clarify particular areas of policy. It can include the distribution of informational material in the form of media exposure or exhibitions, alongside pamphlets etc. Allan Stewart notes in the Scottish Grand Committee debate that such arrangements have

their limits but nevertheless:

> "are at least an improvement on the rigid landlord-
> tenant relationships of the past which have been
> variously described as paternalistic and authoritarian"

Problems - This stage of tenant participation involves no
dialogue with tenants. It is a one-way flow. Often in the
case of public meetings, tenants are heavily bombarded with
complex facts, and are discouraged from contributing to the
meeting. Too often, officials talk far longer than the
time allotted to them, resulting in boredom for the majority
in attendance. It is obviously important to inform tenants
of policy and practice, but there is a distinct danger that
many authorities will feel that they have "done their bit"
and fail to pursue more positive avenues of activity.

(2) Collecting information about tenants needs and views.
This may take the form of surveys and questionnaires which
may raise expectations among tenants, that any shortcomings
in their accommodation will be improved. It is important
that tenants are informed of the purpose of the exercise,
and that responses are treated with the utmost confidence.

Problems - There is a distinct danger that tenants will
feel that they are being "messed-about" by the authority
in the sense that nothing will come of the results. It is
also possible that such a method may be used as a form of
placation of tenants by the public landlord. They may wish
to be seen to be doing something about dissatisfaction, but
unwilling to take positive action.

(3) <u>Involving tenants in a dialogue</u>. This covers a wide variety
of action on the part of both tenants and authority. It can
be either formal or informal. For example within this category
could be placed tenants associations which have been established
as action groups based upon specific issues or as a means of
creating a permanent dialogue with the authority. Alternatively
a more formal arrangement could involve tenant representatives
being invited to attend housing committee or sub-committee
meetings with the council in question. Within this category,
it is unlikely that such tenants would have formal voting powers.

<u>Problems</u> -   The problem with the less formal arrangement, is
that in many areas such Associations do not exist. This may
reflect satisfaction with the existing service, but it may be
due to a lack of the essential ingredients which give rise to
such bodies. For example, in a fairly new estate, there may
not yet have developed a social network of tenant activity, that
is common in more established areas. There exists a dilemma
within the debate surrounding the initiation of tenants associa-
tions. On the one hand it could be said that they should result
from tenant action and enthusiasm. On the other, however, it may
be tempting for local authorities to establish them in areas
where they do not already exist. The motives could be related to
a genuine desire to involve tenants in discussions and decision
making, but could also be based upon a fear that tenants,
if left to their own devices, may pursue more radical methods of
participation. Perhaps what should be hoped for is a sympathetic
attitude towards Associations and a little gentle persuasion by
implanting the idea and offering practical services such as a
meeting place and clerical back-up. A note of caution must be made

about tenants' associations. They can easily become channels

for complaints and issues which are somewhat detached from

wider, more significant problems. They can also raise expecta-

tions among members and tenants as a whole. Donald Dewer noted,

in the Parliamentary Debate of 1983 that:

> "It is difficult for housing officials to say ...
> we want to involve you in management, and to
> discuss with you how we are going to improve the
> housing stock, but then have to add, ...
> during the next two or three years we won't be
> able to make any improvements at all, because
> there are no funds."

<div align="right">(HMSO, 1983)</div>

In terms of the more formal arrangement of tenants' representa-

tives sitting in on housing committees, without voting powers,

this may represent a placatory measure by authorities.

(4) <u>Giving Tenants Some Control</u>. There are two main categories of

such control. Tenants representatives may be given full voting

powers on councils' Housing Committees and sub-committees. With

regard to the former, tenants cannot, by law, constitute a

majority. The provisions for co-option were introduced in the

Local Government Act of 1933 and updated in the same Act of 1972.

The Maud Committee of 1967 advocated co-option on grounds which

included utilising the skills of those with special knowledge of

a specific issue, and for promoting co-operation and mutual

understanding. Ann Richardson in a survey and article in 1977

notes that, prior to 1971 only about a dozen local authorities

had established participation schemes of any kind, most of which

were for purposes of consultation and discussion. However,

Richardson notes that by 1975, 46 authorities had implemented

schemes, 15 of which had tenants directly involved in housing

sub-committees. It was also noted that 40 other councils were

considering establishing such arrangements. It may be worth

quoting Ann Richardson's views on such methods of involving

tenants:

> "The devolution of housing management functions on
> to tenants, even though it means allowing non-
> elected persons to determine certain traditional
> local government decisions, can be seen as a useful
> means of increasing consumer choice, especially
> since the issues involved do not generally affect
> the wider community."

> (Richardson, 1977)

In addition, the involvement of tenants on decision making

committees is supported by the DOE circular 8/76 on tenant

participation:

> "Where conditions are not suitable for co-operatives,
> tenants should nevertheless be involved through con-
> sultation and participation in the running of their
> homes. A number of local authorities have already
> made progress in this direction and the government
> is anxious that their lead should be followed by
> other authorities."

Glasgow District Council is one local authority which has made

various attempts to implement arrangements for participation.

The city's housing department has recently been decentralised

to 15 area offices which are incorporated into the Area Manage-

ment Strategy. Each Area Management Committee can decide

upon the level of local participation. Some have given tenants

and other community representatives full voting powers, while

others have only consultation rights. On the council itself

from April 1981 till June 1982, there was a Sub-Committee on
Dampness, which included three tenants representatives from the
Glasgow Anti-dampness campaign. Similarly, there was a sub-
committee dealing with the council's modernization schemes, with
which many tenants viewed with hostility due to the timing and
nature of the renovations. The sub-committee therefore, included
three tenants representatives from the Glasgow Modernization
Group, a loose federation of tenants. However, despite these
innovations, in 1982, the Councils' Committee Structure was re-
viewed and the tenants' representatives were excluded from the
sub-groups with no real explanation. Despite this apparent drop
in commitment, the Housing Committee of GDC issued a report, in
September 1982, to its sub-committee on Tenant Co-operatives and
Participation, saying that:

> "It could be argued that effective participation,
> as opposed to consultation is somewhat lacking, and
> it is suggested that this is the nub of the issue
> facing the District Council in this field: how to
> introduce and foster effective participation by
> tenants."

It would be fair to say that the experience of tenant co-
option onto council housing committees is almost non-existent
in Scotland. In England, there are examples in some of the larger
cities, but overall, this is not a method that has been widely
adopted. (TPAS).

The second mechanism for introducing some degree of tenant-
control is the establishment of a tenant management co-operative.
Very recently there have been suggestions that GDC should sell off
some of its most dilapidated and difficult-to-let stock to willing
tenants, to form a 'par-value' co-op in which tenants would have a

nominal stake in the form of a £1 share. Such an arrangement
would operate in much the same way as a local housing associa-
tion. It is, however, with the former 'Management' Co-operative
that one of the following case studies is concerned. In short,
it involves the devolution of management and maintenance functions
to tenants who, in turn, elect representatives onto a Co-op Manage-
ment Committee. The committee allocates funds from an annual
budget provided by the local authority which retains property
ownership.

Problems -   The degree of control delegated is of course
crucial. In the case of co-option onto council committees,
tenants may feel uncomfortable and bogged-down with official
proceedings. They may be easily persuaded by the arguments and
proposals of councillors who will undoubtedly in most cases,
speak with greater eloquence and confidence than 'lay' members.
In the case of Lambeth B.C. in London, several of the elected
members on the housing committees are former tenant activists who
will try to avoid, as far as possible, the difficulties cited
above.

In the case of local authority co-operatives, as in any
community group activities, there is the potential danger that
tenants will see the movement as a ducking of responsibilities
by the council. This will be highly dependent upon the history
of the co-ops establishment and who initiated the idea. In
addition, there is the problem noted earlier, of the representative
nature and motivations of those who become most involved.

These methods and problems are by no means exhaustive and represent
only possible categories of action. There are, for example, many
councils which have adopted other forms of tenant participation.
Basildon Council in Essex discussed the question of home insulation
with tenants and reached an agreement whereby the authority would pur-
chase the necessary materials and the tenants would do the job them-
selves, with help arranged for those unable to participate. The money
saved on manpower costs could then be diverted into the provision of
community facilities.

There is, however, one condition which any local authority land-
lord should adhere to in establishing schemes for participation. It
must take the utmost care in defining exactly what it means by partici-
pation, consultation and any other potentially ambiguous term. If
they do not provide a document which sets out in specific terms, their
policy on tenant involvement, the expectations of many are likely to
be raised to an unrealistic level and result in increasing hostility
and alienation.

VII   The Barriers to Tenant Involvement

The publication of a policy statement on participation may
induce local authorities into thinking about their present stance and
a possible strategy for the future. Unfortunately, however, we cannot
rule out the possibility that many authorities will conclude that they
see little or no point in encouraging opportunities for involvement
by tenants in policy formulation and decision making on housing matters.

There are a variety of causes for such a view. Of particular import-
ance are the reasons, cited earlier, related to the jealousies that
exist in the entire sphere of local government activity. The fear
that power will be eroded is of particular significance when we are
talking of proposals for giving tenants representatives' the power
to vote on council decisions or where it is advocated that the entire
responsibility for management and maintenance is devolved to a tenants'
co-operative. It is a far cry from the old, municipal philosophy
that "if the council can't do it, nobody can" and admittedly, those
involved in local government may feel that they are being asked to
make a fundamental ideological shift.

In addition to such internal constraints of bureaucratic thinking
and practice, there exist those experienced by individual tenants.
Many, who have become disillusioned and alienated over many years,
may seem apathetic to the council who in turn may use this as yet
another argument against participation. However in this situation,
what may be needed is a "bump-start"by the authority perhaps in the
form of convening a tenants' meeting to discuss estate problems etc.
From this may spring the necessary enthusiasm for the establishment,
by tenants, of an Association. We should, however, be aware of the
problem noted above, that the establishment of a tenants' association
by an authority may not result in sustained involvement and may,
indeed, harbour resentment.

The Fabian pamphlet (1980) entitled <u>Can Tenants Run Housing</u> notes
that the response by local councillors to demands for greater participa-
tion in service administration is often:

> "But we, the elected representatives ARE that
> participation"
>   (Fabian Society, p. 1)

This claim rings increasingly hollow in a situation of ever increasing

remoteness and alienation among the local electorate, regarding public

service delivery:

> "The council house, one of the glories of radical
> local politics in earlier decades, has come for many
> to mean paternalism, neglect of repairs, the relega-
> tion of people to passivity and inability to improve
> even the details of their immediate physical environ-
> ment. .... In many cases, council estates demonstrate
> one of socialism's great nightmares: that public
> property is nobody's property; communal areas,
> entrance lobbies to blocks of flats, corridors, become
> a no-man's land between tenants who have neither
> incentive nor responsibility to do anything, and a
> maintenance department and caretaker service which has
> been run down through public spending cuts."

(Fabian Society, p. 1)

This passage is quoted at length because it expresses, in a nut-

shell, the basic contradiction that pervades public housing manage-

ment. That is, the reconciliation of the socialist rationale behind

direct State provision of housing and the authoritarian, paternalistic

manner in which it has been administered. The landlord-tenant

relationship that exists at present goes somewhat against the socialist

ideological grain of equality and the eradication of exploitation.

It is therefore important that:

> "Commitment to the basic principle of a large State
> supported sector of housing to rent, does not entail
> an uncritical stance towards its achievements."

(Fabian Society, p. 2).

It is becoming clear to even its most ardent defenders, that all is

not well on the council estate, and that, in practice, administration

leaves much to be desired. Within such a context, it is difficult

to understand the Under Secretary of State for Scotland, Mr. Allan

Stewart, saying that:

"There is no evidence from tenants that they are
being denied reasonable consultation under the
present arrangements. I think that authorities
consult when necessary."

(1980)

His position was clarified further:

"Whether any system will actually produce repres-
entative tenants must be open to a lot of question.
Some existing tenants' associations are very active
with large memberships but many are not and tend to
be little more than local pressure groups or cliques
dressed up with a nice sounding name."

This hostile attitude is echoed in many politicians and government

officers. While it persists, it seems unlikely that tenant participa-

tion schemes will be given the support that they badly need.

VIII Conclusions

This chapter has provided a brief resume of the major directions

and implications of policies for publicly funded housing in twentieth

century Britain. Within the constraints of time and space it has not

been possible to document all of the relevant legislation and the more

subtle ideological shifts that have occurred in this period. It is

hoped, however, that the information included does provide at least

a notion of direction. Likewise with the sections on tenant participa-

tion. The classifications are not exhaustive and should be interpreted

as possible mechanisms for involving tenants in the housing debate.

It is primarily with the category of"tenant-control" that this work

is concerned and it is the task of the remainder of this work to

analyse two such attempts at participation.

CHAPTER 5

TENANT PARTICIPATION IN A LOCAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION

I. Introduction

        Housing Associations are something of an enigma. Almost every-

one has heard of them, but many remain confused about their origins,

objectives and organisation. At present they account for less than

5% of the total housing stock in Britain, although this figure belies

their significance in the improvement, construction and management of

housing. The housing association movement has never been an integrated

body of agencies. Baker (1976) notes that:

            "Many bodies now classified as housing assoc-
            iations were in existence long before Parliament
            decided to accord certain privileges to them ...
            The movement is not a creature of housing law."

                                              (Baker, p. 19)

        The term Housing Association embodies a wide variety of organisa-

tions which differ widely in many aspects of their work. Financially,

support from central government can only be channelled to Associations

which are registered with the Housing Corporation under the 1974

Housing Act. Bodies which are unregistered must draw funds from else-

where, for example, associations, trusts and societies which are

registered charities can obviously obtain finance from charitable

sources. There exist Industrial Housing Associations, such as the

British Airways Staff H.A. and the Coal Industry H.A. Ltd. which are

financed largely from their sponsoring company or industry. These are

primarily aimed at providing accommodation for workers in the particular

industry or firm. In addition, there are, throughout the country,

other forms of Housing Associations.   These include co-ownership,

co-operative self-build and government sponsored Associations such

as the S.S.H.A., and the North Eastern Housing Association Limited.

This latter body was established by the Commissioner for Special Areas

in 1935 to operate in areas of severe unemployment in the North East

of England. (Baker, 1976).

This complexity is echoed in the registration of Associations under

various Acts. Almost all are incorporated under the provisions of the

Industrial and Provident Societies Act of 1965. In addition, however,

some are registered under the Companies Act 1960 and with the register

maintained by the Charity Commissioners. Dalmuir Park Housing

Association (D.P.H.A.) which forms the basis of this case study, is

a 'Registered, 1965 Act Association' - that is, one which is incorporated

under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act and also registered

with the Housing Corporation, thus having access to government finance.

Alongside the complexities indicated above, there are other areas

of divergence within the voluntary movement. One such area is the

classification of Associations as either philanthropic or non-

philanthropic. There is, however, no neat dividing line between the

two. In general, bodies based upon principles such as co-ownership

whereby residents have an undisguised stake in the preservation and

maintenance of assets, are termed as non philanthropic. Bodies on the

other hand, such as those funded by the Housing Corporation and prohibited

from profit-making by their adherence to the provisions of certain Acts

of Parliament, are usually thought of as philanthropic in principle.

D.P.H.A. falls within this latter category, as do the majority of

locally-based Housing Corporation funded Associations. They represent

a substantially subsidised component of the housing market, alongside local authority provision. Subsidies to owner occupiers, are of course administered in a less direct manner. This is in contrast to the trend in the early 1960's towards cost-rent associations which amounted to an unsubsidized form of housing. The principle was based upon rents covering outgoings and no more. However, cost-rents by their very nature were high, and provision was aimed mainly at those who did not wish for one reason or another to buy a house, but could otherwise afford such rental expenditure. The emphasis was changed markedly in the provisions of the 1972 Housing Finance Act which empowered the Housing Corporation to finance "fair-rents" which are "registered rents" as opposed to cost-rents, thus moving into the sphere of directly subsidised housing, provided through the mechanism of the housing association.

The financial arrangements under which Associations work are complex in detail, but can be simplified as follows. In the case of bodies registered with the Housing Corporation there are two main components of funding.

Housing Association Grant (H.A.G.) is designed to cover the total costs of an Association's work in building and rehab- ilitation, minus the expected annual revenue from rent and any other source of income (from which is deducted management and maintenance costs). Capital expenditure allowable under H.A.G. includes the acquisition of land (including existing buildings), site development, new building, acquisition and development allowances, home loss and disturbance payments and other capital expenditure. (Baker, 1976, p. 171).

<u>Revenue Deficit Grant (R.D.G.)</u>   Rents paid by Association

tenants do not necessarily bear any relation to current

or future costs, incurred by an individual Housing associa-

tion. The R.D.G. is discretionary and amounts to the

difference between HA income in the form of HAG and rents,

compared to its overall expenditure. It is administered

via the Secretary of State and does not exceed an amount

which he thinks reasonable and arising from unavoidable

expenditure.

The reader should note that this is a very simplistic coverage of

H.A. finance and that the full complexity of the financial background

falls outwith the remit of this dissertation.

Of particular importance are the objectives of H.A's and the

geographical scale at which they work. There are basically two kinds

of H.A., those which provide housing for groups with special needs,

either rehabilitated or new built, although usually the latter, and

those associations which renovate and/or build housing for what is

termed 'general-family' needs. Within the former category special

needs can be defined in either physical or management terms. Associa-

tions such as Anchor, providing sheltered housing for the elderly, and

Bield, catering for the same special needs group, are particularly

useful in filling a gap left by the lack of local authority provision.

On the other hand, bodies such as Patchwork H.A. in London, deal with

special management needs, such as those of transient youngsters in

terms of multiple tenancies, and those who have just left institutional

care centres, such as lodging houses, hostels and prisons. Most H.A.'s

however, cater for general housing needs. Although there is often

flexibility in allocation policies which allows nominees or applicants

with special needs to be housed. There are of course, many associations

which have ventured into schemes which include both general and special

needs housing. D.P.H.A. itself is planning a new-build development

which will incorporate both ordinary family units and a few sheltered

houses at ground level. The dichotomy arises between the main focus

of an H.A's work, and within this context, DPHA must be considered as

a general housing agency. The geographical focus of Associations'

work has emerged as an issue of great significance, particularly with

their increased activity in the Glasgow area. There exist three broad

focii of activity. Firstly the National HA's - bodies such as the

Sutton Housing Trust which works within England, and Link Housing

Association working throughout the whole of Britain. Secondly there

are what could be termed 'Regional' bodies, like the North Eastern

H.A. mentioned earlier, and those which work within the London conurba-

tion. Finally, and of most relevance to this study, the locally or

community based Associations, working within small, well defined

localities. The significance of scale will become more apparent

later in the chapter.

These distinctions will have given the reader something of a

flavour of the variety that exists within the voluntary movement as a

whole. It is, however, the task of this chapter to examine one

particular aspect of H.A. work, that is the exercise of resident

management in a locally based association. As mentioned earlier,

this arrangement is based around the election of a Management Committee

which exercises a decision-making function within the H.A. Within

this broad power, however, there exist various specific tasks for the

Committee to execute. The Committee member in effect wears several different "hats", which can be described as follows:

(1)   Agents of housing development   - D.P.H.A. is heavily involved in the rehabilitation of unmodernised tenement property. One of the primary functions of the committee for the duration of this activity is to co-ordinate the process of improvement. This involves deciding firstly, where development will occur, and secondly, the way in which it will occur, in terms of the employment of professional consultants, approval of plans and monitoring the progress of the association's development strategy.

(2)   Managers of housing.   The Committee must make policy decisions on the way in which estate management is implemented. It should be noted that there exists potential conflict between the committee as residents and also, as shapers of management policy. For example, residents as a whole may come to see committee members as part of THEM as opposed to US. in the landlord/tenant relationship.

(3)   Policy-Makers for the Association.   The Committee shape all aspects of policy within the organisation. This provides the context within which the work of the Association is carried out.

(4)   Controlling finances.   This should not be considered as a separate activity in itself. It is clearly related to the priorities and work upon which the committee decide. They do, however, have to approve all association expenditure and this acts as a safeguard against financial abuses. This function

contrasts interestingly with that which will be examined in
the alternative case study.

(5)   Employment of Association Staff. It is the Management
      Committee that employs housing, development, maintenance and
      other staff. The relationship that exists between the two
      is often crucial in the success of the organisation.

      The execution of these functions varies widely between different
H.A.'s. It is the aim of this case study to describe and examine the
process within DPHA from the point of view of committee members them-
selves and members of staff. This will be followed by a personal
analysis of the views of tenants as a whole, which have been extracted
from a questionnaire survey, carried out in January 1984, for the
purposes of this work. However, the following two sections trace
the development of H.A's in Glasgow and Dalmuir in particular, and
provide a background for the examination of 'consumer' participation.

II.   The emergence of Housing Associations

      Earlier in the study, an indication was given of the initial
development of the voluntary housing movement. As noted with the
increasing rate of central and local government in public housing
provision, the movement was somewhat stifled in its ability to engage
in large-scale activity. The emphasis upon council housing carried with
it a large degree of municipal pride and the feeling that it was the
only viable way to alleviate housing shortages and associated problems
such as overcrowding and homelessness. The movement, therefore, was
always perceived as a separate type of activity, based upon funding
from well-meaning individuals and organisations in the form of gifts,
loans and professional services provided free of charge or at a

reduced rate. It was possible for associations to apply for an allocation of local authority finance after 1919, but this was not commonly practiced. The emphasis on the public sector was firmly placed upon local authority activity for the bulk of the present century. The reasons, therefore, for the rise of the housing association movement in the 1960's and '70's are interesting, though complex.

Tenure polarization has doubtless played its part. Even today Britain's housing is heavily dichotomized between local authority and owner occupied stock. In 1978, their respective percentages were 32% and 54%, with the remaining 14% being accounted for by other rented accommodation including property owned and managed by housing associations. (Donnison and Ungerson, 1982). This tenurial pattern is significantly different in Scotland with a heavier weighting, about 60% of total stock, in the local authority sector. Whatever the figures, this two-way polarization has created many problems in terms of perceived class divisions, access to high quality physical environments and personal identification. Donnison and Ungerson in their book, Housing Policy, suggest that housing problems increasingly relate to qualitative rather than quantitative factors. Housing shortages undoubtedly still exist, but the focus of inquiry is shifting towards the way in which stock is distributed among those within the market.

The concern with housing quality, which was noted earlier, gave rise to rehabilitation of older homes as a policy alternative to the comprehensive slum clearance of entire areas. Although in the early 1970's this latter policy was still implemented in many urban areas, improvement gained legislativeand practical credibility.

In retrospect, it is difficult to accept that as the first local
housing association was established in Glasgow (Central Govan in
1971), the systems-built Tracoba flats were still under construction
in the city's Hutchesontown development. This illustrates the
delicate interface between the two policy options.

As noted, it was not until the 1974 Housing Act that associations
received their long awaited "shot in the arm", in the form of direct
government funding. Since then, they have experienced an
unprecented rise in establishment and home improvements in areas of
previously appalling conditions. The city of Glasgow has seen an
enormous degree of association activity since the mid to late 1970's.
Although D.P.H.A. lies outwith the city boundary, it is highly
relevant to examine the movement's success within the city, for the
factors involved are similar to those under which the former was
established.

III   The Glasgow Experience

To many in the U.K. the city is synonymous with urban deprivation,
poverty and physical dilapidation. However trite as it may sound, those
who left Glasgow in years past, in search of a more promising future,
would return to find a very different city in 1984. The improvement
is due in large part to developments in the housing field, and in
particular, to the work of locally based associations.

Glasgow undoubtedly has a legacy of severe housing problems.
Their extent can be seen from Tables (1) and (2) in Appendix (1). It
is clear from these age and amenity indices that in the mid 1960's,
there was a pressing need for improvements on a large scale. The age

of the stock itself, implies that internal conditions would be poor,
despite the favourable structural design of most tenement blocks. The
predominance of the tenement form can be seen from Table (3) in the
Appendix. In 1965, it accounted for over 85% of all homes in the city
and has come to be the dominant focus of association activity. The
suitability of such property should be stressed. With increasing
rent-control and the subsequent demise of the privately rented sector,
many landlords who were still operating in the mid '70's were looking
for an opportune moment at which to "bail out" of the sector. It was
steadily becoming less lucrative. In many cases, therefore, they
were willing to sell, at prices calculated by the district valuer, to
newly formed associations. On the other hand, many low-income owner
occupiers were unable to improve to the specified standards laid down
in the 1974 Act. This was despite the existence of improvement grants
at 90% of costs in many cases. Within this category of home ownership,
there was a predominance of young couples and elderly people. The
former would typically view their small property as a stepping-stone
towards a larger and more expensive purchase. Maclennan (1983) using
results of a survey of 11 Glasgow locally based associations, notes
the pre and post rehabilitation tenure pattern to be as follows:

Property ownership before and after improvement by H.A.'s

(%)	Before	After
Owner Occupied	45	8
Rented	55	7
Housing Association	0	85

Maclennan, (1983)

In 1973, there was a change in emphasis in Housing Corporation funding policy. It moved increasingly towards activity in areas of 'housing-stress'. Previously there had been much work in associations whose objectives did not lie in improving and providing housing for those in areas of sub-tolerable living conditions. For example, Charing Cross and Kelvingrove H.A. in Glasgow was formed with Conservational issues in mind. Although such activity is important, the policy emphasis shifted to more socially pressing needs.

The establishment in the same year, of an office of the Housing Corporation in Glasgow stimulated local interest. In accordance, the H.C. set up the Glasgow Fair group of housing associations in areas of potential H.A.A. designations. Their objective was to acquire property prior to the establishment of indigenous associations. The GFHA organisation was managed by 50% H.C. officials and 50% Glasgow District Council (G.D.C.) representatives.

The notion of the "Community-based Housing Association" is highly problematic. "Community" is a term which is impossible to define accurately, but one which holds positive, psychological connotations. Terms such as 'community spirit', 'community activity' and 'community-life' symbolise for many, the notion of happiness, harmony and a degree of fellowship. What is normally meant by the C.B.H.A. is an association working within a locally defined geographical area. It is often assumed that there exists a sense of 'belonging' among residents. This is, however, a broad assumption to make. This problem has been highlighted by Maclennan (1983), observing that in the selection of project areas in Glasgow, traditionally perceived "communities" were not pre-identified. The result has been that many of the well-established

CBHA's, actually transcend such boundaries. It may, therefore, be more appropriate to talk of locally based or oriented associations, as those which have a physical presence in an area.

This presence is, in itself, a crucial issue. It has been shown in the case of attempts to foster local authority co-ops in the city, that the lack of a local office or base has detrimental effects on progress. The benefits of a local contact point are both psychological and practical and these will be examined alongside the survey results of D.P.H.A.

The establishment of local HA's has been largely related to the involvement of residents in the process of rehabilitation and its management. This has been greatly encouraged by the Housing Corporation which monitors the accountability and execution of association activities. This dispels any notion of the H.C. as purely a funding body. On the contrary, it is heavily involved in the participatory and democratic aspects of rehabilitation. Accordingly, it makes a monitoring visit on a bi-annual basis to every association which draws funds. This involves a fairly close scrutiny of Committee Minutes and proc- edures, financial accounts and the role of staff in relation to Management Committee and vice-versa. Each association, after a HC monitoring visit receives a report, setting out the assessment of internal procedures by HC officials. In most cases, this does not include any major criticism and will consist mainly of minor suggestions for organisational improvement. For example in the recent report received by DPHA, it was suggested that there should be a larger list of potential contractors presented to the Development and Finance Sub-Committee, from which to choose a tender list for individual projects.

This monitoring procedure is valuable for the movement in general.
It is sometimes difficult for both staff and committee to 'stand
back' from their situation and view activities in perspective. It
is easy to get caught up in week to week issues and fail to evaluate
the overall strategy of the association. The inclusion of a monitoring
visit by a 'neutral' body is therefore a sensible and useful procedure.

One of the most significant aspects of the H.A. movement in
Scotland is the divergence that can be observed between associations
in Glasgow and surrounding areas and in Eastern Scotland. Maclennan,
Lawrie and Brailey (1983) have noted the main differences which can
be seen from Table (4) in Appendix (1). In the East, there is a pre-
dominance of non-locally-resident people on Management Committees.
The socio-economic characteristics of members are more heavily skewed
towards professional and managerial employment in the East. The
implications of this are far-reaching. Take, for example, a situation
in which, even a few of the maximum of 15 Committee members, are not
either tenants of an association or owner-occupiers in property factored
by it. One may well question the existence of 'consumer' participation
and whether such anomalies should arise at all. At the moment there
is no legal constraint to non-residents being involved, but an
association can writesuch a condition into its policy. Some Associations
in Glasgow, for example Tollcross, Govanhill and Elderpark, have
adopted policies which preclude non-residents from participating. Even
former tenants who have moved a short distance outside the area have
been prohibited from continuing to serve on committees (Maclennan et
al., 1983). D.P.H.A. operates a system which requires that committee
members, excluding co-opted individuals, must have lived in the area
in the past, if not at present.

From this brief analysis of Glasgow's experience of housing
associations, it is clear that the movement has had far-reaching
implications. within the city. The most important can perhaps be
summarised under:

Social implications: The emphasis upon enabling those who so wished,
to stay in an area, has proved to be a sensitive and humane policy
compared to the ravaging effects of clearance and redevelopment. Partic-
ipation has, of course, been an important by-product of this form of
rehabilitation. The HC has actively pursued this objective. One
aspect that is often overlooked is the effect upon housing tenure in
the city. Although Associations for the purpose of this work are
considered as belonging to the public sector, they have undoubtedly
created a new type of tenancy arrangement – with registered rents,
share certificates and, of course, the opportunity for tenants effectively
to shape the future of their area and homes.

Physical implications: In Glasgow alone, local associations have
improved over 10,000 homes to date. They have transformed former slum
property into homes that people are highly satisfied with and proud of.
Units which previously lacked toilets, kitchens and bathrooms, have
been fitted out to high standards. These standards have significantly
increased over time, with the result that many projects are coming off
site with double-glazing, central heating and door-entry systems
incorporated. (The implications for "fair rent" assessment may however
be unfavourable). The enormous visual improvements have resulted in
a new and growing confidence in neighbourhoods which were formerly
perceived as run-down and beyond regeneration. The environment surrounding
rehabilitated housing has been significantly upgraded with the help of
land renewal funding by local authorities and the SDA, such as in the
case of backcourt renewal and the provision of playground facilities.

Gap sites resulting from demolition of property beyond repair, have potential for future new build developments, funding permitting.

Wider Community implications: The allocation policies of many associations, including DPHA, include provisions for housing people with special needs or problems. In particular cases, tenants have been nominated by social work and other external agencies. For example, adolescents leaving children's homes to start their adult life in the wider community have been housed by DPHA. Maclennan et al., (1983) note that in the case of Glasgow associations, the capital value of surrounding residential property has commonly risen by around 15%. There has also been a spillover effect in terms of private housebuilders moving into adjacent areas that were previously 'no-go' districts due to the poor physical environment. Notably in Elderpark and Queen's Cross, there have been substantial private housing developments in sites immediately next to rehabilitated property. There have been other factors involved, but it seems likely that associations' work has contributed substantially to the new confidence in investment. Similarly there have been commercial developments, in areas recently improved. Examples that spring easily to mind are the new Govan Cross and Maryhill Shopping Centres.

There have, of course, been negative implications. Those who inhabited the worst property which was designated for demolition, were inevitably displaced and largely rehoused by local authorities. This illustrates the delay in achieving a situation in which association houses were available for rent to those in greatest housing need. The result has been that many individuals and families did not share in the benefits of modernisation. Many former owner-occupiers who became tenants of their local association, are still bitter about being "robbed" of their investment and being forced, by lack of alternatives, into the rented

sector. It has been observed that the substantial amount of association activity in inner-city areas and its relative success, has resulted in attention being deflected from the plight of peripheral local authority estates (Maclennan, 1983). This perhaps constitutes a warning against channelling government housing expenditure into areas which have benefited enormously from resources in recent years, at the expense of other deprived areas. This is however a question of wider significance and one which should be addressed by the present government.

Despite these problems, the movement in Scotland as a whole and the Glasgow area in particular, has resulted in extensive improvements. Table (5) in Appendix (1) shows the number of units which have been approved by central government for rehabilitation by associations in Scotland since 1978. With over 10,000 of these improvements already completed in Glasgow alone, there has been a marked upgrading of housing conditions. This has contributed significantly to the process by which Glasgow and Clydeside have lost much of their adverse image. Inevitably, though, remnants remain.

IV   Dalmuir Park Housing Association - origins

D.P.H.A. was not initiated by local people in an act of community action or protest. It was essentially promoted by Clydebank District Council (C.D.C.) and the Housing Corporation (H.C.) It was a response to a highly concentrated area of subtolerable housing. The following examination of its establishment is the result of personal research and discussion with staff and one of the original Management Committee members, who lived in the area prior to rehabilitation.

Dalmuir lies at the extreme western edge of Clydebank, and although having a distinct identity of its own, has always been closely assoc- iated with the old Clydebank Burgh which dates from 1886. Although also being geographically distinct from the town, there being a small break in the continuity of the built-up area, Dalmuir's development is inseparable from that of the world-famous shipbuilding and engineering fortunes of Clydebank. The location of Thomsons Shipyard in 1871 on the banks of the Clyde, which later became "John Brown's" yard in 1899, boosted the economic and physical development of the town. Similarly, the advent of the Singer Sewing Machine plant at Kilbowie in 1884, had far-reaching implications for growth. At Dalmuir itself, Beardmore's Shipyard employed over 10,000 workers at the beginning of the century, (Third Statistical Account, 1959) and attracted other firms to the area.

These developments and the subsequent demand for housing lead to the building in Dalmuir of well over 800 homes in tenement property around 1905/7. These have become the basis of the rehabilitation activity of D.P.H.A. The area suffered, of course, from wartime bombing, particularly in the 1941 Clydebank Blitz. However, Dalmuir was relatively lucky compared to the human and physical devistation suffered by Clydebank. The latter emerged from the bombing of March 14th, 1941 with only 4 houses undamaged and hundreds flattened overnight. The obvious evidence in Dalmuir is in the many small gap sites that remain today.

The tenement property in Dalmuir, by the early 1970's, had however reached an appalling state of repair. It was not until the

H.A.A. provisions of the 1974 Housing Act that any comprehensive

approach could be taken for the necessary improvements. (Table (1) in

Appendix (2) shows some of the indicators of home conditions, revealed

in the Architects' feasibility study of 1977). The prevailing tenure

pattern can be seen from Table (2). The high degree of owner occupation

meant that any improvements prior to the emergence of D.P.H.A., were

achieved on a very ad hoc basis with the use of local authority improve-

ment grants.

This piecemeal improvement was halted suddenly in January of 1977.

Owner occupiers applying for grants were being turned away by C.D.C.

for no obvious reason. Curiosity was naturally raised among residents.

In April, a general Public Meeting was advertised, to which all in the

area were invited to attend. The meeting, held on 13th April, had been

convened by C.D.C. and representatives of the H.C., and over 500 local

residents turned up, in a local primary school. The main objective was

to inform people that Dalmuir's tenement property was to be declared

a H.A.A. The meeting was attended also by the local district councillor

who has since been extremely active in D.P.H.A.'s development. The

concept of the H.A.A. meant little or nothing to most residents. Its

main principles were explained by CDC and HC officials. The first

reaction of people was however <u>panic</u>. Everyone wanted to know what

would happen to <u>their</u> house. There was perhaps relief for many who

had suffered from extremely bad factoring by private companies over many

years in the area. The expectation that this may improve was consolation

to those who believed that things could only improve. This hope became

more realistic as the idea of a local housing association was raised.

C.D.C. was in no financial position to co-ordinate rehabilitation to

the required standards. However, the notion of a newly formed

association was met with some confusion among residents. Many people feared that demolition of some of the property was being proposed because of the use of such terms as 'below-tolerable standard'.

Raymond Young, the H.C. representative at the meeting explained what an association meant and attempted to spark-off enthusiasm. Those present were told that they could hold shares, administer association work and make policy decisions. At the end of the meeting 32 people had 'enlisted' themselves to form a steering group. It has been said that these were probably the most curious individuals present; however there can be no certainty as to why they came forward. The first stage in the establishment of D.P.H.A. had begun. A series of six Steering Committee Meetings were arranged, to take place in Clydebank Town Hall and involving Raymond Young and CDC representatives. Throughout these discussions, people were given more details about how the improvement process would be implemented. The Committee became increasingly familiar with the idea of the Association and ways in which it could take shape.

An additional meeting was arranged, this time held in the local constituency Labour Party rooms, at which the first Management Committee was selected. There were 15 places and 16 members who wished to remain involved, out of the original 32. The 16 individuals formed the committee and in time, one person dropped out. Office bearers (Secretary, Chairperson and Treasurer) were elected and one of the first tasks of the Association was to select a name in order to give itself legal status and to register with the H.C.

It was from a point around the beginning of 1978 that D.P.H.A. began to gain independence and shape future policy. Although the official Committee Meetings had started, there was still a significant

input from the H.C. in the form of guidance. This stage was crucial

in the maintenance of enthusiasm among committee members. It involved

learning to conduct official meetings in a professional manner and to

liaise with external bodies such as the local authority and the H.C.

For about six months, the committee talked at length about the future

before any practical developments occurred. It was within this period

that constitutional regulations were discussed and adopted. This was,

in retrospect, an important stage of development. The increase in indep-

endence and responsibility involved a high degree of commitment by the

committee and seven years on this has paid-off in terms of past successes

and future confidence. It was from early 1978 that acquisition of

property began and was co-ordinated by the newly appointed Development

Officer (D.O.). However, for a period of over six months, he worked

from the H.C. headquarters in Glasgow, due to the lack of a local

office for the association.

Throughout the first year of its existence, therefore, D.P.H.A.

experienced several important events:

(1) The first member of staff was appointed.

(2) It established a Registered Office - (a committee member's

house) which was used as a base for communications.

(3) D.P.H.A. registered with The Friendly Society.

(4) Share Certificates were drawn up and residents could become

D.P.H.A. "members".

(5) An official D.P.H.A. 'seal' was adopted and a seal register

established.

(6) The Association employed its own solicitors.

(7)   A household survey was conducted by Committee Members to

       ascertain what people expected or wanted from the H.A. It

       was also recognised as a socialising tactic to promote the

       concept of the association and also to make the Committee

       "visible" among residents in the area.

Throughout the first year, the question of resources was, of

course, raised. At an earlier stage, the Committee asked officials of

the H.C. how much money would be available. It was advised that

D.P.H.A. should 'bid' for £20 million for the rehabilitation of the

area. It was informed that it had the use of money up to this amount.

The figure has, of course, been altered with inflationary and other

financial influences over time.

Despite the progress indicated above, a major crisis befell the

association. A certain amount of difficulty was experienced by owners,

in two blocks at the eastern edge of Dalmuir, who tried to sell their

homes to D.P.H.A. In short, their sales were not proceeding as had

been the case in other areas of acquisition. It had always been assumed

that all of the tenement property in Dalmuir was to be included in the

H.A.A. However, it was discovered almost by chance, that C.D.C. had

excluded the two blocks in question. The association naturally queried

this and were given totally invalid excuses such as "the blocks are

too near the main road". Anyone who is even slightly familiar with

the area will know that much of the area's property faces directly on

to Dumbarton Road. In short, the reasons were illogical, given support

for the other improvements. Eventually, it was announced by C.D.C. that the two blocks were to be demolished. This proved unacceptable to the Committee. The association decided to take the case to the Ombudsman for Scotland, in the name of a Committee member who lived in one of the properties in question. The decision of CDC was eventually over-ruled on grounds of maladministration. By this time, however, the final resolution of the HAA for the bulk of the area had been adopted and the two blocks were designated as a separate Action Area. For all practical purposes, however, in the work of D.P.H.A., Dalmuir is treated as a single area. The main part of it is, in fact, the largest "one-off" HAA in Scotland.

The importance of a physical, local presence was touched upon earlier. As noted, the D.O. had worked for a period from Glasgow; however, this was remedied at the end of 1978 when an unmodernised flat was converted for use as an office. D.P.H.A. has since moved to more suitable accommodation within the area, but the initial presence gave the association a physical point of contact and reference for residents. (From this point, the number of staff was increased, as can be seen in Table (3) in Appendix (2). Particularly those who had sold to D.P.H.A. and become tenants, could pay rent at the office, which became the physical interface between landlord and tenant in the new relationship.

It has been noted that the physical development process imple- mented by housing associations has not occurred in a strategic fashion, but is closely related to the willingness of owners to sell property (Maclennan, 1983). D.P.H.A. is no exception. Development has closely

reflected the pattern of acquisitions. The extent and geographical location of acquisitions has largely dictated the sequence of contracts going on site. (The nature and extent of the programme can be seen from the graph in Appendix (2)). Technically speaking, work cannot begin on a contract until the association owns all property except those units which are being improved by owner-occupiers. However, in practice this would result in impossible delays and little would have been achieved to date by associations. There do, however, crop up severe problems with individual acquisitions. For example, there has recently been a serious delay in the processing of the compulsory purchase of several units in one street. The street has otherwise been improved with the result that an entire new contract will have to be negotiated for one close, causing a large degree of upheaval for tenants in adjacent houses.

Despite such problems, D.P.H.A. has achieved substantial success to the present. At the end of February 1984, its property statement stood as follows:

	units		units
total acquisitions	748	total modernised stock	303
total amalgamations	137	total unmodernised stock	176
total demolitions	79	under contract	53

Total housing stock = 532 units

The substantial number of amalgamations can be accounted for by the creation of larger units among modernised stock. This has most often resulted in the merging of three units on a 'close' landing into two homes with inside toilets and bathrooms. The demolitions are due to

the structural collapse of an entire block in February 1983. The

resulting vacant land is viewed by the association as its major potential

new-build site. However, any such development will be subject to

stringent financial cutbacks.

Internal Structure:

The Committee organization of D.P.H.A. has developed since the

first faltering meetings at which members grappled with basic procedures.

In the last seven years, the internal structure has become more

sophisticated. In December 1979, a sub-committee system was introduced,

with the Management Committee delegating functions to two specialised

groups. All three committees meet individually on a monthly basis.

Each of the sub groups comprises half of the Management Committee

members. Their function are summarised in the diagram below:

```
                    ┌──────────────────────────┐   (12 members
                    │  Management Committee     │     2 co-opted members)
                  /  └──────────────────────────┘  \
                /        /↑\            ↑\            \
              /          │ │            │ │             \
            /            │ Management   │ │               \
          /              │ Committee    │ │                 \
        /                │ ratifies     │ │                   \
      /                  │ decision by  │ │                     \
┌──────────────────┐     │ Sub Committees│ │      ┌──────────────────┐
│ Housing & Maintenance│  │ and takes de- │ │      │ Development & Finance│
│ Sub-Committee     │     │ decisions on  │ │      │ Sub-Committee     │
└──────────────────┘     │ issues of over-│        └──────────────────┘
         \               │ all policy for │              /
           \             │ the Association.│            /
             \           │ It is in effect │          /
               \         │ the "governing" │        /
                 \       │ body of D.P.H.A.│      /
                   \     │                 │   /
                     \   │              │ /
          Sub Committees discuss and make dec-
          isions pertaining to specific cases
          and issues.
```

The Housing and Maintenance Committee's remit is to discuss issues related to estate management, repairs, arrears, etc. There is a general reluctance of people to join this group because it is thought to involve eviction proceedings etc. In practice, however, committee members have acted with the utmost sensitivity in such cases and there is certainly no evidence of harsh decisions being taken. The Development and Finance Committee, on the other hand, deals with the more strategic, long term issues of overall rehabilitation and new build. It also monitors the financial affairs of the association. This committee views and approves plans for improvement contracts and deals with the choice of layout within houses. It also tends to have contact with professional consultants and has for example gone 'on-tour' with architects, viewing various existing new-build developments elsewhere with a view to the future projects of D.P.H.A.

It would be fair to say that there is no "best" way to organise one association's affairs. There are indeed problems with the system described in the diagram. One concern that has been articulated is that members may become expert in certain areas and be relatively ignorant of others, for example, in the case of finance and estate management. However, specialisms develop in any such organizations and are related to the interests of individuals and the amount of time that can be committed. In the past there were weekly meetings for all members and for some this has proved too hectic when considered alongside the preparation of paper work and keeping up with the minutes and reports of previous meetings.

At present, committee membership involves attendance at two meetings per month. However, this in no way does justice to those who are infinitely more committed to the association that this schedule would

suggest. For example, the Secretary of D.P.H.A. has frequent contact with the office regarding correspondence. Also, those who either do not work or can take 'time off' from their employment, often attend meetings, conferences and seminars during daytime. There are also matters such as staff-union conditions which committee members, particularly office bearers are involved with, and which must be attended to during office hours. Therefore, for most of the committee, commitment extends far beyond what is officially required of them.

The staff structure of the association at present stands as follows:

Housing	— 3 Housing Officers
Development	— 2 Development Officers
Finance	— 1 Finance Officer and Assistant
Maintenance	— 1 Technical Manager, 1 Clerk of Works, 1 Maintenance Officer and 1 Apprentice.
Clerical	— 3 Secretarial Staff.

In addition, there are two tradesmen who work specifically on jobs in association property.

The role of staff, particularly in the Housing Management and Development fields, is a contentious issue in housing associations in general. It is believed among committees in some associations that staff are superfluous in the decision-making process and that they should merely implement the instructions of the Management Committee. This view is based upon the strong belief that decisions should be taken solely by tenants themselves with no external influences. This could suggest

a lack of confidence in staff that a committee itself has selected. More probable, however, is a single mindedness regarding tenant control. This is a major problem for many association employees. It is undoubtedly difficult for staff to watch a committee making decisions that a person with specialised, technical knowledge and training may recognise to be undesirable for a variety of reasons. However, the whole question of influence and the decision making process is dependent upon the strengths and weaknesses among both committee and staff.

Relationships between the two have a crucial effect upon the work of associations and the extent to which committees make independent decisions. In some associations there is a great degree of hostility between staff and committee, within which each sees the other as an adversary. No such situation arises at D.P.H.A. Among the committee there is a great deal of respect for staff and their opinions. On the whole the relationship is one of friendship rather than employer/employee. This does not occur, however, at the expense of committee decision-making. The situation can perhaps be described as one in which staff provide advice and guidance to be used in committee decisions of policy and individual issues. In short, the objectives of both committee members and staff are one and the same: to improve the housing and environmental quality of life for the people of Dalmuir. The relationship is, therefore, one characterised more by harmony than by hostility. It is to this relationship and the internal decision-making process of the association that the study now turns.

V.   Influence and Decision-Making within D.P.H.A.

The reader should note that this examination of tenant participation
and control is not intended to merely illustrate the ideas introduced
earlier in the dissertation. Previous chapters are significant in their
own right as examinations of the principles of democratic control of
services by their'consumers'.   The present case study is intended to
analyse a situation in which the principle of tenant involvement is
implemented. It will reveal strengths and weaknesses, related both to
principle and the peculiarities of the housing association movement.

At D.P.H.A. the main focus of decision making activity lies in
the Management Committee. The motivation of committee members varies
widely. Some of the present committee joined out of dissatisfaction
with their experience of DPHA housing, particularly in unmodernised
stock. Others joined out of curiosity and interest. One particular
member was motivated by a wish to become involved in local politics
and 'the community' in general, having been already associated with the
Constituency Labour Party. Among members as a whole, however, there
was a very low degree of previous activity in official organisations.
Within DPHA, therefore, there is no evidence of a tendency for members
to have been community activists. This, of course, varies from one
association to another. On the whole, present committee members have
become involved out of interest and for some, out of a desire to under-
stand the work of the association. Some individuals admit that their
interest stems from selfish reasons. For example, one member who lived
in an unmodernised house knew another tenant who had been in a similar
position for about the same length of time. The latter tenant was
offered an improved house, while the former was not contacted. This

sparked-off curiosity and a desire to do something about the situation. Over two years later, this member is still active on the committee, although having since been housed in modernised property.

It is therefore possible to conclude on the subject of motivation, that this takes a variety of forms. It is not simply a case of people realising that they have some unalienable right to make decisions affecting them. Involvement at DPHA is characterised more by people taking the existing opportunities for participation, for a wide variety of personal reasons, than by activity motivated by the principle of democratic control as an end in itself.

The membership of the Management Committee has varied from year to year since 1978 (see Table (3) in Appendix (2)). As can be seen the committee has had as few as eight members at various points. It is not possible to explain with any certainty, the low level of involvement. The membership of 11 at present is relatively high in the light of previous years. On several occasions in the past, the committee has run "recruitment" campaigns to attract people to become involved. In the context of what has been said at an earlier point about the significance of <u>who</u> initiates participation, this may, at face value, seem unadvisable. However, several individuals who have been thus motivated, have proved to be active and enterprising committee members. It may therefore be the case that there exist many "latent" participants who require a "push" to become involved.

There are of course widely differing levels of involvement among the committee Office bearers, particularly, the Chairperson and Secretary/tend who to be heavily involved in a wide variety of issues. This is true also of the co-opted district-councillor who naturally

acts as a point of reference between C.D.C. and D.P.H.A. There are, however, members whose main activity is attendance at committee and sub-committee meetings. This is largely due to external constraints such as employment and alternative commitments. However, there are undoubtedly individuals who have little or no inclination to extend the scope of their participation. A problem would undoubtedly arise if all members limited their involvement to this level. This should in no way be taken as an attack upon such members, for each has his or her own personal priorities. The important point remains that overall, "consumer" participation within this case study, must, by necessity, involve for some a greater commitment than simply committee membership.

Who Makes Decisions?

Of great importance in any scheme involving tenant decision-making, is their perception of the power structure and the influence of external forces in policy outcomes. The Management Committee of D.P.H.A. is no exception. It should be stressed that there exists an excellent relationship with staff. There is a recognition among both staff and committee that the former can potentially exert a powerful influence on decisions. However, the general feeling among the latter is that such decisions are taken by them with the help of guidance in the form of staff input. The role of staff is seen as one in which technical and legal back-up is provided as a basis upon which the Management and sub-committees make decisions. Individual members welcome the presence and advice of staff at meetings, but do not believe that they are dominated to any extent by this advice. The present

Chairman of D.P.H.A. is of the opinion that this input is valuable

and necessary, given the situations that the committee deals with.

Another committee member agrees with this view but stressed that any

"hoodwinking" or domination by staff for personal ends, would probably

backfire on the individuals concerned. There is therefore a feeling

of confidence that decisions are being made by residents themselves

with guidance from members of staff.

This degree of confidence has not always existed. There was much

confusion among the first committees that operated immediately after

the establishment of the association. This was largely due to the

severe lack of experience from which members could draw. It was not

until the mid to late 1970's that Scotland as a whole experienced a

proliferation of associations. One original member recalls that due

to the time lag between establishment and the first improvement contract

going on-site (a period of almost 3 years) many began to lose heart and

echo the disillusionment of residents in general, at the apparent lack

of progress. Subsequent committees therefore owe much to the commitment

of those originally involved.

In this important developmental stage, therefore, it was necessary

for the original committee to draw heavily upon the advice and guidance

of Housing Corporation Officials who could be contacted for support.

There was also a certain degree of contact with Associations already

established. What these inputs amounted to was an important influence,

albeit subconscious. and informal, upon the procedures adopted by

D.P.H.A. This should not be taken as a negative observation. In the

prevailing circumstances it was only natural that the Association would

draw upon others' experiences and learn from their mistakes. The first

important point, therefore, regarding decision making, is that in this

particular Association, establishment was not a case of residents

banding together and confidently drawing up a strategy for rehabilita-

tion and its management.   This period should, perhaps, be seen as

a gradual process of "coming to grips with" practical and later,

theoretical problems, inherent in such a venture.

The inexperience of members is something that is overcome only

by time and exposure to decision-making.From personal experience,this

is not an easy task. From the initial "election" to the committee,

one is bombarded with material and situations without knowledge of

their background and associated conflict in many cases. At present,

participation in the setting of the local housing association is very

much a case of "learning by doing". There have been repeated calls,

from staff and committees of a number of associations, for a training

programme to be organised by the Scottish Federation of Housing

Associations (S.F.H.A.). Steps are now being taken to develop such a

programme. It will attempt to give committee members old and new a

basic grounding in procedures and principles with which they will have

to deal in the course of their involvement. There exists no evidence

of inexperience being taken advantage of by existing committee members

or staff. Those who are cynical about arrangements for any degree of

tenant participation may believe that they inevitably involve some

element of manipulation. As noted previously, there is a very harmonious

relationship between staff and the Management Committee and there are

no observations of the former deliberately attempting to manipulate

decision making. There is indeed no reason why this would occur,

for their objectives are based upon similar principles. As stressed

earlier, there is a great deal of respect between the two, but staff are all too aware of their potential for swaying decision-making.

This arises out of the way in which important issues are debated and decided upon. It is common for staff to provide a list of alternative policies which could be adopted by the committee. An example of this practice occurred in the Management Committee Meeting at the end of February, when a decision was required on the type of sales policy, if any, that D.P.H.A. should adopt and implement. A lengthy report was compiled and circulated by the Senior Housing Officer, highlighting alternative courses of action. After a lengthy controversial and heated debate, a decision was deferred to the next meeting in the hope that committee members will have considered more fully, the policy they wish to see adopted. This is, of course, an issue of significance for the future of the association and one on which the majority of members hold definite views. On other issues, however, the committee have confined themselves to considering options suggested by staff. It is fairly easy for such a committee to become stale and lack flair and initiative. Given the necessary time input, it is perhaps unrealistic to expect that the members compile reports outlining their ideas. However, as the Chairman points out, imaginative proposals should increasingly come from the committee rather than from staff. This is in no way to belittle the skills and sensitivity of staff. It does in fact illustrate their dedication and enthusiasm. However, from a purely democratic point of view, this may discourage the Management Committee from taking self-initiated decisions on issues of policy. In short, the committee should devise and consider its own proposals alongside those presented by staff.

Given a situation in which members do initiate ideas, there may
exist potential for meetings to be dominated by the most experienced
individuals. At these meetings there is displayed a wide variety of
personalities, some more confident than others in speaking out,
questionning and expressing opinions. The local councillor who has
been instrumental in the establishment and the progress of D.P.H.A.,
tends to take a very pragmatic approach to committee discussion and
decision-making. It is often the case that the debate digresses from
its original subject or interest. In such cases this member often
clarifies issues and highlights the crucial decisions that must be made.
This may seem to some as domination of proceedings. However, to
conduct official business, the committees must stick closely to its
agenda and make all of the necessary decisions at the appropriate point.
Therefore, it may seem that an individual is over-confident, while he
or she may merely be drawing attention to details that others have
omitted to consider.

Overall, there is no evidence of committee members deliberately
influencing decisions to their own ends.

Representation:

The question of the "representative" nature of those who participate
in public affairs was raised earlier in this study. It is, indeed, a
problematic area of the debate. It would be of limited value to attempt
to evaluate how typical are those individuals who participate in the
Management Committee. It was however interesting to discuss this matter
with them and also with tenants who, as yet, remain uninvolved. As one
would expect, members perceive themselves as partof arepresentative
committee which they believe to comprise a good cross-section of D.P.H.A.

tenants. There is a realistic recognition however, that many tenants are simply not interested in participating. However, there were expressed, varying personal explanations for this. For example, one committee member said that people had to have someone else to blame when things go wrong. As long as a certain amount of people stood for the committee, others feel quite unmotivated to join them. However, another view was that people could be kept better informed about the work of D.P.H.A. This may, over a period of time, increase awareness and the degree of direct participation in its management. It is worth noting that since the start of 1983, there has been a quarterly Newsletter prepared by the Committee, which carries an application form for Association membership. Through this medium, there may be a gradual increase in activity.

Perception of Tenants' Views

Of much importance to Committee members is their perception of tenants' views about D.P.H.A. There is a recognition that the landlord/tenant relationship could be improved within the association and that there is scope for increasing the amount of contact that D.P.H.A. has with its tenants. At the moment there exists no regular forum at which staff, committee and tenants meet. Clearly, from the responses of tenants themselves, the existence of opportunities to participate in housing issues, does not automatically lead to fulfilled and satisfied consumers. There are shortcomings in the prevailing system, which will be examined shortly. It is recognised by existing members that a significant number of tenants view the provisions of the housing association as no different from the landlord/tenant relationship in the local authority sector. Therefore, committee members do themselves see a need for improving this relationship. The problem however, lies in the means by which this can occur. One individual said that

perhaps what is needed is the establishment of a full scale public

relations exercise to inform people about the association, how it is

run and about its democratic principle in particular. The problems

with such an exercise are many. To initiate a survey of all tenants

requires much input in terms of staff and committee time. The

constraints upon this type of commitment are primarily related to the

difficulties encountered by those who are in employment. There are

many employers who are unsympathetic to the commitments of Management

committee members. Therefore, most individuals are not in a position

to attend meetings etc. during daytime, except in special circumstances.

Nevertheless, committee members at D.P.H.A. are keen to attract new

members, and to increase the level of direct participation. During

discussions, members showed enthusiasm for bringing in new ideas and

views and talked of the dangers of the committee becoming "stale".

One individual said that it was detrimental to have too many people

who had 'been at the helm' for some time. Although there are provisions

for members to stand down from the committee, they can simultaneously

be re-elected. This is seen by some tenants as resulting in a clique

situation. There exists a dilemma, therefore, of a minority of tenants

thinking thus, coupled with their unwillingness to participate. There

is no evidence of resentment among the existing committee regarding

the emergence of others who may wish to become members. There is in-

deed a noticeable emphasis upon what is good for the housing association

as a whole and the need to increase the level of participation. This

regard for long term benefits to D.P.H.A. is encouraging in the face

of those who perceive involvement as primarily selfish.

Finally, it was interesting to talk to committee members about

any improvements that could be made in the existing management system

The general feeling is that D.P.H.A. is well organised and democratically
run. Naturally, it was observed that there is always room for improve-
ment, particularly in a situation in which the need for accountability
is becoming more acute. Without doubt, the main 'fault' is seen as
the lack of training courses and facilities for new committee members.
This is a widely recognised problem among most local associations
in the Glasgow area. There have been several short courses run by
the S.F.H.A. with an emphasis upon existing members. For example,
there is a "Key People" course which deals with problems encountered
by members. It involves role playing and discussions among participants
about their experience as committee members and decision makers. Such
provision assumes a basic knowledge of committee procedures, financial
arrangements and the rationale behind the work of associations. In
practice new members can join a management committee and be over-
whelmed by the use of technical jargon and complicated procedures.
Although encouraged to ask questions at any point, it is difficult
for the beginner to assimilate such information within a short space
of time. This may in some cases result in bewilderment and a delay
in becoming active in committee discussions.

In conclusion, among those involved in the Management
Committee, there is a high level of participatory activity. This is
coupled with the perception that decisions are reached in a democratic
fashion, by committee members. In short the committee has a fairly
high degree of confidence in itself as a decision-making body. There
is very little, if any, conflict between staff and members, and like-
wise between individuals on the committee.

The Committee is predominantly composed of D.P.H.A. tenants, the
exceptions being two co-opted councillors and one member who has been

voted on to the committee since the Steering Group of 1977 and has

now moved a small distance outwith the area. It can therefore be said

that at present, it represents a vehicle for truly local participation

by tenants in the housing field. As noted, there is no evidence what-

soever of manipulation by either staff or committee members. There

is an underlying harmony in the internal relationships of D.P.H.A. as

a whole.

Objectives are fairly well defined and disagreement largely

concerns the means by which these can be achieved.

VI   Tenants' perceptions of Participation

The ideas cited in previous chapters examined the basis for 'consumer'

participation. In housing this is based upon reducing the hostility

and alienation that is characteristic of the traditional landlord-tenant

relationship. Related is the notion of individuals have some form

of moral claim upon control of their own destiny. Writers such as

Ward (1974, 1983) believe that it is right and beneficial for tenants

to control the provision and management of their housing. Throughout

the literature, there is the nagging assumption that once such schemes

are implemented, tenants will feel significantly more dignified than

under the traditional relationship in which they were often subjected

to insensitive practices.

As the reader will have grasped already, there remain problems

even where such opportunities exist. In the present case-study, many

tenants are ignorant of, and hostile to, the work of the association

as landlord. Opportunities for involvement, therefore, are no guar-

antee that difficulties will be solved.

Starting from the knowledge that only around 15 tenants can be active in the Management Committee, it was thought useful to conduct a small questionnaire survey of tenants. A sample size of 50 was selected from a total tenanted stock of 347 units, over 85% of which are modernised units. The survey was solely concerned with tenants in modernised property, which amounts to 303 units at present. The reasons for this emphasis are fairly self explanatory. Around 93% of unmodernised property is uninhabited at present. Particularly important in the light of the second case study is the fact that the inclusion of such tenants would bring into play a set of forces which are not directly comparable to those experienced within the co-operative. It is, therefore, mainly for purposes of uniformity that the sample was drawn from modernised stock. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix (2).

Tenants' responses are best examined under a few simple headings:

(1) Previous tenure and reasons for moving to present house.

(2) Degree of familiarity with DPHA and participation at various levels.

(3) Perceptions of the work of the Association in terms of its sensitivity and adherence to tenants' views.

(1) Previous tenure and reasons for moving

This is of particular importance in providing a context for examining the degree of participation that is exercised by respondents. The survey results are as below:

Previous Tenure

D.P.H.A. tenant	25
Owner-occupier	15
L.A. tenant	6
Other	4

Reasons for moving

Rehabilitation/Demolition	25
Larger/smaller house	12
"Better" house	3
Familiarity with the area	2
Marriage/employment reasons	2
Other	6

Length of Residence in Present House

Under 1 year	16
1 - 2 years	23
2 - 4 years	8
Over 4 years	3

As can be seen, 50% of respondents had previously lived in another D.P.H.A. house. Most of these tenants had lived for a minimum of two years in unmodernised property, some as owners and others as DPHA tenants. This is significant in that one would expect such respondents to have some degree of knowledge about its organisation and to perhaps have been motivated to become involved. Several of them had lived in the area when the H.A.A. was declared and subsequently experienced the

establishment of theassociation. They would therefore have been
canvassed with promotional letters and information sheets.

It is equally significant that the same proportion of respondents
(50%) lived through the demolition or renovation of their homes. As
a result most were decanted into already modernised homes or were
temporarily moved and subsequently returned to their original house.
In the case of those whose flats were demolished due to the structural
collapse of the block of tenements in Duntocher Road, they were
rehoused in modernised property. As can be seen from the table
describing length of residence in present house, 68% have been DPHA
tenants for more than a year.

(2) Familiarity and Participation

It could conceivably be said that the 'effectiveness' or 'success'
of a system which is based upon tenant management or control of housing,
can be evaluated from its adoption by tenants as a whole. As mentioned
at a previous point, all persons, whether resident in the area or not,
can purchase a £1 share in a locally based housing association and
thereby become members. Exactly how membership is perceived by
individuals is unclear. Technically it gives the right to stand for
the committee and to nominate and vote in elections. However, there
are many people who remain as members when they leave the area and
DPHA has no power to invalidate membership. This must be done
voluntarily by the member himself/herself. The whole concept of
membership is an enigma in Housing Association in general. Members
are shareholders and technically they control entry to the committee
with their right to nominate others and stand for election themselves.

In practice, however, nominations have come largely from existing
committee members and there are no formal channels of communication
between the committee and ordinary members.

It is interesting to observe the survey results regarding know-
ledge about the workings of the Association, membership, attendance
at the last AGM and involvement in any aspect of its management.
These results are as follows:

	Yes	No
Do you know how DPHA is run?	28	22
Are you a member of DPHA?	13	37
Did you attend the last AGM?	5	45
Are you involved in the running of DPHA?	0	50

As can be seen, none of the survey respondents were involved to any
extent in the organisation of DPHA. This is obviously of great
importance in that it reflects the paucity of individuals who do
participate directly in the management of their housing. This is
particularly disappointing given the efforts that have been made
by staff and committee in terms of publishing the newsletter to
advertise the achievements of DPHA and its future plans. It is of
little comfort to discover that only slightly more than 50% of survey
respondents are actually familiar with the way in which DPHA is run.
Among those who responded 'Yes' to this question, there emerged a
variety of degrees of knowledge about the organisation. The majority
(19) were familiar with the Management Committee and its composition

of local people. Two respondents mentioned both Management and sub-
committees and one person knew only that tenants are involved in
running the Association. From the total number of individuals who
answered questions, only one was in any way familiar with the rationale,
financing and organisation of DPHA. It is significant to note that
the person in question was particularly hostile to it. She had been
a tenant in the Duntocher Road property before its collapse. In
this person's opinion, the Association Committee is a clique and
is not accountable enough. She believes that office hours etc.
are fixed purely to fit the conveniences of staff and that there
is an air of conspiracy within the whole organisation. This perception,
though not always as strong, is fairly common among similar tenants
who had to be evacuated from the demolished tenement. This is perhaps
to be expected. In the space of 24 hours, many families lost their
homes.

It should, however, be stressed that all tenants and owner-
occupiers were rehoused almost immediately in modernised DPHA flats.
This may illustrate the point that despite the considerable effort
and sensitivity of DPHA (the collapse happened at a weekend and
committee and staff rallied round to co-ordinate removals and re-
housing) there are still a fair number of people one year later who
feel that they have been 'hoodwinked' in some way.

As can be seen from the table, only 25% of interviewees were
members of the D.P.H.A. This reflects the lack of practical implica-
tions of membership. Within the association as a whole there is
a noticeable lack of importance attached to it. It is of course
relevant for committee members on a personal basis, but it must

be concluded that to tenants as a whole, it seems that holding a

share certificate means little or nothing. In short, there are no

directly tangible benefits. This is reflected in the table below

which traces Association membership and attendance at AGM's.

Year	Membership of DPHA	Attendance at AGM*
1977	78	N/A
1978	40	5
1979	84	3
1980	83	6
1981	89	12
1982	96	14
1983	123	12
1984	78	N/A

*excludes staff and Committee members

This must be considered in the light of the fact that adequate

notice is given to all tenants about the forthcomingAGM in June of

every year. This is accompanied by an application form for member-

ship and a nomination form for the management committee. Despite

such efforts, attendance is very poor by any standards. It is, of

course dangerous to conclude that the reason is apathy. It seems,

however, that there are many individuals, including those who are

association members, who feel unmotivated to attend. It is doubtful

that these individuals are completely satisfied with the work and

activities of DPHA. The low turnouts may indeed be accounted for

by a relatively high degree of satisfaction and/or, a feeling that
complaints will be ineffective in producing results. There may,
of course, be personal circumstances which prevent people from
attending, but the consistently low turnout does not augur well for
constructive debate between decision-makers and those whom they are
supposed to represent.

It is appropriate, in the light of this low level of activity,
to look a little further, to consider the reasons cited by respondents
for their lack of participation. It became obvious in the course
of the survey that people had not made a conscious decision about
whether to join the Management Committee. It is interesting first,
to consider the views of individuals on the concept of tenant parti-
cipation in general. When asked if they thought it was beneficial
to have a say in management issues, the majority of respondents (44)
said 'Yes' while 6 said 'No'. The latter said that they didn't
believe that 'ordinary' tenants had adequate knowledge to run affairs.
Significantly, these tenants were not at all familiar with the way
in which they could participate. It is therefore likely that they
imagined people taking over from staff completely.

The overwhelming majority, however, believed participation to
be a good thing. Significantly however, almost all recorded explana-
tions reflected a perception of those on the committees as somehow
passive. Responses such as "It lets people know what's happening"
and "it lets people air their views" implied that what is understood
by involvement amounted to a form of consultation rather than tenants
taking important decisions.

In turn, this can be considered alongside the reasons cited
for non-involvement. These were as follows:

Lack of time	20
Not interested	6
Applied in the past but committee was full	2
Hostility towards DPHA	2
Health/age reasons	5
Lack of confidence	1
Inconvenient times of meetings	2
Other reasons	4
No reason given	8

As can be seen, the most often quoted explanation is a lack of time.
It is fairly easy to explain non-involvement in this way; however
it would be very unfair to condemn people on such grounds. It is
more likely that this reflects respondents' personal priorities.
How an individual spends leisure hours is tied closely to perceived
satisfaction. It is simply the case for many that there are more
attractive ways to spend such time.

It is fairly surprising that so few respondents were negative
about participating. These amounted to only eight individuals –
those who said they were disinterested and those who felt hostility
and had made a conscious choice to remain uninvolved. The latter
had both been owner-occupiers and sold out to D.P.H.A. They felt
unfairly treated and also that the Association has nothing to offer

them. It is ironic that such individuals, who have had adverse
personal encounters with DPHA, do not feel motivated to join the
committee, even if to attempt to bring changes. In addition, it
can only be assumed that those who indicated that they were not at
all interested, feel that they have nothing to gain from involvement
in terms of personal fulfilment. Those who have applied in the past
to join the Management Committee, indicated that they would be inter-
ested in future participation. Finally, a mention should be given
to those who felt that the times of committee meetings were inconvenient
and to the individual who lacked confidence to come forward.

Such responses highlight two major constraints to public
participation in general, which were examined in an earlier chapter.
It is crucial to recognise the shortcomings of seeking explana-
tions for non-involvement. It is entirely possible that most respon-
dents had never given a thought to participating prior to being
asked such a question.

(3) General perceptions of DPHA

It is important, after considering the more specific views
of tenants, to briefly examine the more general perceptions of the
Association that emerged from the survey. Perhaps of more value
than to analyse in detail the responses in the table below, these
observations should be used as a basis for "evaluating" if this
is at all possible, the general image of DPHA that exists in
respondents minds.

Question	Yes	No	d.k.
Are there any benefits from living in a HousingAssociation house compared to other forms of housing?	18	27	5
Was the opportunity to get involved important in your move to this house?	0	50	-
Are there enough opportunities to let your views be known?	36	8	6
Would you like to see more consultation?	31	16	3
Do you think that DPHA is in touch with your views?	30	15	5
Do you feel well enough represented by the Management Committee?	24	6	20
Is the Management structure adequate or not?	35	11	4

Of obvious significance is the fact that no respondent saw opportunities for participation as important in their move to the present house. This contrasts with the responses that will be examined in the co-operative survey. This suggests that, despite academic emphasis upon involvement, it does not seem to be an important issue for a large percentage of DPHA tenants.

The question of whether association housing is 'better' than other forms produced interesting responses. It may have been expected that the large proportion of owner occupiers who became DPHA tenants since 1977 would have commented upon the improved factoring of property. There was a bad record in the area prior to the association being established. However, the lack of specific mention of this

may be due to the fact that it is now some years since the situation
was markedly improved. Therefore, many former owners who have perhaps
now moved into their second D.P.H.A. property, may have 'forgotten'
just how bad the factoring was previously. There was a certain degree
of praise for the speedy and efficient repairs and maintenance service.
However this did not reflect the extent of its improvement since
D.P.H.A. took over.

Tenants perceived the presence of a local office as important
for contact with staff and the payment of rent (although rent-collection
hours were critisized). Only four individuals favoured D.P.H.A.
accommodation on grounds of its emphasis upon tenant participation.
This is in marked contrast to the responses of the survey conducted
in the Management Co-operative at Summerston.

As observed in the table, 72% of the sample are satisfied with
present opportunities to let their views be known. For most, this
involves visiting the offices and conversing with committee members
who may live in the same street or close. Despite this response,
30% of people interviewed believe that D.P.H.A. is not in touch with
their views. This ties closely with the respondents who wish to
see more consultation with tenants. The general feeling was that
more contact, in the form of meetings etc. would be useful.

Surprisingly, given such responses, a full 50% felt well enough
represented by the Management Committee. Those undecided were almost
exclusively tenants who were unfamiliar with the association's
organisation. Negative responses were specifically related to hostility
arising from past experiences such as the structural collapse mentioned
previously.

Satisfaction with D.P.H.A. is surprisingly high given opinions

expressed earlier. This is encouraging, given the apparent dearth

of knowledge among a significant number of tenants. Those who view

the set up as inadequate are concerned with the degree of contact

with tenants (8) and unsuitable office hours coupled with slow

processing of repair complaints.

VII   Conclusions:

The locally based housing association has provided a unique

form of 'consumer' participation. It is not merely in management

tasks that the committee is involved, but in all aspects of the

planning,development and administration of a housing service.

Given that the idea of the association originated outside the

area, the achievements and enthusiasm of D.P.H.A. are very encouraging.

It was said at an earlier point that arrangements for tenant

participation, imposed from externally, may result in resentment

among people. This has not been the case at D.P.H.A. Members are

very aware of just how bad the local housing situation would be,

had it not been for the establishment of the association as an agent

for rehabilitation. Those who have been involved over the past seven

years have taken their tasks very seriously. There is, of course,

a social side to participation and rightly so. It has strengthened

the basis for co-operation between staff and members. However,

this does not exist at the expense of sensitivity in decision-making.

The association's objectives have been kept firmly in sight through-

out.

As noted, the vast majority of committee members are D.P.H.A. tenants. All of these tenants live in modernised property. There is no indication therefore that people lose interest in participating when they have achieved satisfactory housing conditions. Some present members admit that they first thought of becoming involved while living in sub-tolerable housing. However, such members have proved to have a long-term commitment to the association. There is evidence to suggest that once people make the initial step and get involved, their confidence grows and, without developing a desire for "power", they become proficient in and knowledgable about many aspects of association work.

This does not happen without a great deal of perseverence among relatively new committee members. Most people in this position feel hesitant about espousing their opinions at meetings. Others, however, of a more outgoing personality, take to active participation very easily. This is all part of the learning process mentioned earlier. No one is ever made to feel that they are a nuisance for asking questions. In fact, there is a great deal of encouragement of new members to question procedure and to become familiar with aspects of committee work. More could perhaps be done in a formal sense to familiarize new members; however, the necessary resources are not available at the moment. From personal experience, the informal, social act-ivities of the committee and staff provide a valuable source of information for new recruits!.

The decision-making process was examined earlier and it is necessary only to say that there exists a large degree of involvement by the Management Committee. Decisions are taken primarily by those

who understand what being an association tenant means. This results

in a high level of tenant control. It is not control exercised in

an antagonistic fashion. The committee respect the input of staff

advice and proposals but members do not blindly accept such guidance.

There are too many astute individuals who initiate detailed discussion

about the application and implications of potential decisions.

The main inference that can be drawn from the tenant survey

is the apparent lack of knowledge about D.P.H.A. and its organisa-

tion. The low level of membership and attendance at AGM's suggests

that even those who are familiar are largely unmotivated to participate

to any degree. Over all, there is a perceived need among tenants

to see a greater degree of contact with D.P.H.A. However, in the

light of the survey results, it is not certain if such contact

would be sustained by the former. This illustrates one of the

important drawbacks of a questionnaire method of research.

Despite the shortcomings of arrangements for tenant involvement

in D.P.H.A., the prevailing system represents an opportunity for

local people to shape the future of their housing. This is echoed

by the widespread support for participation among survey respondents.

The physical improvements in the area have not been achieved without

enormous financial support and guidance from central government via

the Housing Corporation. However, the establishment of D.P.H.A.

has allowed the exercise of local democracy in this vital field of

service provision. It has provided an initial base, upon which a

greater degree of involvement could develop in the future in the

sphere of housing and possibly in other fields of community development.

CHAPTER 6

THE CO-OPERATIVE APPROACH TO TENANT PARTICIPATION

I. Introduction

> "Housing Co-operatives are a partnership between
> tenants and the local authority; they can only
> exist where there is a commitment and willingness
> on the part of the tenants to run their own affairs,
> and they can only exist where there is the right
> kind of background within the local authority.
> Without these conditions nothing will happen."
>
> (John Kernaghan – ex Convener
> of GDC Housing Committee)

The fact that Management Co-ops have not been widely established
in Scotland is perhaps due in part to the absence of this commitment
among public sector landlords. There has been a great degree of ambi-
valence among Scottish local authorities in general towards the concept
of Management Co-ops.

Within this context, it is interesting to trace the development
of the principle and to examine one specific local authority co-op
in Glasgow which was the first of its kind in Scotland and whose experience
has been widely drawn upon by those who have felt inclined to initiate
further developments in the City.

Given the lengthy and complex origins of the housing association
movement documented in the previous chapter, experience of co-operative
housing in Britain is a very recent and uncommon phenomenon. Co-ops
exist both in the private and public sectors. Those in the former are
most often based upon the principles of equity-sharing in which residents'

investment appreciates over time. There exist self-build co-ops in
this sector which involve what Ward (1974) has called "sweat-equity"
and which ultimately result in ownership of the property in question.
These types of co-operative venture are intrinsically related to
notions of self-help by those who seek housing outwith the publicly
funded sector. In short, they represent an unconventional approach
to property ownership. Although falling outwith the present scope
of examination, it is important to note their existence. It is
however with co-operative housing in the public sphere that this work
is concerned. Within this category, there exist two main types of
co-op:

(1) Par-value co-ops — This embodies collective ownership of
    property but involves no individual stake in the houses.
    This type is based upon co-op members having a nominal share
    in the property. The arrangement is very similar to that of
    the local housing association and in some cases, par value
    co-ops are actually registered as associations.

(2) Tenant Management Co-ops — Ownership is retained by the
    local authority, while management functions (to varying
    degrees) are devolved to tenants.

It is with this latter type of co-op that this case-study is concerned.
Within this category, it is the tenants themselves that constitute
the co-op and not the property that they inhabit. (TPAS, 1981).
It is the purpose of examining such an innovation, to consider one
way in which local authorities have responded to varying problems
inherent in both their stock and in their relationship with tenants.

As noted previously, it is not easy for councils to dispel the
assumptions that have for long, dominated the latter. The devolution
of control of management functions represents a shift in the emphasis
of local housing provision. The far-reaching implications of this
shift is reflected in the lack of a widespread adoption of co-operative
housing in council stock. The concept is undoubtedly still considered
as an unconventional, and by some, rather gimmicky, experiment in the
management of public housing.

However, the principles upon which co-operatives are based are
far from trivial. Co-operation, self-help, democratic management and
mutual aid are embodied within its rationale. In the sphere of public
housing these represent a valuable opportunity to radically alter and
improve the basis of provision. An example of what can be achieved
will be examined in the case study material.

II   Institutional/legislative Background

Co-operative principles can be traced as far back as the activities
of the Rochdale pioneers in the 1840's and beyond. However, co-operative
housing has never held any significant degree of credibility among policy
makers in the largest part of the present century. Until the mid 1970's,
most co-op developments that occurred were in the sphere of co-ownership
housing in Britain. This has not been the case elsewhere. In Scandanavia,
for example, voluntary housing, based largely upon the principles of
co-operation,dominates the tenure pattern (Greve, (1971)). In the
U.S.A., groups of individuals commonly band together to develop self-
build housing on the basis of limited personal liability (Ward, 1974).
We must look therefore to the enormous influence of directly subsidised

state housing in the British context, to find a possible explanation

for the relative lack of co-operative housing. As noted in the case

of housing associations, any provision outwith the traditional sectors

(council, owner occupation and privately rented) has long been seen

as experimental. In short, such 'unconventional' tenures as associations,

co-ownership and co-operative have never seriously challenged the "norms"

noted above. Tenure polarisation has dominated.

It was only as recently as the early 70's that the virtues of

co-operatives have been espoused with any degree of effect. This has

occurred primarily in England where the Co-operative Party developed

as a lobby for such developments. The Party highlighted the existence

of groups who actively sought an alternative to traditional tenure

choices. Activity was primarily centred around London. This, coupled

with the enormous scale of the housing problems in the conurbation,

has resulted in the city becoming a major centre for management and

par-value co-ops.

One of the most influential people in the promotion of the movement

is Harold Campbell, who chaired the DoE sponsored 'Working Party on

Housing Co-operatives' in 1975. Campbell had been lifelong supporter

of self determination in housing and was instrumental, through his

1975 Report, in the government's establishment of a Co-operative Housing

Agency (C.H.A.). This unit never provided an effective promotional

body for co-ops and was incorporated into the Housing Corporation in

1979. The Working Party emerged within a context of growing awareness

of the concept of participation in many areas of provision. Nowhere

was this more pronounced than in the sphere of public housing. The

well documented alienation and hostility within the landlord/tenant

relationship became more intense in this period.   Squatting and the
spontaneous emergence of tenant protest in a variety of forms were
increasingly visible in the 1960's and 70's.   With this in mind, Campbell's
views were crystallized in the 1975 Report.   The minister for housing
and construction had appointed the Working Party in 1974 to:

> "Report to the minister on ways, legislative,
> financial, and administrative, by which Government,
> local government, housing associations, the build-
> ing industry, financial and other institutions can
> enable the formation of housing co-operatives to
> take place, on ways in which local authority and
> housing association tenants can be enabled, by
> co-operative management schemes, to participate
> collectively in decisions which affect them, on
> ways in which tenants may, by means of housing
> co-operatives acquire a financial stake in their
> homes and on ways in which the current problems of
> co-ownership can be tackled."

Oxford Polytechnic Papers (1981)

This passage is quoted at length, both to emphasis the variety of ideas
associated with Co-ops and to stress the Working Party's wide remit.
Campbell recognised the long legacy in Britain of mutual aid and self-
help, particularly in the retail trade.   The Report had, as its basis,
the principles of co-operation set out below:

(1)   Voluntary membership with no restrictions on grounds of social,
      political, racial or religious affiliations.

(2)   Administration based upon democratic principles.

(3)   Financial gains belong to the body as a whole and should be
      distributed in a way which avoids any member gaining at the
      expense of others.

(4)   Should include provisions for the education of members, officers
      and employees, and of the general public, in the principles of
      co-operation - both economic and democratic.

The Report that emerged is widely quoted as the major official publica-
tion of support for co-operative housing. It strongly urged that the
principles should be embodied in future housing strategies. Campbell
however issued an important note of caution to 'would-be' promoters
of such an innovation. It was emphasised that a co-operative cannot
be imposed upon a group of individuals, who lack enthusiasm for its
principles, and be expected to succeed:

> "people must be ready and willing to accept its
> obligations and its disciplines as well as its
> rights, freely and with understanding. If they
> are to fulfil their responsibilities to each other
> and to the co-operative, they must be able to
> reach informed decisions about management and the
> policies it has to pursue."

> Harold Campbell - Oxford Polytechnic
> Papers (1981)

Despite the danger of failure, Management Co-ops were given explicit
legislative support in the <u>1975 Housing Rents and Subsidies (Scotland)</u>
<u>Act</u>. The Act made provision for local authorities to retain ownership
of property, while devolving some or all management functions to a
tenant co-operative. This was to be possible without loss of government
subsidy to the authority, the houses remaining on its Housing Revenue
Account.

The provisions were framed with several issues in mind. Remember
that this period was one in which consumers' rights and notions of
participation became more commonly discussed. It had been recognised
for long that significant dissatisfaction was harboured among council
tenants. It was clearly time to adopt a new strategy of management.
However the provisions of the Act, fall for some, far short of a radical
shift in policy. Nevertheless, the legislation did represent a recognition

of the potential contribution of co-operative housing. The Act was

followed closely by the announcement by G.D.C. of its intention to

promote a tenant Management Co-op.

As will be seen shortly, the relative success of the resulting

Co-op at Summerston has been instrumental in the council's further

adoption of the innovation. It has not, however, been widely adopted

as a policy option for Scottish local authority housing. The most

likely reasons are related to the entrenched views of councils regarding

management of 'their' housing stock. The assumptions of the landlord-

tenant relationship have been examined in a previous chapter. Within

this context, any hint of decreased influence has been viewed by many

officers and members as something which is not to be encouraged. For

example, the Housing Co-operatives Review Committee (H.C.R.C.) wrote

to all housing authorities in Scotland and received 32 responses.

These showed that as many as 11 had rejected outright the principle

of co-ops, 15 had accepted.the idea in principle, and 6 were still

thinking about it. These figures show the enormous reluctance of councils

to implement such a policy. The reasons may be complex but the fact

remains that little positive action has been taken. In some cases there

seems to have developed a vicious circle of opinions. H.C.R.C. note

that there is a prevalence of the view that initiative should come

from tenants. However, how can this occur if tenants have never heard

of the idea and have therefore, no notion of the potential benefits?

It is worth noting that the survey response from housing associations

was very sparse. This reflects the low priority within the movement

of devolving management, even where associations are bigger than the

smallest local authorities in Scotland in terms of housing stock. There

exists a vacuum, therefore, between tenants' lack of knowledge and the imposition of co-ops in areas of unidentified tenant support.

Recognising the lack of widespread adoption, the SDD issued a circular in 1977 to all local authorities, New Towns, the SFHA and SSHA. It concerned Tenant Participation and Housing Co-ops (SDD, 1977). The object was to encourage the promotion of pilot co-ops. It was recognised that there existed a highly centralised system of housing management in the public sector and that, in keeping with the imminent Green Paper on housing policy and finance, substantial efforts should be made in the promotion of participation. Four important benefits of co-ops were envisaged. They were as follows:

(1) Giving tenants a greater individual satisfaction through having the opportunity to exercise real control over their living conditions.

(2) Developing a stronger sense of concern for the local community and reducing social isolation.

(3) Providing in effect, an alternative form of tenure to the virtually straight choice that now exists in Scotland between owner-occupation and public sector renting.

(4) The introduction of more personal initiatives and resources into housing management, and in the long run, providing for more effective use of management resources.

The latter 'benefit' has proved to be a contentious issue. In short, it is viewed by   some   that local authority management co-ops are merely a cost-cutting exercise with the introduction of voluntary

labour into the management process. This fear has not however been
borne out by the views of committee and tenants in the present case-
study. The question of long and short term financial implications
will be considered shortly.

The benefits noted above do provide an adequate definition of
the perceived advantages of co-operatives in local authority stock.
They can however be further refined as follows:

(1) To enable tenants to exercise a substantial degree of control
     over the provision, management and maintenance of the housing
     environment in which they find themselves.

(2) To foster and sustain a feeling of community which embodies
     co-operation in all aspects of daily life. In addition, to
     implement democratic principles of decision making in housing
     issues within that community.

The circular covered many aspects of promoting co-operatives such as
optimum size, the most suitable type of areas in which to concentrate
and the practical steps necessary for establishment. It is to these
issues that we now turn.

Once an authority has made a policy decision to establish a
management co-operative, there are important questions that it must
consider in order to bring the policy to fruition. Scale is of great
significance. In the case of two of Glasgow's co-ops in the east-end,
size varies significantly. Whiterose (GDC) has 350 houses, while
Claythorn, one of the two SSHA sponsored Co-ops in the city has 37.
There are two important issues related to scale. Firstly, it should
enable co-operative principles of familiarity and management sensitivity
to thrive. This will be aided by a geographical scale which co-op

members do not perceive to be distant and which does not frustrate the objectives of local, sensitive and democratic management. Secondly, the size of area should as close as possible, reflect people's perceptions of community identity. This is, of course, a problematic issue. In areas of new housing such as at Summerston, this problem does not arise. However, in areas of tenanted housing, it may be easier to promote co-ops among people with a family strong community identification. Such promotional activity should, however, be closely related to tenant support and enthusiasm.

Co-ops may comprise an entire estate or alternatively part of such a development. Summerston Co-operative is located within a large estate. However, it is geographically self-contained, being surrounded on all sides by breaks in the continuity of development. It is significant to note that since the establishment of the Summerston Co-op, there have developed two additional co-ops in adjacent parts of the estate. It seems likely that, in time, the entire area may comprise separate co-operative units. It could be said with caution, that the visible success of the original venture has "rubbed off" on the tenants in surrounding areas.

The most suitable type of area in which to encourage such developments is the subject of an important debate within the co-operative housing movement. The dichotomy between new housing and tenanted stock has been mentioned. There are, however, within the latter category, many important distinctions to be drawn. Physical characteristics of stock such as age, condition, size and environmental attributes are of significance. Similarly, tenants vary widely in their age, socio-economic characteristics, personal priorities and enthusiasm to participate in management. In other words, council housing in terms of supply

and demand factors, is a heterogeneous sector. If an authority wishes to see a co-op established, and assuming there exists no demand from a specific group of tenants, it must decide on an area in which to initiate the idea.

The SDD circular and the Campbell Report both warned against the dangers of using such innovations to deal with 'problem' areas of council stock.

> "Co-operatives are not an easy means of dealing with
> the multiple problems of deprived areas. There is a
> strong argument against establishing co-ops in such
> areas on the grounds that <u>what is needed is greater</u>
> <u>rather than less effort on the part of housing</u>
> <u>authorities</u> .... the tasks are likely to be beyond
> the tenants themselves and they will almost certainly
> not be capable of taking on the responsibilities of a
> co-op at an early stage in the improvement process,
> although consultation with them will be important."

SDD (1977)

The passage goes on to say that perhaps at a later stage, when some of the area's problems have been alleviated, any interest generated among tenants may form the basis of a co-operative. It should perhaps more realistically be said that, <u>if its motives are honourable and</u> <u>if a large majority of tenants in such areas have commitment and enthusiasm</u>, there is little reason for dismissing such an initiative. One can easily understand the potential dangers. An area that has been a management and maintenance "headache" to an authority for some time could conceivably be hived-off to tenants in the form of a co-op "to sort their own problems out". This is a recipe for disaster. If on the other hand, tenants themselves are informed of the possibility and they respond in a positive manner, responsibility and control could be devolved. This may be viewed by tenants as a vote of confidence from a landlord

who has proved uneffective and insensitive in the past. It is the case in three separate areas of Glasgow that there are concrete plans for the promotion of par-value co-ops by the district council. These are in areas of stock which have proved difficult to let. Plans will involve the sale of the houses, for a nominal sum, to the co-ops in which people will have a £1 share.

Similarly it has been the case in several GLC estates in and around London, that management co-operatives have regenerated, previously demoralized areas. For example the St. Katherines estate in Tower Hamlets was on the brink of desertion when a co-op was initiated (Oxford Polytechnical Papers 1981.) Nothing however, is more certain to fail than a management co-operative imposed upon tenants who have no interest whatsoever in its principles. Likewise however, it has been the case that tenants have had an enormous amount of drive and enthusiasm for forming a management co-op while the council have been unsympathetic. The Fabian Pamphlet (1980) points to the case of Roupell Park in the London Borough of Lambeth in which this was experienced.

In the case of tenanted stock, there exists a potential problem where a number of tenants do not support the establishment of a management co-op. It is noted in Circular 14/77, that if this minority of tenants is "substantial", the co-operative should not go ahead. It is unfortunate for those with enthusiasm, but assuming that commitment is necessary, this amounts to sound advice. Perhaps an arrangement should exist whereby potential co-operators could be "pooled" in a housing list for use at a future point when the authority is in a position to foster further initiatives. It is probably the case however, that individuals are more interested in influencing aspects of their present

housing experience rather than being committed to co-operatives per-
se.

One of the less obvious, yet important considerations is time-
scale in the development of a management co-operative, and indeed in
any scheme for participation. Expectations must not run far ahead of
practical developments. If this happens, disillusionment and resentment
will set in. After a long history of inadequate consultation between
council, landlord and tenant, long delays in the process of giving the
latter any degree of control, will leave tenants suspecting that they
are being cheated or manipulated. It is of course a formidable task
to implement a policy which introduces management co-operatives. Never-
theless, it should be made as clear and efficient as possible. Expectations
themself should also be kept at a realistic level. This is very much
the responsibility of the fostering agency.

Such problems can be overcome most effectively by following a
systematic procedure of establishment. It should be stressed that
there is no "right" way to set up a co-operative in the public sector.
There are however certain steps which can be taken. These can be
summarised as follows:

(1) Commitment on the part of the landlord and tenants must be
    firmly established.

(2) The compilation of a constitution which defines the legal status,
    objectives and form that the co-operative will take.

(3) Making sure that the co-operative has limited liability in terms
    of any unforeseen financial crisis that may occur. This is most
    commonly done by enrolling with the Registrar of Friendly Societies
    under the 1965 Industrial and Provident Societies Act. The

benefits of such registration have been adopted in principle
by GDC but there has been no drive to encourage TM co-ops
to follow the procedure. Such registration coupled with
that under the 1974 Housing Act with the H.C., exempts a
co-operative from the necessity to pay Corporation Tax. However,
none of Glasgow's co-ops are so registered. In the case of
Summerston, this arises because funds are lodged with the
District Council which is not liable for such tax.

(4) Local authorities must seek <u>approval from the Secretary of State</u>
     for the principle of setting up a Management Co-op.

(5) Drawing up an <u>Agency Agreement</u> between the authority and the
     co-op. This document is vitally important in that it sets out
     the responsibilities of both parties in the relationship.

(6) There must be prepared a series of <u>working documents</u>   which
     pertain to the functions carried out by the co-operative. The
     Agency Agreement sets out in broad terms, the responsibilities.
     However, specific policy must be set out in separate documents.
     Lettings policy, tenancy agreements etc. must be clearly
     defined.in this manner.

(7) If a par value co-op wishes to gain exemption from Corporation
     tax, it must <u>register as a housing association with the Housing</u>
     <u>Corporation.</u> In so doing it becomes eligible for central
     government funding for improvement and new building. Scotland's
     only co-operative H.A. is <u>Lister</u> in Edinburgh which has under-
     taken rehabilitation work using H.C. money.

These are the main steps that should be taken by a co-operative in order to gain a legal status and to protect itself against misinterpretation and unforeseen financial troubles. In practice, however, the procedure may not proceed as systematically as suggested. Complex issues such as the drawing up of an agency agreement may take a considerable amount of time. Before proceeding to the case study, it is essential to consider the financial aspects of local authority promotion of management co-operatives.

As noted in the SDD circular, one of the perceived benefits of such an initiative was that it would place greater personal initiative and resources into housing management. In addition, it was envisaged that in the long term, it could provide a more efficient and effective use of management resources. One thing is clear - the promotion of a co-op requires a substantially increased input in terms of financial advances and housing management staff resources. Benefits accrue in the long term when the co-op, in a sense starts "running-itself" and becomes largely self-perpetrating. The most obvious financial component of the organisation is the annual allowance that is paid by the local authority. This varies widely between areas. In London there has been a much more pronounced development of co-ops than practically anywhere else in the country. This results from a more positive overall attitude to the initiative (Housing Co-ops Review Committee) compared to that prevailing in Scotland. The present rate of allowance for GDC co-operatives is £210 per unit annually. The SSHA schemes receive £163 per house (presently being reviewed). Allowances in England, however, are substantially higher (currently standing at over £400 per house). This of course, reflects a marginally higher cost of living but also a greater commitment to the principles of co-operative housing.

Despite a large state housing sector, England has a

significantly less polarised tenure structure than Scotland. The

predominance of council stock in the latter has led to a

certain degree of inertia, in terms of management practices and the

way in which officials view municipal housing. It is interesting

therefore to examine the co-operative experience of a public

authority landlord which is the largest of its kind in Europe.

III Summerston Housing Management Co-operative

As noted previously, G.D.C. has a housing stock of around

180,000 units. There exist problems related to this scale of

activity, such as differences in environmental quality and physical

conditions of houses, both within and between estates. Within such

a context, the decision was taken to foster a tenant management

co-operative within the city. Grant (1977) notes that:

> "the decision was the brainchild of Pat
> Lally – the then convener of the Housing
> Management Committee. Other political
> support developed subsequently from those
> who believed that a wider tenure balance
> in Glasgow would be desirable on a number
> of grounds, particularly as a means to
> stem the outflow of population."

<div align="right">(page 1)</div>

Its rationale was also based upon a wish to foster a management phil-

osophy which would be more sensitive and humane than centralised, bureau-

cratic control. Whatever else, the Management Co-op at Summerston

was seen as an experiment. It was not until its 'success' was confirmed

that GDC promoted further initiatives. To date, these have taken the

form of a further 5 fully operational co-ops sponsored by GDC plus

several "embryonic" co-ops in the initial stages of development.

The example of Summerston has been followed by the SSHA who have two similar projects in the east-end of the city. In the Claythorn Co-op (SSHA), tenants have been involved in the layout and design of the new-build development.

The area chosen for the initial GDC Co-op was a section of the Summerston estate on the north-west edge of the city, due for the first completions in 1976/77. Because the Co-op was to consist of newly built housing, co-operative tenants had to be selected prior to allocation of houses. The council appointed a Tenant Participation Officer (T.P.O.) who became active in the developmental stages and in the selection procedure.

Recruitment of co-operative tenants:

Only those who would normally be eligible for housing in Summerston were to be considered. At 1976 when the first houses in the scheme as a whole were coming off-site, this involved having been on the GDC waiting list for about 4 years or having lived in a redevelopment area for the same period (Grant, 1977). All eligible applicants were notified by letter of the Co-operative and the opportunity of becoming a tenant. Those interested were asked to contact the T.P.O. The respondents were given a short information session and given the choice between co-op accommodation or a mainstream council house in the rest of Summerston. The units located in the co-op section were to be finished <u>after</u> the main part of the estate. Therefore many of those in most urgent need of rehousing were forced by circumstances into non co-op housing. In this way, many potential tenants slipped through the allocations net. On a more positive note, the delay may have selected those with a commitment to the co-operative. Those who saw it as merely a way of gaining access to housing would have been eliminated in the procedure.

All potential co-op tenants were invited to attend fortnightly
meetings in the City Chambers, the first of which selected a Steering
Committee (literally by pulling 7 names out of a hat). This Committee
operated until superceded in April 1977 by the first Management
Committee. The constitution which was officially adopted in February
1977 made provisions for this committee to be elected when the 48th
home had been occupied. However, as early as July 1976, co-operative
members became involved in vetting allocations. Towards the end of
the year,members along with the co-op's first full-time administrator
who had been appointed in October 1976 became dissatisfied with the
level of commitment shown by recent recruits and they called for a
more rigorous procedure. This involved a system of second interviews
for those applicants whose commitment was doubtful. The whole question
of tenant selection is a contentious aspect of co-operatives.
Initially in the case of Summerston, members had no rights to nominate
tenants and were confined to selecting from applicants already
nominated by G.D.C. This position has since changed and will be
examined shortly. In early 1977, recognising the complexity of
the task, the Management Committee delegated allocations to a sub-
group consisting of 4 of its members and one other co-op tenant.

The Emergence of an organizational framework

As in the case of housing associations, management co-operatives
display a wide variety of arrangements and procedures. The 1975
legislation provides for the delegation of a variety of functions and
therefore the responsibilities assumed by co-ops can differ widely.

throughout the initial period of the co-op's establishment,

and particularly after the Steering Committee was elected, work began

on drawing up a constitution. General meetings of all tenants were

held monthly from the time that houses were first occupied. These

meetings discussed various potential constitutional items. A trial

constitution was adopted in April 1977 and has since been altered in

several ways. In addition, on 27th April, the official Agency

Agreement was signed by the three office bearers of the Management

Committee and G.D.C. representatives. As explained earlier, this

formed the basis of the responsibilities of both parties. The initial

functions to be assumed by the Summerston Housing Management Co-operative

can be seen from Appendix 3. In short, they amount to the overall

management and maintenance of the 247 houses. The latter consists of

the co-op employing private contractors to carry out jobs. Contracts

go to tender and it is entirely possible that G.D.C. Building and

Works Department may be employed. However there are several important

omissions from responsibilities to be devolved.

(1)   the nomination of applicants for tenancies

(2)   the fixing and collection of rents

(3)   all legal proceedings including the raising and pursual of

      actions leading to an eviction.

(4)   property insurance.

Since 1977 however, the right to nominate tenants for housing has

been partly devolved as a co-op function. The other exceptions still

stand. As will be seen shortly, there exists an overall satisfaction

with the functions that the co-op is responsible for.

A Framework for Participation

Tenant participation has always been an integral part of the
Co-op. The principle lies at its very heart. The idea that people
should exercise control on their housing, in a democratic fashion,
is central. The decision making institutions of the co-op consist
of the following components: the 'sovereign body' is the General
Meeting at which all co-op members ratify decisions taken by the
Management Committee. This Committee is the central co-ordinating
body of tenants' representatives. In addition the co-op is split
into 15 separate "wards" each of which holds "ward meetings". Each
ward has a representative directly elected by tenants. (The ward
representative is in effect, the Management Committee member for
tenants in that section.The representatives of all wards amount to
the 15 committee members). In addition to these formal mechanisms
for decision-making, the Management Committee can delegate discussion
on specific issues, such as allocations and environmental maintenance
to sub-groups. These groups are not necessarily composed of Committee
members and in fact there exists very little overlap at present.
They provide a valuable opportunity for 'ordinary' co-op members to
directly participate. They have no formal decision-making powers,
but bring ideas and recommendations to the Management Committee for
discussion and approval. This in turn must be ratified by the
General Meeting. As will be seen, this participatory structure
amounts to a relatively high degree of direct involvement by
"co-operators".

Within the co-op's organisation as a whole there is a marked
emphasis upon the local nature of the decision-making network.
The most obvious manifestation of this is the breaking down of the

247 houses into 15 wards. These are largely based upon the physical
units of the area, for example a ward may consist of one or two
distinct blocks of housing or alternatively a few rows of terraced
houses. The Management Committee is drawn from representatives of
all 15 wards. The object of this localised basis for representation
is the involvement of tenants on a 'constituency' basis. This is
compared to the prevailing situation at D.P.H.A., where an entire street
or block may remain unrepresented on the Management Committee. From
the responses to the tenant survey at Summerston, many tenants view the
ward system as a favourable basis for representation and familiarity.

The General Meeting is the major focus of involvement for the
bulk of tenants. The majority of the 246 households (247 – the office)
in the co-op are active members. There are constitutional provisions
for two adult (over 18) members within each household. Others who live
in co-op accommodation are considered as associate members. They are
not entitled to vote in ordinary General Meetings but can contribute
to discussion and debate. Attendance at General Meetings is exceptionally
high. There do exist within the organisation several 'lapsed' members
who have opted out of participation in all aspects of the co-op's
activities and decision-making. It is the opinion of committee members
that these households constitute individuals who have used the co-op
simply as a means of getting a house without any real interest in
participating. At the moment, these amount to around 25 households out
of the 246. Despite this, attendance at General Meetings is commonly
over 70% of all voting households (see Appendix 3). Tenants largely
view this channel of communication as a means by which they can
participate in decision-making. There are however certain "privileges"
associated with active participation.

The first of these is related to the nomination of tenants
for co-op houses. There are at present three methods of obtaining
housing in the co-op. In addition to nominations made by GDC from
their waiting-list and mutual exchanges, actively participating
tenants can 'nominate' friends and relatives for housing. The
nomination rights of the cooperative's members stand at 50% of all
allocations. (One committee member noted that ... in practice, the
co-op has 100% nominations because GDC do not take up their right
at present.)   Because of the very high popularity of the housing
among existing tenants there is an extremely low turnover rate
and very few houses are normally available. The nomination system
is complex but can be summarised as follows: In order to nominate
friends or relatives, tenants must have shown commitment to the
co-op by attending its General Meetings, for which they are allocated
points. Similarly, nominees who must be on the G.D.C. waiting list,
are asked to attend 4 of the Meetings in order to be eligible for the
allocation of a house. It is not difficult to imagine how the system
could be abused by those who are interested only in accommodation,
rather than its co-operative principles. Naturally, this is an area
of considerable disagreement within the co-op. Proposed changes went
to the General membership but were rejected. They would have gone towards
a less subjective nominations policy. In the opinion of the Admin-
istrator, the proposals were relatively poorly explained with the
result that many who voted against them probably did not understand
their intricacies. In short, the situation as it stands means that
existing tenants can nominate friends and relatives for housing by virtue
of having attended General Meetings on a regular basis. Put thus, this
right could be seen by the outsider as an incentive for people to
participate and negating the underlying co-op principles. In other

words, it could provide the basis for tactical participation in the name of personal commitment.

The second 'privilege' resulting from participation is related to any financial surplus that the co-op may generate. Any amount of the allowance from GDC that is not spent on management and maintenance costs is distributed among the 15 units in the form of a ward fund. Committee members and tenants talk of 'special projects' which have resulted from such funds. Each ward decides how to spend any available money, independently of other wards. It is only those who participate in the co-op by attendance at the Monthly General Meetings who benefit from special projects. In years past, these have included the provision of gas heaters to tenants with potential dampness problems and Georgian wooden feature doors for the 'terraced' wards.

It is in no way suggested that such benefits are seen as existing incentives to participate. However, the point to note is that there are significant benefits to be gained (however sporadically) by tenants, apart from the most obvious advantages of influencing decision making.

IV Influence and Decision Making within the Co-operative

The co-operative is based upon principles of tenant participation and control as its raison-d'etre. The motivation of committee members to become involved stems from much the same source as that of the association committee. Primarily, this has been based upon interest in the workings of the co-op and a high degree of willingness to become active in its objectives. The construction of the co-op provides for committee members to stand down after 3 years of service, for at least 1 year. They can, after this year, stand again for re-election.

There are several members of the committee at present who have been involved on and off since the original Steering Committee of 1976/7. This reflects a long term commitment and interest among these individuals. As with the association committee there is no evidence among the people interviewed, of previous public or political activity. The only involvement recorded was trade-union membership by one of the committee who stressed that it was not in any supervisory (shop steward etc.) capacity. This therefore negates the notion that active participation occurs primarily among those who have some organisational experience.

Participation

There exists a high degree of confidence among the committee that the ward system is instrumental in ensuring a minimum degree of participation. There exists no such certainty in D.P.H.A. As noted, committee size there has fluctuated from year to year depending on the ability and willingness of individuals to become involved. On the other hand, the co-op is assured a full committee, each member being directly accountable to his ward's tenants. This also has benefits for the latter. Each ward, commonly having around 20 houses has a representative who is known to all tenants, these having elected he or she to the Management Committee. This provides a point of regular contact, via ward meetings, between tenants and committee members. Within this climate, personal and common grievances can be discussed among those involved, in an informal setting. This is not to suggest that there exists an eager person in every ward to stand for election. It is the case among some of the committee that they have "stayed on" as ward representative because no-one else had been forthcoming.

Management Committee membership involves a minimum commitment of attending monthly meetings. However, many individuals' activity extends beyond this minimum. This is largely based upon personal circumstances and priorities. Those who are available during the day are often in the co-op's office on committee business. The additional responsibilities of office-bearers manifest themselves in a greater time input than the average member. Individuals take on such posts, aware of the inherent commitment.

The Committee's dissatisfaction with the prevailing level of participation among ordinary co-op members does not reflect the high turnouts at General Meetings. There is always a danger of viewing this apparent commitment as indicative of enthusiasm and support for tenant control. However, although viewing the turnouts favourably, there is a feeling among the committee that participation could improve in terms of a greater willingness of co-op members to join sub-groups, and to stand for ward representation. This is based upon much the same perception as association committee members regarding the reluctance of people to assume a position of responsibility. Having said this, there are however 10 sub-groups which report on a wide variety of issues to the Management Committee. These involve around 30 co-op tenants apart from those involved in the latter committee. The Housing Sub-group, despite the importance of its remit to discuss tenancy agreements etc. has trouble recruiting members. One Management Committee member attributes this to the frightening prospect of dealing with personal tenant disputes. Note the similarities with D.P.H.A., but also the differences in influence between sub-committees at the association and subgroups at the co-op. The latter does not necessarily comprise elected ward representatives.

The relative dissatisfaction, within the co-op, of the lack of active

participation reflects the very high priority attached to overall

tenant involvement.   There does in fact, exist a sub-group dealing

specifically with participation.   This emerged as part of a recruit-

ment drive in the past.

Tenants as Decision-Makers

In purely numerical terms, staff input to co-op decision making

and administration is almost negligible compared to D.P.H.A.   The

former has one full-time administrator, two clerical staff and a

clerk of works.   The role of the administrator has developed since

the initial appointment in 1976.   Initially, there was a considerable

emphasis upon gaining committee approval of minor day to day occurrences.

Over time, the emphasis has shifted towards the daily running of

co-operative matters especially pertaining to repairs which require

speedy decisions in many cases.

Much the same as within DPHA, there is a complementary relation-

ship between the administrator and the Management Committee.   The

former has much to offer in terms of professional advice and experience

to the tenant decision making process.   There is little open conflict

between the two.   Committee members feel that 'they' make decisions and

that any influence exercised by the administrator is welcomed and

necessary.   One member saw him as a ' 'devil's advocate' figure,

pointing out possible shortcomings of potential decisions and also as

an important check upon official procedures.   This referred to the

legal do's and don'ts which most committee members are unfamiliar

with.   Another member believed that he did not influence decisions at

all but gave guidance.   It is difficult to separate these two functions

of guidance and influence - surely each involves components of the other?

A third member said simply that "It is necessary to have staff input"
without elaborating on positive or negative features. There are
therefore, differing views on the role of the administrator with no
indication that his 'influence' or 'guidance' is dominating decision-
making. It seems reasonable to conclude that the committee is confident
of its own ability, as a body of tenants, to implement democratic
principles.

It is interesting to look at the process from the administrator's
point of view. He notes the fundamental difference between influencing
decision making and controlling resources. It was noted that the
former is necessarily linked to developing what was termed "expert-
power" and controlling aspects of education within the committee/
co-operative setting. Inherent is the view that the co-op's decision
to sponsor attendance of a professional housing course, conferences and
seminars, is a recognition of the enormous technical input that is
required. There is therefore no doubt in the administrator's mind that
he does influence the Management Committee and the decision at which
it arrives. In retrospect, the situation at D.P.H.A. could be seen
thus. The input of association staff to formulating policy options
is instrumental in the final decisions of the committee. This may
be in a positive or negative way. The committee members sometimes
support such options, but often reject them outright. It is therefore
a difficult area to interpret.

The administrator at Summerston may influence decisions but he has
no control over the ultimate distribution of co-op resources. As he
pointed out, the power of veto is the greatest power within such an
organisation. This however would not be an acceptable justification
if the committee felt that they were being manipulated by staff. It

could of course be the case that members felt cajoled by staff but were reluctant to say so, in the face of a discussion about tenant control or participation. However, such a view was not detected during interviews.

Although somewhat bland, it must be said that staff influence undoubtedly exists but ultimately the committee vote and reach decisions. There is no basis whatsoever for thinking that the objectives of the administrator and tenants as a whole are any different. They may believe in different ways to achieve these, but there is an overall commitment to co-operative, tenant decision making and participation.

Within any committee, personality is undoubtedly related to the way in which members are perceived by the body as a whole. Among the committee members interviewed, there was a definite feeling that some individuals tend to dominate discussion of issues. This was attributed to quirks of personality and not to the feeling that people had personal interests to protect. As was seen in the case of the individuals on the DPHA management committee, certain members do appear to dominate discussion and to generally be more 'visible' than others. However, it seems that in any such organisation, individuals display different levels of confidence. This is quite distinct from a person monopolizing debate for his or her own ends. There is no reason to believe that this occurs in co-op decision-making.

Committee members' perceptions of the effectiveness and success of the co-op was an important area of discussion. Particularly mentioned by all were the advantages of the ward-system, ensuring local representa-tion and committee members being responsible for a specific area of the co-op. An emphasis was put upon the sense of duty that tenants of a particular patch feel in terms of their efforts to look after the close, street, etc. As noted, the regular ward meetings, convened by the

representative are a focal point for personal and group discussion of
issues. On purely democratic grounds, committee members are directly
chosen and elected by their 'constituents'. On the whole, the ward
system was supported and praised by both committee and the majority
of tenants responding to the survey.

Richard Grant (1977) noted that the establishment of the Summerston
Co-op can be seen as:

> "Substituting decision-making (over a wide range
> of housing management issues) by a remote but
> 'professional' bureaucracy with a small committee
> of neighbours"

> (p. 13)

In the light of this opinion, committee members see the co-op as
infinitely more sensitive than traditional local authority management.
All were certain that it represents a local, trusting and responsive
approach to housing provision and administration. They perceived the
major benefits to relate to a much more efficient maintenance and
repairs service, the advantages of tenants having a significant part
in decision-making and the development of a caring and sensitive
community. The survey responses of tenants reflect much the same feelings
as will be seen shortly. From the overall discussion with committee
members, it is possible to conclude that there is a positive view of
the co-op's principles, effectiveness and organisation.

However when asked about the shortcomings, if any, of the existing
system, one issue was stressed. This was the question of the level of
commitment and involvement of co-operative members. By DPHA standards,
participation within the co-op is relatively high. However, given
the expectations of the committee members of the latter, there is
perceived a need for increased direct involvement. The Reader should
remember that there exist formal lines of regular communication between
the Management Committee and tenants as a whole. It is probably the

case that if these 'lines' are underused, the lack of participation is all the more obvious than if there existed no formal channels.

Participation was low enough around 1980/81 for a recruitment campaign and survey to be carried out by the committee. The main problem was a low turnout of tenants at General Meetings, resulting in several non-quorate attendances (under ⅓ of all eligible voting members). It was considered necessary for the committee to make contact with tenants who had consistently been absent from meetings (a register is taken of all present at the General Meetings). This may seem to the reader as somewhat defeating the purpose of voluntary participation. However as noted, the co-op is made up of its tenants and not the property. If the former do not show active support and attend meetings to decide on issues of policy, there can be no meaning-ful co-operation. The efforts of the committee paid off in terms of a revitalised interest in co-op issues and increased attendance.

Despite this improvement, the committee still perceive a reluctance to become directly involved in the co-op's sub-groups. One member said that as long as each ward has a representative, people are quite happy to rely on this individual to act. Another said that the situation with the sub-groups is bad enough to threaten the demise of them altogether. The reluctance could be related to the fact that sub-group members are not elected. They volunteer themselves for membership. There is therefore no formal decision making power vested in them. It was said by one of the committee that the Management Committee is seen as a focal point for participation. People tend to bring their problems to it without perhaps trying to resolve a situation at sub-group or ward representative level. It may therefore be the case that this committee overshadows sub-groups in terms of its formal powers and perceived prestige.

Apart from the dissatisfaction with the level of participation among the general membership, the only other area of conflict mentioned was the present allocations/nomination policy. Members saw room for "tightening up" the process and closing the potential loopholes for abuse. There was expressed a fear that nomination rights are bringing members to the General Meetings in order to gain points. The rationale of the entire nomination system was seriously questioned. Two Committee Members were openly against the policy as it stands but pointed out that the general co-op members are in favour so the situation remains as at present. This appropriately illustrates the ultimate power of veto held by members as a whole and their ability to shape policy decisions. From a democratic point of view, this power is a safeguard against the potential "tyranny" of the minority who act as direct representatives of the tenants. It is, however, frustrating for committee members who may sometimes question the responsibilities vested in them by their respective wards. However, in the ultimate interests of justice and democracy it must be said that the ability and willingness of tenants to exercise this kind of control is a positive feature. It represents a significant development in self-help and self-determination in public housing and one which has for long been sought by tenants.

V   Tenants' views of co-operative housing

The previous section noted the emphasis upon the co-operative tenants as a whole, as a 'sovereign' policy making body. The recognition among the Management Committee of a need to encourage and increase general participation was noted. This implies that by the committee's standards at least, involvement has not always lived up to the expectation – that every co-op tenant would assume an active part in affairs. The very fact that several households have opted out of

involvement reflects the lack of interest among tenants who have at one point intimated a commitment to the co-op.

In the light of the justification of co-operative housing, the tenant survey was carried out. It sought to examine the views of co-operative tenants on the advantages of this type of housing management. The survey, similar to the DPHA questionnaire, involved interviewing 50 tenants on a random basis (a copy of the questionnaire can be found in appendix 3). As with the housing association survey, it is appropriate to consider the responses under 3 simple headings.

(1) Previous housing tenure and main reason for moving to present house

(2) Familiarity and participation within the Summerston Co-operative

(3) Perceptions of the effectiveness and sensitivity of the co-op.

It should be noted that the co-op's housing stock comprises the following units. (This factor was not considered as significant in the random selection of tenants for the survey).

              2 apartment houses -   24 units

              3   "   "   - 194 units

              4   "   "   - 29 units

(1) Previous tenure and reasons for moving

The reason for inquiring about previous tenure was related to the reason for moving. From the discussion about recruitment of the first co-op tenants it was expected that a large proportion of existing tenants would have originated in redevelopment areas of the city. The actual results are as follows:

Previous tenure of respondent

local authority tenant	23
owner occupier	15
private rented tenant	10
co-op tenant	1
other	1

Reason for moving

demolition/compulsory purchase	19
different size/type of house	14
"better" area	8
GDC allocation/transfer	5
wished to join Management Co-op	2
nomination by existing tenant	2

As can be seen, a large proportion of respondents had previously lived in sub-tolerable housing conditions. Those whose previous home had been compulsorily purchased most often lived in areas which have largely been renovated by local housing associations. It is significant to note the occurrence of previous local authority tenants compared to the DPHA results. This has provided a more suitable basis for evaluating the relative advantages of co-op housing over mainstream council stock, in the eyes of tenants. The tenurial stability of co-op tenants is illustrated in the table below:

length of residence in present house

less than 1 year	0
1 - 3 years	7
3 - 5 years	3
over 5 years	40

Within the latter category, most respondents have lived in their

present house for over 6 years (37). Many have therefore been

resident in the co-op since the houses came 'off-site'. This would

suggest a relatively high degree of satisfaction, both with the way in

which the housing service is managed and with the opportunities to

participate in this process. It also indicates a high degree of

familiarity with the co-op's principles and objectives. It is these

latter considerations that are examined in the following section.

(2) Familiarity and participation within the co-op

Within the co-operative movement there is an assumption that

commitment and familiarity are crucial to the realization of the

principles and benefits mentioned previously. In order to participate,

tenants must be familiar, to a certain extent, with the rationale of

the co-op. The practices that determine the nature of their housing

experience, depend solely upon their involvement (whether this is as

a committee or sub-group member, or as a part of the General Meetings).

It is therefore crucial to ascertain the respondents' knowledge about

the co-operative and to examine their degree of involvement.

	Yes	No
Do you know how the co-op is run?	50	0
Do you attend General Meetings?	44	6
Are you involved to any extent in the running of the co-op	15	35

Significantly, all of the respondents were familiar with the organisation

of the co-op. This is in stark contrast to the responses of DPHA tenants,

44% of whom had no idea how the association is run. This in itself

is a crucial observation. The co-operative's overall emphasis upon

generating enthusiasm and activity among its members is reflected in

this response. This awareness is closely related to the attendance
at General Meetings, be this through choice or a sense of duty among
tenants.

The table shows that the vast majority of tenants attended
meetings regularly. There was expressed a very high degree of support
for this form of participation. Most respondents see it as a vital
point of contact with issues affecting the co-op. On the whole, the
impression was given that people actually looked forward to and
enjoyed the meetings. Many neighbours make a habit of congregating in
one house and going along together. In other words, they are more than
a mechanism for participation, being a basis from which social,
neighbourhood contacts can arise. For many it has become second
nature to attend and voice opinions. The greatest value of General
Meetings was considered to be the chance for members as a whole to
let their views be known to the administrator and management committee.
Also important was the opportunity to 'vet' and ratify the proposals
stemming from the latter.

The respondents who did not attend the meetings said their
reasons were related to either bad health or the attendance of another
co-op member within the household, usually a husband or wife. The
survey therefore did not produce any evidence of non-attendance due to
hostility towards the co-op. Such conflict does exist for people who
have been members in the past but who are now classified as 'lapsed'.
However, the random sample did not pick up any such tenants of co-op
homes. As will be seen, a few respondents were hostile for a variety
of reasons, but all continued to attend General Meetings to exercise
their democratic co-op rights.

The survey revealed that 30% of respondents were active in some way in the running of the co-op. This amounted to either Management Committee or sub-group membership. This reflects the significantly higher degree of direct and specific participation compared to DPHA which has only 15 individuals so involved. The 15 co-op respondents involved, consisted of 3 Management Committee and 12 sub-group members. These observations simply reflect the more intense and widespread framework for direct involvement at Summerston. The sub-group system in particular has enabled many tenants to actively participate. Some of these individuals, for example those on the Allotments and Social groups see their involvement as a hobby as well as a means of "helping" the co-op.

Despite the reasonable proportion of respondents who are involved directly, it is interesting to examine the reasons given by the remaining 70% for their present lack of participation in the committee and sub-groups. It is particularly relevant to consider these responses within a context which stresses a minimum degree of participation in the form of monthly attendance at General Meetings. Also, given the high degree of familiarity, all of the respondents, without exception, are aware of the opportunities that exist for further involvement. The responses were as follows:

Reasons for non-involvement

lack of time	13
age/health reasons	6
believe that the co-op is a clique	4
have been involved in the past	3
have had a difference of opinion with co-op in the past	2
lack of confidence	2
not interested	1
other	4

The most common reason cited was 'lack of time'. In the previous

case-study, the problems of evaluating this response were mentioned.

It is impossible to say if this represents for some respondents, a

convenient excuse, or if it indicates a genuine constraint upon

involvement. Only 6 individuals were openly hostile or in disagreement

with the co-op. The justification was mainly related to the way in

which tenants view the role of committee members. Four tenants had

perceptions of the committee acting in an "uncooperative" manner.

This involved allegations of "cliquishness" and members being more

interested in the social side of the committee than its proper

business. It is difficult to find evidence to back up such claims

and it is worth remembering that the same feelings existed among some

DPHA tenants. It is perhaps natural for people to see those directly

involved as somehow "above-themselves". One such view held by a

co-op tenant was that "they think they're better than the ordinary

tenants". A possible explanation may be that people adopt this view

to combat what they see as their own inadequacies. Note that only

one tenant admitted lacking confidence to become more involved. It

may be the case that others too lack confidence but this manifests

itself in a distrust of those who do not.

Those on the other hand who have had "a difference of opinion"
did not feel as much hostile, as alienated from the co-op. One
respondent had, in the past, stopped attending meetings on a regular
basis due to heavy work commitments. The other adult in the house-
hold was troubled by illness. The tenant felt annoyed that she was
approached by the co-op and asked to justify her non-attendance.
This is a valid point to be noted by the co-op, in its endeavours to
increase attendance and involvement. It is inevitable that some
tenants' circumstances will alter in the course of their residence in
the co-operative. Despite the understandable wish to spark off
enthusiasm among people, flexibility must exist. Preferably however,
a balance should be struck between sensitivity and an effective
encouragement of co-op members' involvement. As was seen from the
earlier responses, there is a predominance of tenants who need no
encouragement to become involved in General Meetings. However, there
are some members who find themselves losing interest and motivation.
It can at best be hoped that they will be encouraged to establish or
renew a commitment by a caring community arising from common interests,
democratic decision making and co-operative principles.

(3) Perceptions of effectiveness and sensitivity within the co-operative

It has been emphasised at an earlier point that co-operative housing
has not been widely supported by local authorities throughout Scotland.
It was also stressed that the establishment of the Summerston Co-op was
seen as an experiment by GDC. With the subsequent development of similar
GDC projects and 2 co-ops sponsored by the SSHA within the city, it
might safely be assumed that a certain degree of official support exists.

It may also be assumed that this has resulted in part, from the perceived success of the original co-op at Summerston. In 1979, the Scottish Office commissioned a survey of co-op tenants, conducted by Crofts and Seale (1979). The areas of interest were related primarily to household characteristics such as socio-economic grouping and educational attainment. There was however detected a high degree of satisfaction among tenants, compared to those in mainstream G.D.C. housing in the estate. Five years later (1984), the co-op has had a reasonable amount of time to stabilise in terms of length of residence among tenants and their familiarity with opportunities for participation. Part of the present survey therefore attempted to build up a general picture of the degree of satisfaction, with co-operative housing, that was felt by respondents. The table below goes some way to reveal their perceptions.

Question	Yes	No	DK
1. Are there any benefits from being able to get involved in the running of the co-op?	44	1	5
2. Are there any benefits from living in a co-op house compared to your last house?	46	4	-
3. Was becoming part of a Management Co-op an important reason in your move here?	31	19	-
4. Are there enough opportunities to let your views be known?	50	-	-
5. Is the co-op in touch with your housing needs and views?	46	3	1
6. Do you feel well enough represented by people on the Management Committee?	40	4	6

The vast majority of respondents believed involvement to be a positive benefit of the co-op. This was primarily on grounds of the open,

democratic nature of the organisation. People in general felt happy

about the idea of tenants having a say in the decisions affecting

them. Another perceived advantage was the impact of tenant control

over the quality of the repairs and maintenance service. As will be

seen shortly this is one of the most often quoted advantages over other

types of housing. Several respondents mentioned specifically the

social activities that have resulted from the co-op. These too will

be mentioned shortly. The one tenant who saw no benefits in involve-

ment was of the opinion that the whole organisation is dominated by a

'clique'. It is unfortunate that this has coloured the tenant's view

about participation in general. Only 4 respondents saw no advantages

of co-op housing over their previous tenure. There were no specific

reasons given. People just thought that despite opportunities to get

involved, there were no advantages which were worth mentioning.

Favourable attributes of co-operative living were recognised as follows:

Quicker repairs	15
Community spirit	8
Tenant participation	10
"Better house" or "better-area"	12
Social life	1

The items that tenants find valuable obviously extend far beyond the

opportunity to participate in decision-making. As expected at the

outset of the survey, maintenance is seen as of an exceptionally high

standard and was commonly compared to that of other council stock.

Environmental matters in terms of house size, types etc. and the quality

of the area were important issues. Back in 1977, the SDD talked of

co-ops developing a sense of concern for the community and reducing

social isolation. For some respondents (8) this was a direct advantage

of living in co-operative housing.

It is interesting to compare these responses with those to the
question of the benefits over "ordinary" council housing. The
reader should note that 23 of the surveyed tenants had previously been
council tenants while the remainder had lived in housing of other
tenures. The responses therefore reflect personal experience for
some while revealing the intuitive perceptions of others.

Quicker repairs	23
Community spirit	11
Tenant participation	6
Better environment	3
'Extras' from special projects	2
Social activities	3
Don't know	2

These show that for the majority of respondents the co-op's main
advantage does not lie in tenant participation as an end in itself.
However, it can be said that attributes such as a community spirit and
a better environment are likely to be associated with co-operative
living. It was not possible to log all of the benefits that people
mentioned. Many for example stressed the cleanliness of the surrounding
area. This was attributed to discussions about the environment at
General Meetings. People felt a duty to "keep up the standards" of
the area by discouraging litter etc. A point that was consistently
made was the enormous difference between cleanliness within the co-op
area and that in other parts of the estate. It was believed by some
tenants that this was a major motivation behind the two more recently
established co-ops in adjacent parts of Summerston. A short walk
around the non-co-op areas confirmed the substantial difference in

environmental quality. It is not possible to attribute this solely to the existence of housing based upon tenant participation, however the local environment is an important issue within the co-op as a whole.

In complete contrast to the DPHA responses, participation was an important factor for 31 respondents in the move to their present house. This indicates a high degree of commitment which can be attributed, in part, to the initial recruitment procedure. There was in addition expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the existing opportunities to let views be known and also in terms of the co-op being in touch with tenants' needs. Most respondents felt adequately represented by the Management Committee, on account of their direct election of an individual to the committee. Those who felt that the co-op was 'out of touch' or that the committee was unrepresentative were , on the whole, suspicious of the motives of those involved. This was articulated as a perception of committee members as a 'clique' or a group who set themselves apart from tenants.

Conclusions:

Despite the advantages of co-operative housing indicated in the survey results, it has not been widely adopted in the public sector. Possible explanations were outlined earlier. The experience of those who have implemented policies which include co-op sponsoring, has not been followed by enthusiasm among other local authorities. In short there exists a problem in the area of promotion. As noted, tenants cannot initiate such a development without knowledge of its existence and a desire to alter or improve the prevailing management relationship. The promotional situation was improved with the

establishment in 1980 of the Tenant Participation Advisory Service.
It was set up for an initial period of 3 years by the Scottish Council
of Social Service. Over this period it emphasised the concept of
tenant participation and promoted interest among community and tenants'
groups. Its finance has since been extended till 1986 and there has
been a marked shift in policy towards setting up working examples of
participation in practice. TPAS sees its role as one of

> "promoting greater tenant involvement in and
> control over housing management in Scotland
> .... to make sure that they have opportunities
> to control the management of their own homes,
> for example through co-operatives."

(TPAS, 1980)

The initial scope of activity extended almost no further than Glasgow
but it is increasingly being widened to include all of Scotland. There
have been identified by the HCRC, several local authorities who have
shown an interest in co-ops and TPAS is following these up. Glasgow
being the first authority in Scotland to sponsor a co-op, has become
the undisputed centre for such initiatives in the country. This has
drawn attention away from other areas where much can be achieved, given
the right amount and type of promotion. This is not to suggest that
authorities should be bombarded with pressure to establish co-ops but
it does imply a need to spread knowledge about the possibilities
that exist.

    The experience at Summerston has shown that these possibilities
are enormous. Among tenants as a whole, there is an enthusiasm that
seems to stem from a system of housing management based upon self
determination, participation and co-operation. Problems still exist
and these have been mentioned previously. However there is an undoubted
recognition within the co-op that it is tenants themselves who shape
policy and decisions. It is perhaps the case that tenants can live

more happily with mistakes they have made themselves than is the case

for those tenants under traditional council management who are often

alienated by insensitivity. Even among survey tenants who had

previously been owner occupiers, there is a high degree of satisfaction

with the existing framework for involvement. This is in the light of

the fact that home ownership could be considered as the ultimate form

of self-help and participation.

Schemes for greater tenant control and participation can be

judged only by the satisfaction of tenants themselves. There are

of course some co-op members who for a variety of reasons have

'lapsed'. However the vast majority are familiar with and enthusiastic

about the co-ops objectives, organisation and benefits. With the

direct election of ward representatives on to the committee, there

exists a form of local democracy which is reflected in a high degree

of tenant satisfaction.

The greatest danger of management co-ops at present is their

potential to divert attention away from housing problems which have

their origins in wider economic conditions, lying outwith the control

of local authorities. The advantages of co-operative housing implied

in this chapter, are a reality for only a tiny minority of local

authority tenants in Britain as a whole. Their experience is far

removed from the frustration of thousands of individuals who exercise

little or no control over their housing environment. The promotion

and implementation of co-op housing on a wide scale would hold benefits

for both tenants and authorities in terms of reducing the negative

aspects of their relationship. For the present however, there is no

prospect of a suitable attitudinal climate arising within which this

could occur.

CHAPTER 7

PAST INERTIA AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

I.   Introduction

             "To speak of increasing control over
             housing is usually to speak of a move
             towards individual ownership of homes.
             But whilst not opposed to personal owner-
             ship, we believe that much of the freedom
             and control enjoyed by owner occupiers
             can and should be enjoyed by the many people
             who, either not wishing or not able to own,
             will remain as tenants."

                                    (Fabian Society, 1980)

This encapsulates the very essence of the debate surrounding tenant

participation. Participation is about freedom and choice. It involves

the activity, whether directly or indirectly, of influencing one's

experience of housing. In short, it implies the exercise of a collective,

consumer based approach to housing management. In a society whose

political philosophy is based upon so-called representative government,

there are people who deny the value or legitimacy of a local, democratic

and participatory style of decision making. One of the most common

arguments against such an approach is that our political system is

based upon direct representation in local and central government.

This inherently implies that the prevailing arrangements for public

policy-making cater adequately for the subtle and diverse needs and

aspirations of all citizens. This has not proved to be the case.

Throughout this study, the shortcomings and constraints of impersonal,

bureaucratic decisionmaking have been indicated. Throughout this

work it has been emphasised that the process could be more responsive

to the intricacies of human needs. This is based upon a commitment

to the idea that tenants can, given the necessary support, revolutionise

the provision and management of housing at a reasonable cost, to
those in need.

II Theoretical Underpinnings

There are two major theoretical justifications for public
participation in civic decisionmaking:

(1) that it is a vehicle for personal and community development

(2) that participation results in "appropriate" and responsive
decision making.

There is no need to fall down on one side of the imaginary divide
between these concepts. Both are equally valid in the debate surrounding
tenant involvement. They are inextricably linked.

A dichotomy is also drawn between so-called direct and indirect
participation. A tenant can report a fault to the housing department
and be satisfied with the outcome. The same satisfaction can result
from vigorous campaigning by a tenants' association. At the end
of the day none is less valid than the other, for in both cases,
a specific objective has been achieved. This may be an unattractive
conclusion for the would-be champions of collective, formal and
direct forms of tenant participation. However it must stand if we
are arguing for a more responsive housing service rather than
collective involvement for its own sake. Tenants have little to
gain from sophisticated participation if its demands fall on deaf
ears.

III Institutional Constraints

The crux of the matter lies in the response of those who ultimately
control the resources necessary to provide a housing service. Such

provision should be based upon meeting expectations and needs rather than providing a second-rate, impersonal and often insensitive service. The increasing emphasis in academic literature of the concept of tenant involvement has emerged out of the unfortunate recognition that egalitarian, socialist principles have parted company with the realities of publicly funded housing.

This is not to suggest that the blame must be exclusively with public landlords. In the case of housing associations in their present scale and form, financial cutbacks are now beginning to bite with severity. However local authority housing has long been a target for central government stringencies. The present administration seems more determined than ever before to undermine its very basis (Chapter 4). This manifests itself in the ideological shift towards owner occupation, often at the expense of public tenants.

> "The nub of the housing problem in Britain is the financial basis which makes owner occupation an irresistable carrot for those who can afford it but which leaves those who can't to compete for a generally poor alternative .... there is a need to create a fairer financial balance between the tenures and to prevent the decline of public housing into a residual sector."
>
> Fabian Society (1980)

If we assume that official commitment is crucial in the development of participation, we are talking about input that involves financial support. It would be foolish to think that this was not the case. Indeed, in the local authority sector, there is, in the short term, a need for increased resource allocation in the formation of co-ops and in other forms of participation. It is not difficult to see how councils could easily come to the conclusion that they

simply cannot afford such developments. This is symptomatic of the relatively low priority that is attached to its objectives, and of the deep seated assumptions which underly the provision of public housing. What these amount to for the tenant is a "general poor alternative" to owner-occupation (Fabian Society). The main assumptions can be classified as follows:

(1) That public housing should be <u>delivered</u> by authorities and not by tenants

(2) That the wealth of <u>"professional" expertise</u> within the field is sufficient to ensure sensitive and effective policies

(3) That tenants should remain primarily in a <u>passive role</u>, in their relationship with housing authorities.

The culmination of these assumptions is that there is no systematic encouragement of public housing "consumers" to become involved in management responsibilities.

Chapters 3 and 4 have stressed the diversity that exists within the term "tenant-participation". It cannot be assumed that once tenants have been encompassed in the policy process that there has been a devolution of power. On the contrary, many arrangements are manipulative and simply reinforce existing practice. Therefore, what is presently advocated is participation based upon a belief that tenants should <u>control</u> crucial aspects of housing provision. This contrasts with mechanisms which are highly patronizing and evoke a feeling of placation and resentment. Such arrangement may gain tenant approval in the short term but they represent no lasting redistribution of decision-making power.

It has been noted throughout, that the promotion and introduction

of tenant participation is not a straight-forward task either for

local authorities or tenants themselves. The former must rise above

past assumptions and be willing to commit financial and staff resources

in the process. The benefits occur only when groundwork has been

thoroughly prepared and cultivated and when tenants are in a position

to assume management responsibilities. The latter reflects the need

for education. Even the most ardent supporters of "tenant control"

(Ward 1983, HCRC 1983) recognise this need. The case study of DPHA

(Chapter 5) illustrates the importance of the initial learning stages

in decision-making. This cannot happen overnight and patience is

a necessary virtue. Developments such as the establishment of TPAS

and courses run by the SFHA are contributory factors to the promotion

of education for participation.

    HCRC note that:

> "Education is essential for prospective co-operative
> members and their sponsors. For tenants the needs
> are to build interest in and knowledge of the coopera-
> tive idea and to equip them to play new and challenging
> roles. For sponsors the needs are to ensure that
> staff and lay members understand the concept of
> co-operative housing and the nature of the new type
> of relationship between the housing agency and the
> co-operative."
>
>   (p. 18, 1983)

This recognition is no less applicable to locally based housing

associations.

    Despite this need, there are at present a lack of facilities

for training members. This situation must be remedied in the future

if tenants are to enjoy the maximum benefits from participatory

activity. TPAS has recently held a series of 4 meetings with representa-

tives of local authority co-ops and housing associations discussing

consultation, cooperatives, tenants associations and techniques and organisation. This represents an attempt by TPAS to move into the sphere of associations and away from its past emphasis upon local authority housing.

Alongside the constraints noted above there is of course an almost total lack of legislative commitment to any degree of tenant control. Chapter 4 outlines its present legal status which amounts to a weak, ill-defined and discretionary obligation upon public sector landlords. In short, the obligation involves consultation and can in no way be seen as even a basis for a "tenants charter". In Scotland, with 54% of its housing stock in local authority ownership it is significant that there exist only two bodies (Glasgow D.C. and SSHA) who have implemented co-operatives as part of their housing strategy. This reflects the lack of positive commitment to tenant participation. Coupled with this is the view held by some authorities that the initiative for involvement should come from tenants themselves. This represents a "catch 22" dilemma. Tenant participation in its many forms requires a certain amount of promotion and support by the "land-lord" agency. Therefore, there exists a crucial vacuum to be filled in the field of promotion.

IV Practical Observations

The housing association and the co-operative have served as useful working examples of what can be achieved in terms of involvement, awareness and satisfaction. From the tenant survey results it is obvious that there is a significantly higher incidence of these factors within the co-operative setting. In retrospect, this can be attributed to several factors. The co-op's very existence is based

upon participatory principles or all or most members/tenants. In

other words, all tenants know what the co-op is, what its objectives

are and how it is organised. In contrast, DPHA's rationale lies in

the rehabilitation, management, maintenance and hopefully future

building of houses to rent. Although there is a commitment on the

part of the Housing Corporation, tenant participation is primarily a

by-product of other functions. This basic divergence between the

case studies is reflected in the extent of participation. Chapter 5

notes the absence of formal channels of communication between the

association's committee and tenants as a whole. The co-operative

on the other hand, has as its "sovereign" policy making body, the

co-operative membership in the form of the General Meeting. The

implications are many and include the lack of familiarity among many

association tenants. With some of the latter expressing a wish to

see greater consultation,the development of a regular forum for

communication between staff,committee and tenants may heighten the level

of awareness and involvement.

The ward system that operates within the co-operative ensures

an 'even' representation of tenants whereas the more 'spontaneous'

involvement within DPHA does not always result in a full complement of

15 committee members. The former system encompasses a greater visibility

of opportunities for participation among tenants. It may therefore be

of benefit to DPHA and similar associations to devise a "constituency"

basis for tenant representation. This may be particularly useful in

those with a housing stock of over 1000 units, such as Elderpark and

Govanhill H.A.'s in Glasgow. The key point to note is that some

associations, by virtue of their achievements in rehabilitation and

newbuild, are in danger of becoming remote in themselves. Their

local emphasis could possibly be eroded and tenants may increasingly

feel distant from the Management Committee. DPHA with an existing stock of over 500 houses and a proposed new build scheme could, in the future, fall into this category.

The functions over which the DPHA and Summerston Committees' exercise responsibility are notably different. Association Committee Members command a much more strategic form of decision-making with an emphasis upon expensive, large scale improvements. Committee Members also deal with estate management and its associated components. On the other hand, the co-op committee deals primarily with the latter responsibilities and issues. It is inevitable that over time, the role of the DPHA committee will converge with that of the co-op. This has been observed in the literature on the Movement (Robinson (1980), Maclennan, Lawrie and Brailey (1983)). It can only be hoped that the enthusiasm, sensitivity and commitment which has characterised the work of associations will be retained in future years. From personal involvement and observation, there is every reason to be optimistic, provided that financial cutbacks do not undermine past achievements.

V Future Prospects

There are 4 essential components in the future development of participatory housing management:

(1) Commitment - both theoretical and practical among tenants
                    and the sponsoring agency (if applicable)

(2) Education

(3) Promotion - where spontaneous activity does not exist

(4) Channels of Communication - between those who take an active
        part (e.g. Management Committee members) and those who choose
        to remain outwith direct committee based involvement.

The legacy of past inertia is great but can be overcome. The case
study material has shown that tenants in publicly funded housing
can mobilise to produce local, responsive and rewarding approaches
to housing management. Tenant-based provision is no panacea for
the problems of public housing. It must not overshadow the fact
that the role of this sector has changed over time, and harbours
many problems related to macro-economic factors. However, the case-
study observations and particularly the tenant surveys, indicate
the potential that exist for participation. It can result in

(1)   an awareness of opportunities to shape management practices

(2)   a sense of "community-spirit" among some tenants, arising

from a feeling of co-operation and self-determination

(3)   a feeling among tenants that their housing experience relates

more closely to personal needs and aspirations than that

administered in a large scale, bureaucratic manner.

These observations have implications beyond public housing.
They highlight the constraints of the existing rationale of service
provision. In areas such as planning, where provisions do exist
for public participation, the response has been somewhat disappointing
from both the public and professional standpoint. Despite legislative
provision in such policy areas, the system still appears to operate
under the assumption that the "professional" knows best. This is
not reflected in popular perceptions held by the public. It may
be the case that Planning has always been a scapegoat for the
hostilities towards local government in general. The fact remains
that, in the eyes of the man or woman in the street, the practical
outcomes of policy are often at odds with their perceived requirements.

It is not argued in this work that a participatory approach can produce universally pleasing and acceptable outcomes. What is advocated is an approach which is based more upon the views of those who have to live with policy implications, than upon the needs of centralised, bureaucratic organisation. If existing policy makers accept this principle and work towards means of implementation, and if there is a commitment among service consumers, we may see more responsive, humane and democratic provisions in the future.

(approx. 34,000 words)

APPENDIX I

TABLE (1)

AGE OF HOUSING STOCK (%)

Date built	Glasgow	Scotland
Pre 1861	n/a	4
1861 - 1880	7	11
1881 - 1900	36	19
1901 - 1918	14	10
1919 - 1944	22	22
post 1945	21	34

TABLE (2)

DWELLINGS LACKING BASIC AMENITIES (%)

Dwelling lacks:	Glasgow	Clydeside Conurbation	Central Scotland	Scotland
Fixed bath/shower	38	28	22	21
Internal w.c.	22	17	13	13
Hot water at 3 points	41	29	24	24
Ventilated food store	62	46	38	37

(Both tables adapted from Cullingworth
(1968))

TABLE (3)

TYPE OF DWELLING AT 1965 (%)

Type	Glasgow	Scotland
Detached house	1	13
Semi-detached house	6	21
Terraced house	5	16
Tenement or flat	85	46
Other	2	4

(Source – Cullingworth (1968)).

TABLE (4)

ECONOMIC STATUS AND RESIDENCE OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

%	Glasgow based associations	Edinburgh based associations
Not working	57.3	18.6
Property related-employment	6.3	7.6
Managerial/prof-essional	17.7	31.2
Other	45.4	41.3
Resident outside local area	6.3	21.1

(Source – Maclennan et al. (1983)).

TABLE (5)

APPROVED APPLICATIONS FOR HOUSE IMPROVEMENTS BY HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS IN SCOTLAND

Year	Number of units approved
1970	46
1971	97
1972	165
1973	132
1974	159
1975	461
1976	156
1977	330
1978	1447
1979	2703
1980	2787
1981	1833
1982	2717

1970-82 total = 13,033 units

(Source - Scottish Housing Statistics Bulletin

published by S.D.D. 1982).

APPENDIX 2

TABLE 1   D.P.H.A. - Previous house condition indicators: (H.A.A.)

Indicator	Percentage of housing stock
Lacking inside toilet	25
Lacking bath/shower	76
Lacking hot water	37
Unwholesome water supply	100
In need of rewiring	87
Defective drainage	25
Unsatisfactory cooking facilities	95
Unsatisfactory external access	100

TABLE 2 D.P.H.A. (H.A.A.):   Previous tenure pattern

Tenure	Percentage of housing stock(approx)
Owner-Occupied	90%
District Council flats	8%
Privately rented	2%

This is in marked contrast to the pattern in most of the Glasgow areas,
now predominantly owned by housing associations. In the Glasgow cases
there was characteristically a much higher (approx. 50%) proportion of
property in the hands of private landlords, trustees and property
companies.

(Both tables adapted from Architects'
Feasability Study, 1977)

TABLE 3. D.P.H.A. Staff and Management Committee Membership

		Staff	Committee
Figures at 31st March	1977	0	10
	1978	1	12
	1979	6	8
	1980	10	8
	1981	15	8
	1982	13	8
	1983	16	9
	1984	16	11

TABLE 4 D.P.H.A. - "Vital Statistics" (property units)

	Acquisitions	Works Completed	Unimproved	On-Site
1978	52	0	52	0
1979	342	0	342	0
1980	141	0	225	71
1981	89	54	296	104
1982	29	157	213	76
1983	33	256	109	47

(Both tables compiled from DPHA Annual
Returns to Housing Corporation 1977-84)

D.P.H.A. QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How long have you lived in this house?

2. Where did you live before?
    Was your previous house: L.A
                               Pvt. rented
                               O/O
                               Other

3. What were your reasons for moving to this house?

4. Do you know how the Housing Association is run?

5. Are you a 'member' of the Housing Association?
    Did you attend the last 'AGM'?

6. Are you involved in the Management Committee of the Housing Association?

7. If you are not involved, can you say why not?

8. Do you think it is good that tenants have an opportunity to get involved in the Management Committee?

9. Are there any benefits from living in a Housing Association house compared to other forms of housing?

10. Was the opportunity to become involved in managing the Housing Association important in your move to your present house?

11. Is there enough opportunity to let your views be known to the Housing Association?

12. Would you like to see more consultation between the Housing Association and tenants about decisions to be made?

13. Do you think that the HOusing Association is in touch with your views about housing?

14. Do you think that you are well enough represented by those on the Management Committee?

15. Is the Management structure adequate or if not, how would you improve it?

D.P.H.A. DEVELOPMENT PROFILE

SUMMERSTON MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE

Record of Attendance at General Meetings

(Sample period - June 1981 - May 1982)

Date	No. of households attending	% Voting Households (201)
June 1981	142	70%
September 1981	163	81%
October 1981	138	68%
November 1981	147	73%
December 1981	113	56%
January 1982	116	57%
February 1982	157	78%
March 1982	153	76%
April 1982	165	82%
May 1982	171	85%

(Source - information sheet S.H.M.Coop)

CO-OP QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How long have you lived in this house?

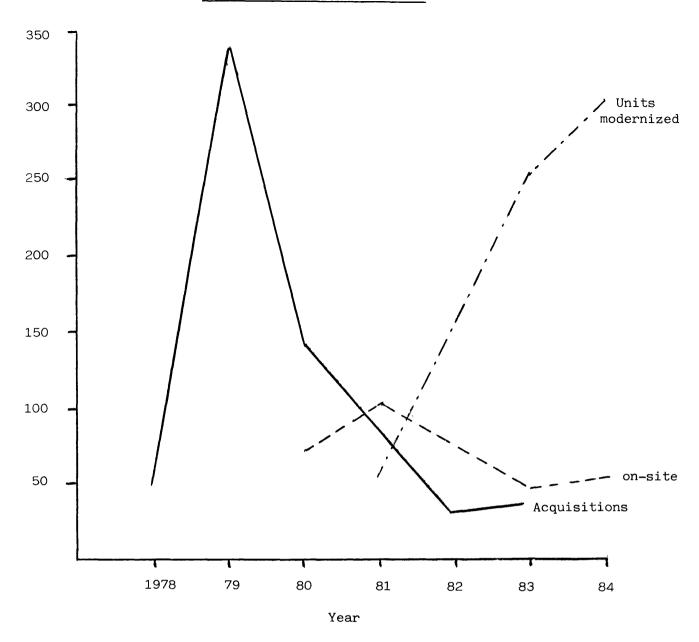2. Where did you live before?
    Was your previous house: L.A. rented
       Private rented
       O/O
       Other

3. What were your reasons for moving to this area?

4. Do you know how the Co-op is run?

5. Do you vote on co-operative issues?

6. Are you involved in the organization of the co-operative?

7. If you are not involved can you say why not?

8. Do you think there are benefits from being able to get involved
    in the running of the co-operative?

9. Are there any benefits from living in a co-operative house
    compared to your last house?

10. Was becoming part of the Management Co-op an important reason
    for your move here?

11. Is there enough opportunities to let your views known to
    those involved in Co-op committees?

12. Do you feel that the Co-op as a whole is in touch with your
    housing needs and views?

13. What, if any, benefits do you think the co-op has over ordinary
    council housing?

14. Do you think that you are well enough represented by those on
    the Co-op's Committees?

    Do you think that the Management Structure is adequate as it
    operates at present?

SCHEDULE 1

Functions to be carried out by Co-operative

1. Maintenance of external painting of all structures and boundary walls or fences in accordance with the maintenance manual when mutually agreed.

2. Maintenance of internal decoration of houses.

3. Maintenance of internal fabric and fixtures by obtaining competitive quotations from the District Council's Building and Works Department and labour-only sub-contractors or by Co-operative members, all materials to be provided by the Building and Works Department from bulk purchase stores at cost plus a handling charge and the Fair Wages Clause to be incorporated in any contract.

4. The expenditure of annual credit balances held by the Council's Director of Finance to the account of the Co-operative on works of improvement to the structures or environment under the control of the Co-operative subject to an annual retention agreed with the Council's Director of Architecture against the occurrence of major maintenance items.

5. Selection of the tenants for houses within the Co-operative from applicants nominated by the Council.

6. The adjustment of missives of let with the tenants on behalf of the Council.

7. The eviction of tenants subject to advising the Council's Director of Housing Management on service of notice of evictions so that alternative accommodation outwith the Co-operative might be made available by the Council if appropriate.

8. The levying on members of charges in addition to rent for services or improvements provided by the Co-operative.

9. The appointment and dismissal of a Secretary/Administrator and the adjustment of conditions of service as appropriate.

10. The operation of an Imprest Account for sundry expenditure.

11. The employment of private factors, solicitors, architects or other professional advisers.

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