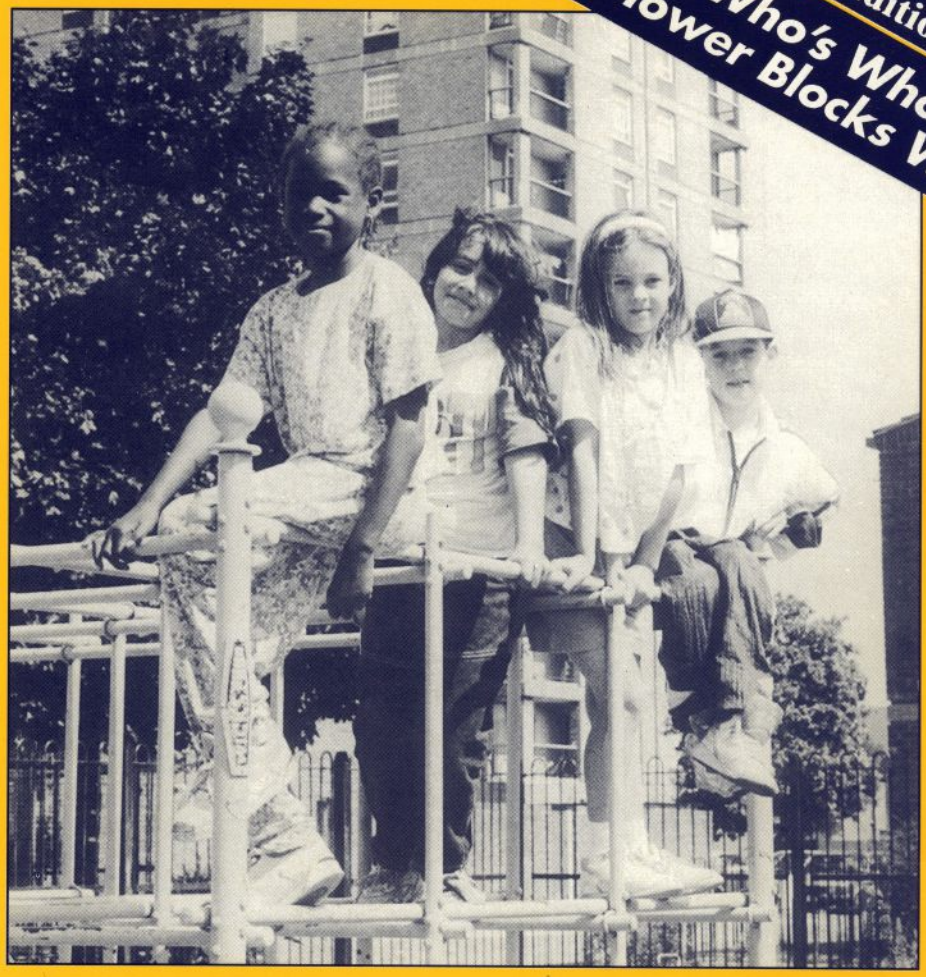
Second Edition

The 'Who's Who' of the Tower Blocks World



National Tower Blocks Directory

·1992·

The National Tower Blocks Network is composed of individuals and organisations concerned to improve the quality of life in Britain's tower block homes.

The network was established in 1984 to gather and share information about the social and structural problems of tower blocks and to promote solutions to these problems. It is a Community Links project.

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data:
National Tower Blocks Directory.
1. High-rise appartment buildings - Great Britain
I. Clarke, Frances

ISBN 0 9512 357 45 £5
Designed and typeset by George Clarke Associates (0635 33382) and printed by Sheaf Graphics (0742 739067)

community LINKS

Community Links is an independent social action centre in the East London Borough of Newham. It was formed by local volunteers in 1977 to work practically on the problems of our inner cities. Our work with children is primarily aimed at those who are 'at risk' either because of neglect, ill treatment and extremely difficult circumstances at home, or as the result of their own behaviour. We provide constructive activities for all age groups including after school clubs, care schemes, at risk groups, toy libraries, holidays and playschemes. We also run a range of unique groups for young children with special difficulties and teenagers who've been in trouble. We are the UK's largest local voluntary sector provider of out of school activities. Our work with adults is based on a wide range of specialist advice sessions, most run by trained local volunteers. We link people in similar situations and we support them in tackling their problems together. From these sessions a range of very active self help groups has developed, such as Action and Rights for Disabled People in Newham, Links Asian Women's Group, and our Pensioners' Club. Our national role has developed from the sucess of these local activities as we have been recognised as a kind of social workshop, developing new ideas. Links runs two major national projects, the National Tower Blocks Network and Action Match (which promotes commercial sponsorship of community activities) plus a Training and Development Unit based in Sheffield. Among other activities the unit invented and publishes the highly regarded Ideas Annual. In all our national work we seek to effectively share local experiences and thus inform policy and improve practice at a national level.

THANK YOU ALL

The publication of this Directory has been supported by The Department of the Environment, The Housing Association Charitable Trust, Shelter, and a range of commercial sponsors including Lander Urban Renewal, a subsidiary of Group Sonitrol, and Capex External Products. We gratefully acknowledge this support.

We are also grateful to Aston Charities Community Research Unit for designing the questionnaires, and to Lynette Margerison for some of the cartoons. Finally, we thank the hundreds of people who completed the questionnaires and provided all the information contained here.

National Tower Blocks Directory

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Details of the NTBN – see inside front cover

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GUIDE TO USING THIS DIRECTORY

The National Tower Blocks Directory has been compiled by the National Tower Blocks Network (NTBN). NTBN have undertaken a national survey of public sector tower-block landlords, of tenants and community associations which represent tower-block tenants and of other individuals and organisations involved in the field. The aim of this survey has been to collect up-to-date information about the tower-block stock and to share and promote examples of good practice in tackling tower block problems. We have followed the Department of the Environment's definition of a tower block as six storeys and over. A tower block has been defined as any building of this height whatever its shape or configuration.

The Directory is divided into two sections. The first includes details of councils, housing associations, tenants groups, other organisations and individuals who responded to the survey. The second is devoted to more detailed examples of the work of some of the respondents.

The first section is ordered alphabetically by local authority district. The entry for the landlord, whether it be a council or a housing association, comes first. Any umbrella tenants' federation comes next, followed by the individual tower block association and community group entries in alphabetical order. In a small number of cases entries have been included for individual tenants. Generally it is more appropriate to include representative tenants organisations but where such groups don't exist and where the individual has useful information to contribute we have made an exception and included the entry.

The information contained in the first section of the Directory has come from the questionnaires which we distributed widely. The questionnaires required respondents to provide stock details including the total number of blocks, their storey height, the number of flats included, the percentage this represented of the authority's total stock, the years the blocks were built and the method of construction. The questionnaires went on to ask about blocks that had been demolished or transferred to other owners and about any management schemes operating. Respondents were asked which were the aspects of the blocks which concerned them most and what steps had been taken to tackle any problems present. Information was then requested on the current tower-block allocations policies, and specifically for details relating to housing children in flats. The final section asked landlords and tenants what they thought of their relationship, whether it was excellent, good, fair, poor or awful and whether they consulted together regularly.

In the second section we focus on particular problems and examine some of the responses we have found. We feel that most are examples of good practice, where they are not, they provide useful insights into how not to do things. Both approaches are included to help the reader learn from the exerience of others, good and bad, and to therefore be better equiped to tackle the problems of their estate.

The Directory is laid out in a way that enables the reader to find the details of any group included if they know the local authoriy area in which the group is based. Also, at the end of the entries section there is a quick reference table ordered in terms of the issues which have been dealt with by the respondents. Readers can then also discover who in the rest of the country is involved with the same problems as they are. We hope that by using these two classifications readers will be able to find all the information they require relatively easily.

KEY TO CODES

Cockroaches	C
Other vermin	V
Inadequate heating systems	H
Inadequate play facilities	P
Lack of safety for children	X
Tenant isolation-depression	I
Asbestos	A
Lack of community facilities	Y
Poor fire safety	F
Inadequate or unreliable lifts	L
Racism/racial harassment	R
Dampness/condensation	D
Building defects	B
Lack of security	S
Poor layout/environment of estates	E

A

ABERDEEN

City of Aberdeen District Council, St. Nicholas House, Broad Street, Aberdeen. Tel: 0224 276276 Contact: Mrs. E Curry – Policy Officer

Aberdeen Council have 59 tower blocks – 22 of 6 to 12 storeys, 36 of 12 to 18 storeys and one of over 18 storeys. This represents 4,456 homes and is 12% of the council's stock. The tower blocks were built between 1961 and 1985. Eleven of the blocks are large-panel Bison.

The remaining blocks are reinforced concrete slab construction and Wimpey no fines. No blocks have been demolished and no blocks have been transferred to other owners. A number of the blocks in Aberdeen were built for use as sheltered housing and they have converted more blocks to sheltered housing recently because of the popularity of such schemes. Some blocks are allocated only to couples over 40 with no children.

The aspect of tower block stock which gives the authority most cause for concern is the lack of security in a small number of their blocks. All 59 of Aberdeen's blocks have controlled-entry systems. These have achieved some improvement in security in the majority, although, in some cases, persistent vandalism has continued. 1,077 Bison flats are continually examined for structural problems, particularly in relation to the external faces of wall panels.

Lifts in the blocks are checked monthly, and all necessary works are carried out. Aberdeen Council have a programme of up-grading communal areas; ten blocks have so far been improved. The improvements have involved replacing floor coverings and improving decoration and lighting. Asbestos-faced partitions have been found in a number of blocks and work has been undertaken to apply a resin-based protective coating. Community rooms exist in sheltered and special purpose blocks and a number of these have been ungraded with, in some cases, new rooms being added.

Aberdeen Council are currently carrying out a structural survey of all its tower blocks with the aim of establishing a rolling programme of repairs. Four blocks at Hazelhead have already been surveyed and some remedial work needs to be carried out. A rolling programme of repairs in the remaining 55 blocks is about the begin. The council have allocated £3.8 million to complete the necessary work.

In general, Aberdeen feel that the blocks are kept well by the tenants, are attractive in appearance and are popular, although some exceptions do exist. Aberdeen have 4,000 people on their waiting list and 7,000 on their transfer list. There is a demand from families for three-bedroom flats and a demand from young, single people for two-bedroom flats.

Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks and there are no restrictions as to which floor, although no children under ten are allowed in a number of the blocks. Young single people and wheelchair users are never offered tower block accommodation. There is an unrestricted number of offers made to potential tenants.

A substantial number of children are living in their tower blocks, but it is not possible to estimate how many. The authority do have policies to remove children from tower blocks. In four blocks, no families with children under ten are housed, and in a further four blocks only couples over 40 with no children are offered accommodation. The authority have considered a 'no young children' policy, but have had to reject it because of demand for housing. The local authority have introduced some compensatory facilities in tower blocks. They have created more play areas and they have upgraded the existing common rooms.

They feel that their relationship with their tenants is fair and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. Their staff attend meetings with tenants' associations regularly. Tenants are advised and consulted about improvements.

B

BARKING

Barking and Dagenham Council, Housing Department, Heathway, Dagenham, Essex RM10 7SC. Tel. 081-592 4500 ext. 2769. Contact: Worth Houghton

Barking and Dagenham own 56 tower blocks. Thirty-eight are of 6 to 12 storeys; 18 are of 12 to 18 storeys. They represents 3,442 homes and are 13% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1952-1981.

The methods of construction used were large-panel, including Bison, and in situ concrete. No blocks have left the council's control: none has been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. Barking and Dagenham have one block which is used for sheltered housing. The aspects of their tower block stock which give the authority most cause for concern are building defects. The pressures affecting their allocation

policy are primarily escalating demand from homeless people – principally families. Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks. They attempt not to offer families with children flats above the 5th floor. They offer all categories of tenant tower block accommodation, except where medical advice is against it. Potential tenants receive two offers of accommodation.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the tower blocks – the authority cannot estimate how many. The authority do not consider this to be acceptable, and they do have policies to remove children from blocks. People with children in tower blocks will get extra points on the new points allocation system in 1992.

The local authority have introduced some compensatory services and facilities in tower blocks – these include providing a playroom and a tenants' association room. The local authority feel that their relationship with their tenants is a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

CHPIXYDBSE

Independent Advice Centre, 28/30 Ripple Road, Barking, Essex. Tel: 081 507 8465. Contact: Diane Seabrook.

The Independent Advice Centre offer advice to individuals and groups on the broad range of housing issues. Where the centre cannot deal with a problem, they refer to the appropriate organisation. The centre handle a lot of cases of homeless families being made offers of accommodation in tower blocks. They have taken up several of these where the offers were not appropriate.

Mr T Neal, 10 Oldmead House, Exeter Road, Dagenham, Essex, RM10 8DY. Tel: 0277 232450. Contact: Trevor Neal.

Mr. Neal describes the area in which he lives as a suburban mixed community. The area contains one eight-storey tower block which was built in the 1960s. The method of construction used was in situ concrete. No blocks in the area have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower block which give most cause for concern are noise, vandalism, litter, grafitti, and the lack of play facilities. There are substantial numbers of children living in the block. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services/ facilities. Mr Neal considers his council to be a fair one.

HPAFLS

BARNET

London Borough of Barnet, Barnet House, 1255 High Road, Whetstone, London, N20 0EJ. Tel: 081-446 8511 ext.4940. Contact: Colin Chudleigh

Barnet have 15 tower blocks –13 are of 6 to12 storeys and 2 are of 12 to18 storeys. This represents 782 homes and is 5% of the council's stock. The blocks were built between 1950 and 1965. The methods of construction used included no fines concrete roughcast, Harry Neal battery cast system and large panel Bison. No blocks have been demolished and no blocks have been sold or transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower block stock which give the authority most cause for concern are maintenance and repair, window cleaning, lifts, rubbish chutes and some minor vandalism. They have responded to tower block problems by carrying out regular pest-control treatment where necessary, doing cladding and insulation work, installing entry-phone systems, renewing lifts – although some problems still exist– creating two new play areas and renewing heating systems.

Demand for housing in Barnet exceeds supply; their stock has decreased as a result of the Right to Buy legislation. Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks and there are no restrictions as to which floor. Their policies have changed over the last ten years – previously they did not house families with young children above the second floor.

Specific medical cases – e.g. wheel-chair users and blind people with guide dogs and people with known suicidal tendencies – are not offered tower block accommodation. In answering the question about the number of offers made, the council stated that homeless people get only one. There are substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks – they don't know how many. The authority are not happy with this situation, but feel they have no choice.

The authority have introduced compensatory facilities into tower blocks. On some estates, new play areas have been built. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They meet monthly with the Barnet Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations, officers attend regular T.A. meetings and quarterly informal meetings take place on estates where improvements are being carried out.

CVHPYLDBS

BARNSLEY

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Housing Central Office,

Kendray Street, Barnsley, S70 2TN. Tel: 0226 733222 ext. 610. Contact: Mrs. A Freeman

Barnsley own three tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. This represents 165 homes and is 0.6% of their stock. All blocks were built after 1964. Methods of construction used were in situ concrete frame with concrete floors and brick cladding.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. It is the local authority's practice to let vacant flats to elderly people and an entry-phone system is in operation. The aspects of their tower block stock which give the authority most cause for concern are waste disposal problems and lack of fire stopping.

They have responded to problems by installing door-entry systems in all three blocks – each tenant has a two-way speech phone connected to the door. Allocations are made by the local authority using a date order system based on priority groups.

Households with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks, and never have been. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

They hold a six-weekly liaison meeting with the Barnsley Tenants' and Residents' Federation and all tenants' and residents' associations have regular monthly meetings with their area housing manager.

FS

Barnsley Federation of Tenants, 1-3 Union Court, Barnsley, S70 1GN. Tel: 0226 201854. Contact: Mrs B. Silcock.

The Barnsley Federation of Tenants offer a range of housing advice to individual tenants and to tenants' associations. They currently have no members who represent estates including tower blocks and no tower-block issues have been brought to them for advice or support.

BASINGSTOKE AND DEANE

Basingstoke & Dean Borough Council, Civic Offices, London Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire. Tel: 0256 844844. Contact: Mrs. C Tiller

Basingstoke have one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys which includes 48 flats and represents 0.47% of council stock. It was built in 1968. The method of construction used was reinforced concrete frame with cavity brick infill. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred. The block is used for sheltered housing.

The housing committee have approved expenditure for the refurbishment of the block in the next financial year, 1992-93.

The authority report that there are no pressures on their allocation policies in respect of their tower block, as it is used solely for sheltered accommodation. No children are offered tower block accommodation and never have been.

The authoriy have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the block. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

HD

BEXLEY

Bexley London Borough, Civic Offices, Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent. Tel: 081-303 7777 ext. 4651. Contact: K Phillips

Bexley own 18 tower blocks – 5 of 6 to 12 storeys, 13 of 12 to 18 storeys. This represents 1,244 homes and is 13% of their stock. The blocks were built between 1964 and 1972. The method of construction was Wimpey no fines.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. One block is used for sheltered housing. The aspect of their tower block stock which concerns them the most is vandalism to entry-phone systems and the social problems of high-rise living – for example, no gardens for children and a lack of community feeling.

The council have dealt with some building defects; where concrete cladding was breaking away, they successfully repaired it and they have an on-going programme of concrete repairs for 19992-93.

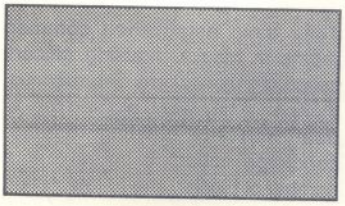
About four years ago the council would not allocate flats above the 4th floor to young families but, due to the pressure of homelessness, now all flats are allocated. The only category of tenant not offered tower block accommodation is people with disabilities.

When stating how many offers are made to each potential tenant, the authority report that homeless people receive only one.

The council estimate that 200 children live in their tower blocks. They have no policy currently to remove children from blocks. They have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities.

The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. The largest high-rise estate has a tenants' association.

PIYBS



BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham City Council, Louisa Ryland House, 44 Newhall Street, Birmingham B3 3PL. Tel: 021-235 4559. Contact: Stephen Smith

Birmingham own 421 tower blocks: 287 are of 6 to 12 storeys, ten4 are of 13 to 18 storeys and 30 are over 18 storeys. This represents 21,400 homes and is 19% of the council's stock. The blocks were built between 1953 and 1972. The methods of construction used were traditional column and beam, plus large panel systems and Wimpey no fines.

Eight blocks have been demolished for structural and/or social reasons. Two blocks have been transferred to other owners. They have been transferred to Copec Housing Trust on a short-term licence agreement.

A variety of management schemes operate in Birmingham, including vertical warden schemes (one of which is described as an extra-care scheme), maturity blocks, single-person blocks, concierge blocks and housing co-ops.

The aspects of their tower block stock which give the authority most cause for concern are structural problems, security, heating and insulation, general design faults, fire stopping, water penetration and social isolation.

They have responded to these problems by undertaking pest control within individual flats as necessary, organising a heat-lease scheme, and offering improved heating systems to certain blocks and energy conservation programmes to improve insulation, and encouraging the formation of residents' groups to overcome isolation.

They have established common rooms in blocks, housing officers constantly monitor any disturbances, there is a city-wide programme to deal with any building defects, concierge schemes operate in a number of blocks, and Estate Action work has been carried out to improve the environment and layout of some tower block estates.

The council do not have enough accommodation to meet the demand. In 1990 there were over 10,000 homeless applications in the city. They also feel that the dwellings within their stock are not suitable necessarily to meet the needs of the applicants or of transfer requests. Families with young children are offered tower-block accommodation, although there are restrictions.

Only the bottom five floors in each high-rise block are offered to young families and then only if there is not more suitable accommodation available elsewhere. These policies have changed in the last ten years.

Previously some blocks were designated as 'no child blocks'. However, increasing pressure for accommodation has led to these restrictions being lifted so that the bottom five floors are available for families with children.

Warden-controlled schemes, maturity blocks and single-person blocks do not have children on any floor. They do not offer tower-block accommodation to people who require more than three bedrooms and people who are considered unsuitable on medical grounds.

They have no stringent policy on the number of offers which are made to each potential tenant – it depends on the individual circumstances. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower-block flats.

Birmingham are considering introducing compensatory services and facilities into their tower blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They take part in this consultation via their tenant participation section and their local neighbourhood office teams.

CVHPXIAYFLRDSE

Community Energy Research, 3 Tower Street, Newtown, Birmingham, B19 3RL. Tel: 021 35929ten. Contact: Keith Bennett

Community Energy Research (CER) was set up by the West Midlands Heating Group to tackle fuel poverty. CER offer independent energy advice to tenants and community groups. Their work focuses on forms of housing which are hard to heat. CER organised a national conference in 1990 on high-rise heating issues.

CER carry out energy audits, e.g. they are currently carrying out an audit for the Three Blocks Association in Birmingham. They will be idenifying the problems and suggesting a range of affordable heating options. CER are working with Birmingham Council in the 'Keep Birmingham Warm' campaign.

They are raising awareness about heating issues amongst front-line social services and housing staff. CER operate the National Energy Foundation software for energy rating in homes. They focus on condensation-risk analysis, i.e. working out the level of heating required to avoid condensation at a price tenants can afford.

HD

Druids Heath Tower Blocks Association, 31 Middlefield House, Britford House, Maypole, Birmingham, B14 5LG. Contact: Mrs K Eginton.

Druids Heath Tower Blocks Association describe their estate as an outer estate. There are 16 blocks on the estate, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 800 flats and represent between a quarter and a third of the total estate. The method of construction used was large panel Bison, built under license by Bryants. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. A number of management

schemes operate in the blocks. One block, of 50 flats, houses only pensioners. There are some furnished bedsits for single people in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are heating - they have Economy 7 central heating which is expensive – the draughty buildings and the need for double glazing. They have problems with water penetration, vandalism and poor security.

The association report that there is no community spirit. The association have confronted a wide range of tower-block problems. They campaigned successfully for the highest heating allowance from the DSS. They were also successful in getting a new heating system to replace their underfloor heating and for improved insulation.

Asbestos has been removed, but the association report that the replacement material in the lobby is useless because it is so easily broken by vandals. Security doors and entry-phones have been installed but are frequently out of use. When describing problems on the estate, they point to expensive transport services since privatisation, inadequate cleaning and caretaking.

When describing the current allocation policies for the blocks, the association report that the people moving in are single parents, people under 25 and recently people from higher income groups. There are not a substantial number of children living in the blocks. However, they report that the numbers are rising as homeless families are receiving only one offer of accommodation and tower blocks are once again being offered.

The local authority hasn't introduced any compensatory services/facilities into its blocks. When asked about their evaluation of their council, the association felt that they couldn't answer the question because they "can't judge how much is their fault and how much is due to ring fencing of the housing rent account". They take part in regular consultation with the council. They have a 'rolling agenda' of issues which they take to the local housing office, although they report that very little is ever done about the issues raised.

VHAYDBS

The Settlement Birmingham, 317 Summer Lane, Newtown, Birmingham, B19 3RL. Tel: 021 359 3562. Contact: Wenda Leslie

Birmingham Settlement describe the estate they work on as an inner-city one. There are 27 blocks on the estate, 26 of 12 to 18 storeys and one of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 2,403 flats and represent 65.5% of the total estate. They were built between 1964 and 1968.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. One block is currently a sheltered housing scheme for the elderly, and tenants in another block are currently setting up a tenant management co-op.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are lack of security and inadequate heating.

The settlement have confronted a wide range of tower-block problems. They report that they provide a

KEY TO CODES

Cockroaches	**C**
Other vermin	**V**
Inadequate heating systems	**H**
Inadequate play facilities	**P**
Lack of safety for children	**X**
Tenant isolation or depression	**I**
Asbestos	**A**
Lack of community facilities	**Y**
Poor fire safety	**F**
Inadequate or unreliable lifts	**L**
Racism/racial harassment	**R**
Dampness/condensation	**D**
Building defects	**B**
Lack of security	**S**
Poor layout/environment of estates	**E**

community flat for small self-help groups to meet and combat the effects of isolation.

They have secured funding from the DoE to form the Newtown regeneration initiative. They will be looking at child care provision as part of this initiative. They run fuel efficiency advice surgeries. Funding has also been secured for environmental improvement projects.

The Settlement run a crech and an 'out of school' club. A successful Estate Action bid will allow the refurbishment of seven tower blocks. When describing the problems on the estate generally, the Settlement point out that the estate is divided between two police divisions and this makes reporting crime difficult. The shopping centre is derelict. The community centre is very run down. Public transport throughout the estate is inadequate.

When describing the current allocation policies for the blocks, they report that priority is given to homeless individuals or families via the city council's central allocations department. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the Settlement are concerned about this. They report that there are no play facilities for children in the tower blocks. The lifts break down on numerous occasions causing problems for people with pushchairs particularly.

The settlement have responded by trying to ensure that adequate facilities exist for parents with young children, such as parent and toddler groups. The local council communicate with residents via the Aston Commission, residents' associations, the Housing Liaison Board and the City Challenge group.

VHPXIYLRDBSE

The Three Blocks Tenants' Association, 7 Conway House, 279 Merritts Hill, Northfield, Birmingham, B31 1JB. Tel: 021 478 3477. Contact: Ivy Woodward.

The Three Blocks Tenants' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. It has three tower blocks, all of eight storeys. The blocks contain ten2 flats and represent one quarter of the total estate. The blocks were built in the 1960s. The method of construction used was large panel Bison. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are the lack of play areas for children, inadequate heating, water penetration, poor insulation, lack of security, dampness, condensation, black mould, no sound insulation and a lack of repairs.

The tenants' association have confronted a wide range of tower-block problems. They are working to have a complete new system of heating and insulation installed. They have had no central heating for over two years. They have also applied for a grant to cover the costs of a community room where they hope to run a range of activities for tenants on the estate, including a playgroup.

The association report that the main problems on the estate generally are a lack of inexpensive shops. Petty crime is increasing and gangs of children intimidate pensioners. When describing the current allocation policies for their blocks, the tenants' association report that families are being moved into floors above the fifth floor, which wasn't previously council policy. Young single people are also moving into the blocks.

The tenants' association would like to have more influence on the allocations. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The association are concerned about this. The council have told the association that this has become necessary because the council waiting list is in excess of 24,000. The association have tried to get families, with more than one child, moved to lower floors, but with little success.

They hope to provide some compensatory facilities themselves. They are seeking to a convert a shed area into community rooms and to attach to it an outside playground. The play facilities that exist are in a poor condition and are not safe enough for toddlers to use. Each block has a small play area that has been vandalised. The association consider their council to be fair and they take part in regular consultation with them. They have monthly meetings with the area housing officers and extra meetings as issues arise.

VHPXIAYFDBSE

BLACKBURN

Queens Park Flats Residents' Association, 18 Elizabeth House, Blackburn, BB1 1QW. Contact: Richard Lee.

Queens Park Flats Residents' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. It contains three tower blocks of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 240 flats and represent all of the estate. The blocks were built in the early to mid-1960s. The method of construction used was large-panel Bison.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give most cause for concern are heating, security and allocations. The heating system is compulsory underfloor or storage heaters, report the association. They have no individual control over the heating system and it is too expensive. The association have confronted a variety of tower-block problems in response

to which the tenants set up their own residents' association. They organise a variety of community activities, such as pensioners' day trips and they have set up a community library. The main problem on the estate generally is the lack of local shops.

When describing the current allo–cations for the blocks the association report that families are being moved in although this is not in line with their policy. They are also concerned that there is no monitoring of dog and cat owners. There are not substantial numbers of children in the blocks but the numbers are rising. They have informed the council of their concern about families with young children living in the flats but, they report, the council seem slow to implement their own policy on this.

The local authority havn't introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. The association consider their council to be a poor one. They take part in regular consul-tation with the council, and they have regular meetings with councillors and area housing officers.

CHAYLDS

BLACKPOOL

Blackpool Borough Council, Housing Department, PO Box 24, 53-55 Cookson Street, Blackpool FY1 3DY. Tel: 0253 25212 ext. 2877. Contact: Agnes Kennedy

Blackpool own five tower blocks - four of 12 to18 storeys and one over 18 storeys. This represents 387 tower block homes and is 5.8% of council stock. All blocks were built in the late '60's. The methods of construction used includes slab blocks (1) and in situ concrete blocks (4).

No blocks have been demolished. None has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block.The aspect of their tower block stock which gives the local authority most cause for concern is 'neighbour' problems – e.g. noise and drug users. No offers are made to families with children under 12 years old. This policy was recently intro–duced. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would not offer tower block accommodation. They estimate that 93 children live in their tower blocks; they don't consider this to be exceptional and they do have specific policies to remove children from tower blocks.

The authority have not introduced compensatory services or facilities into the blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be fair/poor. They do not take part in any regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

XILS

BOLTON

Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council, Paderborn House, Civic Centre, Bolton, BL1 1JW. Tel: 0204 22311. Contact: Paul Thomson.

Bolton own six tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 364 flats and represent 1.5% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1958 and 1967. The method of construction used was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are crime and dogs. The authority have confronted a range of tower-block problems in response to which no children are housed in the blocks. Estate Action money has been spent on one block and a bid has been made for another.

No animals are allowed in the blocks. When outlining the pressures which affect their allocation policies, the council report that because they have very few high-rise blocks the demand is disproportionately high. They have also experienced friction and a clash of lifestyles when young people are introduced into blocks where most of the tenants are middle-aged or elderly. Households with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks, this policy has not changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would not offer a tower-block flat. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and tenants who have a child while in a block are offered a transfer.

The authority havn't introduced any compensatory services/facilities into their blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organi-sations. They have close contact with residents' associations. They carried out a customer survey, using an independent consultant, which indicated that tenant satisfaction was reasonably high.

IYLRS

BRACKNELL

Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Seymour House, 38 Broadway, Bracknell, Berks RG12 1AU. Tel: 0344 424642. Contact: Fiona Green

Bracknell own one tower block of 12 to 18 storeys which includes ten2 flats and represents 1.2% of their stock. The block was built between 1963-65. The method of construction used was in situ reinforced concrete frame which was specially designed for Bracknell Development Corporation.

No blocks have been demolished and none have been transferred to other owners. A resident caretaker is on site and the block is managed by a housing assistant. The flats are mostly small units, suitable for single person accommodation. The block has recently been refurbished and problems have been experienced in carrying out this work while the block

was still fifty per cent occupied. The refurbishment took place in three phases and was completed in November 1991. Balcony handrails have been replaced, as has stairway balustrading.

The podium deck has been re-surfaced, the main building has been re-roofed, the lift has been refurbished,and security gates have been installed to the basement car park.

A new fire alarm has been installed, an external stairway has been enclosed, communal lighting has been upgraded and a door-entry system installed. Kitchens and bathrooms have been up-graded, and a new heating system has been installed.

All doors have been renewed in the building, double-glazing has been installed and a complete redecoration was carried out in all the flats. Families with small children are never offered tower block accommodation. This has always been the policy. Substantial numbers of children do not live in the block.

There are no plans to introduce any compensatory facilities within the block. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they do take part in regular consultations with tenants' organisations.

During the past three years, one housing section have been responsible for negotiating the decant within the building and have been easily available to all existing and new tenants for queries and complaints.

The council hope that this has created a good relationship with tenants that can continue now under normal management.

HAD



BRADFORD

City of Bradford Metropolitan Council, Directorate of Housing and Environmental Health Services, Jacobs Well, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD1 5RW. Tel: 0274 753973. Contact: Mick Johnston.

Bradford Council own 36 tower blocks of between eight and 15 storeys high. The methods of construction used include: traditional front and back, with concrete panel sides; Wimpey "No fines", large-panel Bison Wallframe and Laing Systems, and in situ reinforced concrete.

Four Bison Wallframe blocks off Manchester Road have been demolished due to structural, heating and insulation problems. With the exception of the four blocks the council do not consider their tower-block stock to be a major problem. Vandalism has been largely dealt with by a system of caretakers. They have found that problem s are greatly reduced where there ar active tenants' associations and they encourage the formation of such groups.

H B S

Parkwood Rise Tenants' Association, 48 Delpha House, Parkwood Rise, Keighley, West Yorkshire. BD21 4RG. Contact Bill Keefe.

Parkwood Rise Tenants' Association describe their estate is a medium/small town estate. There are two blocks on the estate both of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 192 flats and represent half of the estate.The blocks were built in 1962 and the method of construction used was in situ concrete.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating in their blocks, the association report that they are considering becoming a tenant management co-op. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are lift breakdowns and blocked and stinking rubbish chutes. The association have confronted a range of tower-block problems and report that they are in the middle of negotiations for a play area.

The lifts are an increasing problem and it is proving very difficult to get the necessary replacement parts even though the lifts are new. They break down on average two to three times per month. When describing the problems on their estate generally, the association point to the lack of shops and the poor environment.

Crime is now virtually non existant as the result of the efforts of the neighbourhood watch, the tenants' association and the new security-camera linked system. There are substantial numbers of people living in the blocks and local people are concerned about this.

They report that they have taken up this issue with the council, they are particularly concerned about children who are unwell living in such unsuitable accommodation.

The local authority havn't as yet introduced any compensatory services and facilities into the blocks, although they are considering introducing play facilities for the under-sevens.

The association consider their council to be a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with them. The housing manager attends their monthly tenants' association meetings.

PXLB

Triangle proposed Co-op Bradford, 41 Buchan Tower, Radwell Drive, off Manchester Road, Bradford, BD5 OQS. Contact: Michael Naylor.

This is an inner-city estate with three tower blocks of 12 to 18 storeys, representing 255 homes. They were

built in 1968 of in-situ concrete and are one third of the estate. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

A tenant management co-op is being proposed for the blocks. The aspects of the blocks which give them most cause for concern are security, asbestos and children in the flats.

Old heating systems have been taken out and replaced by storage heaters, and smoke detectors have been fitted.

When describing their estate generally the co-op report that there is inadequate parking for residents because of outside workers' cars, and a good deal of car theft.

There is a major ring road on the edge of the estate. They report that allocations to the blocks are general, families with children, people evicted from other council property, etc.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks which causes concern amongst the residents who have tried to get safe play areas and youth clubs but have had no success. Tenants feel their council is a poor one.

HPXAYLSE

Yorkshire Community Housing Services, 91 Spital Hill, Sheffield, S4 7LD. Tel: 0742 787135. Contact: Vic Berry.

Yorkshire Community Housing Services (YCHS) are working on two tower-block estates, Parkwood Rise and Bradford Triangle, in Bradford. The blocks contain 350 flats. YCHS are supporting tenants on these estates in establishing tenant management co-ops. YCHS reports that the tenants are establishing co-ops because they want some control over lettings and a better repairs service. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks on both estates.

BRENT

London Borough of Brent, Housing & Environmental Services Department, Mahatma Gandhi House, 34 Wembley Hill Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 8AD. Tel: 081-900 5783. Contact: Isabel Wilkinson

Brent own 89 blocks, 65 of 6 to11 storeys, 23 of 12 to18 storeys, and one over 18 storeys. This respresents 5,385 homes and is 27% of their stock. The blocks were built between the late 1960s and the 1970s. Fifty-seven of the blocks are large panel Bison system.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. People in one block are currently considering becoming a co-op and one estate, including tower blocks, are considering a HAT or other self-management scheme.

The aspect of their tower block stock which gives them most cause for concern is security, hence the introduction of concierge schemes.

The authority have also undertaken asbestos removal and pest control programmes, and a leaflet has been issued to all tenants on racial harassment. They are also removing linkways between blocks. Currently in Brent most lettings are to homeless households.

Households with small children are offered tower-block accommodation, except in two blocks. There are restrictions on these allocations – they are only offered accommodation up to the tenth floor. This policy has changed in the past ten years: previously they were only offered flats up to the 5th floor.

The council also avoid allocating accommodation on large estates to those who are in a vulnerable category. When stating how many offers of accommodation each potential tenant receives, the council report that homeless applicants only receive one offer and this is usually on a large estate. The council do not know how many children in their borough live in tower blocks. They have not introduced any compensatory facilities or services. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be fair and they do take part in regular consultations with tenants' organisations.

CVAFLRDSE

Brent Tenants' Action Group, 17 Darwin House, Kingsgate, Chalkhill Road, Wembley, HA9 9AX. Tel: 081 904 8295. Contact: Alan Blatt.

The Brent Tenants' Action Group was formed four years ago when the Brent Federation of Tenants ceased to operate. The action group has 30 members. The main issue which has concerned the group has been the changing managment and ownership of estates, e.g. HAT proposals, tenant management co-ops and rents-into-mortgages schemes. They report that Brent Council continue to introduce concierge schemes into their tower blocks.

C

Chalkhill Management Board, c/o 17 Darwin House, Kingsgate, Chalkhill Road, Wembley, HA9 9AX. Tel: 081 904 8295. Contact: Alan Blatt

The Chalkhill estate is an inner-city one. It contains 1,250 flats in interlocking blocks which go up to eight storeys. These blocks represent over half of the estate. The method of construction was large panel Bison. The tenants have confronted a range of tower-block problems.

Concierge schemes have been introduced into six of the blocks to improve security. Cockroaches have been a major problem over a period of years. The council employed Rentokil and now 99% of the estate is

clear. There are a high number of voids on the estate generally. The Chalkhill Management Board was formed in 1986, it represents the council and the tenants. It has been highly successful and is now in the process of establishing an estate management board (EMB). They hope that the EMB will be operational at the start of the financial year 1993/4.

The tenants report that they wish to establish an EMB for several reasons. They do not wish to see an outside body take over the estate which would involve tenants surrendering some of their rights. They feel that given the opportunity and the finance they could do a good job of managing the estate.

CS

BRENTWOOD

Brentwood District Council, Council Offices, Ingrave Road, Brentwood, Essex. Tel: 0277 26111. Contact: Robin Hill.

Brentwood own four tower blocks – one of 6 to 12 storeys and three of 12 to 18 storeys. This represents 189 homes and is 5% of their stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1970. The methods of construction used include large-panel Bison (50 flats), in-situ concrete (98 flats), and brick construction (41 flats).

No blocks have left the council's control or been demolished. The authority report they are actively pursuing increased tenant participation in management. The aspects of their tower-block stock which gives most cause for concern include long-term maintenance, children in tower blocks and security. The problems they have experienced are mainly associated with one block for which Estate Action funding is currently being sought. The authority report that the greatest pressure on their allocation policies results from the increase in numbers of homelessness and the need to fulfil their statutory obligations under part three of the Housing Act 1985. This is coupled with a decreasing amount of stock, due to the Right to Buy. Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks. When stating how many offers are made to each potential tenant, the authority report that each case is assessed individually.

The authority don't think that substantial numbers of children live in their blocks. They haven't introduced any compensatory services or facilities into their blocks as yet but they hope to do so under their proposed Estate Action bid. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They report that great care is taken to communicate and consult with all tenants on any matters which affect them.

PYS

BRIGHTON

Brighton Borough Council Housing Services, 71/73 Grand Parade, Brighton, BN2 2LE. Tel: 0273 29801. Contact: Sophie Clark.

Brighton own 31 tower blocks; 13 of 6 to 12 storeys, 17 of 12 to 18 storeys and one of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1,911 flats and represent 17.6% of the total stock. The blocks were built between 1957 and 1976. The methods of construction used were large panel Bison and brick infill. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

Two of the blocks provide sheltered accommodation for the elderly. The aspects of their tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern are the general condition of the structure and of the lifts due to ageing. The authority have confonted a number of tower-block problems. Rats live around and in some of the blocks. Asbestos is being removed. Community facilities are being created on most high-rise estates by converting old storage space and drying areas. Racism and racial harassment is being monitored. Inadequate security is being dealt with by installing entry systems. When outlining the pressures affecting their allocation policies, the authority point to homelessness and a lack of family sized accommodation as the main problems.

Households with small children (under 12) are not offered homes in tower blocks. This policy has not changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower block flat. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks.

The authority have policies to remove those that do. Tenants who have children while in a tower block are made alternative offers. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilties into the blocks. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they do take part in regular consultation with them.

VHAYFLBS

Brighton Federation of Tenants, 59 Albourne Close, Brighton, BN2 5FX. Tel: 0273 672488. Contact: Don Robinson.

The Brighton Federation of Tenants were very active until funding from the council was withdrawn four years ago. The withdrawal coincided with the implementation of Brighton's new consultation structure. It is reported that the council felt that the new structure meant that there was little need for the federation.

Those tenants still involved in the federation feel that it is vital to have an independent body representing the tenants of Brighton. They also report that the federation has achieved positive results and has a valuable

role to play. After the fire in Merry Hill Court, Sandwell, the tenants' federation took up the issue of fire safety in their tower blocks. As a result five large panel Wates blocks on the North Whitehawk Estate have had emergency lighting installed. Notices have also been put on every landing explaining what to do in a fire.

The federation continue to be concerned about the poor standard of fire doors in the blocks, about the escape apparatus available to the fire brigade, and about what would happen to people with disabilities if evacuation became necessary. They have suggested to the council that people with disabilities should be offered ground-floor accommodation for these reasons.

The federation report that another independent voluntary organisation serving tenants in Brighton, the Brighton Law Centre, have also had their funding cut by the council. They are concerned about this.

F

North Whitehawk Tenants' and Residents' Association, 22 Kestrel Court, Swanborough Place, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 5PZ. Tel: 0273 698612. Contact: Peter Sams.

North Whitehawk Tenants' and Residents' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. There are ten blocks on the estate, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 312 flats and represent all of the estate. The blocks were built in the mid-1960s.

The methods of construction used were large panel (5) and brick (5). No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are lifts, the back stairs which are impossible to clean, fire safety, flooding from upper flats, and the high cost of heating, which is over £ten0 per quarter. The tenants' association have confronted a wide range of tower-block problems in reponse to which new security doors have been fitted by the council with video cameras, as part of an estate action scheme.

The association report that tenants wedge open doors thus negating the security. The main problems on the estate generally are high bus fares and the lack of local shops.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks, they are concerned for those that do. It is the association's view that tower blocks and children are not compatible. They have therefore opposed attempts by the council to move families with young children into the flats.

They are now concerned that with the rising numbers of families in bed and breakfast accommodation they may not be able to block these attempts in the long run. The authority have introduced compensatory services/ facilities into the blocks.

They have provided a community room which is controlled by the tenants' association. The room is used for playgroup sessions, Citizens Advice Bureau advice sessions, health advice and councillors' surgeries.

The association consider their council to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with them. Brighton's consultation structure involves four district committees, which any tenants' association may attend and is entitled to one vote.

Three members from each district go to the district forum, who then plan the agenda for the joint consultative committee, who then in turn meet with the housing committee.

IAYFL

BRISTOL

Bristol City Council, Housing Department, Council House, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR. Tel: 0272 222000.

Bristol have 65 tower blocks containing 4776 homes. Of these, 54 blocks are of in situ concrete construction, the remaining ones are Wimpey "No fines" and large-panel Easiform Laing System blocks. Two blocks are due for demolition and are being decanted. The council have participated in the Brisol high-rise working group and in the production of a high-rise charter relating to the needs of children in tower blocks.

Barton Hill Settlement, 43 Ducle Street, Barton Hill, Bristol 5. Tel: 0272 556971. Contact: David Mowat.

The Barton Hill Settlement is the base for a wide range of activities and services. They have worked with tower-block tenants on the Barton Hill estate over many years. They supported the 'Blocks are No Place for Children Campaign' in the mid-1980s.

They report that the Rght to Buy has resulted in one third of the council stock being sold and has therefore made it impossible for the council to continue with their policy of not housing children in tower-block flats. In response to this situation, a children in high-rise working party has been formed to develop a charter for children in tower blocks.

They have been successful in obtaining a four-year urban programme grant for their children in blocks project. They are offering a range of children's activities including playschemes and after-school clubs.

They describe the project as play-based and child-centred. They will be looking at the needs of individual

children as well as providing group activities. Parents and carers are encouraged to be fully involved in the project including its management. Training is provided. Their is an underlying commitment to empowering local people.

PX

Bishport Five Tenants' Association, 3 Maddock House, Bishport Avenue, Hartcliffe, Bristol, BS13 ORU. Tel: 0272 784 149. Contact: Mr I Davies.

The Bishport Five Tenants' Association report that their estate is an outer estate in a mixed suburban community. There are eight tower blocks on the estate, all of 6 to 12 storeys. They contain 512 flats and represent one sixteenth of the total estate. The blocks were built in the 1950s and the method of construction used was in situ concrete.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give the most cause for concern are poor security, vandalism and the number of children living in the blocks.

The association have tackled a range of tower block problems and are currently seeking to encourage the council to look at security, the layout of the estate and the provision of play facilities.

When describing the current allocation policies for the blocks, the association report that increasing numbers of one-parent families are being allocated tower block flats on their estate.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the association and local people are concerned about this. The local authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities; a small playground exists on the estate where children can play safely. The association feel that their council are a fair one and they do take part in regular consultation with the council.

PXIYLSE

'Families Need Father', 67 Croydon House, Croydon Street, Easton, Bristol, BS5 ODU. Contact: Mr P Taylor.

This association describe their estate as an inner-city one. There are four blocks on the estate, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 900 flats and represent three quarters of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1958 and 1960 and the method of construction used was in situ concrete.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. Two of the blocks are used to provide sheltered accommodation.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are children living on the upper floors, unsafe windows and poor lifts. The association have confronted a range of problems.

When describing the problems generally on the estate, they point to no shops and a high level of crime, in response to which a neighbourhood watch has been started.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and local people are concerned about this. They have put pressure on the council to stop housing children in the blocks but the council reply that they have little choice.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facililies into the blocks. They consider their council to be a poor one but they take part in regular consultation with them. There are monthly joint meetings.

VHXYLS

Fulford Family Centre, 1 Fulford Road, Hartcliffe, Bristol, BS13 9BD. Tel: 0272 782441. Contact: Jackie Sims/Maggie Proom.

The Fulford Family Centre works with tenants on the Hartcliffe/Withywood Estate, an outer estate. It includes11 tower blocks, eight of ten storeys and three of 13 storeys. The blocks contain about 600 flats and represent less than a quarter of the total estate. The blocks were built in the 1960s.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished or tranferred to other owners. The aspects of the tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are families being housed in the flats, inadequate play facilities and the high level of poverty. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks.

Fulford Family Centre workers initiated the children-in-high-rise working party. The main concerns of the working party have been the primary play needs of children in the blocks and the implications of the 1989 Children's Act which defines children in need.

The Bristol workers feel that children in tower blocks are children in need and should receive compensatory services.

They organised a conference "Growing up in high-rise" in 1990 and the high-rise working party's children's charter was launched in May, 1991.

Underfloor heating systems were replaced with storage radiators in the three taller blocks. Entryphones are currently being replaced with television-linked entryphones so that tenants can see who is at the door by looking at the television.

Fulford Family Centre workers consider the council to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with them.

XP

role to play. After the fire in Merry Hill Court, Sandwell, the tenants' federation took up the issue of fire safety in their tower blocks. As a result five large panel Wates blocks on the North Whitehawk Estate have had emergency lighting installed. Notices have also been put on every landing explaining what to do in a fire.

The federation continue to be concerned about the poor standard of fire doors in the blocks, about the escape apparatus available to the fire brigade, and about what would happen to people with disabilities if evacuation became necessary. They have suggested to the council that people with disabilities should be offered ground-floor accommodation for these reasons.

The federation report that another independent voluntary organisation serving tenants in Brighton, the Brighton Law Centre, have also had their funding cut by the council. They are concerned about this.

F

North Whitehawk Tenants' and Residents' Association, 22 Kestrel Court, Swanborough Place, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 5PZ. Tel: 0273 698612. Contact: Peter Sams.

North Whitehawk Tenants' and Residents' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. There are ten blocks on the estate, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 312 flats and represent all of the estate. The blocks were built in the mid-1960s.

The methods of construction used were large panel (5) and brick (5). No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are lifts, the back stairs which are impossible to clean, fire safety, flooding from upper flats, and the high cost of heating, which is over £ten0 per quarter. The tenants' association have confronted a wide range of tower-block problems in reponse to which new security doors have been fitted by the council with video cameras, as part of an estate action scheme.

The association report that tenants wedge open doors thus negating the security. The main problems on the estate generally are high bus fares and the lack of local shops.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks, they are concerned for those that do. It is the association's view that tower blocks and children are not compatible. They have therefore opposed attempts by the council to move families with young children into the flats.

They are now concerned that with the rising numbers of families in bed and breakfast accommodation they may not be able to block these attempts in the long run. The authority have introduced compensatory services/ facilities into the blocks.

They have provided a community room which is controlled by the tenants' association. The room is used for playgroup sessions, Citizens Advice Bureau advice sessions, health advice and councillors' surgeries.

The association consider their council to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with them. Brighton's consultation structure involves four district committees, which any tenants' association may attend and is entitled to one vote.

Three members from each district go to the district forum, who then plan the agenda for the joint consultative committee, who then in turn meet with the housing committee.

IAYFL

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Bristol City Council, Housing Department, Council House, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR. Tel: 0272 222000.

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Barton Hill Settlement, 43 Ducle Street, Barton Hill, Bristol 5. Tel: 0272 556971. Contact: David Mowat.

The Barton Hill Settlement is the base for a wide range of activities and services. They have worked with tower-block tenants on the Barton Hill estate over many years. They supported the 'Blocks are No Place for Children Campaign' in the mid-1980s.

They report that the Rght to Buy has resulted in one third of the council stock being sold and has therefore made it impossible for the council to continue with their policy of not housing children in tower-block flats. In response to this situation, a children in high-rise working party has been formed to develop a charter for children in tower blocks.

They have been successful in obtaining a four-year urban programme grant for their children in blocks project. They are offering a range of children's activities including playschemes and after-school clubs.

They describe the project as play-based and child-centred. They will be looking at the needs of individual

St Annes/Area 9 Committee, 5 Leicester Walk, Bristol BS4 4DA Tel: 0272 556971. Contact: Jackie Ariffin

The St Annes/Area 9 Committee describe their estate as a suburban mixed community. Bristol are currently decentralising their housing services. Some of the decentralised districts are currently known by numbers.

Area 9 Tenants' Association represent two blocks of 6 to12 storeys. The blocks contain 105 homes and represent 10% of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1975. The method of construction was traditional.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished or transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating the association report that Gilton House provides accommodation largely for elderly people, although some units have been bought and have younger owners.

The aspects of the blocks which give them most cause for concern are noise from traffic, lifts and other tenants, and unreliability of lifts.

When describing the estate generally they report that there is a lack of shops and difficulty with bus routes. The shortage of garages results in car thefts and vandalism.

The current council allocations policy is over forties only and no children in Castlegate and elderly people in Gilton. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the blocks. The council are considered to be good and there is regular consultation between the tenants' association and the area committee. Caretakers are also helpful.

VHLD

BROMLEY

The London Borough of Bromley transferred their entire housing stock to the Broomley Housing Association.

Broomley Housing Association, Joseph Lancaster, Bromley Civic Centre, Rafford Way, Bromley, BR1 3UH. Tel: 081 464 3333. Contact: Arthur Kitson.

Broomley Housing Association own ten tower blocks which contain about 500 flats. No blocks have been demolished. The association have begun a ten-year programme of repairs and improvements, which involves installing central heating, new kitchens and bathrooms, and replacing windows.

An environmental improvment programme has been undertaken at The Groves in Penge. They plan to decentralise housing services in the near future into three areas with offices in Orpington, Penge and Bromley.

The service charges and improvements sections which existed under the London Borough of Bromley have been disbanded. Housing officers are to take on these responsibilies and the number of officers is to be increased.

The association do offer households with children tower-block homes. Their transfer policies awards extra points to families in flats after five years.

H

C

CALDERDALE

Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council, Northgate House, Northgate, Halifax, HX1 1UN. Tel: 0422 357257 ext.2428. Contact: Lisa Walch

Calderdale own 20 tower blocks: four of 6 to 12 storeys and 16 of 12 to18 storeys. This represents 1,679 homes and is 12% of the council's stock. The blocks were built between 1964 and 1973. The methods of construction used include Wimpey no fines (10). reinforced concrete with brick cladding (6) light aggregate concrete brick infill panel (4).

No blocks have been demolished. Two blocks have been sold to other owners – one has been sold to a private developer, and another is being sold to a developer as part of an estate action scheme. The first block is now part-rented and part owner-occupied; the second block is currently empty, awaiting sale, and will be all owner-occupied.

The aspects of tower blocks which concern the authority most are that some are unpopular, although the estate action scheme at Mixenden aims to address this. The estate action scheme is currently underway involving six tower blocks, two of which have been sold. The scheme will involve greater security measures, improved layout and environment, and the introduction of block managers.

The main pressure on the allocation policy is homelessness. Some blocks are kept for elderly or more mature tenants, although there is no formal policy. There is no limit on the number of offers made to potential tenants. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks. Households with children are never offered homes in tower blocks. This policy has not changed in the last ten years.

They consider that their relationship with their tenants is good and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They actively promote tenant participation and they employ three tenant participation workers. They produce a tenants' magazine three times a year and consult on all major schemes.

HPXVE

CAMDEN

London Borough of Camden, Housing Department, Policy and Information Unit, 38-50 Bidborough Street, London, WC1H 9DB. Tel: 071 278 4444. Contact: Katie Argent.

The local authority own 63 tower blocks, which include 4,351 flats and represent 13.5% of their stock. The tower blocks were built from 1950 onwards. The methods of construction used were varied, including traditional-built Victorian mansions and tenement blocks. Camden have not demolished any blocks; they have sold one to a private owner.

The main aspect of their tower-block stock which gives the authority cause for concern is its age. Because most of the blocks were built in the1950s, they have extenal problems with cladding panels, and internal prob–lems with heating, and they include few facilities for tenants.The council have implemented a policy and a set of procedures to deal with racial harrassment.

The main pressure on the council's allocation policy is the steadily inclreasing demand coupled with the diminishing supply of housing. Households with small children are offered tower-block accommodation. The policy has changed in the last ten years. Until 1990 there was a policy not to put households with small children above the fifth floor. There is no category of tenant to whom the authority would not offer tower block accommodation.

Only one offer of accommodation is made to all potential tenants for all types of property. The authority believe that substantial numbers of children live in their tower blocks but they don't know how many exactly. They have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities.

The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be good, and they do take part in regular consul–tation with tenants' organisations. District management committees have tenant representation. They have recently established a new estate-based tenant consultation scheme.

HPYRB

Camden Federation of Tenants, 30 Camden Road, London NW1 9PD. Tel: 071 267 5328. Contact: Sue Berger/Hilary Barnes.

The Camden Federation of Tenants is an umbrella organisation for tenants' groups in Camden. They provide information and support to existing tenants' groups and help tenants to establish new groups.

They have been involved in several tower-block issues, such as re–peatedly-broken entryphones. They have also supported tenants in Lulworth House where a successful Estate Action bid was made but the council are proposing to use the money in other ways and not to go ahead with the scheme. Tenants are taking legal advice on this.

S

CANTERBURY

Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury, CT1 1YW. Tel: 0227 763763. Contact: Tim Perrin.

Canterbury City Council own three tower blocks, all of 6 to12 storeys. The blocks contain 167 flats and represent 2.69% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1970. The method of construction used is described as concrete panel. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

One block is used to provide sheltered housing. Canterbury have tackled a number of tower-block problems. The authority report that they have replaced all the lifts and that they are now regulary serviced under a new maintenance contract. Door-entry systems have also been installed in all the blocks. The authority report that all three blocks are very popular and are well located. Households with small children are not offered tower block homes; this policy has not changed in the last ten years.

All housing applicants receive only one offer of accommodation. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' orga-nisations. In two of the blocks there are residents' associations and the district housing staff are in constant contact with them.

LS

CARDIFF

Cardiff Tenants' Federation, 25 Moore Road, Ely, Cardiff, CF5 4JT. Tel: 0222 591160. Contact: Bernard Humphrey.

The Cardiff Tenants' Federation offer a range of advice and information to individual tenants and to tenants' associations. They were formed about three years ago and have 33 members, three of which represent estates containing tower blocks.

The federation is managed and run totally by volunteers. They report that no tower-block problems have been reported to them and they believe that the blocks are relatively popular.

Butetown Residents' Associaton, 272 London Square, Butetown, Cardiff, South Glamorgan, Wales, CF1 5JL. Tel: 0222 470642. Contact: Cathy James.

The Residents' Association describe their estate as inner city. There are two tower blocks on the estate, both of 12 to18 storeys. The blocks contain

195 flats and represent a fifth of the estate. The blocks were built in 1965. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. One tower block has been designated as a sheltered housing scheme for pensioners.

The aspect of the tower blocks which gives most cause for concern is security. The association reports "non-residents come in at night and cause trouble". The tenants have faced a variety of tower block problems, in response to which a number of steps have been taken.

The council have contacted Rentokill to deal with cockroaches, and the underfloor heating system has been changed to a radiator system that can be individually controlled.

The lifts have been partially refurbished and the building has been overclad, although tenants still experience problems with condensation as there is no place to dry washing. The main problem that remains is the poor security in spite of the installation of a new door-entry system.

The other tower block is only allocated to couples without children or to single people, therefore there are not substantial numbers of children in the blocks. The local authority have not introduced any compensastory services/facilities.

The association report that their relationship with the coucil is fair and that they do take part in regular consultation with them. The area housing manager attends the residents' association meetings when invited.

VHLDS

CHELMSFORD

Chelmsford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1JE. Tel: 0245 490490. Contact: Nigel Perks.

Chelmsford Borough Council own one tower block of 12 to 18 storeys. The block contains 53 flats and was built in 1964. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block.

Chelmsford consider vandalism to be the main problem. The council report that they are currently planning to upgrade the entrance systems and to provide new laundry facilities. When describing their current allocation policies, they report that all the flats are one bedroom and therefore they are allocated to single people and couples only.

Households with small children are not offered tower-block accommodation. This policy has not changed in the last ten years. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block and the council have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities.

The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They hold three-monthly meetings with tenants' organisations, councillors and officers.

S

CHELTENHAM

Cheltenham Borough Housing Department, 1 Montpelier Parade, Cheltenham, Gloucester, GL50 1UB. Tel: 0242 513241. Contact: Tim Wilding.

Cheltenham own two tower blocks of 6 to12 storeys, which include 80 flats and represent 1.28% of their housing stock. The blocks were built between 1959 and 1960. The methods of construction used were reinforced concrete frame and Wimpey No Fines. No blocks have been demolished and none hase been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The main aspects of their tower block stock which give the authority cause for concern are vandalism to lifts and problems with pets.

Lifts were replaced last year; this caused disruption for tenants. Dry lining, anti-fungal paints and automatic extactor fans have been fitted where needed. The pressures on their allocation policies are " the same as everywhere else, the rise in homelessness, the Right to Buy, and no capital programme."

Households with small children are offered tower-block accommodation and there are no restrctions as to which floor. The policy hasn't changed in the last ten years. Only tenants with medical conditions, mental ill-health or vertigo are not offered tower block accommodation.

The council don't believe that substantial numbers of children live in their blocks. There is a council policy to try to move families with children out of flats into houses, and they try not to put families with small children in the two tower blocks but as they are two-bedroom flats sometimes there is no alternative.

They have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into their blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

PDIL

CHESTER

Chester City Council, Town Hall, Northgate Street, Chester. Tel: 0244 324324. Contact: W. Lacey.

Chester own nine blocks all of 6 to 12 storeys. This represents 648 homes and is 8.5% of the total stock. The blocks were built between 1962 and

1966. The methods of construction used include Wimpey No Fines(6) and large panel(3). No blocks have been demolished and no blocks have been transferred to other owners. The authority run sheltered housing schemes in seven blocks.

The aspects of their tower-block stock which concern them most are security and vandalism in three blocks. The provision of communal facilities has been achieved in one block by demolishing a bin-shed area and providing a communal room in its place. This provides a meeting space and activity space for the tenants' association.

A rolling programme of replacement of lifts has been initiated, all blocks have a door entry system. Three blocks have been prone to vandalism and a CCTV system is currently being installed backed up by concierge. Also environmental improvements are underway.

The pressures on their allocations policies included a shortage of suitable family accommodation. 5,600 people are registered on the housing waiting list. Households with small children are not offered tower block accommodation. This policy hasn't changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would not offer a tower block home and there is no limit on the number of offers made to each potential tenant.

If there are families containing children under 14 in a tower block they are given an additional 15 housing waiting list points to give them priority for a transfer. The council have introduced compensatory services and facilities in their blocks. Communal meeting rooms for use by tenants' associations have been created. Seven blocks have lifeline facilities linking them to a central control and are visited by a mobile warden. The council think that their relationship with their tenants is good and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants.

YLSE

CITY OF LONDON

City of London, Housing Department, PO Box 270, Guildhall, EC2P 2EJ. Tel: 071 260 1652. Contact: Mr P Willey.

The City of London own 13 tower blocks – eight of 6 to 12 storeys, one of 12 to 18 storeys and four of over 18 storeys. This represents 936 homes and is 34% of the total housing stock. The blocks were built between 1957 and 1972. The method of construction used includes in situ concrete with brick infill panels. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in their blocks. They have a problem with cockroaches but they don't consider it to be serious as they are able to keep it under conrol with regular treatment. Asbestos is a problem when they undertake major works – e.g. window renewals. They have some condensation problems linked to electric heating systems.

The pressure on their allocation policies is primarily a lack of properties to let due to the Right to Buy. Households with small children are offered tower block accommodation. This policy hasn't changed over the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. If a housing applicant indicates that they are unwilling to accept an offer of a tower block, then they will not be made such an offer.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in tower blocks in the City Of London. They have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be excellent. They take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations, and they have a residents' forum where they meet representatives of all the residents' and tenants' associations.

CAD

COVENTRY

Coventry City Council Housing Department, Spiro House, New Union Street, Coventry, CV1 2DW. Tel: 0203 831957. Contact: Keith Round.

Coventry own 31 tower blocks, 18 of six to12 storeys, and 13 of 12 to18 storeys. This represents 2,375 homes and is 11% of the council stock. The blocks were built between 1956 and 1970. The methods of construction used include no fines, Truscon, lift slab, and brick. No blocks have been demolished, and one has been sold to Coventry Polytechnic to be used for student accommodation.

Coventry do use some of their tower blocks for sheltered accommodation. The aspect of their tower block stock which gives them the most cause for concern is timber windows. They are currently installing new entrance doors and screens with improved entry phones.

With Estate Action funding, environmental improvements are being carried out on high-rise estates. Additional lift shafts have been added in most blocks where only one was originally provided, and a refurbishment programme for lifts is nearing completion.

The main pressure on their allocation policies is the rising demand for housing which is heavily weighted in favour of small units. Households with small children are offered tower block accommodation and there are no restrictions as to which floor. These policies have not changed within the last ten years.

People with certain medical conditions and special needs are not considered for tower block accommodation. A maximum of three reasonable offers are made to prospective tenants. There are a substantial number of children living in their blocks but they do not know how many. The authority do not consider this to be acceptable. Their existing allocations policy gives

the equivalent of six years on the transfer list for families, with children under 11 years old, living above ground. Play facilities have been improved on certain estates through Estate Action and Inner Area Programme funding. The local authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be improving.

They take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. A quarterly housing news bulletin goes to all tenants, consultation takes places on every improvement and refurbishment scheme, and two tenants' representatives are co-opted onto the housing committee.

ALDSE

Coventry Resource and Information Service Print, Unit 15, The Arches Industrial Estate, Spon End, Coventry CV1 3JQ. Tel: 0203 677719. CONTACT: Pat Rollason.

Coventry Resource and Information Service (C.R.I.S.) offer printing and publishing services to local groups, including tenants' groups. Their services have been reduced as the result of funding cuts, and they are no longer able to undertake community work with tenants' groups.

CRAWLEY

Crawley Borough Council, The Boulevard, Crawley, West Sussex, RHten 1UZ. Tel: 0293 528744. Contact: Maureen Hancock.

Crawley Borough Council own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 126 flats and represents 0.1% of the council-owned stock. The method of construction is described as concrete frame and brick panel. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners.

There are no management schemes operating in the block. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes and this policy has not changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. There are not substantial numbers of children livingin the blocks and the authority do have policies to remove those that do, extra points are awarded for a transfer. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be excellent and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

CREWE

Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council, Delamere House, Delemare Street, Crewe, Cheshire. Tel: 0270 537777. Contact: P Simpson.

Crewe & Nantwich own one tower block of six to twelve storeys. The block contains 84 flats and represents 1.1% of their total housing stock. The method of construction used was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. They are not concerned about any aspects of their tower block.

The main pressure affecting their allocations policy is reported as "too many people for too few homes". Households with small children are not offered tower block accommodation.

This policy has not changed within the last ten years. There are not very many children living in tower blocks in Crewe and Nantwich.

They have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into their tower block. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be excellent and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. Housing officials regularly attend the meeting of the residents' association.



CROYDON

London Borough of Croydon, Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon, CR9 1DH. Tel: 081 686 4433. Contact: Karen Tiernan.

Croydon own 41 tower blocks, all of 6 to12 storey. The blocks contain 1,743 homes and represent 10% of their housing stock. The blocks were built between 1957 and 1971. The methods of construction used include large panel Wates (19 blocks).

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. A sheltered housing scheme is currently operating in some of the blocks. The aspects of their tower block stock which give the authority most cause for concern are building defects and inadequate heating.

They have undertaken external recladding, internal refurbishments, renewal of heating systems and the installation of door-entry phones/ photoscans. The main pressure on the allocations policy is reported to be the great demand from the statutory homeless. In general demands exceeds supply.

Households with small children are offered tower block accommodation and no restrictions as to which floor are currently in force. This policy has changed in the last ten years. Six years ago they did not allocate flats in tower blocks to children under ten years of age.

The only other category of tenant to whom they would not offer tower block accommodation is those where the council's medical housing advisor makes a recommendation against it.

A one-offer only policy applies to all their allocations, both to current tenants and to waiting-list applicants.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks and the authority have no specific policy to remove children from blocks. The authority have not introduced

compensatory services or facilities into their blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be fair and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They encourage the formation of residents' associations, support the production of regular newsletters and hold a housing tenants' consultancy panel.

Households with small children are not offered tower block homes and this policy has not changed in the last ten years. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be excellent and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants organisations. They have regular meetings to discuss problems.

F

HIALDBSE

D

DELYN

Delyn Borough Council, Civic Offices, Holywell, Clwyd, CH8 7LX. Tel: 0352 712399. Contact: Mrs J D McCarry.

Delyn Borough Council own three tower blocks, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 270 flats and represent 5.6% of the council owned stock.

Two blocks were built between 1968 and 1969 and one block between 1973 and 1974. The method of construction was large panel Bison.

No blocks have been demolished and none have been transferred to other owners. All three blocks are used solely to provide sheltered accommodation.

The blocks have entry-phones and warden-call alarms. They have no particular cause for concern with the blocks.

Fire-precaution measures have been upgraded. The warm-air heating system was problematic but it has been improved and a radiator has been installed in living rooms to extend the system.

There is a high demand for sheltered accommodation.

DERBY

Derby City Council, Brook Street Local Housing Office, 39 Parker Street, Derby, DE1 3HX. Tel: 0332 255267. Contact: Mr C Church.

Derby own one tower block of 12 storeys. The block contains 118 flats which represent less than 2% of their housing stock. The block was built

KEY TO CODES

Cockroaches	C
Other vermin	V
Inadequate heating systems	H
Inadequate play facilities	P
Lack of safety for children	X
Tenant isolation or depression	I
Asbestos	A
Lack of community facilities	Y
Poor fire safety	F
Inadequate or unreliable lifts	L
Racism/racial harassment	R
Dampness/condensation	D
Building defects	B
Lack of security	S
Poor layout/environment of estates	E

between 1964 and 1965. The method of construction used was large panel FRAM (Coignet) system. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block.

The aspects of their tower block which give the authority most cause for concern are structural problems and noise nuisance. Funding is currently being sought to deal with dampness and building defects. Households with small children are not offered tower block accommodation; this policy has changed in the last ten years. No other category of tenant is never offered tower block accommodation.

Substantial numbers of children do not live in their tower block. The local authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities; they have provided a resident caretaker. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be good but they do not take part in any regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

IYDB

DONCASTER

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, 17 Prince Gate, Waterdale, Doncaster. Tel: 0302 734550. Contact: Mr V Martell.

Doncaster own nine tower blocks, four of six to12 storeys and five of 12 to 18 storeys. This represents 606 homes and is 2% of their housing stock. The blocks were built between 1963 and 1969. The methods of construction used included in situ concrete with a reinforced concrete frame (1) and Wimpy no fines (8).

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The authority have experienced problems with inadequate heating systems; the original electric underfloor heating systems in some of the blocks have been replaced with district heating schemes which provide full central heating and hot water. The authority have also experienced a lack of security in their blocks. Some of the original door-entry schemes are no longer effective and are being replaced by new intercom systems.

A scheme to fire-stop the service duts has recently been completed in a number of blocks. The authority identify the main pressures on their allocation policies as the rapidly rising number of homeless people, the large waiting list for family accommodation and the high number of single-parent families.

Households with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks and this policy has not changed in the last ten years. The only other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a high-rise flat is people over 60. There are no restrictions on the numbers of offers of accommodation that each potential tenant receives. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and they have a policy to remove those that do; families with children are given priority on the transfer list.

Doncaster have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into their blocks but they report that such facilities do exist close to their tower-block estate. The authority feel that their relationship with their tenants is a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They consult through the Doncaster Federation of Tenants' Associations.

HFS

Doncaster Federation of Tenants' Associations, 17 Princegate, Waterdale, Doncaster, DW1 3EW. Tel: 0302 734577. Contact: Mr J Gates.

The Doncaster Federation report that there are 11 tower blocks in Doncaster. Ten blocks of 6 to12 storeys and one block of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1,128 flats. The blocks were built in l970. The method of construction was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished in Doncaster and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes in operation. In response to the tenants' association efforts several of the blocks have had new lifts, improved security systems and upgraded fire-safety measures. They hope all the blocks will receive these improvements eventually.

The federation report that there are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks which is of concern to them. The council have introduced some compensatory play facilities. The federation consider the council to be a poor one. The council consult with the federation every eight weeks.

VHPXYFLRBSE

DOVER

Dover District Council, Honeywood Road, Whitfield, Dover, CT16 3PQ. Tel: 0304 821199.

Dover District Council own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 221 flats and represents 3.6% of the total housing stock. The block was built in 1960 and the method of construction used was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

The council report that the block is managed from the central office but the head caretaker and two staff are on site. The aspect of their tower block which gives the authority most cause for concern is the difficulty in letting, as the rents are higher than in their other forms of housing.

Dover report that their is insufficient parking space around the block and that they intend to tarmac one of the garden areas to solve this problem. When describing the pressures

affecting their allocations policy, they report that they have a lack of family accommodation. Households with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks; this policy has not changed in the last ten years.

The authority haven't introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the block. Dover consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tentants' organisations.

E

DUDLEY

Chapel Street Tenants' Association, 9 Northwood Court, The Promenade, Brierleyhill, West Midlands, DY5 2UN. Contact: Isobel Everett.

Chapel Street Tenants' Association report that their estate is a small-town one. There are nine tower blocks on the estate, all of 6 to12 storeys. The blocks contain 491 flats. They were built between 1965 and 1967. The method of construction used is described as concrete block and brick skin.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating in the blocks, the association report that several are designated as 'mature blocks'.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are the lifts, particularly in the mature blocks. However, this problem will be alleviated when alarm systems are installed in the lifts that will link with alarms in flats.

The association have tackled a range of tower-block problems. All homes on the estate have had their heating systems updated, some have had Economy 7 heating installed and some have had a gas-radiator system. Five of the blocks have had new staffed security systems, including video cameras. A new adventure playground is being built and should be finished very soon. Two new launderettes were opened in January 1992. The association report that these improvements have all been the result of the tenants' association's bids for more resources.

When describing the current allocation policies for their blocks, the association report that their estate is a mixture of single people, one-parent families, middle-aged people and the elderly. They report that since their estate has been improved people do not move so often and so the estate is becoming a more stable community.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilites. There is now a community centre on the estate which has a mother and toddler group. There is also a youth club and there is a school on the edge of the estate which takes children from the age of three.

The association consider their council to be excellent and they take part in regular consultation with them. They have monthly meetings with housing officers and local councillors. They feel that they are kept well informed on matters relating to the estate.

HPDS

Tanhouse Residents Association, c/o The Estate Office, Tanhouse Estate, Halesowen, West Midlands. Contact: Norma Chapma.

Tanhouse Residents' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. The estate includes three tower blocks; one of 6 to 12 storeys and two of over 18 storeys. The blocks include 369 flats. They were built between 1969 and 1970 and the method of construction was No Fines Concrete. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating in their blocks, the association report that one block, Kipling House, is intended for young single people and Byron House is designated for childless couples. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are litter, vandalism, dogs and lack of security.

The council also recently closed the last of the five play areas on the estate. Lifts are an ongoing problem, but the association report that the council have the problem in hand. Community rooms are available but there is a lack of interest in organising activities.

When describing the estate generally, the association report that they need a launderette, but the council are reluctant to provide one. The number of children living in the blocks is increasing and the association are concerned about this. They report that the number of children is rising because of the lack of suitable alternative family accommodation.

The local authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities into the blocks; there is a community room. The association consider their council to be an awful one. The association report that they take part in regular consultation with the council to the extent that they have an ongoing dialogue with them. They have found the dialogue largely unproductive.

HPIAYLDSE

DUMBARTON

Dumbarton District Council, 15/17 College Way, Dumbarton, G82. Tel: 0389 65100. Contact: Tim Rhead.

Dumbarton District Council own nine tower blocks; two of 6 to 12 storeys and seven of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 478 flats and represent 4% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1968 and 1971. No blocks have been demolished in Dumbarton and none has been transferred to other owners.

When describing the management schemes operating in their blocks, the authority report that they have 70 sheltered units within three of the blocks. The aspect of their tower block stock which gives them most cause for concern is water penetration.

When describing the pressures affecting their allocation policies, they report that they are the same as all councils, not enough suitable accommodation to match the needs of the waiting list. Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks. This policy has not changed in the last ten years. There is no category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat.

There are substantial numbers of children in some of their blocks (about 130). The authority have no official view on whether this is considered acceptable. They have no specific policies to move children out of the flats. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/ facilities into the blocks.

They consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with them. The authority encourage the formation of tenants' associations and all their blocks are in areas represented by associations. The tenants' associations are represented on sub-committees and the liaison committee of the housing committee.

HPAYFDBS

DUNDEE

City of Dundee District Council, Housing Division, 3 Shore Terrace, Dundee, DD1 3AH. Tel: 0382 23141. Contact : Tim Edwards.

The City of Dundee District Council own 55 tower blocks; eight of 6 to12 storeys and 47 of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 5,095 flats and represent 17% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1962 and 1971. The methods of construction used include: BeH (7), Crudens (33), Gray (4), Mitchel (2), Scotcon (5) and other (4). No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. A number of management schemes operate in their blocks; there are sheltered flats within the blocks (327 two-bedroom flats and 138 three-bedroom flats) and a pilot management scheme involving tenants' action groups are operating in two blocks. The aspects of their tower block stock which gives them most cause for concern are maintainance costs, falling demand and management problems.

The authority have confronted a range to tower-block problems. Beetle infestations have been eradicated in house-to-house spraying by the environmental health department. A communal lounge has been created in one block. Controlled door-entry systems with day and night caretakers have been introduced.

The main pressures affecting their allocation policies are the lack of traditional houses because of the Right to Buy and the low demand for peripheral estates. Households with small children are offered tower-block homes; this policy has not changed in the last ten years.

The only category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation is people requiring fully adapted/wheelchair accessible housing.

There is no limit on the number of offers of accommodation made to potential tenants. There are substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and the authority consider this to be acceptable. They have no specific policies for removing children from the flats. The authority have introduced compensatory services/ facilities. They have provided a communal lounge and introduced a communal cleaning service.

The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They report that the housing division is building up a strong relationship with the tenants' movement. Effort is now concentrated on implementing and further developing their tenant participation policy.

VPXIYLDBSE

Dundee Federation of Tenants' Associations, 1 Foundary Lane, Dundee, DD4 6AY. Tel: 0382 23138

The Dundee Federation of Tenants' Associations provide a range of information and advice to individuals and groups. They support tenants in forming new asssociations. They support a range of tenants' groups in Dundee including those representing tower blocks.

Ardler Tenants' Action, TENF Troon Court, Ardler, Dundee, DD2 3SP. Contact: Tom Black.

This is described as an outer-city estate of six blocks of 12 to 18 storeys, consisting of 1,800 homes. It was built in 1968 and represents three/fifths of the estate. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. One section of one block provides sheltered housing.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are vandalism, poor security, poor sound insulation, tenants not taking turns in communal cleaning, and the influx of undesirable tenants, ie. drug dealers and glue sniffers.

When describing problems in the estate generally, they report that policing is poor with a slow response time. There are substantial numbers of children in the blocks which worries the action group. Complaining to councillors has produced no response. The council have not provided any compensatory services/facilities.

The group consider their council to be a poor one and they are unhappy with the level of consultation. A lively

newsletter is produced by Ardler Tenants' Action which pinpoints what is being done and identifies what tenants would like to be done.

HILDBSE

E

EALING

South Acton Residents' Associations' Federation (SARAF), c/o Oak Tree Community Centre, Osborne Road, London W3. Contact: Yvonne Say.

The South Acton Residents' Associations' Federation describe the area in which they work as inner city. They work with 20 tower blocks; 11 of 6 to 12 storeys, 8 of 12 to 18 storeys and one of over 18 storeys. The blocks include about 1,400 flats and represent one half of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1960 and the early 1980s.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. However, the council are conducting a feasibility study into the voluntary transfer of the blocks. There are no particular management schemes operating in the tower blocks.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are building defects - deterioration of the concrete has already resulted in major works on two blocks.

There is no sound insulation in the blocks; the entry-phones aren't working; cleaning is inadequate; there are infestations of cockroaches and rats; heating systems are inadequate; there are major plumbing problems, racial harrassment, defective street lighting, and water penetration, and no facilities for children and young people.

The federation feel that the largest block should be demolished. Asbestos has now been successfully removed from some of the blocks and three blocks now have pitched rooves which has stopped water penetration. When describing the problems on the estate generally, the federation point to the doubling of the rent last year, and the £10 per week increase this year.

Nurseries have been closed and services provided by the local community and youth centre have been reduced. The federation feels that the estate 'lacks everything'. They report that increasing numbers of vulnerable people are being moved into the blocks. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the federation are concerned about this. They have lobbied for improved facilities.

The federation report that most of their committee are single parents and they are particularly aware of the importance of adequate facilities for children. The local authority have not introduced compensatory services/ facilities into the blocks. The federation consider their council to be indescribably bad. They do not take part in any regular consultation with the council. Prior to 1990 they attended a steering committee for the estate, but they report that the subsequent Conservative council abolished it.

CVHPXIYLRDBSE

Moat Housing Society Ltd, St John's House, Suffolk Way, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1TG Tel: 0732 457616.

MOAT work in over 30 local authority areas but only manage tower blocks in the London Borough of Ealing. They describe the estate in Ealing as an outer estate. It includes one 6 to 12 storey tower block This block contains 83 homes and was built in 1973.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspect of the block which gives them most cause for concern is the lack of play areas. The current allocations policy for the block involves housing only homeless people nominated by the local authority, on assured shorthold tenancies. There are substantial numbers of children living in the block. No compensatory services/facilities have been introduced. The society have a good relationship with their tenants and take part in regular consultation with them.

PYDS

EAST KILBRIDE

Dunlop Tower Residents Association, 24 Dunlop Tower, East Kilbride, Scotland, G75 OBS. Tel: 03552 41024. Contact: Andrew Gallacher.

The Dunlop Tower Residents Association report that they live in a new town (of 45 years standing). There are 12 tower blocks in East Kilbride; all of 12 to 18 storeys. Dunlop Tower represent one block which contains 87 flats and they estimate that together the blocks would contain about 1,000 flats. The blocks were built between 1945 and 1972.

The method of construction was mostly large panel Bison, nine blocks were built by Wimpey and three by the Small Building Construction Co. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners although they believe that such a transfer is likely in the next five years.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspects of the tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are deteriorating metal windows and the frequently blocked drains. The block has experienced problems with Bluebottles in the upper flats and the environmental health section have become involved. The association report that the current allocations policy seems to favour young homeless people. There are not

substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. As the number of children has fallen a play room has been converted into a common room. The association consider their council, East Kilbride Development Corportation to be a fair one and they do take part in some consultation with them.

V

EASTBOURNE

Eastbourne Borough Council, Housing Advice Centre, 61 Seaside Road, Eastbourne, EJX. Tel: 0323 410000. Contact: Adrian Channon.

Eastbourne Borough Council own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contain 40 flats and represents 1% of the council-owned stock. The block was built in 1965 and the method of construction used was large panel Bison. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no specific management schemes operating in the block. The aspect of their tower block which gives them most cause for concern is maintenance. The authority have tackled a range of problems. They have carried out improvements to the heating system, installed a door-entry system, and they plan to improve communal areas, construct a porch and improve the landscaping.

Fire alarms have been fitted. Windows open automatically on the stairway when an alarm sounds to allow the escape of smoke. They describe the pressures affecting their allocation policies as a lack of suitable family accommodation, increasing homelessness, and changes to the rules on short-term leasehold properties.

Households with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks. This policy has not changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower block flat. There is no limit to the number of alternative offers of accommodation that each potential tenant receives. There are not substantail numbers of children living in their block. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. Eastbourne consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. The tenants' consultative committee meets every two months, and area tenant associations' committees meet monthly with area officers. Informal meetings take place as necessary.

HFSE

EDINBURGH

City of Edinburgh District Council, Housing Department, 23/25 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3BH. Tel : 031 225 2424. Contact: Dave Drummond.

The City of Edinburgh District Council own 73 tower blocks; 37 of 6 to 12 storeys, 32 of 12 to 18 storeys and four of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 5,686 flats and represent 13.8% of the council owned stock. The blocks were built between 1952 and 1974. The methods of construction used are described as in situ concrete frame/block infill (42), in situ concrete frame/no fines infill (14), large panel Bison (8) and large panel Skarne (9).

Four blocks have been demolished due to the excessive rehabilitation costs. Four blocks have been transferred to other owners. Martello Court was sold to a private developer, John McKay. All the flats in Martello Court are now owner-occupied. Blocks 4, 5 and 6 Hailesland Park were transferred to Wester Hailes Community Housing Association (WHCHA) for demolition. 100 houses are being built on the 63 acre site for let by WHCHA. When describing the management schemes operating in their blocks the council report that shift caretaking has been introduced to 11 blocks, this includes concierge type caretaking in three blocks. New allocations policies based on age have been introduced in five blocks. The aspect of their tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern is security.

They have also been unable to extend shift caretaking due to lack of finance. The council report that their most successful tower block scheme has been the upgrading of two Leith blocks: Citadel and Persevere Court. They now have shift caretaking, overcladding, heat with rent, no tenants under 35 and no allocations to families with children. These changes have greatly improved blocks which previously experienced serious problems with drug abuse, vandalism and voids.

When outlining the pressures affecting their allocations policies they report that they have 25,000 households on the waiting list, a large homelessness problem and a diminishing stock. They have approximately 5,000 properties available each year. Households with small children are offered tower-block homes, these policies have changed in the last ten years. Children are excluded from some blocks, some are let only to people over 35.

The council would not offer tower blocks to wheelchair users. When describing how many offers of accomodation are made to potential tenants they report that there is no penalty for refusing an offer.

There are substanial numbers of children in the blocks and the council does not consider this to be acceptable. The authority does have specific policies to remove children from blocks, extra transfer points are awarded. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities into the blocks because it is Edinburgh's policy to exclude children from blocks as they are upgraded. The lack of low-rise housing in many parts of the city make it difficult to adhere to this policy.

Westfield Court, built in 1952, was designed with a nursery. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a fair one and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants organisations. There are several kinds of consultation; written, evening meetings, information plans, surveys, and through action committees.

The council has a 'Code of Practice" which governs its work with tower-block tenants' and residents' groups. The code was developed jointly with the Flats Fight Back group.

HPXIYLDBSE

Craigour High Flats Action Group, 5/2 Moredun House, Craigour Green, Edinburgh, EH17 7RL. Tel: 031 664 3700. Contact: Nan Farquhar.

The Craigour High Flats Action Group describe their estate as an outer estate. It includes six tower blocks, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 546 flats. They were built between 1965 and 1967. The method of construction was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give most cause for concern are security, gangs of young people and vandalism. The association are negotiating with the council now for the use of a community flat.

When describing problems on the estate generally, they point to vandalism and drugs. They feel concerned about the current allocations policy for their blocks which seems to be leading to a lot of young anti-social tenants moving in. There are substantial numbers of children living in the flats and the association are concerned about this, particularly in relation to their safety.

They report that there is very little safe play space around the blocks and there is no security inside the blocks, and this is worrying when children move around unaccompanied. The authority have provided a play area at the back of one of the blocks. The association consider their council to be awful. They report that they are in regular contact with their housing liaison officer and find her helpful when problems arise.

HPXIYLDBS

Edinburgh Community Design Service, 72 Newhaven Road, Edinburgh, EH6 5QJ. Tel: 031 555 2777.

Edinburgh Community Design Service is a company controlled by a committee of people representing the communities of the major public housing areas around Edinburgh. It is their aim to provide professional design and technical services to community groups, tenants' associations and voluntary organisations in the Edinburgh area.

They have been working for tower-block tenants in Fort House on a feasibility study of their deck-access block. They are hoping that a major refurbishment programme including a concierge scheme will result. The service have also carried out window surveys in a number of blocks.

BSE

Edinburgh SHAC, 103 Morrison Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8BX. Tel: 031 2298 8711.

Edinburgh SHAC provide a range of information and housing advice to individual council tenants and tenants' associations. They can also advise on the voluntary transfer of housing and the implications for individual tenants' rights.

ELLESMERE PORT

Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council, Civic Offices, 4 Civic Way, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral. Tel: 051 356 6481. Contact: Paul Ince.

Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council own three tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 153 flats and represent 1% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built in 1967. The method of construction was traditional.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating in their blocks, the authority report that one block is designated for the over 50s. The aspects of their tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern are security of common parts and of individual flats, and enforcing tenancy conditions.

The council applied for a three-year Estate Action scheme to refurbish common parts in the three blocks and to install a concierge door-entry system and CCTV security system. The CCTV system and security doors for individual flats to be installed in the first year.

When describing the pressures on their allocation policies, the council report that at 31.3.91 their stock was 7,749 and the waiting list was 4,110. In 1990/1 they made only 370 lettings to waiting-list applicants. Housholds with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks; this policy has not changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower block flat.

When outlining the number of offers made to each potential tenant, the council report that they reserve the right to defer an application for six months if a 'reasonable' offer is refused. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks. They have specific policies to

remove those that do. Expectant women are eligible for a priority transfer, and if the other transfer requirements are met a two-bedroom house or ground floor flat will be offered as soon as possible after the birth of the child.

The authority have not introduce any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be fair and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. Officers attend tenants' association meetings. Detailed consultation occurred for the Estate Action proposal, including individual visits, public meetings, displays and committee meetings of officers, tenants and councillors.

LS

ENFIELD

London Borough of Enfield, Housing Department, PO Box 60, Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield. Tel: 081 982 7147. Contact: Diane Clingwood.

The London Borough of Enfield own 63 tower blocks, 23 of 6 to 12 storeys, 26 of 12 to 18 storeys and 14 of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 4,723 flats and represent 27% of the council owned stock. The blocks were built between 1950 and 1970. The methods of construction used are described as in situ concrete, Wates and large panel systems including Reema.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no management schemes operating in the blocks although an estate management board is being considered. The authority have carried out a variety of improvements to the tower blocks. There is a major estate action scheme at Alma Road. A programme of heating replacement is underway, underfloor heating is being replaced by Economy 7. Improvements to play facilities and safety standards for children are underway. They are undertaking extensive concrete repairs, lifts renewals are ongoing and environmental improvements have been carried out.

Households with small children are offered tower-block homes and they report that at present there are no restrictions as to which floor. This policy has changed in the last ten years. Their previous policy allowed families with children to be allocated flats up to the tenth floor only. The categories of tenant to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation are elderly people, except for the sheltered units, and people with particular medical problems.

When describing the numbers of offers of accommodation that each potential tenant receives, the authority report that homeless households receive only one offer and other applicants receive an unlimited number within reason. There are substantial numbers of children in their tower blocks and the authority do not consider this to be acceptable. The authority have no specific policies to remove children from the flats.

The authority report that they are unable to offer alternative accommodation, as they have very few family-sized units available. They regularly review their policy and expect that 'transfer cases may be rehoused at some point'.

The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities, for example, at Alma Road. They also run a playbus project which visits high-rise estates. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. There is a federation of community associations which covers the borough and which the council consults with, as well as with individual tenants' associations.

HPYDBSE

Playbusters, Wessex Hall, Exeter Road, Ponders End, Enfield, EN3 7TN. Tel: 081 804 2274. Contact: Anne Godwin.

Playbusters provide a playbus service throughout the London Borough of Enfield. They visit a range of estates, several of which are high rise. Playbusters have two buses which operate between 3.45pm and 5.45pm.

The playbus sessions are requested by housing officers or tenants' associations. All the sites visited have substantial numbers of children between the ages of five and 12. There is generally no other play provision on the chosen estates.

P

EXETER

Exeter City Council, Civic Centre, Exeter, EX1 1JN. Tel: 0392 77888. Contact: Helen Singleton.

Exeter City Council own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 61 flats and represents 0.9% of the council-owned stock. The block was built in 1968. The method of construction is described as pre-cast concrete slabs, dry lining externally and internal partitions.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The block provides sheltered accommodation and has a warden-call alarm system. The council experience some difficulty in letting the flats.

They report that elderly people do not like the lifts or the height of the block. Also cats and dogs are not allowed in the block.

One flat was offered 11 times before it was accepted. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes; this was the case even before the block became sheltered.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the block. The council consider

their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with them.

FB

Rennes House Tenants' Association, 14 Rennes House, Vaughan Road, Whipton, Exeter, Devon, EX1 3JW. Tel: 0392 67737. Contact: Joan Griffin.

Rennes House Tenants' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. The estate includes one block of 6 to12 storeys. The block contains 61 flats and was built in 1965. The method of construction is described as French-style concrete blocks.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The block provides sheltered accommodation.

The association have confronted a range of tower-block problems in response to which the heating system has been replaced by storage heaters.

A community room offers activities intended to overcome tenant isolation.

Asbestos tiles have been removed. A door-entry system has been installed. A problem with water penetration hasn't as yet been remedied.

The current allocation policy is to offer flats to people over 65 years of age. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block.

The association consider their council to be a fair/good one and they take part in regular consultation with them.

They report that meetings are held at all levels about all aspects of the estate. Lack of money is reported to be the main obstacle to dealing with the problems being experienced.

HIAYBS

F

FALKIRK

Falkirk District Council, Municipal Buildings, Falkirk, FK1 5RS. Tel: 0324 24911. Contact: R. Moodie/I. Bryce.

Falkirk own 13 tower blocks, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1098 flats and represent 4% of the total stock. The blocks were built between 1966 and 1971. The methods of construction used are described as Wimpey No Fines (4), large panel Bison (2) and Crudens, columns and beams (7).

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. One of the blocks provides sheltered accommodation for the elderly. The aspects of the tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern are repairs and upgrading costs.

A number of improvements have been carried out in the blocks. All now have controlled-entry systems. Heating systems have been replaced. Community/tenants rooms have been provided. A programme of re-roofing is underway and a programme of overcladding is being considered. One block, Glenfuir Court, has been overclad and refurbished to a high standard.

The block is now sheltered and has laundry facilities, committee rooms, carpeted and heated landings and a Homecare Assistant's office. There is a high percentage of elderly tenants in all of the Falkirk blocks. The sheltered block and the 2-bedroom flats in all the blocks are linked to a mobile emergency care system.

Households with small children are never offered tower-block homes. This policy has not changed in the last ten years. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with them. The consultation is largely on repair and upgrading issues.

HIYDBS

Callendar Park Tenants' Association, Leishman Tower Clubroom, Seaton Place, Callendar Estate, Falkirk, FK1 1TH. Tel: 0324 26422. Contact: Nancy Waddell.

The Tenants' Association report that this tower-block estate was "gifted to the council". There are seven tower blocks on the estate, all of 12 to18 storeys. There are 84 flats in each block. The flats were built between 1967 and 1969. Crudens were the builders and the method of construction was in situ concrete.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give the most cause for concern include rain penetration, as a result of which several flats have had to be left empty.

The tenants' association report that the allocations policy causes concern for many tenants: "some tenants have come from model lodging houses and are alcoholics, causing much concern to tenants who have lived here for years".

The tenants feel that the caretaking services could be more thorough and they also experience problems with condensation and drafts. In response to the range of problems experienced in the block, Falkirk District Council have refurbished four of the blocks and installed gas central heating.

The electric heating remaining in the other three blocks is inadequate and costly to run. The system is almost obsolete and it is very difficult to get

spares. The tenants' association report a range of other problems on their estate, primarily a lack of transport into town and no Saturday bus service. There is only one general store on the estate and as tenants are mostly pensioners, some in their 80s, this is a major problem.

When describing the allocation policies operating in their blocks, the association report that when they originally moved in (in 1967) the tenants felt that they were hand-picked. This is no longer the situation and some of the tenants are very unsettled by their new neighbours.

Households with young children are being offered flats which is a change of policy. However, there are not substantial numbers of children living in the block and this is not a major worry.

The tenants have been asking the council for some years to move the drying area on the roof to the ground floor. As the lifts do not go up to the roof, it is very difficult for the elderly tenants to climb up the stairs.

The tenants' association report that their relationship with their council is fair. However, they have invited representitives from the council to open meetings and they have declined, saying that it is not their policy.

HYFDB

G

GLASGOW

Glasgow City Council, Housing Department, Lomand House, 9 George Square, Glasgow G2 1TG. Tel: 041-221-9600.

Glasgow own 259 tower blocks. The methods of construction used include large-panel Bison, Reema, and Tracoba. The majority of high-rise flats provide family accommodation. Glasgow have tackled a number of high-rise prob lems. In response to problems with dampness and condensation, many blocks have been overclad. The council have decided to demolish a large-panel Reema block on Royston Hill as a result of structural defects.

Assist Architects Limited, 100 Kerr Street, Bridgeton, Glasgow, G40 2PQ. Tel: 041 554 0505. Contact: John Gilbert.

Assist Architects Limited are a group of architects who function as a co-operative. They have worked with tenants in the Glasgow area for 15 years. Assist are committed to the full participation of tenants and other users in the design and implementation of projects which they undertake. They concentrate on working in areas of greatest need.

They undertake new build and refurbishment work. They worked with the tenants' association in Royston Hill on plans to redevelop their neighbourhood. They are currently working with another tenants' group on the refurbishment of tower blocks.

BE

Balgrayhill Tenants' Co-operative, 1/2 22 Viewpoint Place, Springburn, Glasgow, G21 3AS. Tel: 041 557 0315. Contact: Mr J Innes

Balgrayhill Tenants' Co-operative manage an estate of four tower blocks; two of 25 storeys and two of 24 storeys. The blocks contain 392 flats. The method of construction was large panel Reema

Altogether there are 392 two- and three-bedroom flats in the four blocks.The co-op was established four years ago.

Since taking over the management of the blocks, they have carried out a range of improvements. The outsides of the blocks and the communal areas inside have been decorated. Landings have been tiled. They have upgraded the lighting around the blocks.

A range of environmental improvements have been made. Substantial numbers of children live in the blocks. It is their policy to house families with children under the age of 12 no higher than the 10th floor. The co-op report that there are no major problems with the blocks.

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14 Storey Tenants' Association (Wyndford), 110 Glenfinnan Road, Wyndford Estate, Glasgow, G20 8JH. Tel: 041 946 2052. Contact: David Bogle.

The 14 Storey Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. There are 17 tower blocks on the estate; eight of 6 to 12 storeys, five of 12 to 18 storeys and four of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1104 flats and represent 56% of the total estate.

The blocks were built between 1964 and 1975. The methods of construction used were large panel Bison and in situ concrete. No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

Several of the blocks provide sheltered accommodation. The association consider their relationship with their landlord, Scottish Homes, to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with them.

PY

Heatwise Glasgow, 8 Elliot Place, Glasgow, G3 8EP. Tel: 041 248 3993. Contact: Ann Cale

Heatwise is a large heating advice and house insulation project. They run about 30 schemes in Glasgow, several of which cover multi-storey flats. They have an information and visiting service to advise on energy efficiency in the home. This is a free service.

In addition to their practical insulation work, they provide technical advice to tenants' associations on heating-related issues and have compiled a heating condensation data base.

Their central support unit has an independent advice and information section, which undertakes advice and technical support for any tenants' association in the city.

H D

Kennishead Tenant Management Co-operative, Kennishead Hall, 10 Kennishead Avenue, Glasgow, G46 8PR. Tel: 041 636 1919. Contact: John Hughes, Administrator.

The Kennishead Tenant Management Co-op describe their estate as an inner-city one. There are five tower blocks, all over 18 storeys, on the estate. This represents 660 homes and is 5/6 of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1969 and 1970. The method of construction used was large panel bison.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished and no blocks have been tranferred to other owners. The Tenant Management Co-operative manages all of the tower blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are allocations and repairs.

The Tenant Management Co-operative report that community facilities were non-existent until they made a successful urban-aid appli-cation for a community hall and the hall was opened in August 1991. A new security/concierge system began in March 1991.

The Tenant Management Co-op are responsible for allocations within the block. Three quarters of the applicants must come from the local authority waiting list and the remaining quarter may be nominated by existing co-operative members.

The co-op report that there are substantial numbers of children living in their blocks. They are not particularly concerned about this. The co-op have introduced compensatory services/ facilities in to the blocks. For example, they have started a pensioners' lunch club and a play-group, both of which run in their newly opened community hall.

The co-op report that their relationship with their council is a good one. The co-op is a partnership between the members and their landlord. They have regular monthly meetings with the housing manager and day-to-day contact with the local housing office.

VHPIYDBS

Lomond Tenant Management Co-op, 140 Charles Street, Glasgow, G21 2QD. Tel: 041 552 5313. Contact: Elizabeth Brannigan

Lomond Tenant Management Co-op represent an inner-city estate including one tower block. The block is over 18 storeys and contains 117 flats. The block represents one fifth of the total estate and was built in 1961. The method of construction was in situ concrete.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. The block is managed by a tenant management co-op. The aspect of the block which gives them most cause for concern is security. They have also experienced problems with asbestos.

The major problem on the estate generally is car crime. There are not substanial numbers of children living in the block.

No compensatory services/facilities have been provided. The co-op consider the council to be fair and they consult with them on the management of the estate.

AS

Shelter, 53 St Vincent Crescent, Glasgow G3 8NQ. Tel: 041 221 8995. Contact: Allie Doyle.

This Shelter office covers the Strathclyde and Dunfries and Galloway regions. They offer advice and support to individuals and groups on housing issues. They have worked with groups on tower-block issues involving heating, dampness and building defects.

They were involved in the campaign to make the Royston Hill Reema large panel-system blocks safe. They are currently advising tenants on the implications of the voluntary transfer of estates.

BH

GLENROTHES

Glenrothes Development Corporation, Unicorn House, Falkland Place, Glenrothes, Fife, KY7 5PD. Tel: 0592 754343. Contact: Susan Ardron.

Glenrothes Development Corporation own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 61 flats and represents 1.04% of the total stock. The block was built in 1968. The method of construction used was Wimpey No Fines. No blocks have been demolished.

In April the block, Raeburn Heights, was privately factored. Joseph Smith, Chartered Valuation Surveyors, were responsible for managing the block until June 1989. Then a resident flat-owner took over the role of factor. The corporation gave up the management of the block because the majority of tenants became owner-occupiers; the corporation are currently landlord to only nine ot the properties.

The block is currently managed by factor with representation from the corporation for their remaining tenants. Redecoration works have been carried out on the block and entrance security has been upgraded. There are no children living in the block. The corporation consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' orga-ganisations.

HBS

GLOUCESTER

Gloucester City Council, Herbert Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester, GL1 2EQ. Tel: 0452 22232. Contact: Mrs J Pitt.

Gloucester City Council own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 80 flats and represents 1.3% of the total stock. The block was built in 1963. The method of construction was Wates. No blocks have

been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The blocks provided sheltered accommodation for the elderly. A number of improvments have been carried out to the block. The underfloor heating system has been replaced by storage heaters. Security has been upgraded and a warden call-system installed.

Communal rooms have been provided, concrete repairs have been carried out, a new roof has been fitted and environmental improvements have been undertaken. Households with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks and this policy has not changed during the last ten years.

The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. Consultation took place during the conversion to sheltered housing and a tenant representative acted as a link between the housing department, contractor and tenants. Regular contact has been maintained.

VHYBSE

GOSPORT

Gosport Borough Council, Housing Services, Town Hall, Gosport, Hampshire, PO12 1EB. Tel: 0705 584242. Contact: Sue Davis.

Gosport Borough Council own five tower blocks; three of 6 to 12 storeys and two of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 434 flats. The 6 to 12 storey blocks were built in about 1968 and the 12 to 18 storey blocks were built about 1962. The method of construction is described as reinforced concrete frame (Wimpey No Fines).

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are maintenance problems, especially water penetration; plus the need to justify service charges to leaseholders. The authority have actively encouraged residents to change from underfloor heating to storage heaters which are separately metered.

When describing the pressures on their allocation policies, they report that they have difficulty in finding suitable families with children over the age of 14 to be allocated the two-bedroom flats. Households with small children are never offered tower-block homes. This policy has changed in the last ten years.

The tower blocks are now open to the general waiting list; previously there were certain requirements, e.g. references were required and income had to be above a certain level. The other categories of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat are people who are mentally ill, wheelchair users and families with more than three members.

There are not substantial numbers of children in their blocks and they have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

HL

Seaward Tower Residents' Association, 115 Seaward Tower, Trinity Green, Gosport, Hants, PO12 1HH. Tel: 0705 526995. Contact: Barbara Millar.

The Seaward Tower Block is between 12 and 18 storeys. It contains 120 flats and it was built in the 1960s. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspects of their tower block which gives them most cause for concern are general cleanliness and maintenance. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the block. The association report that they have regular on-sight meetings with the housing department.

LBS

GREENWICH

London Borough of Greenwich, Peggy Middleton House, 50 Woolwich New Road, London SE18. Tel: 081 854 8888. Contact: David Norwood

The London Borough of Greenwich own 128 tower blocks; 109 of 6 to 12 storeys, 11 of 12 to18 storeys and eight of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 6,895 flats and represent 21% of the total council stock. The blocks were built between 1956 and 1982. The methods of construction used include Precast(27), in situ concrete(96) and steel frame(5).

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular types of management scheme operating in the blocks. The authority have confronted a range of tower-block problems.

When outlining the pressures affecting their allocation policies, the authority point to the unprecedented increase in homelessness. Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks and there are no restrictions as to which floor. This policy has changed in the last ten years – they used not to allocate above the fourth floor. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat.

There are substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and the authority consider this to be unacceptable. They have no specific policies to remove children from the blocks. They have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into their blocks. Greenwich consider their

relationship with their tenants to be a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

CVHPXIAYFLRDBSE

Greenwich Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations, Old Town Hall, Polytechnic Street, London, SE18. Tel: 081 854 2517. Contact: Ms Bobby Nelson.

Greenwich Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations is a voluntary organisation which employs three workers. They provide advice and information on a range of housing issues.

They have supported tower-block tenants on large panel Bison estate who are having problems with dampness, condensation and the heating system. They are also involved in lobbying nationally for the reinvestment of capital receipts in housing.

B

Elmley Street Tenants' Association, 3 Elmley, Plumstead, London. SE18 7 NW. Tel: 081 316 5470. Contact: Josephine Kenny.

The Elmley Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. There are two blocks on the estate, both over 18 storeys.The blocks contain l60 flats and represent about half the estate. The blocks were built in the l960s and 1970s.The method of construction used was large panel Bison.

No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give most cause for concern are security, vandalism, children living at a height, furniture being thrown from balconies, the rubbish chutes, graffiti and dirty stairways. A mixture of people are currently moving into the blocks - people with children, people who have been homeless. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the tenants' association are worried about this.

No compensatory services or facilites have been introduced. The association consider their council to be a poor one. They take part in regular consultation with the council, and they participate in the Tenants' Consultation and Participation Committee.

HPXIYFLDBSE

Greenwich Housing Rights, 32-34 Hare Street, Woolwich, London, SE18 6LZ. Tel: 081 854 8848. Contact: Ms Kuldip Kaur.

Greenwich Housing Rights provide advice and information on a range of housing issues to individuals and tenants groups in Greenwich. They also provide support for tenants wishing to form tenants' associations.

They recently helped tenants in Claymill House on the Glyndon Road Estate to form a tenants' association. The centre have undertaken inspections of flats in large-panel Bison blocks and supported tenants in taking action under the environmental protection act about condensation and dampness. They have carried out this work with Plumpstead Law Centre.

D

GRIMSBY

Great Grimsby Borough Council, Devonshire House, Bull Ring Lane, Grimsby, DN32 1ES. Tel: 0472 242000. Contact: Mrs P Dillerstone.

Great Grimsby Borough Council own six tower block, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 558 flats and represent 7.6% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1964 and 1966. The method of construction used was Wimpey no fines. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. One of the blocks provides sheltered housing, it was converted in 1990.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are the management costs and vandalism.

There is one Estate Acion scheme which includes the tower blocks. As part of which they have remodelled communal areas and introduced a concierge scheme and fitted UPvC double glazed windows in all flats. On-site management has been increased and tenant consultative groups have been established.

Because the flats are all one and two bedroom they are not suitable for families, and therefore, report the council, do not help in housing young homeless families, and they do not help to relieve pressure on their waiting list.

Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes. The only other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat is people who are mentally ill.

The authority believe that there are some children living in the blocks but they do not advocate this for children under ten and they would not allocate the flats to such families. They have found it diffficult to deal with this problem in relation to lodgers.

No compensatory services/facilities have been introduced. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

Consultative groups were set up to agree Estate Action bids. The on-site management is leading to improvements in the relationship between the council and tenants.

HIYLBSE

GUILDFORD

Guildford Borough Council, Millmead House, Guildford, GU2 5BB. Tel: 0483 505050.

Guildford Borough Council own two tower blocks, both of 6 to12 storeys. The blocks contain 80 flats and represent 1.23% of the total stock. The blocks were built between 1968 and 1970. The method of construction used was in situ concrete with brick external panels.

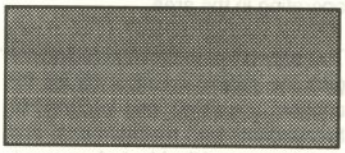
No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of their tower blocks which gives the authority most cause for concern is lift maintenance. They have responded to this by installing new lifts.

The pressures which affect their allocation policies most strongly are the shortage of family housing. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes. This policy has not changed in the last ten years.

There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower block flat. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks.

The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. The council report that housing officers attend meetings and produce newsletters

L



H

HACKNEY

The London Borough of Hackney replied to say they did not have the time available to complete our questionnaire.

Hackney Tenants' Federation, Old Town Hall, Box 5, 380 Old Street, London, EC1V 9LT. Tel: 071 739 2147. Contact: Gary Spencer.

The Hackney Federation of tenants give advice to individual tenants and to tenants' associations. They support tenants in establishing new associations.

They have established a tenants' participation promotion agency which promotes services covered by Section16, i.e. options for tenants' involvement in management of estates.

They have supported tenants on the Kingshold Estate in their asbestos campaign and the tenants of Clapton Park estate who are establishing a tenant management co-op.

A

Gascoyne Tenants Association, Members Clubroom, Wick Road, Hackney, London, E9. Contact: Welfare Officer.

The Gascoyne Estate is an inner-city estate. It contains four tower blocks, all of 10 storeys. The blocks contain 1,100 flats. The method of construction used was large-panel Taylor Woodrow Anglian system. The association have endeavoured to get the heating system upgraded. Children are housed in the blocks and the association are concerned about their safety.

XH

Trowbridge Tenants' Association, 50 Berkshire Road, Hackney Wick, London, E9 5LU. Tel: 071 986 0281. Contact: The Chairman.

Trowbridge Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner city one. The estate contains four tower blocks of between12 and 18 storeys. This represents 240 homes and is a half of the total estate. The blocks were built in 1967.

The method of construction used was large panel system. Three blocks have been demolished because of building defects. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The remaining blocks are due for demolition when Hackney Council have sufficient resources.

The tenants' association report that there are a lack of shops, services, adequate lighting and open space on their estate.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the tower blocks and local people who are concerned about this, report the TA.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the block. The tenants' association report that their relationship with the council is a poor - they believe that the consultation that takes place is a complete waste of time.

HPXYDBSE

HALTON

Halton Borough Council, Town Hall, Heath Road, Runcorn, WA7 5TD. Tel: 051 424 2061. Contact: Mr Jones.

Halton Borough Council own one tower block.The block has been upgraded and is popular with housing applicants. The block is represented by a tenants' association.

HAMILTON

Hamilton District Council, Housing Department, 15 Brandon Street, Hamilton, ML1. Tel: 0698 282323. Contact: Jim Aitken/Stewart Montgomery.

Hamilton District Council own two tower blocks, both of 6 to12 storeys. The blocks contain 147 flats and represent 0.7% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1970 and 1971. The method of construction used was large panel Bison.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

There are no aspects of the blocks which give cause for concern at the moment. Door-entry systems have been installed to improve security.

The authority report that the main pressure affecting their allocations policy is high demand. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes.

There are no other categories of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and they have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities into the blocks.

The authority report that their relationship with their tenants is good/ fair and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

S

HAMMERSMITH

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, Housing Centre, 77 Glenthorne Road, London, W6 OLJ. Tel: 081 748 3020. Contact: Sharon Whittington.

The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham report that they own 56 tower blocks, approximately. They have 1,201 dwellings in blocks of 6 to 9 storeys and 1,936 dwellings in blocks of over ten storeys. In total their blocks contain 3,137 flats and represent 18% of the council-owned stock.

The blocks were built between 1954 and 1972. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are sheltered housing schemes operating on the Edward Woods Estate and the Clement Attlee Estate.

The aspect of their tower-block stock which gives the authority most cause for concern is safety. The authority have confronted a wide range of problems and have responded by installing concierge schemes, carrying out Estate Action schemes, improving play areas and implementing community development programmes.

When ou ining the pressures which affect their allocations policy, the authority report that 88% of all lettings are made to priority homeless cases. Households with small children are offered tower-block homes; there are restrictions as to which floor. Children under ten are only housed up to the tenth floor. These policies have not changed in the last ten years.

The authority will also only house people over 60 up to the tenth floor and people with mobility problems are not housed above the ground floor. One offer of accommodation only is made to homeless people and other emergency transfers. All other transfer and waiting list applicants receive two offers.

There are substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and the authority have no specific policies to remove children from the flats. They have introduced compensatory services/facilities; they have provided play space and community halls. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. The authority report that officers from the housing services department attended 150 meetings with the 50 registered tenants' and residents' associations during the last year.

In addition five questionnaires or local surveys were carried out during the year, as well as a special project undertaken by the Safe Neigh–bourhood Unit (SNU). The SNU survey evaluated the concierge services and recommended improvements when appropriate.

As a result of this the council won two first prizes from a London-wide panel of tenants' judges in a competition to choose the best process of tenant consultation and the best evaluation scheme for an existing service.

HPXIAYFLRDBSE

Hammersmith & Fulham Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations, 217a Ashcroft Square, Hammersmith, London, W60YP. Tel: 081 748 4114. Contact: Kevin or Gaye.

There are over 30 tower blocks in the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham. The federation report that more than ten are of 6 to12 storeys, more than 15 are of 12 to18 storeys, and ten are over 18 storeys. The blocks were built between the 1950s and the 1980s. The methods of construction used varied.

No blocks have been demolished in Hammersmith & Fulham and none has been transferred to other owners. The federation reports that there are no particular management schemes operating in the area.

The aspects of the tower blocks that give the federation most cause for concern are safety and security, lift breakdowns and maintenance, and maintenance of the blocks in general.

When describing the current allocation policy in Hammersmith & Fulham, the federation report that there are now few restrictions on who is allocated to a tower block. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the numbers are increasing.

The federation report that they and local people are concerned about this. The federation say there has not been a concerted campaign about children in blocks but individual TAs have raised the issue with the council.

The federation report that a minimal amount of compensatory services/ facilities have been introduced into the blocks. The Safe Neighbourhood Unit have been working on two estates in the borough and the federation are awaiting their report.

The federation feel that their relationship with the council is fair and they do take part in regular consultation with them. They participate in regular area housing sub-committees.

CVHPXIAYLRDBSE

Ashcroft Square Tenants Association, 4 Ashcroft Square, London, W6 0JU. Tel: 081 748 4033. Contact: Mr F A King.

The Ascroft Square Tenants Association describe their estate as an inner city one. There are seven blocks on the estate, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 223 flats and represent 100% of the estate. The blocks were built in 1977 and the method of construction used was large panel system.

No blocks have been demolished and none have been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the tower blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern is noise disturbance from nearby railways. When describing their estate generally, the Association report "the police say it is a rat run for crime". There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. Local people and the Association are concerned about this. In the Association's opinion "Hammersmith Council do not want to know about this problem". The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the block.

The association report that their relationship with their council is fair, they take part in regular consultation as there are meetings every two months.

HPXAYLDBS

Caroline Estate Tenants' Association, 37 Henrietta House, Queen Caroline Street, Hammersmith, London, W6 9BT. Tel: 081 741 1271. Contact: Rita Stone.

The tenants' association describe their estate as inner city. There are two tower blocks, both of 6 to12 storeys. The blocks contain 76 flats. The blocks represent one third of the total estate and were built in 1953. The method of construction used is described as brick built.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The main cause for concern for the tenants association is lack of security. The association have faced a variety of tower-block problems, and report that in response to unreliable lifts new lifts have been installed. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the association report that local people are concerned about this.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services/ facilities into the block. The Caroline Estate TA feel that their relationship with the council is fair.

VPXIFLDBS

Charecroft Tenants' and Residents' Association, 94 Shepherds Court, Shepherds Bush Green, London, W12 8PW. Contact: Theresa Nobl.

Charecroft Tenants' and Residents' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. The estate contains four tower blocks all of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 436 flats and represent the whole estate. The blocks were built between 1968 and 1970 and the method of construction used was in situ concrete.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemles operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give the most cause for concern are inadequate heating, insufficient caretaking and asbestos.

The tower blocks' association has tackled a wide range of problems. When describing the problems on their estate, they point to regular break-ins, loud music and noisy parties from a club on the estate.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and local people are concerned about this. The association report that their play area is not safe, the play surface is concrete.

The association feel that their council is a poor one; they do take part in regular consultation but they report that they get "very poor results - we attend the housing sub-committee but all we get is promises".

CHXIAYLDS

Clem Attlee, Roque & Maton Residents' Association, Clem Atlee Court, Lillie Road, Fulham, London, SW6. Contact: Stephen Bashorun.

The association reports that their estate is an inner-city one. There are seven tower blocks, five of 6 to12 storeys and two of 12 to18 storeys.

The blocks contain about 500 flats representing 60% of the estate. The blocks were built between 1950 and 1960. The methods of construction used include large panel Bison (2) and in situ concrete (5).

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There is one tower block in addition to those represented by the tenants' association which is used for sheltered housing.

The aspects of the tower blocks which give the most cause for concern are uncontrolled access, lack of thermal insulation, lack of acoustic insulation, inadequate external decoration, poor layout of open space, inadequate maintenance of open space, and the allocations policy – people who have been discharged from institutions and drug dependents are housed on the estate without backup from any support services.

New central heating systems have been installed in the blocks and concierge schemes have been implemented in two of the 17-storey blocks. The association report that the other problems on the estate include insufficient parking space, lack of controlled access to the estate, inadequate youth facilities and "the problems that arise from graffiti, rowdyism, intimidation etc."

When describing the current allocations policy for the tower blocks, the association reports that the blocks include a range of accommodation - 1, 2 and 3-bedroom flats. So, although the majority of tenants have families with children, some singles and couples are housed there as well.

There are substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and the association reports that local people are concerned about this and have made a variety of protests about it. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. The association feel that their relationship with the council is poor. They do take part in regular consultation with the council. An area consultation committee exists "which is a token gesture to tenants as when it comes to the crunch they have no voting rights on any issues."

HPXILDBSE

Field Road Tenants' Association, 77 Glenthorne Road, Hammersmith, London, W6 0LJ. Tel: 081 748 3020. Contact: Dorothy Grove.

The association describe their estate as an outer estate. There is one block on the estate of 6 to12 storeys. The block contains 87 flats and represents a quarter of the total estate. It was built in 1982 of in situ concrete construction.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The aspect of their tower block which gives the association most cause for concern is the entry-phone system. When describing the current allocation policies for their block, the association report that one-parent families are increasingly being allocated flats.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks.

The association report that their relationship with the council is a good one and that regular consultation does take place through the Hammersmith & Fulham Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations.

PXIYFRS

Jepson House Tenants' & Residents' Association, 25 Jepson House, Pearscroft Road, Fulham, London, SW6 2BG. Contact: Mr T Flynn.

The association report that their estate is an inner-city one. The Jepson House Tenants' and Residents' Association represents two tower blocks, one of 6 to12 storeys and one of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 125 homes and represent 45% of the estate. They were built in the 1960s.

The method of construction used is described as concrete slabs, panels and bricks. No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none has been transferred to other owners. The association are not aware of any particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The aspects of the tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are the door-entry system, poor quality front doors, insufficient caretakers and a lack of supervision of minor repairs.

The association have confronted a variety of tower-block problems in response to which the council have installed a new central heating system and double glazing. However, the association report that they still experience serious draughts. Asbestos has been removed from communal areas but not from individual flats.

A new door-entry system has been installed and many problems have been experienced with it - doors, locks, pushbars etc. Following a fire in London, the tenants' association are concerned that the council have painted over layers of paint in communal areas and wonder if this conforms to BS 476 Part 7 1987.

When describing the other problems on their estate, the tenants' association point to the lack of parking restrictions, to traffic problems, problems with access for emergency services and a lack of consultation by various council departments, particularly in relation to the entr-phone system.

The people currently moving into their blocks are single people, married couples and families. There are about 15 children living in the blocks, and the association do not feel that this is a problem. The authority have not

introduced any compensatory services and facilities. The tenants' association feel that their council are fair and they do take part in regular consultation with them. However, they do not feel that the consultation is adequate. They feel they are told what is going to happen rather than genuinely consulted about it.

HAYFLDBSE

Sulivan Court Residents' Association, The Club Room, c/o 11 Sulivan Court, Peterborough Road, London, SW6 3BY. Tel: 071 736 8462. Contact: Hugh Schooling.

Sulivan Court Residents' Association represent one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 72 flats and is about a fifth of the total estate. It was built in 1954 and the method of construction used was in situ concrete.

No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating. The aspect of their tower block which gives most cause for concern is the roof.

The association report that the access to the roof, which is necessary for fire-safety reasons, enables young people and children to get to the roof, damage fittings and cause water penetration to the upper floors. They are also worried that children may fall from the roof and be killed.

The association have confronted a range of tower-block problems, in response to which the flats have recently been double glazed – this helped reduce dampness and condensation. Asbestos has been removed.

The residents have been working towards providing more playground facilities for the children with money from minor estates improvements. When describing the other problems on their estate the tenants write: "There have been times when gangs of roving youths have caused willful damage. They have been reported and a careful watch is being kept to see that there is no repetition". When describing the current allocations policy operating in their tower blocks, the tenants' association report that the block is a mixed community.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the block and the association say they and local people are concerned about this. The tenants' association and the local authority are attempting to introduce compensatory services/facilities into the block by improving the playground facilities.

They are receiving help from the council in terms of advice and money. The tenants' association feel that their council is a good one and they do take part in regular consultation with them. Monthly tenants' association meetings are held, usually with a council officer present.

The association also report that they take part in various consultations through the Hammersmith & Fulham Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations.

VHPXLR

HARLOW

Harlow District Council, Town Hall, Harlow, Essex. Tel: 0279 446301. Contact: D. Hawes.

Harlow District Council own 14 tower blocks; seven of 6 to 12 storeys and seven of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 575 flats and represent 4% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1950 and 1987.

The methods of construction are described as in situ concrete (10), large panel system (2) and brick and block (2). No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are security and families with children living in the flats. A variety of problems have been tackled, UPvC windows and new heating systems have been installed and external cladding has been carried out.

When outlining the pressures on their allocations policy, the council report that they have difficulty transferring families to larger accommodation in a reasonable amount of time.

Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes; this policy has not changed in the last ten years. They do not offer tower-block flats to families of more than four people, to people with special needs or to the elderly. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks; the authority have policies to remove those that do, their families are awarded extra points for a transfer.

The authority have not introduced compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be good/fair. They take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations through neighbourhood forums. They carry out customer satisfaction surveys and encourage the formation of residents' associations.

HLD

HASTINGS

Hastings Borough Council, Housing Department, Portland Place, Hastings, East Sussex, TH34 1QN. Tel: 0424 722020 CONTACT: Steve Foreman.

Hastings Borough Council own five tower blocks; one of 6 to 12 storeys and four of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 404 flats and represent 8.5% of the council-owned stock. Four of the blocks were built between 1963 and 1965 and one block was built in

1975. The methods of construction used are described as Wimpey No fines (4) and concrete ring beam and brickwork (1). No blocks have been demolished and none transferred to other owners.

Two of the 17-storey blocks provide sheltered accommodation. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are the deterioration of rendering and other associated concrete problems.

A range of improvements have been carried out to the blocks. Heating systems have been replaced, play facilities and a community centre have been provided, windows have been replaced and asbestos removed, fire precautions have been upgraded and fire alarms installed, lifts have been overhauled and they have undertaken a comprehensive programme to repair the external fabric of blocks.

The council have found it necessary to abandon, because of lack of suitable accommodation, their policy not to house children under 14 above the fourth floor. There is no category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat.

One offer of accommodation is made to all potential tenants before they must accept a tower-block flat.

The authority report that there are substanial numbers of children living in their blocks, they estimate the number to be 130. The authority do not consider this to be acceptable. They have no specific policies to remove children from the flats.

The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities; they have provided a new community centre. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be good. They take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

About 70% of their tenants are represented by tenants' associations, each association has a representative on the tenants' consultative group. This group meets six weekly to consider matters of housing policy.

HPXIAYFLB

Four Court Residents' Association, Sparkney Close, Stonehouse Drive, St Leonards on Sea, Sussex. Tel: 0424 430959. Contact: Mrs Kemp, Chairperson.

Four Court Residents' Association describe their estate as a medium/small town estate. There are four tower blocks represented by the Four Court Residents' Association, all of between 12 and 18 storeys. This represents 388 homes. The blocks were built in 1965.

No blocks have been demolished and none has transferred to other owners. Two of the four blocks are used to provide sheltered accommodation. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are the lifts, the rubbish chutes and litter.

The association report that a large number of children do live in their blocks and that they are concerned about this. There is a playgroup on the estate and a small play area, but the association report that this is frequently damaged and that older children chase the smaller ones away. The tenants' association report their relationship with the council is a fair one; they do take part in regular consultation.

PXIL

HAVANT

Havant Borough Council, Civic Offices, Civic Centre Road, Havant, PO9 2AX. Tel: 0705 446678. Contact: Mrs J Bound.

Havant Borough Council own three tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 168 flats and represent 4.5% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1966 and 1967. The method of construction was Wimpey No Fines. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The authority report that the blocks have been generally well maintained and well managed.

However, due to their age it has been necessary to undertake a three-year programme of major refurbishment.

The refurbishment involves overhauling and replacing electrical, mechanical and ventilation services and internal and external repairs to flats.

The authority report that the pressures on their allocations policy include the high level of homelessness, the large population in comparison to the size of the stock, the high level of Right to Buy sales and the resulting lack of family accommodation.

Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks, this policy has changed in the last ten years. Before December 1990 the authority only allocated flats up to the third floor to families with children. This policy was changed for the reasons stated above.

The only category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation is those who have a medical recommendation against it. They have no fixed policy on the number of offers made to potential tenants before they must accept a tower block.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and they have no policies to remove those that do. They have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks.

The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one. They don't take part in any regular consultation with tenants' organisations as none exists.

1975. The methods of construction used are described as Wimpey No fines (4) and concrete ring beam and brickwork (1). No blocks have been demolished and none transferred to other owners.

Two of the 17-storey blocks provide sheltered accommodation. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are the deterioration of rendering and other associated concrete problems.

A range of improvements have been carried out to the blocks. Heating systems have been replaced, play facilities and a community centre have been provided, windows have been replaced and asbestos removed, fire precautions have been upgraded and fire alarms installed, lifts have been overhauled and they have undertaken a comprehensive programme to repair the external fabric of blocks.

The council have found it necessary to abandon, because of lack of suitable accommodation, their policy not to house children under 14 above the fourth floor. There is no category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat.

One offer of accommodation is made to all potential tenants before they must accept a tower-block flat.

The authority report that there are substanial numbers of children living in their blocks, they estimate the number to be 130. The authority do not consider this to be acceptable. They have no specific policies to remove children from the flats.

The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities; they have provided a new community centre. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be good. They take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

About 70% of their tenants are represented by tenants' associations, each association has a representative on the tenants' consultative group. This group meets six weekly to consider matters of housing policy.

HPXIAYFLB

Four Court Residents' Association, Sparkney Close, Stonehouse Drive, St Leonards on Sea, Sussex. Tel: 0424 430959. Contact: Mrs Kemp, Chairperson.

Four Court Residents' Association describe their estate as a medium/small town estate. There are four tower blocks represented by the Four Court Residents' Association, all of between 12 and 18 storeys. This represents 388 homes. The blocks were built in 1965.

No blocks have been demolished and none has transferred to other owners. Two of the four blocks are used to provide sheltered accommodation. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are the lifts, the rubbish chutes and litter.

The association report that a large number of children do live in their blocks and that they are concerned about this. There is a playgroup on the estate and a small play area, but the association report that this is frequently damaged and that older children chase the smaller ones away. The tenants' association report their relationship with the council is a fair one; they do take part in regular consultation.

PXIL

HAVANT

Havant Borough Council, Civic Offices, Civic Centre Road, Havant, PO9 2AX. Tel: 0705 446678. Contact: Mrs J Bound.

Havant Borough Council own three tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 168 flats and represent 4.5% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1966 and 1967. The method of construction was Wimpey No Fines. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The authority report that the blocks have been generally well maintained and well managed.

However, due to their age it has been necessary to undertake a three-year programme of major refurbishment.

The refurbishment involves overhauling and replacing electrical, mechanical and ventilation services and internal and external repairs to flats.

The authority report that the pressures on their allocations policy include the high level of homelessness, the large population in comparison to the size of the stock, the high level of Right to Buy sales and the resulting lack of family accommodation.

Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks, this policy has changed in the last ten years. Before December 1990 the authority only allocated flats up to the third floor to families with children. This policy was changed for the reasons stated above.

The only category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation is those who have a medical recommendation against it. They have no fixed policy on the number of offers made to potential tenants before they must accept a tower block.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and they have no policies to remove those that do. They have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks.

The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one. They don't take part in any regular consultation with tenants' organisations as none exists.

HAVERING

Havering Tenants' Federation, 13 Warden Avenue, Collier Row, Romford, Essex, RM2 5P. Tel: 0708 769807. Contact: Pauline Koseda.

Havering Tenants' Federation were formed two years ago. They are run and managed by volunteers. The federation have nine member associations, four of which represent tower-block estates.

The federation carried out a survey of the numbers of children living in their tower blocks, because they were concerned about the health and safety implications. They organised a campaign, with a lot of media coverage, to get the council to reconsider their policy on housing children in blocks.

The council reponded positively and introduced a policy of no children above the fifth floor. The council are also trying to upgrade play facilities on some of the high-rise estates. A playground on the Mardyke Estate, which has eight blocks, is being relocated to a better location.

The federation also campaigned for improved fire-safety standards and the council have fitted smoke alarms in each tower block flat. A range of environmental improvements have been carried out on the estates. A pilot scheme, the 'menu system', is being carried out in two blocks on the Harold Hill Estate; a range of internal improvments are on offer to the tenants.

They must all have the new central heating system but any additional improvements are at their choice. Tenants can choose to have fitted wardrobes, artexed kitchen walls and so on.

There has been extensive consultation on this scheme and tenants are reported to be very happy with it. The Mardyke Estate has traditionally been considered to be a 'dump' estate. The federation went onto the estate to help tenants to form a tenants' association. The Mardyke Village Association were formed and they are now very active, running a range of activities, such as a mother-and-baby group.

Police officers are currently living in some of the flats to catch drug dealers. The federation hope that once this operation is completed it might be possible for the blocks to have concierge schemes.

Then, they feel, the atmosphere on the estate will have been radically improved. The federation consider the council to be excellent and they take part in regular consultation with them.

PXS

Chase Cross Tenants' Association, 13 Warden Avenue, Collier Row, Romford, Essex, RM2 5P. Tel: 0708 769807. Contact: Pauline Koseda.

The Chase Cross Tenants' Association represent an estate with one tower block of 14 storeys. The block contains 74 flats and represents less than a fifth of the estate. The block was built in 1966 approximately.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no children in the block. Environmental improvements have been carried out. The block has improved greatly over recent years, since the formation of the association.

The block has a good caretaker and now people leave out plants on the landings and their is a good atmosphere. Problems have been experienced with allocations made to people who are mentally ill.

Behavioural problems, such as the playing of one record loudly over and over for long periods, have caused stress to neighbours. It has now been agreed that social services must inform the housing department when such allocations are being made. The association consider the council to be excellent and take part in regular consultation with them.

E

Mardyke Village Tenants' Association, 21 Roman House, Roman Close, Rainham, Essex. RM13 8QA. Tel: 04027 25424. Contact: Mrs V Rutherford.

This is an outer estate of six 6 to12 storey blocks, consisting of 500 homes. The blocks were built in the mid l960s. The method of construction is described as concrete.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes in operation. The problems that have arisen are with dampness and lack of security. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks.

The association have asked for a new playground as the existing one is highly dangerous for young children, being made of brick and stone. They consider their council to be excellent and they take part in regular consultation with them.

DS

HOUNSLOW

London Borough of Hounslow, The Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow, TW3 4DN. Tel: 081 862 5742. Contact: Ms F Omar.

The London Borough of Hounslow own 22 tower blocks; nine of 6 to 12 storeys, seven of 12 to 18 storeys and six of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 2050 flats and represent 11% of the council owned stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1970. The methods of construction used are described as cast in situ frame with panels (4), hybrid system (6), cast in situ (11) and traditional brick and concrete (1).

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The aspects of the tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are their unsuitability for families with children, the lack of individual gardens and the limited play facilities on some estates.

The authority have responded to a variety of tower-block problems. Play facilities have been provided on some estates, safety and security have been improved and two concierge schemes have been established.

To break up the harsh high-rise landscape, a range of environmental improvements have been carried out – grass, trees, shrubs and flowers have been planted. A new pilot repairs appointment system has been introduced and a restructuring of priorities for repairs is being considered.

Structural works, such as over-cladding, have been carried out. A victim-centred approach is taken to those experiencing racial or other harrassment and the council have a race support team who specifically deal with racial problems.

Housholds with children under 14 are offerred tower-block homes up to the sixth floor. This policy has not changed in the last ten years. The only category of tenant to whom they would not offer a tower- block flat is those with restricted mobility.

The council make two offers to each potential tenant and if those are refused the application is deferred for a year. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the council have no policy to remove those that do.

They have introduced compensatory services/facilities into some of the blocks; they have provided a community centre, playgroups and a creche. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

Tenants' associations are represented on housing committees and the council meet regularly with the federation of tenants.

PXIYLRDBSE

Clements Court Residents' Association, 49 Clements Court, Green Lane, Hounslow, Middlesex, London, TW4 6EB. Tel: 081 577 6948. Contact: Nigel Bere.

The Clements Court Residents' Association describe their estate as a suburban mixed community. Clements Court is of 6 to 12 storeys and contains 78 flats. The block represents 62% of the total estate and was built in 1962. The method of construction used was in situ concrete.

No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The aspects of their tower block which give them most cause for concern are the fire hazard and associated smoke problems, and rubbish disposal and chute blockages.

The association have confronted a number of tower-block problems. They hope that the imminent installation of new windows will deal with the dampness/condensation problems. As the result of pressure from the association, the lifts have been refurbished.

Asbestos is to be removed when the new windows are installed. It is currently the authority's policy to remove asbestos as properties become empty. There has been an incident of racial harassment in the block. The council's race relations officer is investigating. When describing problems on their estate generally, they report that the only bus service has been withdrawn. There are no local shops. When describing the current allocation policies for their tower block, they report that families and single people are moved into the blocks.

Due to the housing shortage, the council have reversed their policy that prevented children being housed above the fifth floor. The association report that there are not substantial numbers of children living in their block, yet.

Local people are concerned about the rising numbers of children in the block; they feel that this will be a real problem in two to three years time. The association report that there are no play facilities inside the block. They have been given a small portacabin to use as a meeting room.

If they had the resources they would like to use it as a mother and toddler club as well. The association are disappointed that the council playbus doesn't visit their block.

They consider their council to be a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with them. They participate in the housing committee and they have a delegate to the Hounslow Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Asso-ciations.

AYFLRD

Heston Farm Residents' Association, Heston Farm, Heston, Middlesex. Contact: The Secretary.

The Heston Farm Residents' Association describe their estate as a suburban mixed community. The estate includes two tower blocks of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 168 flats and were built in the late 1960s. The method of construction used is described as concrete. No blocks have been demolished and

none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of the tower blocks which gives the tenants most cause for concern is security.

The residents' association are currently consulting with the London Borough of Hounslow over the possibility of a self-financing concierge scheme. The association report that Hounslow have two such schemes operating in other parts of the borough which have been very successful.

The tenants have also expressed concern about fire safety. Their fears centre on the overcladding and plastic windows frames which were installed as part of a refurbishment programme carried out in 1988. They report that the London Borough of Hounslow have a policy not to house children in tower blocks.

The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities into their blocks. They now have two play areas on the estate, one of which is for the under sevens. The association consider their council to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with them. A housing officer attends their monthly association meetings.

PFLS

HULL

Hull City Council, The Housing Department, Kenworthy House, 98-104 George Street, Hull, HU1 3DT. Tel: 0482 594239. Contact: Kay Coates.

Hull City Council own 36 tower blocks; nine of 6 to 12 storeys, 21 of 12 to 18 storeys and six of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 3,453 flats and represent 8% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1964 and 1979. The methods of construction used are described as traditional beam and column, Wimpey no fines and large panel Beals. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating in the blocks, the authority report that some provide sheltered housing and there are neighbourhood management committees.

The aspects of the tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are management problems, water penetration and lift breakdowns. The authority have carried out several improvements to the blocks.

Security and community facilities have been improved through Estate Action schemes. Improvements to insulation, heating and lifts and the introduction of rain-cladding are reported to be underway, although severely restricted by resources.

The authority report that there is a low demand for tower-block accommodation.

Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes and this policy was implemented five years ago. There are no other categories of tenant to whom a tower block flat would not be offered.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the council does have policies to remove those that are. If an application for a transfer is made when a child is born, the authority attempt to make the offer of a house by the time the child is two.

The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities into their blocks. Communal facilities have been provided in sheltered blocks and community resources/centres have been provided as part of Estate Action schemes.

The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be fair and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations via the neighbourhood committees.

HPIYLDBSE

KEY TO CODES

Cockroaches	**C**
Other vermin	**V**
Inadequate heating systems	**H**
Inadequate play facilities	**P**
Lack of safety for children	**X**
Tenant isolation or depression	**I**
Asbestos	**A**
Lack of community facilities	**Y**
Poor fire safety	**F**
Inadequate or unreliable lifts	**L**
Racism/racial harassment	**R**
Dampness/condensation	**D**
Building defects	**B**
Lack of security	**S**
Poor layout/environment of estates	**E**

I

IPSWICH

Ipswich Borough Council, 10 Museum Street, Ipswich, IP1 1HT. Tel: 0473 263216. Contact: M Exworth.

Ipswich own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 69 flats and represents 0.68% of their total stock. The block was built in 1966. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There is currently a sheltered housing scheme operating in the block. The sheltered scheme was started in 1990.

Ipswich report that the main pressure on their allocation policy is that they have the 17th highest number of homeless acceptances outside London. Households with small children are not offered tower blocks homes. This policy hasn't changed in the last ten years.

One offer of accommodation is made to people who are homeless, three offers are made to other potential tenants. There are not substantial numbers of chilren living in their block and they are happy with that situation. Ipswich have introduced compensatory services/facilities; they have provided a laundry room and a common room in the block.

They report that their relationship with their tenants is a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

HIAYLDBS

ISLINGTON

London Borough of Islington, Housing Department, 292 Essex Road, London, N1 3AZ. Tel: 071 226 1234.

The London Borough of Islington own 89 tower blocks which contain 2,970 units. The methods of construction used include large panel Bison system (11) and 'conventional' construction. In 1986 the council took the decision in principle to demolish one of its concrete frame blocks, however they have since deferred that decision. The council report that tower blocks are not in themselves considered to be a major problem, either structurally or in terms of management.

South Islington Law Centre,131-132 Upper Street, Islington, London N1 8PQ. Tel: 071-354-0133. Contact Malika Bediuko.

The South Islington Law Centre describe the areas in which they work as inner city. The law centre works with 26 tower blocks , 16 of 12 to18 storeys and ten of over 18 storeys. The blocks were built in the 1960s and 70s. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give the most cause for concern are inadequate lighting, poor lift repairs, inadequate security, children living on high floors, racial harrassment, rats, ants and cockroaches.

The law centre report that on some estates work has started on treatiing the cockroaches and the ants. Many of the heating systems on the estates in their area have been changed and this programme of replacement is nearly complete.

The law centre state that they have brought many cases of racial harrassment to the notice of council officers. When describing the current allocation policies for the blocks, the law centre report that it is "still one-parent families and ethnic minorities that are mostly offered this kind of housing".

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and this is an issue of concern to the law centre and to local people generally. The law centre have tried to stress to the council the importance of not putting families with young children high up in the blocks. The local authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. Most tower blocks in the area have play areas and community rooms.

In some cases community centres have been attached to the flats and there are community workers who undertake a variety of outreach work. The law centre consider the council to be a poor one. They attend regular meetings with the council on racial harrassment but they still feel that they have a lot of work to do on this issue and that some of the officers continue not to take the issue seriously.

CVPXYLRBSE

INVERCLYDE

Inverclyde District Council, Wallace Place, Greenock. Tel: 0475 24400. Contact: Janet Henderson.

Inverclyde District Council own 35 tower blocks; four of 6 to 12 storeys and 31 of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 2,475 flats and represent 14.5% of the council-owned stock. They were built between 1960 and 1975. The methods of construction used include large panel Bison, Wimpey no fines and brick cavity.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of the blocks which causes most concern is water penetration.

The authority have carried out a range of improvements to the blocks. They have started electric heating with ten schemes, and they have a programme of lift refurbishment. New uPVC windows have been fitted, insulation has been upgraded and rooves replaced. They find that they don't have enough of specific types of property - eg suitable for families, or for wheelchair users. Households with

small children are offered tower-block homes and this policy has not changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. Each housing applicant receives two offers of accommodation.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks; the authority consider this acceptable and have no policies to remove them. They have introduced compensatory services/facilities.

They have provided play areas, laundries and a tenants' hobby room. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be fair and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

CVHPXAYLDBSE

K

KENSINGTON

Hornimans Adventure Playground, c/o Kensal Community Centre, 1 Bosworth Road, London W10 5EB. Tel: 081-969-5740. Contact: Eileen McLean.

Hornimans Adventure Playground describe the area in which they work as inner city. There are four tower blocks on the estate, three of 12 to 18 storeys and one over 18 storeys (Trellick Tower). The blocks represent one quarter of the total estate and were built in the 1960s and 1970s.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give the most cause for concern are children being housed high up in the block and "the stench of urine around and in the lift areas".

The adventure playground report that they raised £1/4m, with local people, to gain a brand new building for their site. The children of this area now have a clean, safe warm building to use and it is an enormous improvement. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and local people and playground workers are concerned about this.

They encourage local people to put pressure on the council not to house children in flats.

The local authority have introduced compensatory services and facilities into the blocks; there is an under-fives creche in the basement of one of the blocks and in one of the blocks the same space is used for a playcentre and for after-school care for children between 5 and 12 years old.

Adventure playground workers consider the council to be fair/poor.

They have regular meetings with the council concerning the childrens act (registration etc). Also they liaise with them on funding issues. They take up a variety of other miscellaneous issues with the council such as dog fowling in the local park and better provision for the under fives.

CHPXYFLE

Pottery Lane Advice Centre, Pottery Lane Community Centre, St Francis of Assisi, Pottery Lane, London, W11 4NQ. Tel: 071 792 9071. Contact: Fiona Nijaye.

The Pottery Lane Advice Centre describe their estate as an inner-city one. The estate includes 25 tower blocks; 10 of 6 to 12 storeys, 13 of 12 to 18 storeys and two of over 18 storeys.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. The advice centre report that social services are based on one of the tower-block estates. A range of tower-block problems have been confronted.

CVHPXIYRDB

Trellick Tower Residents' Association, 170 Trellick Tower, Golborne Road, London, W10 5UU. Contact: Lee Boland.

The Trellick Tower Residents' Association represent one tower block in an inner-city area. The block is 30 storeys and contains 217 flats. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are substantial numbers of children living in the block. The association report that they are not experiencing any major problems.

KIRKLEES

Kirklees Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Association, 41/42 Estate Buildings, Railway Street, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD1 1JY. Tel: 0484 434943. Contact: Jane Griffiths.

Kirklees Federation represent 20 tower blocks, 18 of 6 to 12 storeys and two of 13 to 18 storeys. This represents 974 homes and is less that 3% of the total housing stock in the local authority area. The tower blocks were built between 1964 and 1970.

The methods of construction used included load-bearing brick and in situ concrete. No blocks in the area have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are particular forms of management scheme operating in some of the blocks in the area.

Schemes are being developed to offer housing for single people, with different levels of support for young single people and people suffering from mental health problems. The aspects of the tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern are asbestos and security problems.

The tenants' federation have member tenants' associations covering several tower blocks. These include: Berry Brow (2 x 16-storey blocks), Rashcliffe Hill (2 x 11-storey blocks), Kingcliffe (1 x 6- storey blocks), Swan Court (1

x 6-storey blocks), and Buxton House (1 x 12-storey block). The federation report that the Berry Brow T A was successful in getting a flat turned into a community meeting place, but unfortunately severe asbestos problems were then discovered.

Kirklees Council moved all the tenants very quickly and started work to remove the asbestos. Further asbestos was discovered and a successful solution is yet to be found. Kirklees Council are trying to get additional borrowing permission to tackle this problem.

In the meantime, all the tenants have been moved into new permanent homes and are receiving compensation for the loss of their homes as well as removal expenses. A rolling programme of lift replacement is going on, and proposals for conciege schemes are being drawn up in consultation with tenants to cover the blocks which have the greatest security problems.

Tenants have also ensured that a survey of all blocks is done in relation to fire safety. One block has had extensive improvements to heating and insulation under the government's energy-efficiency initiative. All tower block accommodation in the Kirklees area is one- bedroom or bedsit and therefore not suitable for families.

There has been a shift in allocation policies due to the increasing needs of single homeless people who are considered "vulnerable", and the tower blocks are increasingly housing younger single people rather than elderly people. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks.

Kirkless Federation believe that their relationship with the council is a good one. Regular and extensive consultation takes place between the tenants' federation, local tenants' and residents' associations and the council. Currently there are 75 TAs in Kirklees. Each TA has the right to send a representative to their local district management committee. These are sub-committees of the main housing committee with delegated powers to spend a budget (currently £110,000.00) on environmental improvements. A consultation charter and a code of practice has just been agreed which was drawn up by the housing department and tenants' representatives.

HAYLS

Kingcliffe and Miln Road Tenants' Association, 31 Kingcliffe Flats, Halifax Old Road, Birkby, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. HD1 6HP. Tel: 0484 421955. Contact: Irvina Gale.

Kingcliffe and Miln Road Tenants' Association describe their estate as a suburban mixed community. The estate contains one tower block of 6 to12 storeys. The block contains 36 flats and represents one quarter of the estate.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The association report that the council have tackled a range of tower-block problems and undertaken a variety of improvements. They have removed asbestos from the blocks. New lifts have been installed but frequent breakdowns still occur.

Condensation has been reduced as the result of the installation of new fans when kitchens were renovated. There are no fire alarms or extinguishers on the premises but smoke alarms are being provided.

The association report that the blocks contain a mixture of tenants, young and old, but from now on the council are only allocating flats to older people.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block. No compensatory services or facilities have been introduced. The association describe their council as a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with them. They participate in district housing meetings and they are consulted through the Kirklees Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations.

AFLD

Rashcliffe Hill Tenants' & Residents' Association, 80 Rashcliffe Hill Road, Lockwood, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD1 3LZ. Tel: 0484 431720. Contact: Vera Wigley

Rashcliffe Hill Tenants and Residents Association describe their estate as an outer estate. The estate includes two blocks of 6 to12 storeys. The blocks contain 86 homes and represent one third of the total estate. The method of construction was brick. The blocks were built in the 1950s.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the blocks which gives them most cause for concern are escape in the case of fire and poor security.

The tenants' association have been successful in obtaining individual security doors for their flats, and a new concierge system is to be installed.

When describing the estate generally they report that there is a lack of shops, and poor transport. Drugs and burglaries are also a problem. The current allocations policy is to give priority to young single homeless people. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the flats.

The association report that through the Tenants' Consultation Charter which is now been implemented, tenants are always consulted when decisions are made. The council are considered to be an excellent landlord.

IFLD

KNOWSLEY

Knowsley Borough Council, "Woodcroft", 9 West Street, Prescot, Merseyside, L34 1LF. Tel: 051 443 4705. Contact: Barbra Carlisle.

Knowsley Borough Council own 17 tower blocks, nine of 6 to12 storeys and eight of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1982 flats and represent 10.03% of the council-owned stock. The methods of construction are described as mostly steel frame, brick infill panels and in situ concrete. NIne blocks were built with Premeto concrete.

No blocks have been demolished. Nine blocks, six of 16 storeys and three of 22 storeys, have been transferred to other owners. They were transferred to the Stockbridge Village Trust and all have been offered for rent except three that were demolished.

When describing the management schemes operating in their blocks, the authority report that three of the eight storey blocks (120 flats) provide sheltered housing. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are safety and security of the blocks and of individual flats, and the lack of insulation.

The authority have confronted a range of tower-block problems. There are mice in the blocks and now each tenant has the phone number for the company who are dealing with the mice. Heating systems have been improved, and warm-air systems have been replaced by radiators.

The authority are planning to install smoke alarms in all flats. The lifts are old now; they are linked to an elevator company who send an engineer promptly when needed. Security has been improved by having stationary guards in lodge areas, security cameras, concierge schemes and security doors on individual flats. Housholds with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks; this policy has changed in the last ten years. It wasn't previously a policy, they have now adopted a multi-storey allocations policy. The other category of tenant to whom they are reluctant to offer a tower block home is those who are mentally ill. Each potential applicant is made three offers of accommodation before their application is referred to the housing manager.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the flats– the council have policies to remove those that do, they are given top priority for rehousing. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities into the blocks.

They consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. There are monthly meetings with associations, housing assistants are permanently on site and tenant satisfaction surveys are undertaken.

VHPXIYLDBSE

L

LAMBETH

Jay Allen, 39 Rundell Tower, Portland Grove, London, SW8 1JB. Tel: 071 582 0103.

Rundell Tower is part of an inner-city estate. It is over 18 storeys and contains 82 flats. The block represents less than a quarter of the entire estate. The block was built in the 1960s. No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspects of the block which give most cause for concern are fire safety, the newly-installed 'heat exchange units', cockroaches, dampness and children's safety. The block has been refurbised, it has had a new heating system installed and has been overclad. Ms Allen has been unhappy about the nature of some of these improvements and by the way the work has been handled by the council. The estate generally is reported to have experienced a number of arson attacks. The layout, with its emphasis on concrete bollards and iron bars, is felt to encourage a feeling of hostility and aggression. There are substantial numbers of children in the block.

CVHXIAFLDBS

LANCASTER

Lancaster City Council, Council Housing Services, Dalton Square, Lancaster. Tel: 0524 582000. Contact: Chris Hanna.

Lancaster City Council own three tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 130 flats and represent 2.5% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1951 and 1961. The method of construction was Wimpey no fines.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating in the blocks, the council report that they are part of a local management area lettings policy of "no young children". The aspect of the blocks which concerns them most is the rising number of dogs.

A range of improvements have been carried out to the blocks. Underfloor heating has been replaced with Economy 7 storage heaters and hot water. Asbestos has been removed. All blocks now have mechanical and passive ventilation systems, external insulation and uPVC double glazing.

Door-entry systems have been installed and fire safety is being upgraded, in line with fire brigade recommendations. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes and this policy has not changed in the last ten years. The only other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a high-rise flat

is one with a dog. There are not substantial numbers of children in the blocks and the authority award extra transfer points to those in the flats. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks.

They consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

HAYFDS

LANGBAURGH

Langbaurgh-on-Tees Borough Council, PO Box South Bank 20, Cargo Fleet Offices, Middlesbrough Road, South Bank, Cleveland, TS6 6EL. Tel: 0642 231212. Contact: Mr E Sharpe.

Langbaurgh Borough Council own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 76 flats and represents 0.5% of the council-owned stock. It was built in 1975. The method of construction was large panel system. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspects of the tower block which give the authority most cause for concern are vandalism and security. When describing the pressures on their allocation policies, they point to homelessness and medical cases. Housholds with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks.

There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block home. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and they have policies to remove those that do; they are given priority for a transfer.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the block. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be fair. They don't take part in regular consultation with tenants organisations, but they are seeking to improve tenant participation and to liaise more closely with individual tenants and tenants' groups.

IFBSE

LEEDS

Leeds City Council, Department of Housing, Dudley House, 133 Albion Street, Leeds LS2 8PP. Tel: 0532 348080. Contact: Mr Geoff Dalton.

Leeds City Council have 158 tower blocks between six and 25 storeys. The methods of construction include: in situ concrete, large panel Reema and Myton Systems. The council report that "Multi-storey flats provide a valuable housing resource for the city and are eminently suitable for single persons and couples without children.

Five blocks now provide sheltered housing for the elderly and have call-care systems with a resident warden. The authority intend to designate more sheltered schemes if they can get the funding. Five blocks have also been designated for use by young people and they will each have a block manager. This is a pilot scheme involving higher-profile management of what have been difficult blocks.

The blocks have been chosen and tenants have been consulted, and it is hoped that the managers will be in post by the end of the year. In general the authority feel that multi-storey flats require more careful management with more selective provisions, eg controlled entry.

They feel that unless serious structural problems occur, they are likely to remain as part of the housing stock well into the next century. Leeds have installed controlled-entry systems in most of their blocks. The council have also participated in a fire-safety working group looking at fire-safety standards in the city's blocks. They are looking at structural problems such as inadequately sealed service ducts and at the advice provided to tenants. In consultation with the fire brigade they have revamped their information to tenants and the notices in blocks. All of the city's blocks will be inspected and works carried out where necessary.

SF

Briarsdale/Gipton Gate Tenants' Association, 76 Gipton Gate East, Leeds, LS9 6SU. Tel: 0532 488972. Contact: Keith Thompson.

Briarsdate Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. There are five tower blocks on the estate, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 265 flats. The blocks were built in the 1930s and 1940s. The methods of construction used include large panel Reema and brick.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give the tenants most cause for concern are the building defects inherent in the Reema large panel system, the lack of security and the attitude of some tenants.

The association have confronted a range of tower-block problems. They are currently trying to tackle the problem of inadequate security, insufficient council resources is the main obstacle.

When describing the allocation policies for the estate, they report that a cross-section of people are moving into the flats.

They feel that a lot of the people who are moving in have little commitment to the tower blocks as a community. There are not substanial numbers of children living in the blocks.

They report that it is the council's policy not to house children in high-rise flats. The authority havn't introduced any compensatory services and facilities into the blocks.

The association consider their council to be a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with them. Housing officers attend association meetings and tenants are invited to the housing consultative committee meetings.

FBS

Leeds Energy Advice Project, The Housing Advice Centre, 21-27 The Headrow, Leeds, LS1 6PU. Contact: Alan Jones

The Leeds Energy Advice Project is a resource centre for domestic energy issues. It is managed by a committee of local community and advice centre representatives, and is funded by Leeds Council. The advice project provides a range of advice and information to tenants' groups including those representing tower blocks. They undertake energy audits.

They acted as independent consultants on five bids that the council made under the Greenhouse Programme. One of these bids, for an estate with two tower blocks, was successful. The two blocks are to be upgraded, a combined heat and power system is being fitted alongside new metering and insulation.

HD

Lincoln Green Residents' Association, 91 Naseby Grange, Leeds, LS9 7TE. Tel: Contact: Kathy Watson.

Lincoln Green is an inner-city estate. It includes 16 tower blocks; 12 of 6 to 12 storeys and four of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain about 2,000 flats and represent three quarters of the estate. The methods of construction used are described as Wimpey no fines, Shepherds and large panel Bison.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The main causes for concern are security and heating. The association have also been very concerned about the fire risk in the flats and have instigated a city-wide working party looking into fire safety. By the end of this year the council will have inspected 40 of their blocks. The inspections revealed that in some blocks service ducts needed fire-stopping reinstated.

The association have also recommended that a list of people with disabilities in each block should be kept in the event of a fire. The estate is reported to have changed over the last ten years. Previously the estate was dominated by elderly and middle-aged people, now lettings are made to everyone because of the pressure of homelessness.

The council try to keep children under 15 to the lower floors and give extra points for a transfer when children are born in a tower-block flat. The association report that there are quite a few children in the blocks and the numbers are growing. There are no play areas at all. When describing the estate generally, the association report that the location is good, only ten minutes walk to the city centre. The association consider the council to be fair.

HDF

Edward Walker, Architect, 25 Bexley Road, Leeds, LS8 5NS. Tel: 0532 493491. Contact: Edward Walker.

This firm of architects have worked with a range of tower-block tenants' groups over many years. The firm offer advice on a variety of tower-block issues including disrepair, building defects, affordable warmth, dampness, dangerous materials and fire precautions.

The firm have worked with tenants of The Deane in Leeds, and of Newby Square and Allerton in Bradford. Mr Walker acts as an expert witness for law centres and solicitors under the legal-aid system. Some free advice is given to groups, and support in obtaining grants to cover the fees. Mr Walker has worked on large panel Bison, large panel Reema and Wimpey No Fines blocks. He lived in a tower block himself for four years.

HDB

LEICESTER

Leicester City Council, New Walk Centre, Welford Place, Leicester. Tel: 0533 549922. Contact: J R Thomson.

Leicester City Council own ten tower blocks; one of 6 to12 storeys, five of 12 to 18 storeys and four of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1,033 flats and represent 3% of the total council stock. The blocks were built between 1966 and 1974. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

When describing the management schemes operating in their blocks, the authority report that single people over the age of 25 are housed in two of the blocks. The main aspects of the tower-block stock which give them cause for concern are poverty and the non-payment of rent. The authority have confronted a wide range of tower-block problems. Cockroaches are endemic but are being controlled through regular spraying. Other vermin are found sporadically and are under control.

Estate Action funding has enabled gardens and play areas to be provided for specific blocks. A major lift renewal programme is underway. Some spalling of concrete has occurred in two of the blocks. Window safety for children is an issue in some blocks.

When describing the main pressures on their allocation policies, the authority report that demand outstrips supply. Households with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks; this policy hasn't changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom

they would never offer a tower-block flat. They give an unlimited number of offers of accommodation to potential tenants. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks. They have specific policies to remove those that do, extra points are awarded for a transfer.

The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. They have provided a launderette and play areas. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

Leicester operate a three-tier consultation system in which city-wide, area-wide and estate-wide consultation takes place.

CVPXILRB

Leicester Tenants' Federation, 13 Welford Road, Leicester, LE2 7AD. Tel: 0533 559097. Contact: Ann Green.

The Leicester Tenants' Federation provides advice and information for individuals and tenants' groups on a range of housing issues. It is funded through a tenants' levy of 10p per week. They employ one worker. They report that all tenants' associations recognised by the council are required to affiliate to the federation; they have 35 members.

Five tenants' associations are represented on the federation management committee. The individual associations are eligible for grants directly from the council; for historical reasons there has been some inequality of funding for the individual associations.

The council are seeking to address this. Funding for the federation began in the 1980s but the level of funding is low and as only one worker is employed development work suffers. The federation have supported a tower-block group with problems associated with their concierge scheme.

S

Rowlatts Hill Tenants' Association, New Walk Centre, New Walk, Leicester. Tel: 549922. Contact: Brenda Roe, Secretary.

The Rowlatts Hill Tenants' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. The tower blocks contain 132 flats and represent 1/8 of the total estate. The blocks were built in 1965 and the method of construction used was large panel.

No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in their blocks.

The aspects of their tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern are the large numbers of ex-mental patients who are housed in the flats and the behaviour of 'drunks, who excrete and urinate in the lifts'.

The association report that there is no chemist or laundarette on their estate, no washing or drying facilities and only one shop. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and local people are concerned about this.

The association report that Leicester City Council will not allocate any other accommodation to people who are in rent arrears.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the block. The association feel that their relationship with their council is awful.

They do take part in regular consultation with the council but they feel that the council do not take consultation particularly seriously.

CVPXIYFLRBSE

St. Peters' Tenants' Association, 112 Melboure Road, Leicester, LE2 ODS. Tel: 0533 623391. Contact: Mr Jussab.

The St. Peters' Tenants' Association represent four tower blocks on an estate of five blocks. All of the blocks are of 17 storeys and contain 425 flats. The blocks represent about half of the total estate.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in any of the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give most cause for concern are noise and rubbish left in communal areas and thrown out of windows.

Warden-controlled entry systems have been installed in all the blocks. Lifts have been refurbished and environmental improvements have been carried out. The association are currently concerned about some of the improvements carried out - the high bars separating parts of the estate have proved to be rather challenging and dangerous for children. Discussions are underway to make alterations.

On two occasions elderly tenants have died in their flats and it has been some considerable time before anyone realised. The association report that there is a lack of open space and of space for children's or youth facilitiies on the estate generally.

Problems are experienced with racial harassment from youths. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities.

The association consider the council to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with them. Monthly, open meetings, are held between tenants and officers on the estate.

CPIRS

LEWISHAM

London Borough of Lewisham, Lewisham Housing Department, Capital House, 47 Rushey Green, London, SE6. Tel: 081 695 6000. Contact: Carl Reynolds.

The London Borough of Lewisham own 42 tower blocks; 30 of 6 to 12 storeys, 17 of 12 to 18 storeys and 5 of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 2,752 flats and represent 7.4% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1955 and 1970. The methods of construction used include in situ concrete, and traditional brick and large panel Skarne system.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The authority employ a co-op development officer but they report that so far there has been no interest shown by tower-block tenants in a tenant management co-op or an estate management board.

The aspects of their tower blocks which concern them most are structural defects, access for maintenance, insufficient funding for improvements, noise, security and vandalism.

They have carried out a range of improvements to the blocks. Heating systems have been renewed or replaced, play and community facilities have been improved, lifts have been replaced, security systems have been enhanced through the provision of extra doors, entryphones and concierges.

Design has been improved, hiding places have been eliminated and street lighting increased. When describing the pressures affecting their allocation policies, they report that there are 16,000 people on their unified housing list, 50% in need of family-sized accommodation. The Right to Buy is affecting 70-100 properties per month and they are unable to build or to replace properties.

Households with small children are offered tower-block homes and there are no restrictions as to which floor. These policies have changed in the last ten years. Due to the pressure of homelessness, the council found it necessary on 6.9.88 to remove the fourth-floor ceiling on tower-block offers to families with young children.

Also, at that time they decided to make one offer only of accommodation to homeless households. The only category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation is those with medical grounds. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks.

They are concerned about those that do but feel that they have no choice. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

There are neighbourhood committees of tenant representatives and councillors. Two tenant representatives from each association attend the tenants' council. The authority's tenants' charter is currently being reviewed. Major HIP/Estate Action bids are compiled in consultation with tenants.

CVHPXIAYFLRDBSE

The Federation of Lewisham Tenants' and Residents' Associations, 2a Lewisham Way, New Cross, London, SE14 6NN. Tel: 081 691 2921. Contact: Shirley Mucklow.

The Federation of Lewisham Tenants' and Residents' Associations (FELTRA) was formed in 1955. They have between 60 and 70 member associations, about ten of whom represent tower-block estates. FELTRA have supported tower-block tenants' associations on a couple of issues recently. A fire in a tower block kitchen revealed asbestos panels behind water heaters. The asbestos was found to be present in blocks on two estates: Milton Court and Evelyn. The asbestos has been removed and the federation felt that the council responded to the problem very well. Tenants in two other tower blocks contacted FELTRA for support with problems arising from the installation of concierge schemes. Video tapes had been taken and used by the police in evidence which led to prosecutions.

FELTRA have developed draft guidelines on the use of such tapes which they are currently negotiating with the council. They have been researching into whether such guidelines exist in other parts of the country but have found none as yet. They are working towards the establishment of national guidelines.

They report that children used not to be housed above the fifth floor but that that policy is not now implemented because of the shortage of housing. Although, they believe that the council still try to keep very young children at lower levels. The federation consider the council to be fair and they take part in regular consultation with them.

AS

Woodpecker Patch 5 Association, 87 Naseby Tower, Desmond Street, London, SE14 6JT. Tel: 081 692 5645. Contact: Ben Beck.

The Woodpecker Association describe their estate as an inner city one. It contains ten tower blocks - two of six to 12 storeys, five of 12 to 18 storeys and three of over 18 storeys. This represents 112 homes and is about half the estate. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1974. The methods of construction used were tradition brick-built and Crudens Skarne.

No blocks have been demolished as yet but four are scheduled for demolition by 2002. The reasons for the proposed demolition are the

unpopularity of the properties and their unmanageability. No blocks have been transferred to other owners. There are currently no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. However, the tenants' association report that they are currently in the midst of a PEP feasibility study.

The association report that the problems which give them the most cause for concern are vandalism, cockroaches, fire integrity, asbestos and the housing of families with young children in the blocks. A number of the problems on the estate are being or have been tackled recently. A new children's centre is soon to be built.

A concierge scheme has been installed in one block. The association feel that there are 'ongoing concerns re code of conduct/ethical guidelines for the use of surveillance equipment'. Lifts and heating systems are being replaced. Remedial work for fire safety is being carried out.

When describing their estate generally, the association report that there is a lack of shops and a lack of child care. The association report that the council's allocation policy has involved letting largely to homeless families, since 1987.

It is now the policy to have single pregnant homeless women in the one-bedroomed tower-block flats. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks, but the numbers are increasing. Local people are very concerned about this problem and have tried to do something about it.

The tenants' association 'hotly resisted' the reversal of council policy on the housing of children in flats. They are continuing to lobby on this issue. No compensatory services/facilities have been introduced into the block but a new children's centre is currently being built on the estate. They comment that this is in response to existing demand and will not meet the demands resulting from the increasing numbers of children being moved into the blocks. The association feel that their relationship with their council is a good one and they do take part in regular consultation. The tenants participate in a neighbourhood committee but they feel that, as the committee is only an advisory one, they have not had the influence on decisions that they feel is appropriate.

CVHPXIAYFLBSE

Wyndham and Comber Tenants' Association, 90 Poulner Way, Peckham, London, SE5. Contact: Norah McGreig.

Wyndham and Comber Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. The estate includes five blocks, all over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 410 flats and represent one quarter of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1964 and 1969. The method of construction used is described as concrete panel and bric .

No blocks on the estate have been demolished, none has been transferred to other owners. They are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are lifts, water penetration and lack of security.

The association have tackled a range of tower-block problems. Treatments for ants and cockroaches have been carried out, entry phones have been installed, although these work inefficiently. When describing the general problems on their estate, the association point to drugs and squatting as the main problems.

Describing the current allocation policies for their blocks, the association report that most of the new people moving in are squatters. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the local authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. The association consider their council to be a poor one. They take part in regular consultation with the council, and the local councillor holds monthly surgeries on the estate.

CVPAFLS

LINCOLN

Lincoln City Council, City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln, LN1 1DE. Tel: 0522 511511. Contact: E. Wilkes.

Lincoln City Council own three tower blocks, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 300 flats and represent 3% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1964 and 1966. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The aspects of the blocks which gives them most cause for concern are structural defects. They have responded to a range of tower-block problems. Heating systems in all blocks have been replaced and tenants chose their systems. All lifts have been replaced. They organised a fire safety officer's inspection and have acted on all the recommendations.

A structural survey has been carried out to identify faults. Security has been improved through the installation of door-entry systems. When describing the pressures affecting their allocation policies, the authority point to homelessness, excessive demand for two-bedroom and larger family accommodation.

Households with small children are never offered tower-block homes, these policies have not changed over the last ten years. The other categories of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat are people with disabilities and dog/cat owners. Applicants are only offered tower-block flats if they request them. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the council have policies to remove those

that do - they are given priority for a transfer. They have not introduced compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one . They don't take part in regular consultation with tenants organisations.

HPXIYFLDBSE

LIVERPOOL

Liverpool City Council, City Housing Department, Foster House, Canning Place, Liverpool, L1 8HJ. Tel: 051 227 3911. Contact: Mrs J Williams.

Liverpool own 71 tower blocks, 20 of 6 to 12 storeys, 45 ot 12 to 18 storeys and six of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 5,427 flats and represent 9% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1956 and 1970. The methods of construction are described as RC Frame/Brick Clad (48), large panel Camus (10), RC Frame/No fines (10), PAC System (1) and large panel Bison (2).

Eighteen tower blocks have been demolished because they provided sub-standard accommodation and had poor letting potential. Seven blocks have been transferred to other owners, two to Liverpool Polytechnic and five to private developers, and three are being marketed.

Ten of their blocks provide sheltered accommodation. The aspects of the tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are security, lifts and heating. The authority report that blocks in Liverpool are unpopular because of the poor security and unreliable lifts.

All of the blocks are included in a Housing Action Trust proposal. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes and this policy has not changed in the last ten years. They also never offer tower-block flats to young singles under 25. All potential tenants receive three offers. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the council have policies to remove those that do. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. The high-rise groups of the tenants' forum meet monthly to discuss the HAT.

HILDBSE

Community Technical Services Agency Ltd., 52/60 Duke Street, Liverpool, L1 5AA. Tel: 051 709 9907. Contact: Stephen Kirby.

Community Technical Services Agency Ltd (COMTECHSA) is a non-profit making co-operative set up to provide the services of architects, landscape architects and related professionals to voluntary organisations. They serve Liverpool, Merseyside and the the surrounding area.

They have undertaken 'Planning For Real' exercises with tenants' groups, exploring and developing local people's ideas about the redevelopment of their communities. They have also worked with tower-block tenants' groups on assessing structural problems and problems with the fabric of the blocks.

BE

High Rise Flats Tenants' Group, 39 Hartsbourne Heights, Liverpool, L25 1QT. Tel: 051 722 7074. Contact: Jim Hart.

Hartsbourne Heights is situated on an outer estate. The High Rise Flats Tenants' Group represent tenants in Hartsbourne Heights. Hartsboune Heights is of 6 to 12 storeys. The block represents one third of the total estate. It was built in 1964 and the method of construction used was steel frame and brick panel. There are two other blocks on the estate, one provides sheltered accommodation and one is derelict. Windsor Tower in Liverpool 8, which was the same design and age as Hartsbourne Heights, was demolished in 1985. The block was demolished as part of an urban renewal programme, because it had deteriorated dramatically.

The aspects of the tower block which gives the tenants most cause for concern are poor management, inadequate heating and insulation, and the need for extensive capital repairs. The High Rise Flats Tenants' Group is involved in the negotiations for the Liverpool-wide Housing Action Trust.

When discussing the current allocation policies for the estate, the group report that anyone can move onto the estate and it is unclear whether the council have any policy on this at all. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks.

The group consider their council to be awful. They take part in regular consultation with them. Extensive consultation is taking place as the result of the HAT and the new city-wide tenants' federation has become well established.

HYBSE

Liverpool Council for Voluntary Service, 14 Castle Street, Liverpool, L2 ONJ. Tel: 051 236 7728. Contact: Lyndsey Draper.

Liverpool Council for Voluntary Service runs an information and enquiry service for individuals and organisations throughout Liverpool. Their direct involvement with tower-block issues has decreased over recent years. However, they can provide helpful information to individual tenants and to tenants' groups about council services and decision-making processes, and they have an

information resource which enables them to refer to other agencies.

Netherley Citizens' Advice Bureau, 87 Middlemass Hey, Liverpool 27. Tel:051-498-4949.Contact:Charlotte Anderson.

Netherley CAB discribe the area in which they work as an outer estate. Netherley CAB work with 14 tower blocks, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain about 3,600 flats and represent 10% of the estate.The blocks were built in the 1960s and the 1970s. The methods of construction used include large panel system and no fines concrete. Tower blocks in their area have been demolished. The demolished blocks were of 6 to12 storeys and contained about 3,500 dwellings. These blocks were built in 1970 but were empty by 1980, due to bad insulation, dampness, vermin, inadequate heating and building defects.

Five 12-storey blocks are currently empty and are due to be sold or demolished. All the other blocks are currently part of the Liverpool-wide HATS proposal. One of the blocks provides wardened accommodation for pensioners. There are no particular management schemes operating in any of the other blocks.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give the most cause for concern are inadequate heating systems, poor lighting, poor security, drug pushing, graffiti and lift breakdowns. The CAB report that it is policy not to house children above the sixth floor. However, once children are born in high-rise flats their parents find it difficult to get re-housed.

Pensioners and young people are housed together in the blocks which does cause problems particularly where there is a drugs issue. The flats are reported to be very undesirable and some empty ones are used for "Giro Drops". Netherley CAB also report that racism/racial harassment is a problem on the estate generally. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the local authority has not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. Netherley CAB feel that their council is an awful one. The CAB run an advice service once a week in the flats and take up a variety of issues with the council and the fuel boards.

VHPXIYFLRDBSE

Olive Mount Residents Association, 79 Olive Mount Heights, Liverpool, L15 8LB. Contact: Mrs M Gallimore.

The Olive Mount Residents' Association describe their estate as a suburban mixed community. There are three tower blocks on the estate, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 195 flats and represent about 1/4 of the estate. The blocks were built in 1964 of traditional brick construction. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

One block is used to provide sheltered housing. The aspect of their tower blocks which gives the most cause for concern is leaking rooves. The association report that the most significant response to their tower block problems is the proposed Hat for all the tower blocks in Liverpool.

The association report that the current allocation policies for their blocks involve housing people over 55 in the one sheltered block and people of 26 years and over in the other two blocks.

They feel that their relationship with their council is fair and they do take part in regular consultation with them. Regular consultation takes place with district housing officers and with chief officers via the city tenants' forum. Members of the steering committee are currently discussing the feasibility of the Hats for Liverpool.

H

St. Georges Heights Tenants' Association, 98 St. Georges Heights, Liverpool, L5 3RG. Tel: 051 298 1346.

St. Georges Heights Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. There is one block on the estate of over 18 storeys. The block contains 176 flats and stands by itself. It was built between 1963 and 1964. The method of construction was large-panel Camus.

Four blocks on the estate have been demolished, because they provided such poor housing, and two transferred to other owners. There are no particular managment schemes operating in the block. The aspects of the tower block which give most cause for concern are poor management and repairs.

The association have confronted a range of tower-block problems and they feel that their block is being seen as a 'dumping ground' by the council. There are substantial numbers of children living in the block and the association are concerned about this. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities into the block. The association consider their council to be a fair one.

VPXIAFLRS

West Everton Community Council, The Planning Shop, 43 Netherfield Road, Liverpool L5 4LS. Tel: 051-298-1346. Contact John Hutchison.

West Everton community council describe the areas in which they work as inner city. The community council work on an estate where there are four tower blocks, three of 6 to 12 storeys and one of 18 storeys. The tower blocks include 300 flats which are currently occupied and represent a quarter of the total estate.

The blocks were built between 1965 and 1975. Eleven blocks on the estate have been demolished as the result of "political determination and falling population" and because the housing proved unpopular and unman-

ageable. Two blocks have also been transferred to private owners. One block is used to provide sheltered accommodation.

All the blocks form part of the Liverpool-wide HATS proposal. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The Community Council consider Liverpool Council to be a poor one. They report that they are increasingly taking part in consultation with the council.

VLBS

Vauxhall Neighbourhood Council Tenants' Committee, Community Services Centre, Silvester Street, Liverpool, L5 8LE. Telephone: 051 298 1544. Contact: John Albertina.

The Neighbourhood Tenants' Committee describe their estate as an inner city one. There are four tower blocks on the estate, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks include 400 flats and represent 1/8 of the estate. The blocks were built in the late 1960s.

The association report that several tower blocks have been demolished and houses have been built in their place. No blocks have been transferred to other owners. There are no specific management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are safety and main-tenance. The association report that there is a lack of shops in the local area and drug dealing takes place within the tower blocks. They also identify valdalism as a serious problem.

The current allocation policies for the tower blocks do not allow people under the age of 26 to be housed in a flat. Also, couples including a woman between the ages of 26 and 35 are not eligible for a tower-block flat. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The association report that their relationship with the council is fair.

CVHPIFLDBSE

M

MACCLESFIELD

Macclesfield Borough Council, 19 King Edward Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire. Tel: 0625 500500. Contact: VK Newlands.

Macclesfield own two tower blocks both of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 184 flats and represent 2.4% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built in 1965. The method of construction was in situ concrete with brick panels.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of the blocks which gives them most cause for concern is unauthorised access.

The authority are introducing a concierge scheme into their deck-access estate; if this pilot project proves successful they will introduce a similar scheme into the tower blocks. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes. This policy has not changed in the last ten years. The only other category of tenant to whom they would never

KEY TO CODES

Cockroaches	C
Other vermin	V
Inadequate heating systems	H
Inadequate play facilities	P
Lack of safety for children	X
Tenant isolation or depression	I
Asbestos	A
Lack of community facilities	Y
Poor fire safety	F
Inadequate or unreliable lifts	L
Racism/racial harassment	R
Dampness/condensation	D
Building defects	B
Lack of security	S

offer a tower-block flat is elderly people, because they have adequate alternative elderly people's accommodation. Allocations are made to single people over 25 and to couples without children. There are not substantial numbers of children in the blocks.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. Space has been provided in which to hold housing officers surgeries and the council work closely with the tenants' association.

S

Hurdsfield Tenants' Association, Hurdsfield Depot, Hurdsfield Green, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SKI0 2RJ. Tel: 0625 501027. Contact: Mr T Swarbrick.

Hurdsfield Tenants' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. The estate includes two tower blocks of l2 to l8 stories. The blocks contain l84 flats. They were built between l987 and 1970. The method of construction used was in situ concrete.

No bocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which concern the tenants' association the most are isolation, depression and lack of security.

When describing other problems on their estate generally, they point to the games teenagers play in the local area. The association report that the current allocation policies for their blocks involve mainly elderly and or single people moving in. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks. Hurdsfield Tenants' Association consider their council to be a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with them. They have regular meetings with housing officers and councillors.

IS

MANCHESTER

City of Manchester, Housing Department, PO Box No 532, Town Hall, Manchester M60 2LA. Tel. 061 234 4761. Contact: Stan Kukalowicz.

There are 118 tower blocks in the city of Manchester and on overspill estates, varying from eight to 17 storeys. These blocks contain 7,868 units which are either bedsits or one- or two-bedroom flats.

About ten methods of construction were used to build the blocks, including large panel systems (Laing, Sectra).

Manchester have carried out a major review of their tower-block stock and are developing a comprehensive strategy for the blocks which covers caretaking, security, desrepair, refurbishment, improvement and rehousing issues.

They have identified the need to improve the quality of accommodation. This would include heating and insulation works and the conversion of the bedsits into one-bedroom flats.

The overall appearance and amenity of the blocks is to be improved by reconstructing the public entrance and foyer areas, by improving lighting, access to stairways and fire escapes and changing the floor and wall coverings. Accommodation suitable for a residential caretaker is to be provided.

The external landscaping is also to be remodelled. Flats are not let to families with children below 16. An increasing number of blocks are designated either formally or informally for the use of the elderly.

Flats in 11 blocks are fitted with the Social Services Department emergency warden call system. One block has been converted to provide sheltered accommodation for the elderly.

SHEC

Northern Counties Housing Association Ltd., Princes Building, 15 Oxford Court, Oxford Street, Manchester, M2 3WQ.

Northern Counties Housing Association own two tower blocks, both of 12 to 18 storeys. They own Castle Court on the Hyde Park estate in Sheffield and Adelphi Court, Silk Street, in Salford. The blocks contain 424 flats and represent 4% of their total stock. The blocks were built in the early to mid-1960s. The method of construction of both blocks was in situ concrete frame with brick/block infill.

No blocks have been demolished by the association. Two have been transferred to other owners, one was sold to the University of Salford and one was transferred to them on a ten-year lease.

When describing the management schemes operating in the blocks, the association report that Castle Court is managed by an estate-based regional office. Adelphi Court is managed from a regional office which is within a mile of the block, and floors 1-3 provide sheltered accommodation and have a warden. The aspects of the blocks which give them most cause for concern are rent levels in Castle Court and security in Adelphi Court.

The association report that they have tackled the problems experienced in the blocks in a comprehensive manner and they are no longer hard-to-let. The pressures on their allocation policies are that there is a lack of turnover in the properties which are suitable for families with young children. Households with small

children are offered tower-block homes. In Adelphi, children are housed up to the seventh floor. No children are offered homes in Castle Court. These policies havn't changed in the last ten years.

There is no category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The association have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities.

They consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They consider good liaison with tenants' organisations to be essential for good management.

Federation of Associations on Manchester Estates, Room G, 2nd Floor, 21 Oldham Street, Manchester, M 1 1JW. Tel: 061 839 2189. Contact: Brenda Sedgewick.

The Federation of Associations on Manchester Estates (F.A.M.E.) is the city-wide federation for tenants' groups in Manchester. They have about 65 members, many of whom represent estates including tower blocks.

The association support established tenants' groups and tenants who wish to form new groups. They have an office, a small library of information, meeting space, and printing and photo-copying facilities for groups to use. They also publish a regular newsletter.

The association have been involved in helping tower-block tenants' groups on a number of issues including asbestos, disrepair, large panel system building defects, dampness and poor security.

They have a number of working parties, e.g. the repairs and voids working party and the warm and dry working party, which deal with heating insulation and dampness. FAME hosted a national tower blocks conference in conjuntion with The National Tower Blocks Network.

The conference focussed on safety in blocks and looked at a number of issues e.g. fire safety, children's safety and play, asbestos and racial harassment.

AXHD

Abbey Court Tenants' Association, 62 Abbey Court, Hollybush Street, Gorton, Manchester, MI8 8PU. Tel: 06I 220 9629. Contact: Steve Banthorpe.

Abbey Court Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. There is one block on the estate of I2 to 18 stories. The block contains 72 flats and represents I00% of the estate. The block was built in I970.

The method of construction used is described as in situ concrete/ring beam. No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the block.

The aspects of their tower block which gives the most cause for concern are bad caretaking, poor security, vandalism, noise, damp, bad insulation, expensive heating, and drug taking. When describing problems on the estate generally, the association point to 'car theft and thefts from cars associated with drug taking and dealing'.

The association are very unhappy about the current allocation policies for their blocks. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks. They are concerned about those who do. They have tried to get all families with children moved to more suitable accommodation but have had little success.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the block. They take part in some consultation with the local council – they meet with housing officers.

HPIDBS

Artillery Court Tenants Association, 6 Artillery Court, Wadeson Road, Manchester, MI3 9TU. Tel: 06I 273 3430. Contact: Miss Irene Roach.

Artillery Court T.A describe their estate as an inner-city one. The estate contains four tower blocks of 6 to 12 stories. The blocks were built in I960 approximately. No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none have been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. When describing the aspects of their tower blocks which gives the most cause for concern the association point to the allocations policies and the mixing of young tenants with older tenants, and the resulting clash of lifestyles.

The association have confronted a number of tower block problems. Asbestos panels were discovered in the window units, these have all been removed and new plastic double-glazed windows have been installed.

The blocks experience a lack of security which has now been partly dealt with through the installation of electronic doors and by the employment of security staff who walk through the building during the night and at weekends. There are not a substantial number of children living in their block. The association consider their council to be a poor one.

AS

Deepdale Court Tenants Association, 33 Deepdale Court, Northwold Drive, Manchester, M9 2HX. Tel: 061 682 0059. Contact: Mrs A Nash.

Deepdale Court T.A. describe their estate as an outer estate. There are nine blocks on the estate all of 12 to 18 stories. The blocks contain 846 flats and represent approximately one third of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1970 and 1972 approximately. No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none have been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give the most cause for concern are noise and pollution as a result of the new motor way that is currently being built parallel to the estate.

The tenants also feel that their security system is totally inadequate primarily because of insufficient staff. When describing problems on their estate generally, the association point to the high crime rate, inadequate bus service, insufficient shops, and a neglected environment.

DS

Langley Residents' Association, 19A Lakeland Court, Langley Estate, Middleton, Manchester. Tel: 061 654 1928. Contact: Mr A McDermott.

Langley Residents' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. They represent one tower block of 12 to 18 stories. The block contains 180 flats and represents one tenth of the estate. It was built in 1960. The method of construction used is described as brick.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspects of the tower block which give the most cause for concern are fire and security.

The association have confronted a range of tower block problems. New heating systems have been installed, draft proofing has been upgraded, a community room has been provided and the area has been fenced. When describing the estate generally the association report that crime and drug abuse are the main concerns.

The current allocation policy in their tower block allows only people over 35 to be given a flat. There are not substantial numbers of children in their block. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities. Langley Residents' Association consider their council to be a fair one and they do take part in regular consultation with them.

HIFLBS

Roach Court Tenants' Association, Flat 34, Roach Court, 42 Hammerton Road, Collyhurst, Manchester, M10 7QP. Contact: Paul Llewellyn.

Roach Court Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. There are seven blocks on the estate, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 434 flats and represent about one fifth of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1964 and 1966.

The method of construction used is described as concrete and steel girder with brick outer walls. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. Two of the blocks are warden controlled and house mainly elderly people.

The aspects of their tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern are security, fire safety, lack of cleaning and poor maintenance. They feel that there is a major problem with the direct-work department, urgent repairs are often left for weeks, and jobs are cancelled and delayed without any explanation. They report a lack of communication and accountability. The association report that the open spaces on their estate are badly maintained, they are strewn with litter and the grass is rarely cut. There are not substanial numbers of children living in the blocks. The association consider their council to be a poor one. They take part in limited consultation with local housing officers, but they find the consultation unfruitful.

PXAYFLDS

Sawley Estate Tenants' Association, 7 Alburn Court, Sawley Road, Miles Platting, Manchester, M10 8DE. Contact: Bill Broadbent.

Sawley Estate Tenants' Association represent an inner-city area. There is one block on the estate of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 63 flats and represents one third of the total estate. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspects of the block which gives them most cause for concern are security in relation to access to the block and fire safety, particularly broken fire doors which are given a low priority for repairs.

When describing the estate generally, they report that there are no play facilities or youth clubs, policing is poor, there is inadequate maintenance of open areas, and a fairly high rate of vandalism. There are not substantial numbers of children on the estate.

The council have provided some community facilities, e.g. a laundry room. The association consider their council to be poor.

They consult with the council through the tenant participation unit and through FAME, the Manchester tenants' federation.

HIYFS

Shelter Housing Aid, Swan Buildings, 20 Swan Street, Man-chester M4 5JW. Tel: 061 834 4809.

Manchester Shelter offers advice and information to individual tenants and to tenants' groups.

Wilton Court Tenants' Association, 25 Wilton Court, Bridgnorth Road, Blackley, Manchester, M9 3HJ. Tel: 061 740 8749. Contact: Mrs Betty Dixon.

Wilton Court Tenants' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. It includes seven tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 371 flats and were built around 1975. The method of construction is described as brick and concrete. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are the lack of maintenance, lifts constantly breaking down, surrounding areas not kept clean, and entry systems that are antiquated. When describing the estate generally, they report that the shopping facilities are inadequate, the bus service is poor, there are no community facilities, and there is a high level of crime and vandalism.

Describing the current allocation policy for the flats, the association indicate some concern about the lack of restrictions on who is offered a high-rise flat. The flats do not have substantial numbers of children living in them. The association feel that the blocks are too dangerous for children. The council have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. The association consider their council to be awful. They take part in consultation but don't find the meetings productive.

PXIAYFLRDBSE

MERTHYR TYDFIL

Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council, Civic Centre, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN. Tel: 0685 723201. Contact: Mr Thomas

Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 66 flats and represents 1% of the council-owned stock. The block was built in 1962. The method of construction was no fines. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners.

The block provides sheltered accommodation. Households with small children are not therefore offered flats in the block and this hasn't changed over the last ten years.

The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

MERTON

London Borough of Merton, Housing and Social Services Department, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, SM4 5DX. Tel: 081 545 4003. Contact: Dennis O'Rourke.

The London Borough of Merton own 24 tower blocks; 21 of 6 to 12 storeys and three of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1,430 flats and represent 13.7% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1955 an d 1966.

The methods of constuction used include concrete frame with brick infill panels(8) and brick with concrete ringbeam and cantilevered balconies. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

When describing the management schemes operating in their tower blocks, they report that there is an estate management board and a single sharers scheme operating on the Phipps Bridge Estate.

The aspects of their tower block stock which give them the most cause for concern are vandalism, grafitti, lift maintainance, spalling concrete, balcony drains, timber decay to exposed joinery, and electrics. Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks.

There are no general restrictions as to which floor, except on the Phipps Bridge Estate, where households with children under thirteen are not offered flats above the second floor.

These policies have not changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower block flat. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities into its blocks.

They consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with the tenants' organisations. Consultation take place at several levels.

All tenants' associations are invited to send representatives to the twice-yearly borough policy advisory panel which discusses the HIP/Capital Programme and strategic housing issues. Tenants are represented at the district housing panels which meet every two months. Tenant association and estate officer meetings occur regularly, as required.

CVHPAYLRDBS

MIDDLESBOROUGH

Middlesborough District Council, Area 2 Housing, 15 Shelton Court, Thorntree, Middlesborough. Tel: 0642 224321. Contact: Len Junier.

Middlesborough own 10 tower blocks; four of 6 to 12 storeys and six of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 840 flats and represent 5% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1968 and 1972.

The methods of construction included Wimpey no fines and in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished. One block has been leased to the local polytechnic. Two of the blocks provide sheltered accommodation and one houses people over 50.

They have a selective allocations policy for all the blocks. Applicants have to be keen to live in a tower block and show an understanding of

what it's like. The authority are undertaking a managerial reveiw of the blocks, looking at concierges and security systems. A team of specialist officers are based in a tower block. Middlesborough have a high level of voids in the blocks, selectivity slows down the relets. They do not offer tower-block homes to households with small children, this policy has changed in the last ten years.

Three years ago they decided to move children under ten out. There are no other categories of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower- block flat. Each potential tenant receives three offers of accommodation. There are substantial numbers of children in the blocks (307) and the council do not consider this to be acceptable. They have specific policies to remove children, extra transfer points are awarded.

The authority have intro-duced compensatory services/facilities. All of the blocks have communal free laundries, lounges and cardphones. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' orga-nisations. There are management committees for all blocks composed of tenants, officers and councillors, where tenants are in the majority.

CPIALE

Netherfields Steering Group, Ground Floor Office, Welton House, Ingoldsby Square, Middlesborough, Cleveland. Tel: 0642 300382. Contact: Len Junier.

Netherfields Steering Group describe their estate as an outer estate. They represent nine tower blocks, four of 6 to12 storeys and five of 12 to 18 storeys. These blocks include 750 homes and represent 34% of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1966 and 1970.

The methods of construction used were in situ concrete and large panel system. No blocks have been demolished. One has been transferred to the local polytechnic and is occupied on a shorthold lease basis.

There are several management schemes operating in the blocks, two are used to provide sheltered housing, and one is a Co-op designated for single people. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are vandalism, graffiti, burglary and car theft.

A range of tower-block problems have been tackled by the local authority. Economy 7 heating systems have been fitted in conjunction with improved insulation.

Asbestos has been partially removed and community lounges/facilities have been installed. Security is being improved, new secure flat doors are being provided, and smoke alarms are being fitted in all flats.

When describing their estate, the association report that there are no youth facilities available but there is a great deal of wasted open space and a very stark environment. All blocks except one now operate a selective allocations policy. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the tower blocks. Compensatory services/facilities have been introduced–community facilities, lounges, and communal laundries.

The steering group report that their relationship with the council is a good one and that regular consultation takes place with local housing officers and ward members.

HPIAYSE

MID SUSSEX

Mid Sussex Housing Association, Norris House, Burrell Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1YL. Tel: 0444 414429. Contact: M. J. Cousins.

Mid Sussex Housing Association own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 26 flats and represents %0.6 of their total stock. The block was built between 1958 and 1960. The method of construction was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished. This block was transferred by Mid Sussex District council to the Mid Sussex Housing Association as part of a large-scale voluntary transfer of the council's entire housing stock. The current form of tenure is assured tenancies. There is no particular management scheme operating in the block. The main aspect of their tower block which gives them cause for concern is the need for refurbishment.

The main pressure affecting their allocations policy is homelessness; however, they report that it has not been necessary so far to use this block for families. Households with small children are never offered tower-block homes and this policy has not changed in the last ten years. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block.

The housing association have introduced compensatory services/ facilities into the block, they have provided play space. The housing association consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They consult via a tenants' consultative committee.

MILTON KEYNES

Milton Keynes Borough Council, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes, MK9 3HQ. Tel: 0908 682221. Contact: Sarah Markham.

Milton Keynes own two tower blocks; one of 6 to 12 storeys and one of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 186 flats and represent 1% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1962 and 1965. The methods of construction used were large panel Bison.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are not particular types of management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give the authority most cause for concern are the water services. Security has been improved in both blocks by the introduction of door-entry systems, with a concierge in one block.

These improvements have been made in consultation with the residents' association. When outlining the pressures affecting their allocation policies, the authority point to homelessness as the main problem.

Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks, although only rarely and they are never housed above the third floor. This policy has changed in the last ten years. The current policy has been much more stringently applied since the suicide of a young mother with a baby in 1987. They would not offer tower-block accommodation to elderly people or to a person they consider might be suicidal. People on the waiting and transfer lists are made three offers of accommodation, people who are homeless are made two offers.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks. The authority do have specific policies to remove those that do; they are given some priority for a transfer. The authority havn't introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

ILDS

MOTHERWELL

Motherwell District Council, Civic Centre, Motherwell. Tel: Motherwell 66166. Contact: Mr R Thomson.

Motherwell own 30 tower blocks; three of 6 to12 storeys and 27 of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 2,929 flats and represent 10% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built after 1962. The methods of construction used are described as Wimpey concrete panels (29) and steel frame (1).

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of the blocks which gives them most cause for concern is the external maintenance.

The authority have replaced heating systems and fitted door-entry systems. They report that there are no pressures affecting their allocation policies. The blocks are very popular. Households with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks and this policy has not changed in the last ten years. They report that they would be reluctant to offer tower-block accommodation to 'immature or anti-social families' or to households with pets. In answer to the question about the number of offers each potential applicant receives, the authority replied that people are selected for properties, not forced into them.

There are not substanial numbers of children living in their blocks and they have policies to remove those that do; they encourage people who have children while in the tower blocks to move to more suitable accommodation.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be excellent and they take part in consultation with tenants' organisations as required and prior to any improvement works. They feel that consultation is less necesary because the quality of the caretaking is so high.

HS

N

NEWCASTLE

City of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Housing Department, Barras Bridge, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 8PR. Tel: 091 232 8520. Contact: Chris Mills/Vivienne Grivell.

Newcastle Council own 47 tower blocks: six of 6 to12 storeys, 34 blocks of 12 to18 storeys, seven of over18 storeys. This totals 4138 homes and represents 9.7% of their housing stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1970. The methods of construction used included reinforced steel frame, steel frame, and large-panel Bison and Byker Wall. Four Bison blocks of a scissor design have been demolished because of the poor design. One block, The Larches at Cruddas Park, has been trans-ferred to Newcastle Poly-technic on a five-year lease for use as student accommodation.

Several blocks in Newcastle are used for sheltered housing and several are designated for use by single people over 45. Newcastle Council are concerned about their remaining blocks – the roofs, concrete and brick repairs, windows and the general deterioration of the physical fabric.

In addition there are problems with security and there is a need for a programme of fire-stopping measures. A variety of schemes has been carried out to improve Newcastle's tower blocks.

The current programme involves improved heating systems, insulation, secondary glazing, draught sealing and improved ventilation.

In parallel with this programme the council are tackling the problem of water penetration and carrying out roof repairs. Ten blocks have had an external fabric overhaul.

Under the City Challenge ten Cruddas Park blocks will get a similar overhaul. An Estate Action supported scheme at Cruddas Park has involved installing camera-linked concierge schemes and extensive landscaping. Under the 'Greenhouse Programme' one block is to receive a comprehensive insulation package.

A city-wide rolling programme of fire-stopping work is underway. Controlled-entry systems continue to be a priority for the council. A large number of Newcastle Coun-cil's blocks are in areas where demand for properties is low.

This creates a problem in terms of allocations. Households with small children are not offered tower-block flats. This policy was adopted in 1974. All other categories of tenant do receive offers of tower block flats.

flats. There is no limit on the number of offers made. In six of the council's blocks they have provided community rooms for the elderly. The council feel that their relationship with their tenants is fairly good and they take part in regular consultation with them. Representatives of the housing department meet tenants to discuss day-to-day concerns and capital schemes.

Public meetings are organised on estates and tenants are encouraged to attend council committee meetings. Tenants views are also sought during home visits by housing renewal staff and through surveys.

Tenants' associations are invited to attend the area housing sub-committees. The council support financially the Newcastle Tenants' Federation.

HIYFLDBSE

North British Housing Association, 4 The Pavillions, Portway, Preston, Lancs, PR2 2YB. Tel: 0772 824441. Contact: Jeremy Morton.

North British Housing Association own one tower block of over 18 storeys. The block contains 131 flats and represents 0.5% of their total stock. The block was built in 1970. The method of construction is described as rigid concrete frame.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. This is the only tower block the association own and they took it over from another housing association some years ago. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block.

The aspect of the block which gives most cause for concern is security. The association have tackled a number of problems. The heating system was replaced in 1991 but there are still insulation and cold-bridging problems.

Asbestos has been removed over the last couple of years. A door-entry system has been installed. The association report that there are some problems with the system due to tenant misuse. The tower block is in Newcastle city centre and is in high demand. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes and this policy hasn't changed in the last ten years.

They don't make tower-block offers to families with children under 16. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block home.

There are not substantial numbers of children in the block and they havn't introduced any compensatory services and facilities. The association consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

The association report that the tenants' association pressed for improvements to security and heating, but once these issues were dealt with the association became inactive.

HIAYLDB

Newcastle Tenants' Federation, Ist Floor,1 Pink Lane, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE1 5DW. Tel: 091 232 1371 & 091 233 0467. Contact: Dav ina Brain.

Newcastle Tenants' Federation have 50 members, ten represent tower-block estates. They successfully campaigned for the installation of double glazing and new heating systems in the city's 46 blocks. Ten blocks at Cruddas Park have concierge schemes. A refurbishment programme is underway, there are not many serious structural issues.

Fire safety is a concern. The federation's high-rise working party have finalised their draft fire safety charter, and are now discussing it with the council. Other main issues are management, allocations, security and care-taking. Some blocks provide sheltered accommodation and some are designated as "mature" blocks. The council have a "no children in blocks" policy. Children born in blocks are generally moved out in six months The federation consider the council good/fair; they do take part in regular consultation.

FS

Vallum Court Tenants' Association, 265 Vallum Court, Westgate Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne, NE4 6NP. Tel: 091 2738332. Contact: R Anderson/Vera Williams.

Vallum Court Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. It includes three blocks, all of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 360 homes and represent one quarter of the estate. They were built between 1962 and 1964. The method of construction used is described as concrete blocks/brick.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their blocks which give them most cause for concern are the lack of security and noise from neighbours. The storage-heating system is inadequate, and difficulty is experienced in obtaining replacement parts.

Other problems being experienced on the estate generally are break-ins and joyriding. When describing the current allocations policy for the blocks, the associaiton report that they requested that flats be let to the over 40s only, but council policy is to let to people over 16.

There arenot substantial numbers of children living in the flats. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. The association consider the council to be fair and they take part in regular monthly housing meetings with them.

HIFLDB.

NEWHAM

London Borough of Newham, Housing Department, 320 High Street, Stratford, London E15. Tel: 081 555 5552. Contact: Chris Worby.

The London Borough of Newham own 106 tower blocks; 60 of 6 to 12 storeys, 22 of 12 to 18 storeys and 24

of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 5,666 flats and represent 20% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1973. The methods of construction used were largely in situ concrete with some large panel Taylor Woodrow Anglian.

Ten blocks have been demolished because of structural defects. Two blocks have been transferred to other owners; these flats will be owner-occupied.

One of their blocks provides sheltered accommodation.

The aspect of the tower blocks which causes the authority most concern is security. They are dealing with this through a programme of concierges for all blocks with more than 60 units. Rents have been increased to meet part of the costs of these schemes.

They have a cyclical programme to deal with structural defects. 30% of lifts have been replaced. Amenities on estates have been improved through Inner Area Programme and Estate Action schemes. 25% of blocks have had underfloor heating replaced.

Fire-safety inspections have been carried out to most blocks but they have a problem finding the funding for the necessary works. Houeholds with small children are offered tower-block homes, this policy has changed in the last ten years.

In the early 1980s they had special lettings policies for some blocks and they gradually moved families down to the lower floors. This had to be changed because of the home-lessness crisis. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat.

They have a one-offer-only policy for all housing applicants. There are substantiail numbers of children living in their tower blocks. The authority do not consider this to be acceptable, but they no longer have any policies to remove children from the flats.

They have introduced compensatory services by providing concierge schemes. The council consider their relationship with tenants to be fair and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They encourage the formation of tenants' associations and consult at block, area and district levels.

CVHPXIAYFLRDBSE

Newham Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations, 29 Barking Road, London, E6 1PW. Tel: 081 552 5111. Contact: The Chair.

The Newham Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations offer a range of advice and information to individual tenants and to tenants' groups. They support tenants in forming new associations. They try to facilitate the work of the associations and encourage them to be as self-sufficient as possible.

The federation have 137 member associations, many of whom re-present tower blocks. The federation is funded through a tenants' levy. In Newham each tenant pays 8p per week. The aspects of the tower-block stock which gives them most cause for concern are disrepair, caretaking, safety issues and vandalism.

They have recently focussed on vandalism and drug abuse and are concerned not only about the damage to health involved but also about the cost of repairs which are ultimately carried by the tenants through their rent.

They would like to see six-monthly fire drills in tower blocks. The federation also support tenants' associations in raising additional funds through grants such as Community Chest.

F

Bemersyde Point & Maisonettes Tenants' Association, 30 Bemersyde Point, Dongola Road West, Plaistow, London, E.I3. Tel: 08l 552 5884. Contact : Edward Neve.

The Bemersyde Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. The association represent one block of 6 to l2 stories. The block contains 50 flats and represents three quarters of the estate. The block was built in l970.

The method of construction used was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in this block.

Aspects of the tower block that give the most cause for concern are vandalism, a lack of security, and the unhealthy, inefficient and expensive heating system (Cyclo-Control).

The association have confronted a range of tower-block problems in response to which many improvements have been carried out.

Improvements have been made to lighting, security, the maintenance of lifts, and the surrounding environment. Sheds and metal fencing have been removed and improvements made to community facilities in the form of a new tenants' meeting room.

The association report that there are no outstanding problems and the estate has a pleasant outlook, thanks to an active tenants' association. There are children living in their block but this doesn't present many problems at the moment.

The authority havn't introduced any compensatory facilities into the block. The association feel that their council is a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with them.

They participate in district tenant liaison committees and area committees, and take part in regular consultation with leading council officers. They also consult with the council through the Newham Tenants' and Residents' Federation.

HY

Community Links, Canning Town Public Hall, 105 Barking Road, London, E16 4 HQ. Tel: 071 473 2270. Contact: Frances Clarke

Community Links was established by volunteers in 1977. The organisation runs and supports a wide variety of services, activities and groups. Community Links supported the formation of the Newham Tower Block Tenants' Campaign (NTBTC).

NTBTC undertook a range of campaigns on estates throughout the borough, most notably the highly sucessful campaign for the demolition of the Freemasons Estate, which included Ronan Point.

Community Links run a wide range of out-of-school activities for children in the borough. Several of the schemes serve high-rise estates. The organisation are currenlty bringing the 100-year-old West Ham Town Hall back into community use after it became surplus to council requirements several years ago.

The National Tower Blocks Network is a Community Links project.

XP

Ferrier Point Tenants' Association, 54 Ferrier Point, Forty Acre Lane, London, E16. Tel: 071 474 0286.

Ferrier Point Tenants' Association represent a tower block in an inner-city area. The block is 23 storeys and contains 115 flats. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. Security has been upgraded with the introduction of a concierge scheme.

The association undertook a fire-safety inspection as there had been a number of fires in the block. The inspection revealed several problems including broken fire-doors and a vandalised dry-riser main. The association consulted the fire brigade and the council, who responded to the problems.

Newtown Tenants' Association, 46 Sparkes Terrace, Clarkson Road, London, E16. Tel: 071 476 6702. Contact: Renee Heath.

Newtown Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. The estate contains four tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 180 flats and represent one half of the estate. The blocks were built in the 1960s and the method of construction was brick.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern are vandalism and noisy parties.

The association have confronted a range of tower-block problems. The council are currently undertaking a boroughwide cockroach treatment programme which includes blocks on this estate. The heating system has been replaced with cyclo controlled heating, this has proved expensive.

The dry-risers are currently vandalised. In a fire the fire engine would not be able to get access because of the parked cars which are everywhere. The entry-phones are regularly out of order. The association have tried to get some play facilities provided on the estate but with no success. A 13-year-old boy was badly injured when playing 'chicken' on top of a tower-block lift.

Children have recently been seen swinging on and climbing up ropes hanging from scaffolding around the blocks. They climb up several floors to look in people's windows. When describing the problems on the estate generally, the association report that the high-density, lack of any open space, and hostile and threatening environment are the main issues.

There are not substantial numbers of children in the tower blocks. When the tenants' association was originally formed they got agreement for a local lettings policy in which families with children were moved from the high-rise flats to ground-floor properties that became empty. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks.

The association have been given a small flat on the estate where they run regular advice surgeries. The association consider the council to be good/fair and they take part in regular consultation with them both as an individual tenants' association and through the Newham Tenants' Federation.

CVPXIYFDSE

The Taylor Woodrow Anglian Group of Tenants' Associations, c/o 46 Sparkes Terrace, Clarkson Road, London, E16. Tel: 071 476 6702. Contact Renee Heath and Hazel Reid.

The Taylor Woodrow Anglian Group of Tenants' Associations (The TWA group) describe their area as an inner-city one. The area contains nine inhabited tower blocks plus the empty Freemasons Road Estate blocks.

The TWA group is an association of tenants' associations in the south of the London Borough of Newham. The group came together because of the demolition of the Freemason Estate blocks. They wished to participate in the redevelopment of the site. The Freemasons Estate included Ronan Point and eight sister blocks.

All but two have been demolished and the remaining two will go shortly. The method of construction of the Freemason Estate blocks was large panel Taylor Woodrow Anglian system.

All nine blocks were 22 storeys and together they contained almost 1,000 flats. The TWA group working together with Hunt Thompson and Planning Aid For London organised a planning-for-real exercise in which local people made their suggestions about what could happen to the redeveloped site. These suggestions were turned into a local plan for the area. However, it was not possible to gain any financial backers for the plan and so it wasn't implemented.

The contract for demolition and new build went to Barratts. The TWA group met with Barratts and the demolition firm, Demolion UK, to discuss issues involved in the demolition, such as site safety and asbestos removal.

While the demolition was carried out there was a fire on the top of one block, one worker fell down a lift shaft and was killed, and debris fell into neighbouring gardens. It had been Barratts intention to leave one block, Hulme Point, standing, and to sell the flats.

It is reported that they decided against this in the light of the slump in the housing market and because of the structural information gained on the blocks during the demolition. The TWA group have been very concerned about the high-density of the area, the large number of children and the inadequate services/facilities.

They are seeking to provide such services themselves and have been successful in obtaining an urban aid grant to undertake research and funding development for their proposals. The TWA plan has also been submitted for inclusion in the borough's unitary plan. The group consider their council to be a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with them.

BAE

Newham Rights Centre, 285 Romford Road, London E.15. Tel: 081-555-3331. Contact: Steve Brierley

The Rights Centre offer a range of housing advice to individuals and tenants' associations. They have supported tenants of Brassett Point, Stratford, in their efforts to be rehoused after a fire in which a mother and child jumped from a balcony.

FX

NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

North Bedfordshire Borough Coucil transferred their high-rise stock to The Bedford Pilgrim Housing Association.

Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association, Pilgrims House, Horne Lane, Bedford, MK40 1NY. Tel:0234 328828. Contact: Mike O'Sullivan.

Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association own 16 tower blocks; 13 of 6 to 12 storeys and three of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 650 flats and represent 8.6% of the council owned stock.

The blocks were built between 1960 and 1970. The methods of construction used are described as concrete frame, in situ floor and either large panels or brick cladding.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. A number of management schemes are currently operating within these blocks.

Two of the 12 to 18 storey blocks provide sheltered accommodation and two of the 6 to 12 storey blocks also provide sheltered accommodation.

The aspects of their tower-block stock which gives them most cause for concern are security, prior to the installation of door-entry systems, and access problems for external maintenance including concrete repairs. The housing association report that the blocks are generally quite popular.

They have confronted a range of tower-block problems. They have carried out a programme of improvements to the central heating system.

They report that they have no hard facts on tenant isolation or depression but they think that it is likely to be a problem for some of their tenants, particularly the more elderly.

Communal rooms have been created in five blocks. Tenants of the sheltered blocks have access to laundries and guest rooms. But generally, they report, there are no communal facilities.

They report that the main pressure on their allocation policy is that there are too many applicants for too few properties. Households with small children are not offered tower block homes; this policy hasn't changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The housing association consider their relationship with their tenants to be excellent and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

They promote and help tenants' associations generally and are working towards the formation of a tenants' federation. They provide financial support for their tenants' associations.

HIYBS

Greyfriars Residents Association, 10 Roise Court, Bedford, MK40 1JJ. Contact: Mrs R. Whittington.

The Greyfriars Residents' Association describe their estate as a medium town/suburban mixed community. The estate has four tower blocks; all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain about 250 flats and represents 100% of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1957 and 1960. The method of construction used was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished. These four blocks were transferred to the Bedford Pilgrim Housing Association by the North Bedfordshire Borough Council.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give the most cause for concern are noise from traffic, other tenants and nearby clubs, and anti-social behaviour from other tenants.

When describing the estate generally, the association point to vandalism and lack of police supervision of local clubs as the main problem. A small number of children live in the blocks. The association feel that the blocks are not an appropriate place for children and some tenants have

officially complained about it. No compensatory services/facilities have been introduced. The association consider the Bedford Pilgrim Housing Association to be a fair landlord and they take part in regular consultation with them.

Y

Queen Street Residents' Area Action Committee, 1 Cobden Square, Bedford, MK40 2JE. Contact: Mr T J Dyer.

Queen Street Residents' Committee describe their estate as a suburban mixed community. The estate contains three tower blocks all of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 342 flats and represent half of the total estate. The blocks were built in 1968. The method of construction used is described as concrete.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished. The ownership of the three blocks has transferred from North Bedfordshire Council to the Pilgrim Housing Association. Two of the blocks are used to provide sheltered accommodation for the elderly.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are noise, dirty communal areas, and vandalism. The action committee report that these problems are more serious in the one block which doesn't provide sheltered accommodation.

They feel that this third block should also be sheltered, as 80% of the tenants are elderly. When describing the problems on their estate generally, they point to rising crime and bad policing. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks.

The action committee have recently been recognised as a tenants' association by their landlord, and expect as such to take part in regular consultation.

S

NORTHAMPTON

Northampton Borough Council, Newilton House, Deangate, Northampton, NN1 1XD. Tel: 0604 29055. Contact: D. Jeyes.

Northampton Borough Council own 12 tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 649 flats and represent 3.96% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1957 and 1974. The methods of construction used include concrete frame (6) and non-traditional Wimpey (6). No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners.

Eight blocks provide sheltered accommodation. They found the wardened units difficult to let and so dewardenised three blocks. A range of improvements have been carried out. District heating systems have been replaced by individual systems. Asbestos has been removed.

Seven blocks have had security doors and entryphone systems installed. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes, this policy has changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat.

All housing applicants receive three offers of accommodation. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

HAS

NORWICH

Norwich City Council, City Hall, Norwich, NR2 1NH. Tel 0603 622233. Contact: Richard Houghton

Norwich City Council own eight tower blocks, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 445 flats and represent 2.13% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1964 and 1966. The methods of construction used were brick(6) and no fines(2). No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

When describing the types of management scheme operating in their blocks, the authority report that allocations are made to people of over 50 in one block (Winchester Tower). In this block the flats are connected to an alarm service.

There are no aspects of their tower blocks which give the authority cause for concern. They have fitted door-entry systems to improve security. When outlining the pressures affecting their allocation policies, they report that homelessness among small families - i.e. with one child - is the main problem.

Households with small children are never offered homes in tower blocks; this policy hasn't changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. Norwich consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. There is a network of seven area committees within the local authority area.

S

NOTTINGHAM

Nottingham City Council, Department of Housing Services, Exchange Buildings, Cheapside, Nottingham, NG1 2BG. Tel: 0602 483500. Contact: Julia Clark.

Nottingham City Council own 22 blocks. They have four blocks which provide sheltered accommodation

and are warden-aided. The authority have carried out a range of improvements to the blocks. A number of Estate Action programmes have enabled them to improve security, carry out environmental works, replace lifts, upgrade heating systems, install fire alarms and undertake structural works. All but one of the blocks now have security systems. Victoria Centre has a roof garden. It is the council's policy to house young children, under 14, on or below the fifth floor.

S

Nottingham Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations, 99 Tilbury Rise, Cinder Hill, Nottingham, NG8 6DE. Tel: 0602 273811. Contact: Gill Bainbridge.

Nottingham Federation are run and managed by volunteers. They are currently organising a city-wide meeting of tower-block tenants to consult on the council's proposals to rationalise security systems in the blocks.

The council are proposing to link six or seven blocks together in a scheme. There will be one control room in a tower block from which all 6/7 blocks can be monitored using either a cable or dish system. The numbers of security staff currently employed will be reduced by natural wastage.

A similar, smaller, scheme has been operating on the Lenton Estate where there are three blocks. Woodthorpe and Winchester blocks currently predominantly house older people who have expressed the wish to retain a security/concierge worker for their blocks; the council have agreed to this.

The federation report that the council house children in tower blocks and that tenants' associations are largely responsible for providing any play services. Highcross Court is having major works undertaken as part of the City Challenge Project. Asbestos is being removed from inside and outside of the flats. Tenants have not been moved out while the work is going on. The federation are looking into the possibilities of compensation for the tenants.

ASP

First Report, 65 North Street, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7NG. Tel: 0602 813714. Contact: Roger Critchley.

First Report works with tenants to achieve safe, warm, dry homes in a good state of repair. They undertake technical reports, surveys, research and consultancy. They concentrate on several tower-block issues, such as, dampness, repairs, heating, health and safety.

First Report are currently undertaking some fire-safety work on tower blocks in Sheffield. The work undertaken by First Report can often be paid for through the legal-aid system. First Report have many years experience of working on housing issues with tenants' groups.

HBF

Highcross Court Tenants' Association, 60 Highcross Court, Radford, Nottingham, NG7 3LS. Contact: Andy Bloomfield.

The tenants' association describe their estate as an inner-city one. They represent one tower block of 14 storeys which contains 112 flats. The blocks were built in 1970 and the method of construction used was large panel bison.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspects of their tower block which have given them most cause for concern are fires, poor heating and structural problems, but this was before an estate action programme dealt with the problems. In 1990/91, £3 million was spent on the block. A new electric system and a new heating system were installed; security works and environmental works were carried out. Many families are allocated flats in the tower block and there is a good mix in the tenants' opinion of families and young couples.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and local people and the tenants' association are concerned about this.

They have attempted to run a mother and toddler group in response to this problem and a new tenants' community room is planned for the bottom of the block.

The local authority are planning to provide play space next to the block. The tower block tenants' association consider that their relationship with the council is awful, but they do take part in regulation consultation with the council.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland Housing Executive, The Housing Centre, 2 Adelaide Street, Belfast, BT2 8PB. Tel: 0232 240588. Contact: Colin James.

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) are the single housing authority in Northern Ireland. They own 30 tower blocks which contain 2,746 flats.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. Divis maisonnettes have been demolished but not the tower block. Remote-control entry systems and some concierge schemes have been introduced into the blocks, along with strengthened glass.

The NIHE report that they have found it necessary to house children in some of the blocks.

Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations (Greater Belfast), c/o 103c Shaws Road, Belfast, BT11 9PS. Tel: 0232 617334. Contact: William Pollock.

The Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations is a young federation, it was formed two years ago and is building support gradually. They have no financial resources and are hoping that it might be possible to fund the development of their work through a tenants' levy.

Amalgamation of Tenants' and Housing Associations East Belfast, 223a Albert Bridge Road, Belfast, BT5. Tel: 0232 731675. Contact: Molly Taylor.

The Amalgamation of Tenants' and Housing Associations has 23 affiliated groups, a small number represent tower blocks. The group have been running for 15 years.They are an independent body run entirely by volunteers.

They have supported the efforts of the tenants lobby group to get security and fire safety improved. The group report that they opposed the building of tower blocks in East Belfast when it was proposed and consequently few were built.

Carlisle & Victoria Barrack Tenants' Association, 46a Victoria Parade, Belfast. Tel: Belfast 323 945. Contact: Eileen Uprichard.

The tenants' association describe their estate as an inner-city one. The estate includes seven blocks, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks include 384 flats and represents half of the estate.

The blocks were built between 1960 and 1970 (approximately) and the method of construction used was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give the most cause for concern are fire safety, security, poor heating and unreliable lifts. The tenants describe the other problems on their estate as a serious lack of open space and a high rate of crime. They report that the current allocations policy for the block involves moving in more single people.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The tenants' association report that local people are concerned about this. The council have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the tower blocks.

The association report that their relationship with the council is poor. They have regular meetings with council representatives but they do not find them particularly helpful. They take part in regular consultation with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

HPXIFL)SE

Divis Tower Tenants' Association, Flat 5E Divis Street, Belfast, County Antrim, Northern Ireland, BT12 4QA. Tel. Belfast 232298. Contact: John Mulholland.

The association describe their estate as inner-city. There is one tower block on the estate containing 95 flats and representing one tenth of the whole estate. The block was built between 1963 and 1968. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

The method of construction was large panel system by Sectra. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspects of the tower block which gives the most cause for concern are fire safety, draughty windows, lift breakdowns and noise from the water pump.

The tenants have faced a range of tower-block problems; they report that fire hoses have recently been put up on all the landings and there are now two new emergency phones on the 3rd and 8th floors. However, major fire safety work, such as ventilated corridors, will not be started until 1992. They have been issued with a new 'fire safety in high rise blocks' leaflet.

The other problems on their estate are reported to be very little open space, poor environment and inadequate repairs. The people who are currently moving into the block are reported to be young couples with young children and single-parent families. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities. The association report that their relationship with the council is poor, there is no regular consultation. Tenants feel that they have no influence on the decision-making process.

PXIYFLBE

Rathcoole Self Help Group,30aThe Diamond, Rathcoole, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland, BT37 9BJ. Tel: 0232 365322. Contact: Adree Wallace.

Rathcoole Self-Help Group describe their estate as a medium/small town estate. There are four blocks, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 252 flats and represent 1/18 of the total estate. The blocks were built in the 1960s, the method of construction is not known.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give the most cause for concern are fire risks, too many elderly people on the upper floors, vandalism, people frequently getting stuck in the lifts, and poor car-parking facilities. The association report that the Northern Ireland Housing Executive are at present carrying out a nine-

month repair programme which the tenants hope will deal with all the problems they have identified. The housing executive have a policy of not moving children into the blocks. Rathcoole is the largest housing estate in Northern Ireland.

The association report that the estate has a handful of shops, no community centre, no playgrounds and no provision for the elderly, for young adults or for teenagers. One block is reserved exclusively for people aged 30 or more and the average age in this block is 60. There are not substantially high numbers of children living in the block.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities. Rathcoole Self- Help Group report that there relationship with their council is fair and that the housing executive have a ten-year plan for Rathcoole as a result of which the estate is physically improving. However, tenant consultation is still considered to be very poor and social facilities to be inadequate.

PXYFL

Tenants Lobby Group,103c Shaws Road, Belfast BT11 9PS. Tel: 0232 617334. CONTACT: William Pollock

The Tenants' Lobby Group was formed initially by four tenants' associations in Belfast who were concerned about the1984 Rent Scheme. Rents are calculated on a points scheme. The group are campaigning to get tower-block tenants the same rent concessions that other tenants are allowed for having a shared access.

The four tenants groups are : Lausville Residents' Association, Rathcoole Tenants' Association, East Belfast Amalgamation of Tenants' Associations' and Ballybeen Tenants' Association. The Tenants' Lobby Group have campaigned recently about fire-safety standards and have been successful in drawing attention to the possible dangers. The NIHE have appointed a fire consultant to inspect all their tower blocks and make recommendations.

Two schemes to improve fire safety have been agreed. Firstly, a ventilated corridor is to be created in the Divis tower block. Secondly, two blocks in Finagy are to have their soil pipes sealed to prevent transmission of flames and fumes. The lobby group is an entirely independent organisation and now has the support of 24 tenants' associations.

F

Tullycarnet Residents' Association, 37 Langholm Row, Tullycarnet, Dundonald, BT5 7GN. Tel: 0232 487350. Contact: Mrs J Donaldson.

Tullycarnet Residents' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. It contains one tower block of 6 to12 storeys. The block has 120 flats and represents a quarter of the total estate. It was built in 1968, the method of construction used was large panel bison.

No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block.

The aspects of the tower block which give them most cause for concern are poor security, the number of break-ins, graffiti, loud music at night, no fire drill, inadequate caretaking and insecure front doors. The tenants have campaigned on a range of issues and as a result of their efforts leaflets have now been put up in the lobbies about what to do if a fire occurs.

When describing problems on their estate generally they point to the lack of a chemist, a lack of open space for children to play and high levels of crime and break-ins. When describing the current allocation policies for their tower block, the association report that a lot of young men (18-20) are being allocated two- bedroom flats among pensioners. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and local people are not concerned about this.

The association believe that their council are fair. They have regular monthly meetings with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive but feel that the NIHE can be slow to act on high-rise issues.

IYFLDBS

NORTH TYNESIDE

North Tyneside Council, Parkside House, Elton Street, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear. Tel: 091 262 2324. Contact: Colin Boxshall

North Tyneside Council own two tower blocks, both of 12 to18 storeys. This represents 180 homes and is .0007% of their total housing stock. These blocks were built between 1962 and 1963. The methods of construction used were in situ concrete and column beam Wimpey curtain walling.

They have never demolished a block and none has been sold or transferred to other owners. The blocks are managed by a local neighbourhood housing office. There is a resident caretaker and lettings are made to people of 50 years and over.

The council are concerned about persistent water penetration in top-floor flats. The local authority have successfully responded to a variety of problems in their tower blocks: asbestos panels below windows in the living rooms and the bedrooms were encapsulated, and underfloor heating proved unpopular and has been replaced by electric storage heaters.

External walls have been dry-lined within individual flats to reduce heat loss. A door-entry control system has been installed and secondary glazing

has been put into all the flats to reduce drafts from metal window frames and reduce heat loss. All flats are able to be connected to a Care Call warden-controlled system. All new allocations in the blocks are made to single people or couples of over 50 years of age.

No households with small children are ever offered homes within the blocks. This policy was introduced in 1989 - prior to that there were no age restrictions, but offers were not made to families with children. Tenants are offered flats within these multi-storey blocks if it is felt that they are compatible with the other residents.

The local authority believe their relationship with their tenants to be a good one. All tenants are consulted prior to any works being carried out, e.g. before improvement work. Pilot schemes were carried out within empty flats and open days were held for tenants to call in and see the work.

HAS

O

OLDHAM

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, Housing Department, Level 10, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1UP. Tel: 061 6784585. Contact: B. Neville.

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council own ten tower blocks; five of 6 to 12 storeys and five of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 755 flats and represent 3.4% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1962 and 1975.

The methods of construction used include traditional (4 blocks, 213 flats), Wimpey (2 blocks, 169 flats), large panel Bison (2 blocks, 235 flats), large panel Reema (1 block, 67 flats) and Fram Gerard (1 block, 71 flats). No blocks have been demolished. One block, Briarstones, was sold to Lodgeday to be improved and sold. When describing the types of management scheme currently operating in their blocks, the authority report that on the lower floors of certain blocks there is warden-controlled accommodation for the elderly. There are not particular aspects of their tower blocks that give them cause for concern.

The pressures which affect their allocations policy include the increased numbers on the waiting list, growing homelessness and the reduced number of properties. Households with small children are never offered homes in tower blocks; this policy hasn't changed in the last ten years.

The only other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower block flat is those under the age of 21. There are not a substantial number of children in their blocks and they have not introduced any compensatory services/facilites into the blocks.

The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. There are twice-yearly meetings with all tenants' groups and other meetings occur as needed.

OXFORD

Northway/Marston Tenants' Association, 59 Plowman Tower, Northway, Oxford, OX3 9RA. Contact: K. Balsamo

Northway/Marston Tenants' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. There is one block on the estate of 12 to18 storeys. The block contains 85 flats and was built in 1965.

The method of construction used was in situ concrete. No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspect of the block which gives them most cause for concern is security. They report that this is a problem even with an entry-phone system as people who don't live in the block are still let in. Households with small children are not allocated flats above the fifth floor.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block. No compensatory services/facilities have been introduced into the block. The association consider their council to be fair and they take part in some consultation with them.

PIYLDSE

P

Peterborough City Council, Town Hall, Bridge Street, Peterborough, PE1 1HT. Tel: 0733 63141. Contact: A Holmes.

Peterbough Council have one 6 to12 storey block containing II8 homes. The block represents 0.9% of their total stock. It was built in I963 of in-situ concrete with brick panels. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block.

The block is situated in a very popular city-centre location and has previously been housed only retired people. The council have not found it necessary to house families with older children in the flats. Households with children under I2 are not housed above the first floor.

One offer is made to each potential applicant. If the offer is refused and the council still consider it reasonable, then the application is deferred for 12 months.

There are not substantial numbers of children in the block. No compensatory services/facilities have been introduced. The council consider their relationship with tenants is good. There is no regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

PLYMOUTH

Plymouth District Council, Municipal Offices, Civic Centre, Plymouth. Tel: 0752 264813. Contact: Dennis Spilsbury.

Plymouth District Council own six tower blocks; all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 548 flats and represent 2.77% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1964 and 1975. The methods of construction used are described as concrete beams and columns with infill panels.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular types of management scheme operating in the blocks. The aspect of their tower-block stock which gives the authority most cause for concern is occasional vandalism.

They report that security could be improved and that metal windows require replacement. Households with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks and this policy hasn't changed in the last ten years.

Tower-block flats are only allocated to families with children over the age of 12 or to single people and childless couples.

There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. They report that they have no problems in allocating the flats. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and they have no specific policies to remove those that do.

The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities into their blocks; they have improved a community centre.

The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

S

Plymouth Association of Tenants' and Residents' Associations, All Saints House, Harwell Street, Plymouth, PL1 6BW. Tel: 0752 254440. Contact: Ann Wilkinson.

The Plymouth Association of Tenants' and Residents' Associations (PETRA) was formed three years ago. The organisation is managed by volunteers. It now employs one worker and is funded by the council. PETRA has 55 member groups, two of which represent estates containing tower blocks.

The federation report that no blocks in Plymouth have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. They are currently organising a meeting of tenants from Plymouth's three high-rise estates to share information and discuss common concerns.

PETRA has supported the tenants of Tamar House with difficulties experienced as the result of a lift fire. Fire escape signs have been put up by the council and ongoing problems with the lift are being dealt with. In general the tower blocks are reported to be popular, with stunningly good views over the River Tamar.

The federation consider their council to be excellent and they take part in regular consultation with them. They also take part in a council/tenants' forum which meets every six weeks and they have a representative on the housing committee.

F

Tamar House Residents' Association, Tamar House, James Street, Devonport, Plymouth, PL1 4HT. Tel: 0752 563303. Contact: Mrs P Hamilton.

Tamar House Residents' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. The estate contains one tower block of 12 to 18 storeys. The block contains 90 flats and was built in 1965. No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspects of the tower block which gives the association most cause for concern are security, lack of control over the use of the lifts, and communal facilities, such as laundries.

Cleanliness is a problem - there is no regular cleaning of chutes and common areas. The allocations policy is unpopular with current residents. The association report that the life-style of new tenants is causing distress to the large elderly population and requires police involvement.

The tenants also have problems with ill-fitting windows, dogs and people throwing rubbish out of their windows. When discussing the current allocations policy for their block, the association report that there is an influx of people whose life-style is not conducive to living harmoniously in a tower block.

As a result, report the association, there has been a fire in the block, people get drunk and urinate frequently in lifts and some are involved in drugs. They feel that the council is unable to enforce their tenancy agreement. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities. The association consider their relationship with the council is awful. They take part in regular consultation with the council, and now meet council officers through the tenants' federation, PETRA.

The association feel that they have had a poor response from the council in terms of action taken on problems raised with them. However, the association have decided to carry on meeting with them, as they have no choice.

HIYLDBSE

POOLE

Poole Borough Council, Civic Centre, Poole, Dorset. Tel: 0202 675151. Contact: W Shaw.

Poole Borough Council own six tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 270 flats and represent 10% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1972. The methods of construction are described as reinforced concrete frame, Wimpey no fines concrete infill panels and brick-block cavity infill panels.

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are problems with their policies on dogs and other pets, and noise.

The six blocks are in the process of having insulation upgraded, double glazing fitted and heating systems improved. They describe the pressures which affect their allocation policies as the government, too much demand, not enough resources, an ineffective computer system, misdirection of housing subsidy to home owners and the Right to Buy.

Households with small children are offered tower-block homes. There are restrictions as to height; generally families with children under eight are not offered homes above the first floor, exceptions are made sometimes for homeless families.

These policies have changed in the last ten years. About three years ago, in response to the housing shortage, households with children started to be offered high-rise flats. The only category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat is wheelchair users. Housing applicants can receive three offers of accommodation but people rarely need the three to be satsified. There are not substanial numbers of children living in the blocks and the council have policies to remove those that do - they are awarded 'unsuitable accommodation' transfer points. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. Tenants are consulted prior to any improvement works, and there is a joint consultative committee who meet quarterly and represent all tenants' associations.

HPDB

PORTSMOUTH

Barry Russell, School of Architecture, Portsmouth Polytechnic, King Henry Building, King Henry 1 Street, Portsmouth, PO1 2DY. Tel: 0705 827681.

Barry Russell has undertaken extensive research into the industrialisation of house building. His research was published in the book "Building Systems, Industrialisation and Archictecture". The book contains some useful information including a chapter on Ronan Point. Mr Russell has been happy to provide relevant information to support tower-block tenants' groups.

B

R

REDBRIDGE

London Borough of Redbridge, Housing Department, 17-23 Clements Road, Ilford, Essex. Tel: 081 478 3020. Contact: Ken Packer.

The London Borough of Redbridge own 15 tower blocks. The blocks contain 972 flats and represent about 9% of the council-owned stock. The methods of construction used include large panel Wates and reinforced concrete. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. Broadmeade Estate which includes six large panel Wates blocks is currently having major works underataken as part of an Estate Action programme. All of the blocks are to be overclad, new security systems are being installed, and environmental improvements are to be carried out.

SE

Broadmead Family Centre, Liston Way, Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 7BL. Telephone: 081-505-6559. Contact Michelle Nathan.

Broadmead Family Centre describe the area in which they are based as an outer estate. The estate includes six tower blocks of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks include 630 flats and represent three quarters of the estate. The blocks were built between 1964 and 1966 and the method of construction used was large panel Wates system.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. Some of the flats are used to provide sheltered housing for elderly people. The family centre report that major improvement works are being carried out which will take three years.

The family centre report that the works are making life even more difficult for tenants by reducing access to the area and by the removal of the community hall. Their own centre will be closed for nine months as a result of the works and so tenants are even more isolated.

They also report that safety in the flats is very poor. The family centre run groups and information surgeries to help overcome tenant isolation and depression. They report there are large numbers of children living in the blocks and that local people and the family centre are concerned about this. They continually pressurise the council to try to get adequate play

areas provided and to have families only housed below the fifth floor, with an adequate number of bedrooms so that children of different sexes can sleep separately. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilites into the tower blocks. The Broadmead Family Centre consider the council to be a poor one.

CVPXIYLRDE

REIGATE & BANSTEAD

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, 24 Hatchlands Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 6AR. Tel: 0737 761265. Contact: Fred Barnes.

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council own three tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 157 flats. They were built between 1965 and 1971. The methods of construction used were in situ concrete (1), traditional brick (1) and concrete frame with brick infill panels (1).

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The types of management scheme operating in the blocks include sheltered housing (1 block) and accommodation for people without children under 17 (1block). The third block is nearly empty and is to be sold or demolished.

The aspects of their tower blocks which gives the authority most cause for concern are their unsuitability for families with children and the cost of maintenance. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes. This policy has changed in the last ten years; families with children used to be housed in the third, now empty, block.

There are not substantial numbers of children now living in the blocks. The authority has specific policies to remove children from the blocks. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants is a fair one. They take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They report that ad hoc meetings are held with groups of tenants when matters affecting their homes arise. They also make extensive use of newsletters, particularly when a programme of reprairs is to be carried out.

HPXIYDBSE

RESTORMEL

Restormel Borough Council, 39 Penwinnick Road, St. Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5DR. Tel: 0726 74466. Contact: Mr Sweeney.

Restormel Borough Council own one tower block which contains 66 flats. The block represents 1.6% of the council-owned stock. It was built in 1968. The method of construction was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners.

Asbestos has been removed from the block and an entryphone system installed. Families with young children are not offered tower block homes and this has not changed in the last ten years.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they don't take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations as there aren't any.

XAS

ROCHDALE

Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council, Municipal Offices, Smith Street, Rochdale, OL16 1YD. Tel: 0706 47474. Contact: Alan Taylor/ Karen Mitchell

Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council own seven tower blocks; three of 12 to 18 storeys and four of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 761 flats and represent 4.1% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1969 and 1972. The method of construction used was brick and in situ concrete.

The authority report that five blocks, on a separate site, have been demolished because they were difficult to let and too expensive to refurbish (£40,000 per dwelling). No blocks have been transferred to other owners.

When describing the management schemes operating in the blocks, they report that there is an estate committee and they have considered 'zoning'. The aspects of the tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern are neighbour disputes and sound transmission.

The authority have undertaken a range of improvements to the blocks. They have replaced underfloor heating systems with storage heaters. They have removed asbestos. Community rooms have been provided under Estate Action schemes. A three-year lift-replacement programme is underway. A concierge scheme has been implemented.

Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes and this policy has not changed in the last ten years. There are no other categories of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat but they would consider carefully, and would take medical advice, about any application from a person 'coming out of care or from a mental institution who may have suicidal tendencies'.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and they don't have any policies to remove those that are. There is a high turnover in the blocks and a high demand for the flats.

Currently, there are no restrictions on allocations but because of the nuisance caused by young singles the estate committee are pressing for an over 25s allocations policy. No compensatory services/facilities have

been introduced into the blocks. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. Through the tenants' association and the estate committee, the council consult on all aspects of development and management and they report that this has proved very satisfactory to all parties.

HIAYLRS

Rochdale Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations, 102 Drake Street, Rochdale, OL16 1PQ. Contact: Mr Peter Shaw.

Rochdale Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations were formed 15 years ago. They receive funding from the council and employ two workers. They have 30 members, one of whom represents a tower-block estate.

They are an information and resource centre; they help tenants to establish new associations. Their chair person also acts as a mediator in neighbour disputes. The federation consider the council to be good and they take part in regular consultation with them.

ROCHESTER

Rocheter Upon Medway City Council transferred their housing stock to Medway Housing Society on 27.7.91.

Medway Housing Society Ltd, New Depot Complex, Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 4AQ. Tel: 0634 727777. Contact: R A Rooke.

Medway Housing Society own four tower blocks, three of 6 to 12 storeys and one of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 188 flats and represent 2% of the council owned stock. The blocks were built between 1968 and 1970. The method of construction was large panel system. Prior to the transfer of stock, Rochester Upon Medway demolished six tower blocks because they were structurally unsound. The housing society report that Rochester have one remaining tower block which is currenlty being transferred to a housing association.

When describing the types of management scheme operating in the blocks, the society report that they generally only allocate flats to childless couples, people with adult children, single people and elderly people.

There are no aspects of the blocks which give them cause for concern. The society report that they may in future seek to increase the number of elderly people in the blocks.

They have never offered households with small children tower-block homes, although Rochester City Council did at one time allocate flats to such families.

There are no other categories of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. Applicants for council housing receive three offers of accommodation; the society report that a tower block is not normally given as the final offer.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and they have policies to remove those that do; families with children receive priority transfers.

The society report that they have introduced compensatory services/ facilities, they have provided a community hall which is used by Kent Autistic Society as a day centre.

The society consider their relationship with their tenants to be excellent and they would take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations, if they could succeed in encouraging the formation of such organisations.

ROTHERHAM

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Crinoline House, Effingham Square, Rotherham, S65 1DB. Tel:0709-382121. Contact J. Mahon.

Rotherham own one tower block of six to 12 storeys which contains 48 homes. It was built in 1967 of in situ concrete construction. None of the blocks has been demolished and none transferred to other owners. They do not have any specific type of management scheme currently operating.

The aspect of the tower block which gives the authority most cause for concern is security. As a result a door-entry system was fitted in 1990. They don't report any pressures on their allocation policies. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes and this policy hasn't changed in the last ten years. There are no other catagories of tenant to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and they have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. They report that their relationship with their tenants is a good one and that they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

S

RUGBY

Rugby Borough Council, The Retreat, Newbold Road, Rugby, CV21 2LN. Tel: 0788 533821. Contact: Mr A S Garner.

Rugby Borough Council own five tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 315 flats and represent 6.5% of the total council stock. The blocks were built between 1963 and 1964. The method of construction used was large panel Bison. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred

to other owners. There are no particular types of management scheme operating in the blocks; they report that elderly people, single people and families live in all the blocks.

The aspect of their tower-block stock which gives the most cause for concern is housing families in the flats. The authority has tackled a range of tower-block problems. Heating systems in all the blocks have been upgraded. CCTV entry-phone systems have been installed.

They feel that the provision of resident managers on the tower block sites has helped enormously in tackling the range of problems. When outlining the pressures affecting their allocation policies, the authority point to the number of homeless families.

Households with small children are offered tower-block homes and there are no restrictions as to which floor. This policy has changed in the last ten years. Previously blocks were segregated, two blocks were allocated to single people, one block to the over 35s, one block to the over 50s and one block was mixed. But due to the pressure of homelessness this form of segregration has had to be abandoned.

There are no categories of tenant to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation. All applicants get two offers of accommodation before they must accept a tower-block home or nothing. They report that there are substantial numbers of children living in their blocks; they estimate that there are 20 per block.

The authority dos not consider this to be acceptable. The authority report that they had previously cleared all their blocks of children but now they have no alternative and children have returned.

The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities into the blocks; they have provided laundries with washing machines and tumble dryers. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. The resident managers consult regularly with tenants individually and in groups.

HXIAYLDSE

RUNNYMEDE

Runnymede Borough Council, Civic Offices, Station Road, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey. Tel: 0932 845500. Contact: Mr G Rendall

Runnymede own one tower block of 12 to18 storeys. The block contains 97 flats and is 1% of the council-owned stock. The method of construction used was in situ concrete and brick cladding.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The block is conventionally managed.

The aspect of their tower block stock which gives the authority most cause for concern is security. Households with small children are not offered homes in their block, this policy was adopted within the last 10 years.

There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower block accommodation. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their block,and they do not have any policies to remove those that do.

They have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks.

Runnymede report that their relationship with their tenants is a good one and that they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They have regular meetings and correspondence with the residents' association.

FLS

SANDWELL

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Housing Department, The Council House, High Street, Smethwick, B66 3NT. Tel: 021 569 5047. Contact: Ms S Simmons.

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council own 110 tower blocks; 57 of 6 to 12 storeys, 45 of 12 to 18 storeys and 8 of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 6,826 flats and represent 13% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1954 and 1970.

The methods of construction used were large panel Wates (47), Bison (10) and Tracoba (3), Wimpey no fines (28), Bryant in situ (1), Wates with balcony access (1), Tarmac in situ (3), W.J.W. Trad.T.C. (4), Five Oaks in situ (3), W.V. 21NN (2), Kendrick/ Truscon (4) and Laings (4). Sandwell have demolished five of their tower blocks.

The reasons for demolition were lack of demand, the high cost of refurbishment and strategic remodelling of estates. The authority have sold blocks to other owners. Kennedy, Marshall and Roosevelt Houses were sold for private development to Flame Lodge Limited. Flame Lodge then either sold or let the flats.

Sandwell report that there are 44 no-child blocks in the borough, and three blocks are designated sheltered schemes for the elderly with warden and piper alarm support. Second-stage accommodation and support for young homeless people is provided in one block.

When describing the aspects of their tower block stock which give the authority most cause for concern, Sandwell report that a range of fire and structural problems have been identified and the resources needed to address the problems are being sought. Sandwell have tackled a

range of tower-block problems. Estate Action funding has and is being used to deal with problems of inadequate heating, poor community facilities, lack of security, dampness and condensation, and the generally poor environment of some of the estates. Bolton Court, Beatty and Jellicoe Houses have received Estate Action funding.

A DICE scheme was proposed for the Riddins Mound Estate under the direction of Professor Alice Coleman. Improved security and the remodelling of the estate were considered. The scheme did not go ahead but some of the ideas were incorporated into an Estate Action bid.

The borough has a number of active tenants/residents' associations which the authority report have played a vital role in the assessment of problems on some estates. Community groups have been established which offer contact and support to residents. Energy efficiency schemes at Brades Rise and Rowley Hall have been successful in improving heating and insulation standards.

Another three blocks are due to receive the same improvements. The authority report that their lettings policy is under review. The main pressure on their allocations policy is the mismatch between the demand for and the supply of housing.

This has been caused by the lack of local authority new build and by the Right to Buy, transferring the most popular properties, usually houses, into owner-occupation. Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks and there are no restrictions as to which floor. These policies have changed in the last ten years.

Offers of tower-block accommodation would not be made to people who are mentally ill, unless they were adequately supported. Housing applicants receive three offers of accommodation. There are substantial numbers of children living in their blocks, the authority cannot estimate how many. They do not consider this to be acceptable. Their proposed new lettings policy is to have some provision for the removal of children from the blocks. The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities into their blocks. Specific examples are a community centres at Lancaster House, Beatty House, Jellicoe House and James Watt House. Play space has been provided for Sandwell Adventure Playground Association adjacent to Darley House.

The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They also consult with Sandwell Tenants' Federation regularly.

HPXIAYFLRBS

Darley House Tenants' Association, 12 Darley House, Wallace Close, Oldbury, Warley, West Midlands, B69 1HS. Tel: 021 544 8744. Contact: C. Haycock.

Darley House Tenants' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. It includes one tower block of 12 to 18 storeys and contains 108 flats. The block represents one quarter of the total estate. It was built between 1970 and 1972. One block on the estate has been demolished.

No blocks have been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in Darley House. An Estate Action bid has been made for the entire Wallace Close Estate. The tenants' association liaise with the council on lettings for the block.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the block and the association are concerned about this. The association consider their council to be excellent and they take part in regular consultation with them.

HPXIIAYLRDSE

Dave Bird, 25 Lennard Gardens, Foundary Lane, Smethwick, B66 2NL. Tel: 021 565 2439. Contact: Dave Bird.

Mr Bird lived in Merry Hill Court prior to a major fire in the block in which a tenant died.

The estate, which includes Merry Hill Court, is known locally as 'Black Patch' and is described as an outer estate. The estate contains six tower blocks, all of 12 to18 storeys. The blocks contain l,200 flats and represent one third of the estate. The blocks were built between l965 and l970 approximately. The methods of construction used include steel frame and in situ concrete.

Several blocks in the area have been demolished as the result of poor design and excessive cost of repairs. Merry Hill Court was demolished after a fire made it unusable.

This tragic fire was of national significance for several reasons. Firstly, the rapid spread of flames and fumes along ducting which houses gas pipes clearly showed that the block did not comply with the building regulations that stipulate a fire in a tower-block flat should be able to be contained within that flat for one hour.

Secondly, the poor standard of fire safety within the block, the condition of the fire-escape stairwells and of the dry risers made the job of evacuating the tenants and of fighting the fire very hard.

As a result of tenant concern about this fire, the National Tower Blocks Network (NTBN) carried out its own spot fire-safety survey of five local authority areas and found that conditions in Merry Hill Court were not unique. NTBN subsequently produced a Fire Safety Pack for use by tenants and local authority workers.

No blocks in the area have been transferred to other owners. There are several management schemes operating in the blocks. One block is

warden controlled and provides accommodation for elderly people, and several are designated as mature blocks. It is reported that young single people are 'dumped in one block which is known locally as the zoo'.

The aspects of the tower blocks which have given local tenants most cause for concern are the fire and the lack of fire-stopping between floors, lack of security and problems for tenants when occupancy falls below two thirds within a block.

A variety of tower-block problems have been tackled in the area. Fire-stopping has improved, and the mature blocks have been upgraded and maintained to a higher standard than previously. The demolition of Merry Hill Court is reported to have been handled quite well, without too much noise.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities. Dave Bird considers the council to be a fair one. He was rehoused from Merry Hill Court but expects to be a tower-block tenant again. He has been very involved in the inquest into Jennifer Noble's death and the current legal action being pursued by the tenants.

FLS

SCUNTHORPE

Scunthorpe Borough Council, Civic Centre, Scunthorpe, DN16 1AB. Tel: 0724-280444. Contact: Daniel Beck.

Scunthorpe own four tower blocks one of 12 to 18 storeys and three of over 18 storeys. These blocks contain 297 homes and represent 3.73% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1965 and 1970. The method of construction was large panel Bison. Scunthorpe have not demolished any blocks and none has been transferred to other owners.

The council report that one block provides sheltered housing which is linked to a central 24-hour cover control point and the other three blocks are under ordinary local authority management. The aspect of the tower block stocks that gives the authority most cause for concern is maintenance.

They have tackled a wide range of tower block problems, they have irradicated cockroaches, updated heating systems, provided play and community facilities, removed asbestos, improved fire safety standards and renovated lifts. They are in the process of tackling dampness problems through the use of over cladding.

They have overcome a wide range of building defects, security is to be improved and alterations to the layout have been affected. The council report that the pressures which are affecting their allocation policies are the right-t-buy sales which have reduced the number of properties becoming available, thereby increasing demand for flats and lengthening waiting lists.

Households with small children are not offered homes in tower blocks; this policy hasn't changed in the last 10 years. One block, which has been refurbished to provide sheltered accommodation, is now available only to pensioners, and one block is restricted to those who are over thirty and families who contain no children under twenty.

Each potential tenant was previously made four offers; recently this was changed to two. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks but they do have specific policies to remove children from blocks. The transfer scheme gives extra points to families with young children in high- rise flats and no allocations are made to families with young children.

The authority hasn't introduced any compensatory services/facilities. They report that their relationship with their tenants is a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. The three high-rise blocks in Market Hill have a residents' association, which is regularly consulted, and tenants have representation on a member/officer working party.

CHPXAYFLDBSE

SEDGEMOOR

Sedgemoor District Council, 2/4 Taunton Road, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 3LR. Tel: 0278 424391. Contact: Alastair Matthews.

Sedgemoor District Council own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys. The block contains 60 flats. The block was built in 1965. The method of construction was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no specific management schemes operating in the block. The aspects of their tower block which give them most cause for concern are lifts, security and poor television reception.

The authority have responded to these problems by installing a door-entry system and upgrading lifts. Households with small children (under ten) are not offered homes in tower blocks.

This policy has not changed in the last ten years. The only other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat is expectant women.

Each potential tenant is made two offers of accommodation before they must accept a tower-block flat. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block. They have policies to remove those that do, they are given priority transfers.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the block. They consider their

relationship with their tenants to be a good one. They don't take part in any regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

LS

SEFTON

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council, Vermont House, Housing Department, 375 Stanley Road, Bootle, L20 3RU. Tel: 051 934 3614. Contact: Sue Lacey.

Sefton own 14 tower blocks, two of 6 to 12 storeys, 11 of 12 to18 storeys, and one of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1,024 flats and represent 6.4% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1971.

The method of construction used included in situ, no frame with brick pillars (7 blocks) and Mathews and Mumbi construction (7 blocks). No blocks have have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. A number of management schemes are currently operating in their blocks.

Sheltered housing for the elderly is provided in five blocks, young singles are housed in two blocks, and mature people (over 45) are housed in two blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks that give Sefton most cause for concern are the high level of noise in some blocks, security, vandalism, people found to be sleeping rough in communal areas, and high levels of suspected drug abuse in some blocks.

The authority have tackled a number of tower-block problems. In response to tenant isolation, one-bedroom flats on designated estates have been turned into sheltered accommodation including resident wardens and communal lounges.

In response to poor layout, one estate is being re-shaped around four multi-storey blocks and several unpopular maisonette blocks have been demolished. The new street design and layout have improved the area substantially. Fencing and landscaping around the blocks have improved both security and the environment. In response to the problems with security, the council have installed television cameras and door-entry systems and they have a pilot scheme providing a full concierge service.

When outlining the pressures affecting their allocation policies, the council report that their two blocks for young, single people are unpopular and therefore they have a high level of voids. Households with small children are offered flats up to the third floor only, and then only when accommodation in a maisonette has been declined. This policy has not changed in the last ten years.

In response to the question about categories of tenants to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation, the authority report that each case is judged individually but they would never offer tower-block accommodation to anyone severely physically disabled or clinically depressed. All potential tenants are made three offers of accommodation.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the tower blocks and they do have specific policies to move those that do. All families with young children are eligible for a transfer.

They have introduced compensatary services/facilities into their blocks; they have provided a family centre on the ground floor of one of the blocks which is central for the other surrounding blocks.

They feel that their relationship with their tenants is good/fair and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They have regular meetings with tenants' associations.

ISE

SHEFFIELD

Sheffield City Council, Housing Department, Town Hall, Sheffield, S1. Tel: 0742-735148. Contact Kath Windle.

Sheffield own 53 tower blocks, one of 6 to 12 storeys, and 52 of 12 to18 storeys. These blocks include 4,715 homes and represent 6.2% of the tower-block stock. The blocks were built between 1959 and 1970. The methods of construction used include Wimpey no fines (6), in situ structural concrete frames with brick infilling (27), in situ reinforced concrete slabs, columns and some thermal walls (19), and in situ concrete frame and floor slabs with brick infill (1).

Seven blocks have been demolished for structural reasons, three of the blocks were Reema large panel systems and four were Wimpey no fines. One block in Hyde Park has been transferred to Northern Counties Housing Association and the form of tenure is Housing Association rented.

The types of management scheme currently operating in their tower blocks include a tenant management co-op on Hyde Park Walk and Terrace, a concierge scheme on the Kelvin estate and a special lettings policy at Harold Lambert Court.

The aspects of their tower block stock that give the authority most cause for concern are heating and insulation, spalling concrete, windows, safety and security, water penetration, stability of external fabrics, fire safety standards, cold bridging and condensation.

They report that other concerns stem from the problems of high-density, high-level living. They have tackled a range of tower block problems. They have established a rolling programme for the maintenance of lifts, emergency and door-entry equipment, and for the removal of spalling concrete. They have an on-going programme to upgrade fire-precaution measures

in all their tower blocks. They undertook a programme of lift replacement and the replacement of heating systems between 1986 and 1988.

Sheffield fully refurbished the Stannington and Callow Mount blocks; the Kelvin Deck access estate now has a 24-hour concierge system and the newly refurbished Harold Lambert Court in Hyde Park is subject to a special lettings policy which excludes children.

The council report that the pressures on their allocation policies are the decreasing stock but increasing waiting list, a general dissatisfaction with tower blocks and a lack of large family houses, plus homlessness.

Households with children are offered tower block homes, applicants with children under 16 years old are given a one-year enhancement to their waiting list time, families with more than one child are not normally allocated multi-storey homes. These polices have changed in the last ten years.

The categories of tenant to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation are families with more than one child and families with pets. Applicants are offered up to three properties and a tower block may be any or all of the offers.

There are substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks, but they don't know how many. The authority are currently reviewing their policy on children in blocks. They have introduced compensatory services/facilities – for example, community centre facilities in the basement of the Norfolk Park tower block.

They don't comment whether they think their relationship with their tenants is a good one, but they do take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. Their consultation structure is currently under review but the existing process includes tenant representatives on local area housing comittees which meet bi-monthly. More specific consultation takes place around individual schemes. The housing advisory comittee includes tenant representation and meets bi-monthly to advise on policy issues.

CVHPXIAYFLRDBSE

Northern Counties Housing Association Ltd., Princes Building, 15 Oxford Court, Oxford Street, Manchester, M2 3WQ.

Northern Counties Housing Association own two tower blocks, both of 12 to 18 storeys. They own Castle Court on the Hyde Park estate in Sheffield and Adelphi Court, Silk Street, in Salford. The blocks contain 424 flats and represent 4% of their total stock. The blocks were built in the early to mid-1960s.

The method of construction of both blocks was in situ concrete frame with brick/block infill. No blocks have been demolished by the association. Two have been transferred to other owners, one was sold to the University of Salford and one was transferred to them on a ten-year lease.

When describing the management schemes operating in the blocks, the association report that Castle Court is managed by an estate-based regional office. Adelphi Court is managed from a regional office which is within a mile of the block, and floors 1-3 provide sheltered accommodation and have a warden.

The aspects of the blocks which give them most cause for concern are rent levels in Castle Court and security in Adelphi Court. The association report that they have tackled the problems experienced in the blocks in a comprehensive manner and they are no longer hard to let.

The pressures on their allocation policies are that there is a lack of turnover in the properties which are suitable for families with young children. Households with small children are offered tower-block homes. In Adelphi, children are housed up to the seventh floor. No children are offered homes in Castle Court. These policies havn't changed in the last ten years.

There is no category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The association have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities into the blocks.

They consider their relationship with their tenants to be good and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They consider good liaison with tenants' organisations to be essential for good management.

Netherthorpe Tenants' Association, 22 Brightmore Drive, Robertshaw Block, Netherthorpe Estate, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S3 7NH. Contact: Mrs Edith Soar.

Netherthorpe Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. They represent 11 tower blocks, nine of 6 to 12 storeys and two of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 640 flats and represent half of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1958 and 1961. The method of construction used was traditional brick.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The aspects of the tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern are overdue refur-bishments and inadequate heating.

When describing their estate, the association report that there are not many shops, but as they are near the town centre this is not too major a

problem. When describing the current allocations policies, the T A report that "anybody who wants to live in the blocks can do so regardless of other tenants". There are some children living in the blocks but not in substantial numbers. Local people are concerned about this and they have raised the issue with Sheffield Council.

There are no play areas in the area but plenty of open grass space and there is some provision at the local school for mothers and toddlers, but no compensatory services or facilities as such has been introduced into the block. The association report that their relationship with the council is a good one and they take part in regular consultation with the council.

HAD

Sheffield Polytechnic Students' Union, The Welfare Unit, Nelson Mandela Building, Pond St, Sheffield. S1 2BW. Tel: 0742 738934. Contact: Ms. Ona Matthews.

This is a student advice centre based in the inner city, but covering three other polytechnic sites in Sheffield. There are five blocks of 6 to 12 storeys representing a quarter of the housing stock. The blocks were built in the 1960s. None of the blocks has been demolished.

Blocks were improved for the World Student Games, then sold to Northern Counties Housing Association. The polytechnic manage some of this accommodation for students. The blocks most of the students live in have been refurbished for the World Student Games. However, the rents are high and not covered by housing benefit.

There is also concern about the lack of student family accommodation. The estate has a poor layout and there is concern for safety going to and from the estate. The Students Union Welfare Unit work with students who live in council-owned blocks, Poly-owned blocks and old health authority blocks. They have supported students on a range of housing issues, calling in Environmental Health officers when needed. The Polytechnic is beginning to manage more accommodation for students owned by housing associations, in response to the lack of student accommodation. By and large property is reasonable, but small and mainly for single students .

HFE

Stannington Tenants' Association, c/o Hawkhills Old People's Home, Stanwood Road, Sheffield, S6 58E. Contact: S.Eggerton.

Stannington Tenants' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. There are three tower blocks on the estate all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks were built in 1965. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of their tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern is the expensive district heating system.

When describing the problems on their estate generally they report that there has been a 37% increase in crime.

When describing the current allocation policies for their blocks, they report that the council's policy has changed to allow young single people into the blocks. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the blocks, in fact the community centre has been closed. The association report that their council is a fair one.

HIYFLDBSE.

SLOUGH

Slough Borough Council, Town Hall, Bath Road, Slough, SL1 3UQ. Tel: 0753 23881. Contact: Mr J Elnig

Slough Borough Council own four 6 to12 storey blocks and four 12 to18 storey blocks, representing 588 homes which is 6% of council-owned stock. They were built between 1964 and 1967 of in-situ concrete and large panel Bison (2). No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners.

There are no management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of their tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern is the number of lodgers who cause management problems. Security was improved by putting in high-quality security doors in four of the blocks. A small outbreak of cockroaches is being treated.

There has been a depletion of family stock because of the "Right to Buy" scheme, and there is a shortage of two-bedroom stock to meet the needs of the statutory homeless and people on the waiting list.

The council do not offer tower-block accommodation to families with small children; wheechair users or those with medical recom-mendations are not housed in this type of accommodation.

Tenants are only made one offer of accommodation before being deferred for one year. There are not substantial numbers of children in the blocks. They are introducing a policy this summer which will help to remove children from the flats.

The new transfer policy will give greater priority to families in high-rise flats. The council's relationship with tenants is considered to be very good. They write to tenants and invite comment, as well as talking to tenants' associations.

CS

SOLIHULL

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Alcott House, Berwicks Lane, Chelmsley Wood, Solihull, B37. Tel: 021-770-4433 ext 228. Contact John Pitcher.

Solihull own 41 tower blocks, 24 of 6 to 12 storeys and 17 of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks include 2,199 flats and represents 16% of the council owned stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1971. The methods of construction used include traditional (9), Bison (30) and Wimpey (2).

Three blocks have been demolished because they were unpopular and expensive to maintain. They have used the cleared site for local authority new build. No blocks have been transferred to other owners.

The types of management scheme currently operating in their blocks include two vertical sheltered schemes and four mature person blocks (no children, people aged 45+). The aspects of their tower block stock that give the authority most cause for concern are the cost of management and maintenance, compared to other property types.

They have tackled a range of tower block problems and report that there is a significant commitment in the department's capital programme to making improvements to insulation and the environment, and remedying defects.

The management schemes mentioned earlier have proved to be popular. The authority report that the main pressures on their allocation policies are that demand for housing outstrips supply, and the sharp rise in homelessness in the borough.

Households with small children are offered tower block homes and there is no restriction as to which floor. This policy has changed in the last 10 years, they used not to have children above the fifth floor. The other category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower block accommodation are the elderley, except for the sheltered blocks. There are no limits to the number of alternative offers made to each potential tenant before they must accept a tower block home. There are substantial numbers of children in their tower blocks, they can't estimate how many. They consider this to be acceptable.

They do have policies to remove children from the blocks, they give families priority for transfer. They have introduced compensatory services/ facilities such as common flats/ lounges. They feel that their relationship with their tenants is a good one in general.

They take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations, they hold regular meetings concerning block improvements and they listen to residents' views.

HPXYDBSE

Twin Towers Tenant' Association, 58 Westham House, Forth Drive, Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham, B37 6PT. Contact: David Jones.

Twin Towers Tenants' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. The estate contains 42 tower blocks, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks have 3,360 flats and represent one quarter of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1970. The method of construction used was large panel Bison.

The association report that three blocks on the estate have been demolished to make way for a traditional housing project. No blocks on the estate have been transferred to other owners. Redwood house on the Kinghurst Estate provides wardened controlled housing for elderly people.

There are no other specific management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give the association most cause for concern are children living there, security, dogs, and not being able to receive satellite or cable television. The tenants' association came into being to pressurise the council for a central heating system; they were successful.

They are currently trying to get video-linked security systems agreed. They have tried, without success, to get double glazing. They report that the level of amenities on their estate is fairly high. The current allocation policies for the blocks involves letting mainly to people over 45; however, young homeless people are offered flats on occasion.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the association are concerned about this. The association report that they don't consider tower blocks to be a suitable place for children to live and it is for this reason that the council mainly allocate to people over 45.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities into the blocks. The association consider their council to be a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with them. They meet with council representatives every six weeks.

HDS

SOUTH TYNESIDE

South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council, South Tyneside House, 1-15 Westoe Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE33 2RL. Tel: 091-427-1717. Contact Mr. E Derrick.

South Tyneside own seven tower blocks , five of 6 to 12 storeys, one of 12 to 18 storeys and one of over 18 storeys. This represents 579 homes and is 2% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1966 and 1974. The methods of construction used included John Laing

reinforced concrete and brick panel (3), and Stanley Miller in situ concrete frame with precast external cladding panels (4). No blocks have been demolished although one block containing 114 units is scheduled for demolition.

No blocks have been sold or transferred to other owners. The authority report that one block is used partly for sheltered housing. The aspects of the tower block stock which give the authority most cause for concern are security, vandalism and high district heating costs. They have tackled a few tower block problems.

They report that they have changed the heating systems in three blocks to meter control, initiated a security patrol at Hebburn Newtown, and installed access control to their sheltered block. They report that the main pressure on their allocations policy is the lack of family housing at ground level.

Housholds with small children are not offered tower block accommodation and this policy hasn't changed in the last ten years. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower block accommodation. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks. They do have policies to remove those that do. They offer transfers when children "attain a suitable age".

The authority hasn't introduced any compensatory services/facilities. They report that there relationship with their tenants is a good one.

HPXSE

SOUTHAMPTON

Southampton City Council, Civic Centre, Southampton, SO9 4XH. Tel: 0703 832346. Contact: Dr Jo Ivey.

Southampton City Council own 19 tower blocks; three of 6 to 12 storeys, 13 of 12 to 18 storeys and three of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1,894 flats and represent 9% of the toatal council stock. The blocks were built between 1958 and 1967. The methods of construction used included large panel Reema (3) and reinforced concrete frame with brick infill.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating in their blocks, the authority report that one block houses single people. The aspect of their tower-block stock which gives the authority most cause for concern is children living in the flats.

The authority have responded to a range of tower-block problems. Asbestos has been identified and removed. Fire safety measures have been upgraded. A range of building defects have been tackled. One block has been overclad, three blocks have been strengthened to resist progressive collapse and a range of minor works have been carried out on the structure of blocks as defects have been identified.

The lack of security has been tackled through the installation of door-entry systems. Play facilities have been provided through the conversion of drying rooms. New windows and window locks have been installed.

The authority have a tenant participation programme to help to overcome tenant isolation. When outlining the pressures affecting their allocation policy, Southampton report that their current stock is 20,000. Of which two thirds are flats. The Right to Buy has removed 8,000 properties from their control, these were mostly houses. About 60% of two-bedroom flats are allocated to homeless people and to special sub-committee cases.

Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks, there are no restrictions at present as to which floor. The only other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower block flat is pensioners.

Three alternative offers of accommodation are made to each potential tenant from the waiting list. They estimate that there are 705 children, under 18, in their tower blocks. The authority do not consider this to be acceptable. Their policies to remove children from blocks are currently under review.

The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. Play facilities have been introduced in one block with a large child population. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They consult through tenants' liaison officers, the Southampton Tenants' Federation and tower-block tenants' groups.

PXAYFBS

Southampton Tenants' Federation, 9 Merideth Towers, Thornhill, Southampton, Hants. Tel: 0703 225083. Contact: Mr J Johnson.

The Southampton Federation is relatively new, it was constituted in August 1991. The federation receive some council funding but they don't have any workers. There are only five tenants' associations in Southampton, three of which are affiliated to the federation. All three represent tower blocks. One of the associations is currently producing a video of life in a tower block.

The federation have taken up a number of tower-block issues. They are encouraging the use of unwanted drying areas, in scissor shaped blocks, for community activities. One block, Albion Tower, has 234 children living in it, mostly under fives; they have succeeded in getting rooms to be used for a mother and toddler club for a couple of sessions a week. The federation consider the council to be good/fair.

PY

Northam Tenants/Residents' Association, Northam Community Link, The Northam Centre, Kent Street, Northam, Southampton, Hamp-shire, SO1 1SP. Tel: 0703 225083 & 223598. Contact: Ms J Reynard.

This is an inner-city estate including one tower block of 12 to 18 storeys. The block contains 66 flats and represents approximately 10% of the total estate. The block was built between I960 and I964.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The local housing association rent 5% of flats on the estate to people rehoused into the community from hospital where they were treated for mental illness. The aspects of the blocks which give them most cause for concern are indadequate lifts and insecure front doors.

City-wide heating meetings have been held in response to complaints, and a stock survey report is awaited. The block has been overclad for £3m, panels have fallen off in high winds. The overcladding is now being checked.

There have been many good results regarding racist problems. Play facililty work was to start in the summer but has been delayed because a six-lane road is to be built through the estate and the park will have to be moved.

The association have been told that they will be able to design the play area and choose equipment when the work is undertaken. The association report that the other problems on the estate generally are that the parade of shops on the estate is empty (because of high rents and rates), and the estate is surrounded by industry with no green open spaces at all.

The old policy of not housing children above the 5th floor has now been dropped due to lack of accommodation in the area. This causes concern for the children, although there are not substantial numbers of children in this block. At present they are setting up new groups for parents, also an 8 to 14 youth club backed by local police.

Compensatory services/facilities are being provided, major works on the estate are about to start with local sponsorship, and details are being worked out at present. The association consider the council to be fairly good, and there is regular close consultation.

VHPXIRDE

Thornhill Tower Blocks Residents' Association, 9 Meredith Towers, Tunstall Road, Thornhill, Southampton, SO26NX. Contact: Johnny Johnson.

Thornhill Tower Blocks Residents' Association describe their estate as an outer-city one. There are 342 homes in the three 12 to 18 storey blocks which represents less than a quarter of the estate. These were constructed between I965 and I970. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes in operation. The aspects of their blocks which give the most cause for concern are rotting windows frames and noise from neighbouring tenants. When describing their estate generally, they point to the lack of youth facilities and difficulties with groups of youths.

There are substantial numbers of children in the blocks, and the residents' association have stated many times that they would like to have a say regarding allocations and would strongly recommend that no children under a certain age be accommodated.

The authority have not provided any compensatory services/facilities in the blocks. The association consider the council to be fair. There is very little consultation between them and then only at the tenants' request. They would prefer regular meetings as frequently as possible.

IYFS

SOUTHEND

Balmoral Community Committee, 36 Brecon, Salisbury Avenue, Westcliffe on Sea, SS0 7BD. Tel. 0702 432605. Contact: Maurice Grainger.

Balmoral Community Committee describe their estate as a suburban mixed community. There are three tower blocks on the estate, all of 12 to 18 storeys. They contain 220 flats and there are no other properties on the estate. The blocks were built between 1971 and 1972 of large panel concrete construction.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which gives the most cause for concern are "the type of tenants being moved in, noise form neighbours, unsocial behaviour by adults, problems with dogs, drug abuse and a degree of prostitution."

They have experienced a number of tower-block problems on their estate, in response to which one block is being refurbished. Electrics, plumbing and windows are being upgraded and it is hoped that two other blocks will be dealt with in the same way over the next two to three years. Security doors are also being installed.

The other main problem on the estate is reported by the association to be petty crime. The community committee have serious concerns about the current allocations policy. They feel that little consideration is given to tenants' suitablity for "communal living". There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and local people are concerned about this. The authority have not introduced

any compensatory services/facilities. The community committee report that their relationship with the coucil is good/fair and that they take part in regular consultation with them. Members of the committee meet monthly with councillors.

FLS

SOUTHWARK

London Borough of Southwark, 38 Rye Lane, Peckham, London, SE15 5BY. Tel: 071 639 4353. Contact: Colin Anderson.

Southwark are unable to say how many blocks they own. Their blocks were built between 1959 and 1976. The Brandon Estate in Southwark, were the first tower blocks to be built in London.

They believe that no blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The authority report that there are no particular management schemes operating in their blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are the structure, security and safety.

Southwark have tackled a wide range of tower-block problems and they report that their current pharoah ants/ cockroach programme seems to be working in most areas. Most blocks now have adequate heating systems. A new anti-grafitti coating is about to be tested. A major lift renewal programme is being completed.

The council report that there are two or three proposed tenant management co-ops and estate management boards, which include tower blocks, which may go ahead in1992/ 3. When describing their allocations policies, Southwark report that for some years they have not placed families with children above the fourth floor. They have found the current housing situation so desperate that now families are housed above the fourth floor if they explicitly ask to be. Elderly people and people with physical and mental disabilities/ learning difficulties are very unlikely to be offered tower-block accommodation. Southwark estimate that roughly one quarter of their tower-block homes include children.

The authority don't have any specific policies to remove children from the blocks. Compensatory services are provided on many of their high-rise estates, these include play areas/ dog free zones and funding for local under-fives groups.

They consider their relationship with their tenants to be fair and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. There is a well-developed neighbourhood forum network, and the council consults at a borough-wide level with the tenants' council, which refers items to the housing committee and recieves items from it for consultation. They report a good relationship with the Southwark Group of Tenants' Organisations

CVHPXIAYFLRDBSE

Southwark Group of Tenants' Organisations, Bells Gardens Community Centre, 19 Buller Close, London, SE15 6UJ. Tel: 071 639 6718. Contact: Nicola Bacon.

The Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations (SGTO) report that there are 29 tower blocks in the London Borough of Southwark but the federation report that a tower block has been defined in Southwark as eight storeys and over. They do not have any details about storey height and numbers of flats.

Tower blocks have been demolished in Southwark but they do not know how many or why. No blocks have been transferred or sold to other owners. There are particular types of management schemes operating in their borough. Currently there are two or three tenant management co-ops, two in the process of being set up and several at the feasibility study stage. The aspects of their tower blocks which gives the federation and local tenants' groups most cause for concern are reported to be structural problems, safety and crime problems.

The SGTO report that local tenants' groups have encountered a wide range of tower block problems and have responded to them in a variety of ways. When describing the current allocation policies, the SGTO report that it is the council's policy not to house families with young children above the 5th floor. However, in practice, they do.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the SGTO report that they and local people are concerned about this. The local authority have introduced some compensatory services/facilities. The SGTO report that they feel that their council is a poor one.

They take part in regular consultation with Southwark. A new participation structure has been introduced as part of the de-centralisation process. A Neighbourhood Forum/Tenants' Council structure has been introduced. There are some teething problems at present, notably the council trying to dominate and tenants having to adapt to a new structure.

CVHPXIAYFLRDBSE

Adders Tenants' Association, Adders TA Mailbox, c/o Harris Street Neighbourhood Housing Office, Harris Street, Camberwell, London, SE5 7RX. Contact: Mike Loveder.

Adders Tenants' Association describe this estate as an inner-city one. The estate includes three tower blocks, all of 6 to12 storeys. The blocks contain 240 flats and represent the majority of the estate. The blocks were built between 1950 and 1960. The method of construction used was reinforced

concrete. No blocks have as yet been demolished. One block, Ayton House, is due to have £764,000 worth of structural repairs in l992/3. No blocks have been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The aspects of the tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are security, rotten window frames, inadequate lifts, cockroaches, external decoration and rent arrears.

The association have confronted a range of tower-block problems as a result of which new fire balconies have been erected and new fire doors installed.

Concrete repairs have been carried out and the drainage system has been renewed. Lift replacement is pending High Court action. The association also report that an inadequate cockroach treament is underway.

When describing their estate generally, the association point out that there are a high number of burglaries and there is no youth provision. When describing the current allocation policies for the blocks, the association report that it seems as if flats are offered to 'whoever will accept them.'

The association are not sure how many children live in the blocks. They are currently trying to pressurise for children's play facilities and youth work provision, through the Neighbourhood Forum.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the blocks.

The association consider their council to be a poor one but improving slowly. They take part in regular consultation with the council through the Neighbourhood Forum.

CVHPIAYFLRBSE

Draper Tenants' Association, c/o 109 Newington Butts, London, SE1 6SF. Tel: 071 701 5863. Contact: C.T. Bailey.

Draper Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. The estate contains one tower block of over 18 storeys. It has 141 flats and represents half the total estate. The block was built between 1962 and 1964.

The method of construction was large panel. No blocks have been demolised and none has been transferred to other owners. There are not particular management schemes operating in the block. The aspects of the tower block which gives them most cause for concern are lift failures, break-ins and assaults. They have confronted a range of tower-block problems.

The council have responded by taking prompt action on cockroach infestation. They are also installing a concierge system to deal with the lack of security. The main problem on the estate generally is the lack of cleaning. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities. The association consider their council to be a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with them. They attend meetings of the neighbourhood forum and the tenants' council, and feel they are well informed.

CVPLS

Kipling Tenants' & Residents' Association, Community Rooms, Ground Floor, Simla House, Weston Street, London, SE1. Contact: Mrs Di Trescher.

The association report that their estate is an inner-city one and that they represent two tower blocks of over 18 storeys which contain 158 flats. The blocks are half of the total estate and are 25 years old. The association report that they were brick built. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The aspects of the tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are security and people throwing rubbish out from the upper flats.

The association have confronted a number of problems, in response to which asbestos has been removed from the block and Southwark Council has spent £62,000 on providing two new rubbish chutes. However, the tenants report that "no one can use them because they are so rotten and dirty."

There are other problems. There is no play area now because it was taken away when the equipment became unsafe. The people currently moving into the blocks are "all manner of people, families and people on their own, of all ages."

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks but the tenants' association feel that "the children who live there should not be placed so high and should have gardens to play in."

They also report that they have community rooms on the estate but there are no resources to provide any activities for the children.

The association believe that their council is fair and they do take part in regular consultation with them. They participate in the neigbourhood forums and in general they feel that decentralisation of housing services has meant they see a lot more of council officers and they are consulted about most things.

PXIFLDBSE

Ledbury Estate Tenants' Association, 17 Sarnsfield House, Ledbury Estate, Peckham, London SE15. Tel: 071 635 0094. Contact: Ms A M Curry

The Ledbury Estate Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. There are three tower blocks on the estate, all of 12 to18 storeys. The blocks contain 165 flats and represent one quarter of the estate. The blocks were built in the 1970s.

The method of construction used was large panel system (TWA). No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give most cause for concern are the internal and external gaps which allow water penetration and the spread of smoke. The association have confronted a range of tower-block problems. Cockroach infestation has been dealt with.

A recent survey funded by the housing corporation revealed that most tenants wanted to move out of the estate. Tenant participation is very low.

When describing the problems on the estate generally. the association point to the lack of open space, drug abuse and related crime, poor housing management, poor environment, dirty communal areas and irresponsible tenants. There are not substantial number of children living on the estate. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities.

CPXIAZFLDBSE

Portland Tenants' Association, 36 Studland, 172 Portland Street, Walworth, London, SE17 2TW. Tel: 071 703 5159. Contact: Irene Clark.

The Portland Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. The association represent four tower blocks, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 216 flats and represent 100% of the estate. They were built in 1966/7 and the method of construction used is discribed as concrete frame with non load-bearing cavity walls.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The association have confronted a number of tower-block problems.

Capital projects have been undertaken in response to serious building defects primarily affecting the concrete, the balconies and the expansion joints. The tenants also experience problems with water penetration in top-floor flats – the rooves of the blocks are flat.

The association report that the other main problem on the estate is noise. Loud music causes many neighbour disputes and that really a programme of noise insulation is needed within the flats. The allocations policy has caused some problems where young families are moved in above elderly or disabled tenants and come into conflict about noise.

The association report that the majority of people now moving into the blocks are young families or single people. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the association say they and local people are concerned about this.

The tenants' association report concern that the London Borough of Southwark have eased their allocation policy on allowing children above the fourth floor and they are also concerned about statutory overcrowding.

The association note that overall, despite the problems that they experience, theirs is a smallish quiet estate which makes it quite desirable in comparison to some of the larger ones. They consider their council to be fair and they take part in regular consultation with them. They take part in the neighbourhood forums and tenants' council which has just been introduced, and that they hope this will improve services for tenants.

IYBSE

Sceaux GardensTenants'Association, c/o 77 Lakanal, Sceaux Gardens, Havil Street, London, SE5 7DP. Tel: 071 708 2013. Contact: Nancy Horwood.

Sceaux Gardens TA describe their estate as an inner-city one. The association represent two tower blocks of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 200 flats and represent half of the estate. The blocks were built about 1960 and the association believe that the method of construction may have been in situ concrete.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes in operation in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern are security, poor lighting, small lifts, continual lift breakdown, drug mis-use on the stairs and in "blind floor areas."

In response to these problems the council have installed security doors in one block. The association are at present negotiating for the installation of similar doors in the second block. There is a de-infestation programme currently in progress to deal with the cockroaches; fire doors are being installed on balconies and service ducts throughout both blocks are being fire-proofed.

There have been improvements to lighting on the estate. When describing the other problems, the association report that the cleaning of communal areas is diabolical, footpaths are overgrown with weeds, trees have not been pruned for several years, there are no safe areas for parents and children to go, there are

frequent muggings in the lifts and in the lift areas on both estates. When describing the current allocation policies for the local tower blocks, the association report that the people moving in are mainly young people with young children.

The tenants' association report that there are substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and that they and local people are concerned about it. They have expressed their concern to the council, particulary in relation to the lack of play areas but they have not received much response.

However, the local authority have introduced compensatory services/ facilities, and a playgroup and a mother and toddler club have been started in the local TA hall. The tenants' association feel that their council is a poor one.

They take part in regular consultation with the council. They have regular meetings with estate officers and councillors, and they have representatives on the neighbourhood forum and tenants' council.

CHPXAYFLRSE

Southampton Way Tenants' Association, 109 Redbridge Gardens, Southampton Way, London, SE5 7HB. Tel: 071 703 3892. Contact: Irene Steer.

The association describe their estate as an inner-city one. They represent two tower blocks, both of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 124 flats and represent about one third of the estate. The blocks were built in 1961/ 2, they believe that the construction may be steel frame.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in their blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern are lifts being out of order, "the use of lifts as urinals", lights being out of order for long periods, blocked rubbish chutes, unsafe windows and the general rundown appearance of their blocks, vandalism, graffiti, robberies and common assaults. In response to this wide range of tower-block problems, the council have undertaken a block treatment for cockroaches and is re-asphalting the roof of one of the blocks.

The other main problem of their estate generally is the high rate of robberies. When describing the current allocations policies for their tower blocks, they report that mainly young single people and one-parent families are moving in. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services/ facilities. They feel that their council is a poor one, but they do take part in regular consultation with Southwark. Council officers attend monthly TA meetings which they report are helpful but that progress regarding repairs is slow and frustrating. The TA representatives attend regular neighbourhood meetings where they are able to make known to the council the needs of the estate.

CVPXIYLDBSE

Tustin Estate Tenants' Association, Tustin Estate, Old Kent Road, Peckham, London, SE15. Tel: 071 732 6258. Contact: Tom Stapleton.

The Tustin Tenants' and Residents' Association represent three tower blocks, all are of 12 to 18 storeys. They contain 217 flats and represent a third of the estate. The blocks are 25 to 30 years old and the method of construction used was in situ concrete.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The association report that there is no particular management scheme operating in their blocks but they are looking into an estate management board. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are windows, drains and lifts. They have confronted a variety of tower-block problems in response to which the council have sprayed the cockroaches, repaired the drainage system and installed a camera- linked entry-phone system.

The tenants' association have taken over the community centre on the estate in the hope of reducing tenant isolation and are running a variety of activities. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks.

The association feels that their council is a good one and that they do take part in regular consultation with Southwark. They take part in walkabouts with local housing officers and participate in the local neighbourhood forum.

CVIYLDBSE

Willowbrook Tenants' Association, 70 Tonbridge House, Rosemary Road, London, SE15 6BY. Tel: 071 703 2017. Contact: Martin Wheeler.

The Willowbrook Tenants' Association describe their estate as inner-city. They represent one tower block of 12 to 18 storeys. The block contains 120 flats and represents a quarter of the total estate. The block was built between 1965 and 1967 of in situ concrete construction. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. They report that there is no particular management scheme currently operating in their block but they are hoping to start a tenants' management co- op. The aspect of their tower block which gives them most cause for concern is the fact that it is becoming more and more rundown. As tenants are moving out, new people are refusing to move in and the flats are being squatted. They believe that they are entering a cycle

of despair and that there is a danger that Tonbridge House will eventually become a slum. They have confronted a variety of tower-block problems in response to which they have got money from the DOE to improve some of the low-rise blocks. They have received grants and training in how to run a tenant management co-op.

There is a thriving pensioners' club and youth club operating each week. The police and the tenants' association jointly distribute a newsletter, organise summer outings, youth summer sports weeks and a variety of other activities. Security items such as, locks, eye pieces and door chains are provided free to pensioners and single parents.

They report that the other problems on the estate are crime, burglary, drugs, vandalism and noisy parties. The association note that the people who are currently moving into their blocks are people who have been rehoused as a result of racial harrassment, short-lease tenants and ex-offenders.

There are substantial numbers of children living in their blocks, but they are not particularly concerned about it. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities. They feel that their council is variable. They believe that the council does try to consult with its tenants but the problems needing to be tackled are enormous.

CHPIABSE

SPELTHORNE

Spelthorne Borough Council, Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines, Middlesex, TW18 1XB. Tel. 0784 451499. Contact: Ms E Londner

Spelthorne own one tower block of 12 to 18 storeys. The block contains 82 flats and represents 0.2% of the council-owned stock. It was built in 1964 of no fines concrete constructed with brick cladding. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The block is centrally managed by the housing department. The aspect of the tower block which gives the authority most cause for concern is that re-letting is difficult.

They have tackled a couple of tower block problems - replaced underfloor electric heating with gas cental heating six years ago, and replaced the two lifts so that they now stop at every floor rather than alternate floors. They have taken steps to improve fire safety after a spate of fires in chute rooms.

They report that the pressures on their allocation policies are the usual pressures to house families with children for whom this type of property is not suitable. Households with small children are not offered tower-block accommodation, this policy has changed in the last ten years.

In the early 1980s they had a policy to make a special transfer case of any family with young children above the second floor. In 1987 they agreed not to let any flats to familiies with children under 18 years of age. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower block accommodation. They have no set policy as to the number of offers which are made to each potential tenant.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower block and they no longer have a specific policy to remove children, as the moving of families with children is complete. They have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities.

The authority report that their relationship with the tenants is a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They always send representatives from the housing department to tenants' association meetings if they are asked.

HL

ST.ALBANS

St. Albans District Council, District Council Offices, St Peter's Street, St Albans, AL1 3JE. Tel: 0727-866100. Contact : H.Drummond.

St. Albans own one tower block of 6 to 12 storeys which represents 1% of its counci- owned stock. The block was built in 1971 of steel-frame construction. The council haven't demolished any blocks or transferred any to other owners.

The authority describe the type of management scheme currently operating in the block as sheltered and general management.

The authority have tackled a couple of tower block problems - heating systems and windows have been replaced and the lifts have been refurbished.

The authority report that the main pressure affecting their allocations policy is homelessness and the management issues involved in mixing elderly and other tenant groups.

Households with small children are offered homes in the tower block and there are no restrictions as to which floor. This policy hasn't changed in the last ten years. They report that they have ten children living in their tower block, they consider this to be acceptable although not ideal. They don't have any specific policy for removing children from the block.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilites. They report that their relationship with their tenants is a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

They have regular meetings with the residents' association and participate in the tenants' association advisory committee.

HLB

STAFFORD

Stafford Borough Council, Civic Offices, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ. Tel: 0785 223181. Contact: R Birchett.

Stafford Borough Council own three tower blocks, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 186 flats and represent 2.5% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1967 and 1968 of in situ reinforced concrete.

No blocks have been demolished, two blocks are leased to Stafford Polytechnic for student accommodation.

They have not introduced any specific type of management schemes into their tower blocks and there is no aspect of their tower-block stock which gives them great cause for concern.

In response to concerns about security, tenant-controlled door-entry systems have been installed. They do not allocate tower-block homes to families with young children.

Alloca tions for the one block which is in their control are restricted to childless couples. There are no other cate gories of tenant to whom they would never offer tower block accommodation.

All potential tenants are made two offers of accommodation. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks, and they have specific policies to move those that do

If tenants have children while they are in the block, they are eligible for a transfer.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory facilities. They report that their relationship with their tenants is a fair one but they do not take part in any regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

S

STEVENAGE

Stevenage Borough Council, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage. Tel: Stevenage 356 177. Contact: Heather Parker.

Stevenage Borough Council own eight tower blocks, three of 6 to12 storeys and five of 12 to18 storeys. The blocks contain 476 flats and represent 3.9% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1965.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. Several types of management scheme are currently operating in their tower blocks, two are used to provide sheltered accommodation, one provides accommodation for single people and the remaining five are managed by the decentralised neighbourhood offices.

Households with small children are occasionally offered tower-block accommodation, but this is avoided wherever possible. There are no restrictions as to which floor and this policy has not changed in the last ten years. The only other category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower block accommodation is those with specific medical illnesses.

Each potential tenant is made two offers of accommodation and if these are not accepted then their application is deferred for 12 months. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks, and they have specific policies to move those that do.

They have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into their blocks. They report that their relationship with their tenants is a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They have taken part in consultations to do with rent increases and tenants' choice.

STOCKPORT

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, Housing Department, Stop-ford House, Piccadily, Stockport, SK1 3XE. Tel: 0614804949. Contact: Bridget Kelly.

Stockport Council own 22 tower blocks. 15 of 6 to12 storeys, five of 12 to18 storeys, two of over 18 storeys. This totals 1676 homes and represents 11.5% of the council stock. The tower blocks were built between 1957 and 1970.

The methods of construction used were Laings Sectra pre-cast blocks (198 flats) and Cross Wall concrete construction (1478 flats). No blocks have been demolished and no blocks have been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular man-agement schemes operating in the blocks. Entryphone systems have been installed in all of the blocks. Seven blocks have TV monitoring of entrances and extra security/cleaning staff. This has resulted in fewer voids and less vandalism.

A rolling programme of lift replacement is underway. Disinfestation of cock-roaches takes place as necessary. Shortage of proper-ties is the main pressure on their allocation policies. They have a waiting list of 7,212, and a total stock of 14,587. They accepted 397 homeless households in 1990/1.

Households with children are offerred tower-block flats and there is no restriction as to which floor. They suspended in Sep-tember, 1990, their policy of not letting to families.

All categories of tenant are offerred tower-block accommodation and there is no limit on the number of offers. There are substantial numbers of children in blocks. In recognition of the problems this causes, the authority give extra priority to families on the transfer lists who live in blocks.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities in tower blocks. They describe their re-lationship with their tenants as fair. They do not take part in regular consultation with tenants.

CLS

SUNDERLAND

Sunderland Borough Council, PO Box 111, Town Hall & Civic Centre, Sunderland. Tel: Sunderland 5676161. Contact: D Soutar

Sunderland own 24 tower blocks, one of 6 to 12 storeys and 23 of 12 to 18 storeys. This represents 2,032 homes and is 4.4% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1964 and 1968. The methods of construction used include large panel Bison.

Two blocks have been demolished because they were structurally unsound (large panel system). No blocks have been transfered to other owners. They report that all their dwellings are managed by a local housing office via estate officers.

There is no particular aspect of the tower-block stock which causes them concern.

They have tackled a number of tower block problemes; they have replaced heating systems, removed asbestos and installed fire detectors in some of their blocks, and the rest of the blocks are included in a future programme.

They have installed door-entry systems to overcome the problem of security. The main pressure on their allocation policy is the increasing demand and the limited supply of dwellings.

They do not offer tower-block accommodation to households with small children; this policy has changed in the last ten years. From 1964, children under the age of 11 were not housed in the flats; this has been changed to under the age of 16. Couples and single people under the age of 35 are also never offered accommodation in tower blocks. They report that the question relating to the number of offers made to each potential tenant before they must accept a tower block is not relevant to them as tower blocks are in high demand in their area.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks, and they do have specific policies to move those that are in them. The council housing points scheme covers this eventuality. They have not introduced any compensatory services and facilities.

The authority report that their relationship with their tenants is a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. All tenants are consulted whenever changes occur which affect their tenancy or if their homes are to be modernised. There is also regular contact with tenants' groups which are actively encouraged by the council.

HAFBS

SUTTON

London Borough of Sutton, Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, Surrey. Tel: 081 770 5640. Contact: Leigh Booth.

The London Borough of Sutton own three tower blocks; two of 6 to 12 storeys and one of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 477 flats and represent 4.5% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1970.

The methods of construction used were PRC and large panel system. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of their tower-block stock which gives the authority most cause for concern is security, in response to which concierge schemes have been installed. The pressures on their allocation policies include the need to move homeless families out of bed and breakfast accommodation and the reduction of their housing stock due to the Right to Buy.

Households with small children are offered tower-block homes. There are no restrictions as to which floor, 10% of suitable voids are above the fourth floor. This policy has changed in the last ten years. In 1990/1 the authority were forced to change their policy which had previously not allowed children above the fourth floor.

There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. Only one offer of accommodation is made to housing applicants who are homeless. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks.

They have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. Sutton consider their relationship with their tenants to be excellent. They take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They undertake customer satisfaction surveys and annual consultation with tenants. A tower-block residents' group is developing out of the tenant/officer steering group which initiated the concierge scheme.

VPXABS

T

TAMESIDE

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, Council Offices, Wellington Road, Ashton--Under-Lyne. Tel: 061330 8355. Contact: Mrs D Nicklin.

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council own 11 tower blocks; 10 of 6 to 12 storeys and one of 12 to 18

storeys. The blocks contain 774 flats and represent 4% of the total council stock. The blocks were built between 1963 and 1971. The methods of construction used were Wimpey No Fines (1), Fram Gerrard (8) and unknown (2). No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are specific management schemes operating in the blocks. One 16-storey block has a sheltered scheme on the lower six floors and there is a furnished-flats project in four of the blocks.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are security, vandalism of the common areas, external joinery and lift breakdowns, although this has improved. The authority have confronted a range of tower-block problems, in response to which they have replaced district heating systems with a gas wet system, in seven blocks.

Electric underfloor heating is currently being replaced in one block. In 1985 they started a rolling programme of lift refurbishment. Security attendants were appointed in 1988.

Because of their concerns about children living in tower blocks, they have a policy to not to let to families and to move out those in the blocks. The pressures affecting their allocation policies are reported to be homelessness and overcrowding. Households with small children are never offered tower block homes and this policy hasn't changed in the last ten years. The other category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation are any applicant who specifically said that they did not want to be considered for a tower block.

There are not substantail numbers of children living in their blocks. They do have specific policies to remove those that do; increased points are awarded. The authority hasn't introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. They consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. On one estate, of three blocks, there are regular monthly meetings of councillors, tenants and housing officers.

HPXLSE

TEIGNBRIDGE

Teignbridge District Council, Forde House, Newton Abbot, TQ12 4XX. Tel: 0626 61101. Contact: Mr C Pegg.

Teignbridge District Council own one tower block of seven storeys. The block contains 30 flats. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are not particular management schemes operating in the block. The flats are mainly occupied by middle-aged and elderly people. They have not experienced any major problems with the block and report that the tenants appear to be very happy with the accommodation. The authority has no difficulty re-letting the flats. The authority are committed to consulting with tenants and hold regular meetings with tenants throughout the district.

THAMESDOWN

Thamesdown Borough Council, Civic Offices, Swindon. Tel: 0793 526161. Contact: Ronald Payne.

Thamesdown own seven tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys high. The blocks contain 268 flats and represent about 2% of the council-owned stock. They were built in 1965 by Truscon. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

They report that they have no specific type of management sheme currently operating in their blocks. The blocks are used in the normal way with a caretaker on site. The aspects of their tower-block stock which give the authority most cause for concern are bin stores and keeping "unwanted guests out."

The authority report that their blocks are very popular, they have been well maintained since they were built and there have been very few maintenance problems. Entry-phone systems are in place. The blocks are all two-bedroom and they are only offered to childless couples, single people or those with grown-up children.

They do not offer accommodation to households with small children or to anyone who could not cope with the stairs/lifts. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks. They have specific policies to move those that do. When children are born to existing tenants, they are given a priority transfer. Currently one block is being converted for use by elderly people.

The authority have not introduced any compen-satory services/facilities. They report that their relationship with their tenants is excellent and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. The housing advisory panel is a sub-committee of the main housing committee at which tenants' representatives and council officers can discuss any housing policy or procedure.

Penhill Neighbourhood Centre, Everleigh Road, Penhill, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 5HB. Tel: 0793 726525. Contact: Amanda Gorton.

The Penhill Neighbourhood Centre describe their estate as a suburban mixed community. The estate includes three tower blocks of 6 to12 storeys. The blocks contain l20 homes and represent one tenth of the total estate. They were built between l960 and 1970.

No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks; this is of

concern to the centre. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the blocks.They consider the council to be a fair one.

IE

THREE RIVERS

Three Rivers District Council, Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth, Herts. Tel: 0923 776611. Contact Mr A.J.Inwood.

Three Rivers District Council own two tower blocks, both of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 48 flats and represent 0.9% of the total housing stock. The blocks were built between 1963 and 1964. The method of construction used was load bearing brick.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. They describe the type of management scheme operating in their blocks as estate management. The aspects of their tower-block stock which give the authority most cause for concern are grafitti on internal walls, urinating in lifts, and vandalism of the door-entry systems.

They have confronted a range of tower-block problems. Pest control officers catch pigeons in the blocks and remove them from the area. Caretakers undertake regular cleaning within the blocks in an effort to deal with the problems outlined above.

When describing the pressures affecting their allocation policies, the authority report that they have been forced to use these flats to provide accommodation for homeless families with children. They do this because of the shortage of houses, many of which have been sold under the Right to Buy.

Households with small children are, therefore, offered homes in tower blocks, there are no restrictions as to which floor. These policies have changed in the last ten years. Until three years ago only childless couples and families with teenage children were allocated these flats. There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower block flat. Homeless families receive only one offer of accommodation unless they have medical conditions.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The authority do not consider this to be acceptable. People with children living above the first floor receive extra points on the transfer list.

The authortiy have introduced compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. There is a large and well-maintained play area within the vicinity. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. On a fortnighly basis estate officers visit individual tenants.

VXS

TOWER HAMLETS

London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Research and Strategy Group, The Town Hall, Patriot Square, London, E2. Tel: 071 739 4344. Contact: John Ryan.

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets own 271 tower blocks which contain 1565 flats. They have decentralised their housing services into seven neighbourhoods. Each neighbourhood decides its own policy on allocations, the housing of children in blocks and so on. One block, Risby House, on the Barley Mow Estate, was demolished when the Docklands Highway was built.

Tower Hamlets Tenants' Federation, Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, Bethnal Green, London, E2 6HG. Tel: 071 739 6778. Contact: Libby Crowley.

The Tower Hamlets Tenants' Federation are an umbrella group for tenants' associations in Tower Hamlets. Since decentralisation, their funding has been insecure and they have been able to offer only restricted services.

However, they continue to provide information and support on a wide range of housing, environmental and planning issues to individual tenants and to tenants' associations. They have also provided support on issues arising as a result of the decentralisation of council services

E

Brodick House, Saxon Road, London, E35HH. Contact: Deborah Brown.

The estate is described as an inner-city one which includes one tower block of over 18 storeys containing 130 flats. The block was built in the early 1970s. The method of construction used was large panel Bison.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the block.

The aspects of the tower block which particularly concern the tenants are reported to be asbestos, fire safety, building defects and the environment of the estate.

The tenants are disappointed with the decentralisation of Tower Hamlets housing service which has failed to make the council more accountable and approachable, in their opinion. There is no play provision for children in the area and there is an excessive number of dogs.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block and the local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities.

HPXIAYFLDBSE

The Environment Trust, 150 Brick Lane, London, E1 6RU. Tel: 071 377 0481. Contact: Lorraine Hart.

The Environment Trust is an independent charity which provides a range of services including architecture, project finance and management, fundraising, community planning and public involvement advice to local authorities and community groups through its trading subsidiaries.

The trust have supported the Taylor Woodrow Anglian group of tenants' associations with their community plan for the Ronan Point site in Newham. They have also worked with tenants on the Boundary Estate in Tower Hamlets on the establishment of a community launderette.

E

Farrell House, Ronald Street, London, E1 0DU. Tele: 071 790 1460. Contact: Mrs Meek.

There are two tower blocks on the estate, one of 6 to 12 storeys and one of 12 to 18 storeys containing ten8 flats and representing about 1/4 of the total estate. The blocks were built in 1969. The method of construction used is believed to be in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of the tower blocks which gives most cause for concern is fire safety. The tenants report that from time to time there are a high number of break-ins and many tenants have door grilles

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block and the local authority has not introduced any compensatory services or facilities. The tenants feel that their relationship with the council is poor, they do not have any regular consultation.

VHPXFLDBSE

Glamis Tenants' and Residents' Association, 646 Commercial Road, London E14. Tel: 071 481 3329. Contact: Mrs Margaret Clark.

Glamis Tenants' and Residents' Association report that their estate is an inner-city one. The estate contains two tower blocks, both over 18 storeys. The blocks contain l30 flats and represent one third of the total estate. They were built between l964 and l966. The method of construction was in situ concrete (Gordon House) and traditional brick (Roslyn House).

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating in their blocks, the association report that there are some specified dwellings for pensioners which are controlled by a resident warden.

The aspects of their tower blocks which concern them most are cockroaches, lift breakdowns, unclean lifts, and inadequate security-door systems. The tenants' association have confronted a range of tower-block problems.

Block treatments for cockroaches have been ineffective. The estate generally is inadequately cleaned by the council caretaking services. There are no play facilities.

The Glamis Road adventure playground has been closed by the local Wapping neighbourhood council. Local groups have campaigned to have the playground re-opened. The heating system is unpopular because it is controlled by the council. There have also been problems with the hot-water system as it is linked to the heating system.

When describing the problems on the estate generally, the association point out that the open space has been sold off, there is a drug problem in the area and a high crime rate. When describing the current allocation policies for their blocks, the association report that there is some overcrowding in the flats. When the GLC controlled the blocks they moved families out. However, more recently Wapping Neigh-bourhood have started moving families in. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the blocks. The association report that their council is a poor one. They take part in regular consultation with them. They do not find the consultation very fruitful, as the money is never available to deal with problems.

CVPXIYFLS

Ranwell Towers TA, 40 Ingram House, Daling Way, Bow, London, E3 5NJ. Tel: 081 980 7314. Contact: Ruth Forsyth.

Ranwell Towers TA describe their estate as an inner-city one. They represent three tower blocks, all over 18 storeys, which include 246 flats and are about a quarter of the estate. The blocks were built in about 1972 by the GLC. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are fire safety, infestation, general security, vandalism and graffiti, the safety of youngster and the lack of play areas. The tower-block tenants' association have tackled a range of problems.

After two years of putting pressure on the local authority, new fire doors have been fitted on all landings in the three blocks. Blocks are being treated for cockroach investation and there are plans to start a 24-hour security system in each block for which tenants will pay £4 per week.

When describing their estate generally, the tenants' association talk about the lack of safe play space for children and the increasing amount of racism. Substantial numbers of children live in the blocks and local people are concerned about this.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities. The association believe that their relationship with the council is fair. Some consultation takes place with the council.

CVPXIYFLRS

Stifford Towers Tenants' Association, 96 Wickham House, Jamaica Street, London, E1 3AW. Tel: 071 702 7550. Contact: Keith Mann.

Stifford Towers Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. There are three tower blocks on the estate, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 288 flats and represent about one third of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1959 and 1960.

No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give the association most cause for concern are structural deterioration and the lack of maintenance.

They have confronted a wide range of tower-block problems. When describing the problems on the estate generally, they point to petty crime and the lack of youth facilities as the main problem.

There are no new allocations being made into the blocks, as the sons and daughters priority scheme is being finalised. It is also possible that this estate will form part of a HAT scheme.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the blocks. The association consider their council to be a poor one. They take part in regular consultation with the council.

CHPXIAYFDB

Tower Hamlets Law Centre, 341 Commercial Road, London, E1 2PS. Tel: 071 791 0741. Contact: Lilian Burns

Tower Hamlets Law Centre offer advice and information on a range of issues including housing. They give advice to individuals and support to tenants' associations. They have supported tenants experiencing racial harassment.

R

Winterton and Gelston Action Group, c/o 15 Agatha Close, Wapping, E1 9RH. Tel: 071 488 3005. Contact: Carol Silverman.

The Winterton and Gelston Action Group report that their estate is an inner-city one. There are two blocks on the estate, both of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 190 flats and represent about half the total estate. The blocks were built between 1969 and 1971. The method of construction used was steel frame(SF1).

No blocks have as yet been demolished on the estate. The future of the blocks is in doubt. They form part of a current Estate Action bid. If this bid is unsuccessful the blocks may then be demolished. No blocks have been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give most cause for concern are the high asbestos content. The action group report that the asbestos includes Asbestolux and Amosite. The concrete on the steel frame structure is also crumbling.

Because the blocks are being emptied due to the asbestos risk, squatters have entered the building and they frequently cause floods which affect other flats and are adding to the overall deterioration of the blocks. The action group report that asbestos was encapsulated and the heating system, which was the main source of contamination, was isolated.

A full decant of both blocks began in 1990. However, some of the flats still remain occupied. The action group have campaigned fiercely for all the tenants to be moved out as a matter of urgency.

Due to the decentralisation that has taken place in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Wapping Neighbourhood are solely responsible for rehousing the tenants and they have a very limited housing stock. The tenants campaigned for a borough-wide decant but this was refused by the overall council on several occasions. The action group report that the main problems on the estate generally have been a lack of maintenance and inadequate cleaning. If the Estate Action bid is successful, the blocks will be refurbished with a view to using them again in three years time.

There were substantial numbers of children living in the blocks when they were in full use. No compensatory services or facilities had been introduced. The action group consider Tower Hamlets council to be awful and Wapping Neighbourhood to be poor.

They take part in regular consultation with the council - they meet once a month with Wapping Neighbourhood housing managers. They have had three meetings with the leader of Tower Hamlets council but found them unproductive.

CVPXIAFLDBS

TRAFFORD

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, Trafford Town Hall, Housing Department, Talbot Road, Stretford, Trafford, Greater Manchester. Tel: 061 872 2101. Contact: Marion James.

Trafford own 11 tower blocks, ten of 12 to 18 storeys and one of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1,024 flats; they were built between 1964 and 1968. The methods of construction used were convential brick bonding (1), brick frame with concrete panels (9), and concrete frame with masonry panels (1). No blocks have been demolished, none has been transferred to other owners.

A variety of management schemes are currently operating in their blocks. One block houses single people over 25, one block houses single people over 30, nine blocks house single people and childless couples. The

The Environment Trust, 150 Brick Lane, London, E1 6RU. Tel: 071 377 0481. Contact: Lorraine Hart.

The Environment Trust is an independent charity which provides a range of services including architecture, project finance and management, fundraising, community planning and public involvement advice to local authorities and community groups through its trading subsidiaries.

The trust have supported the Taylor Woodrow Anglian group of tenants' associations with their community plan for the Ronan Point site in Newham. They have also worked with tenants on the Boundary Estate in Tower Hamlets on the establishment of a community launderette.

E

Farrell House, Ronald Street, London, E1 0DU. Tele: 071 790 1460. Contact: Mrs Meek.

There are two tower blocks on the estate, one of 6 to 12 storeys and one of 12 to 18 storeys containing ten8 flats and representing about 1/4 of the total estate. The blocks were built in 1969. The method of construction used is believed to be in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of the tower blocks which gives most cause for concern is fire safety. The tenants report that from time to time there are a high number of break-ins and many tenants have door grilles

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block and the local authority has not introduced any compensatory services or facilities. The tenants feel that their relationship with the council is poor, they do not have any regular consultation.

VHPXFLDBSE

Glamis Tenants' and Residents' Association, 646 Commercial Road, London E14. Tel: 071 481 3329. Contact: Mrs Margaret Clark.

Glamis Tenants' and Residents' Association report that their estate is an inner-city one. The estate contains two tower blocks, both over 18 storeys. The blocks contain l30 flats and represent one third of the total estate. They were built between l964 and l966. The method of construction was in situ concrete (Gordon House) and traditional brick (Roslyn House).

No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating in their blocks, the association report that there are some specified dwellings for pensioners which are controlled by a resident warden.

The aspects of their tower blocks which concern them most are cockroaches, lift breakdowns, unclean lifts, and inadequate security-door systems. The tenants' association have confronted a range of tower-block problems.

Block treatments for cockroaches have been ineffective. The estate generally is inadequately cleaned by the council caretaking services. There are no play facilities.

The Glamis Road adventure playground has been closed by the local Wapping neighbourhood council. Local groups have campaigned to have the playground re-opened. The heating system is unpopular because it is controlled by the council. There have also been problems with the hot-water system as it is linked to the heating system.

When describing the problems on the estate generally, the association point out that the open space has been sold off, there is a drug problem in the area and a high crime rate. When describing the current allocation policies for their blocks, the association report that there is some overcrowding in the flats. When the GLC controlled the blocks they moved families out. However, more recently Wapping Neigh-bourhood have started moving families in. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the blocks. The association report that their council is a poor one. They take part in regular consultation with them. They do not find the consultation very fruitful, as the money is never available to deal with problems.

CVPXIYFLS

Ranwell Towers TA, 40 Ingram House, Daling Way, Bow, London, E3 5NJ. Tel: 081 980 7314. Contact: Ruth Forsyth.

Ranwell Towers TA describe their estate as an inner-city one. They represent three tower blocks, all over 18 storeys, which include 246 flats and are about a quarter of the estate. The blocks were built in about 1972 by the GLC. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are fire safety, infestation, general security, vandalism and graffiti, the safety of youngster and the lack of play areas. The tower-block tenants' association have tackled a range of problems.

After two years of putting pressure on the local authority, new fire doors have been fitted on all landings in the three blocks. Blocks are being treated for cockroach investation and there are plans to start a 24-hour security system in each block for which tenants will pay £4 per week.

When describing their estate generally, the tenants' association talk about the lack of safe play space for children and the increasing amount of racism. Substantial numbers of children live in the blocks and local people are concerned about this.

The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities. The association believe that their relationship with the council is fair. Some consultation takes place with the council.

CVPXIYFLRS

Stifford Towers Tenants' Association, 96 Wickham House, Jamaica Street, London, E1 3AW. Tel: 071 702 7550. Contact: Keith Mann.

Stifford Towers Tenants' Association describe their estate as an inner-city one. There are three tower blocks on the estate, all of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 288 flats and represent about one third of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1959 and 1960.

No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give the association most cause for concern are structural deterioration and the lack of maintenance.

They have confronted a wide range of tower-block problems. When describing the problems on the estate generally, they point to petty crime and the lack of youth facilities as the main problem.

There are no new allocations being made into the blocks, as the sons and daughters priority scheme is being finalised. It is also possible that this estate will form part of a HAT scheme.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities into the blocks. The association consider their council to be a poor one. They take part in regular consultation with the council.

CHPXIAYFDB

Tower Hamlets Law Centre, 341 Commercial Road, London, E1 2PS. Tel: 071 791 0741. Contact: Lilian Burns

Tower Hamlets Law Centre offer advice and information on a range of issues including housing. They give advice to individuals and support to tenants' associations. They have supported tenants experiencing racial harassment.

R

Winterton and Gelston Action Group, c/o 15 Agatha Close, Wapping, E1 9RH. Tel: 071 488 3005. Contact: Carol Silverman.

The Winterton and Gelston Action Group report that their estate is an inner-city one. There are two blocks on the estate, both of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 190 flats and represent about half the total estate. The blocks were built between 1969 and 1971. The method of construction used was steel frame(SF1).

No blocks have as yet been demolished on the estate. The future of the blocks is in doubt. They form part of a current Estate Action bid. If this bid is unsuccessful the blocks may then be demolished. No blocks have been transferred to other owners.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspects of the tower blocks which give most cause for concern are the high asbestos content. The action group report that the asbestos includes Asbestolux and Amosite. The concrete on the steel frame structure is also crumbling.

Because the blocks are being emptied due to the asbestos risk, squatters have entered the building and they frequently cause floods which affect other flats and are adding to the overall deterioration of the blocks. The action group report that asbestos was encapsulated and the heating system, which was the main source of contamination, was isolated.

A full decant of both blocks began in 1990. However, some of the flats still remain occupied. The action group have campaigned fiercely for all the tenants to be moved out as a matter of urgency.

Due to the decentralisation that has taken place in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Wapping Neighbourhood are solely responsible for rehousing the tenants and they have a very limited housing stock. The tenants campaigned for a borough-wide decant but this was refused by the overall council on several occasions. The action group report that the main problems on the estate generally have been a lack of maintenance and inadequate cleaning. If the Estate Action bid is successful, the blocks will be refurbished with a view to using them again in three years time.

There were substantial numbers of children living in the blocks when they were in full use. No compensatory services or facilities had been introduced. The action group consider Tower Hamlets council to be awful and Wapping Neighbourhood to be poor.

They take part in regular consultation with the council - they meet once a month with Wapping Neighbourhood housing managers. They have had three meetings with the leader of Tower Hamlets council but found them unproductive.

CVPXIAFLDBS

TRAFFORD

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, Trafford Town Hall, Housing Department, Talbot Road, Stretford, Trafford, Greater Manchester. Tel: 061 872 2101. Contact: Marion James.

Trafford own 11 tower blocks, ten of 12 to 18 storeys and one of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1,024 flats; they were built between 1964 and 1968. The methods of construction used were convential brick bonding (1), brick frame with concrete panels (9), and concrete frame with masonry panels (1). No blocks have been demolished, none has been transferred to other owners.

A variety of management schemes are currently operating in their blocks. One block houses single people over 25, one block houses single people over 30, nine blocks house single people and childless couples. The

aspects of their tower-block stock which give the authority most cause for concern are repair to the blocks, the need to re-house households with children, and security. They have tackled a range of tower-block problems.

They have carried out refurbishment programmes including new windows which have helped to reduce the pigeon population and the resulting beatle problem. Beatles infested some of the flats as a result of pigeon droppings.

Specialist lift consultants have dealt with some of the lift problems, largely through refurbishment programmes. One area has been fenced off to provide play facilities. CCTV cameras, new door-entry systems and additional lighting have improved security to seven blocks. The authority report that the main pressure affecting their allocation policies is that tower-block flats are difficult to let.

Households with small children are not offered tower block accommodation, the policy has changed in the last ten years. Other categories of tenants to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation are people with mental health problems which might be worsened by living in a high-rise block.

They estimate that 46 children currently live in their tower blocks, and they do not consider this to be acceptable. They have policies to move these children; additional points are awarded for transfer. They have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities.

The authority report that their relationship with the tenants is a good one – they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. Housing officers attend tenants' association meetings in two blocks. The other blocks do not have tenants' associations.

VHPIYFLDBS

W

WAKEFIELD

Wakefield City Council, Civic Centre, Castleford. Tel: 0924 297091. Contact: T. Todd.

Wakefield own ten tower blocks, nine of 6 to 12 storeys and one of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contains 749 flats. They were built between 1960 and1970. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

They operate a 'very sheltered' scheme on floors one to three of one block. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are parking, leaking window frames, security and lifts.

The authority report that the location of the blocks makes them popular particularly with elderly people.

Households with small children are never offered tower-block flats. They would also never offer tower-block flats to young single people or to families with any children.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks and they have policies to remove those that do, they are given enhanced priority on the waiting list. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into the block.

They consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with them.

They have regular meetings with the tower-block tenants' association and with the tenants' federation.

HIAYLDSE

WALSALL

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, Housing Technical Services, Dartmouth Avenue, Walsall, WS3 1SP. Tel. 0922 616 953. Contact: Roger Hardcastle.

Walsall own 63 tower blocks, seven of 6 to 12 storeys, 48 of 12 to 18 storeys and eight of over 18 storeys. The blocks include 3,536 flats and represent 11% of the council owned stock. The blocks were built between 1952 and 1976. The methods of construction used were traditional, large panel Bison, large panel Wates and Tarmac. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners.

A number of management schemes are operated – mature schemes, single-person bedsits and over 40s schemes. The aspects of their tower block stock which give the most cause for concern are fire and security. They have undertaken a number of refurbishment schemes to the Bison, Wates and traditional blocks.

They have carried out structural works including improved wall ties. Lift improvements, rewiring, and upgrading of lighting, windows and heating systems have been carried out. The main pressure which affects their allocation policies is that their tower blocks are difficult to let.

Households with small children are offered tower block accommodation, but there are restrictions as to which floor. The policies have changed in the last ten years. There is no category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower-block accommodation.

Potential tenants are made three offers before a tower-block offer must be accepted. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks.

They have introduced compensatory services/facilities: play areas have been redesigned as part of estate action bids. They report that their

relationship with their tenants is a good one and that they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. They have regular tenants' group liaison meetings to discuss common problems.

HDB

Austin House Community Association(Butts), Upper Forster Street, Walsall, WS4 2AF. Tel: 0922 27087. Contact: Frank Young.

The Austin House Community Association describe their estate as a small-town one. There are three tower blocks, two of 6 to 12 storeys and one of 12 to18 storeys. The tower blocks include 209 homes and represent half the total estate. The blocks were built between 1966 and 1968.

No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none has been transferred to other owners. One of the blocks, Austin House, has been designated a mature persons block and houses people over 60.

The aspects of the tower blocks which gives the most cause for concern are security and heating. The community association report that security is poor, the windows are rotten, the heating system is useless and the bills are excessive.

There are water-leakage problems in the top-floor flats, and there is a lack of transport services into town. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks. The association report that their relationship with their council is poor and that they do not take part in any regular consultation with them.

VHDBS

Booth and O'Hare Tenants' Association, 34 Booth House, Teddersley Street, Walsall, West Midlands. Contact: Elaine Hayes.

Hatherton Neighbourhood Office, Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, Mill Lane, Walsall, West Midlands, WS4 2BH. Tel: 0922 721241. Contact: Paul Bennett.

(Questionnaires have been received from both the above organisations relating to the following tower blocks, information from both has been used to compile the entry. The organisations work together and none of the information conflicted).

The Booth and O'Hare Tenants' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. There are three tower blocks on the estate; two of 6 to 12 storeys and one of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 213 flats and represent 20% of the estate. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1970.

The method of construction used was pre-cast concrete with steel support rods. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating in the blocks, they report that one of the three blocks houses only people over 60 and there is a gradual move towards an estate management board.

The aspects of the tower blocks which give most cause for concern are child safety, depression, crime, refuse, maintenance and vandalism. The association have tackled a range of tower-block problems. An Estate Action scheme is underway which is intended to deal with most of the problems.

Heating systems are being removed by a specialist companyr to prevent asbestos escaping. New lifts are being installed. New steel doors for the front and back of the block are being fitted. Stairs and landings will be carpetted and landing lights improved.

The introduction of the scheme to house people over 60 is reported to be very successful in that there is now a very low level of voids and of rent arrears. The association report that the main problems on the estate generally are lack of play areas and poor car parking facilities. There is also a large through flow of people as the estate is near to the town centre; this makes adequate security even more necessary. The allocations policy for the blocks involve lettings to only those over 60 in one block and letting to singles, childless couples and couples with one child in two blocks. There are substantial numbers of children in the blocks and local people are concerned about this.

People with children seeking a transfer are awarded an extra 120 points. The local authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. The association consider their council to be a good one and they take part in consultation with them.

CHPXIAYLDSE

WALTHAM FOREST

London Borough of Waltham Forest, 1 Wood Street, Walthamstow, London, E17 3JU. Tel: 081 527 5544. Contact: Ben Mansah.

Waltham Forest own 32 tower blocks. The blocks contain 7,000 flats and represent one third of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1970. The methods of construction used include large panel Wates, Bison, BRS and Camus. No blocks have been demolished. Thirteen blocks form part of a Housing Action Trust.

There are no particular management schemes operating in the tower blocks. The aspects of their tower blocks which give the authority most cause for concern are building defects, poor layout, high density and poor environment.

The authority have confronted a wide range of tower-block problems. Estate refurbishment programmes have been carried out, new heating systems installed, disinfestation treatments undertaken, and a new fire-safety programme has been agreed.

The authority encourage and fund voluntary/tenants' groups and committees. They also encourage user group management of community

facilities. When outlining the pressures affecting their allocation policies, the authority report that the main pressure is homelessness. The road widening scheme for the M11 will increase the demand for housing.

Households with small children are offered homes in tower blocks and there are no restrictions as to which floor. This policy has changed in the last ten years. It wasn't previously the policy to offer upper-floor flats to families with children, this changed six years ago.

There is no other category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower block accommodation. The council make only one offer of accommodation to all potential tenants. There are substantial numbers of children living in their blocks.

The authority do not consider this to be acceptable, but they find it unavoidable. They have no specific policies to remove children from the flats. The authority have introduced compensatory services/facilities into their tower blocks. The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a fair one. They consult with tenants via area housing advisory committees.

CVHPIAFLRDBSE

Federation of Waltham Forest Tenants, Community and Residents Associations, 26 Bakers Arms Houses, Lea Bridge Road, Leyton, London, E10 7AE. Tel: 081 539 8080. Contact: Nigel Gansell.

There are 31 blocks in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. The blocks include 2,490 flats. They were built between 1961 and 1972. The methods of construction used include, large panel BRS, Wates, Camus and Bison, and in situ concrete.

No blocks have been demolished in the borough. There are four estates, Cathall (Camus), Chingford Hall (Wates), Boundary Road (Wates) and Oliver Close (Wates) which form part of a Housing Action Trust. No other blocks have been transferred to other owners. When describing the management schemes operating in their borough, the federation report that there are several sheltered housing schemes.

The aspects of the tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are structural/fabric problems, inadequate fire safety, individual repairs, inadequate caretaking and lack of play facilities for children. The federation have been involved in tackling a variety of tower- block problems.

They are currently involved in trying to get an under-fives playgroup established in St Michael's Tower community rooms. Major refurbishments have taken place on some of the large panel blocks, notably the BRS blocks. A major capital scheme to refurbish Livingstone College Tower will probably start in 1993.

The federation report that the stock in the borough will be substantially reduced by the transfer of four estates to the HAT. When describing the current allocation policies of Waltham Forest Council, the federation report that they consider the policies to be unclear but they believe that families with children are still being moved into high-rise flats.

Overcrowding remains a serious problem within the borough's tower blocks. There are substantial numbers of children living in tower blocks in Waltham Forest and the federation report that they and local people are concerned about this.

The local authority have introduced some compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. There are a number of summer playschemes and play projects running in the borough but some estates have no such facilities or services. A voluntary group, the Cathall Hollycats, run a play project on the Cathall estate. The federation is planning to compile a report on the lack of play provision on high-rise estates. The federation consider that the council is a fair one. They take part in regular consultation with them They have regular meetings with housing officers.

CVHPXIAYFLDBSE

Boundary Road Steering Group, 1 Wood Street, Walthamstow, London, E17. Tel: 081 524 5544. Contact: Christine Lawman.

Boundary Road Steering Group describe their estate as an inner-city one. There are three tower blocks on the estate, all of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 369 flats and represent most of the estate. The blocks were built in the 1960s.

The method of construction used was large panel system. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are inadequate lifts, the cleanliness of staircases and lifts, broken and boarded-up windows and insufficient lighting.

The tenants on the estate have confronted a range of tower-block problems. They hope that the Housing Action Trust will deal with all the problems by demolishing the tower blocks and building new homes. The steering group identify several problems on their estate generally: insufficient shops, a high level of burglaries, inadequate security and rubbish being thrown out of windows.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The steering group feel that tower blocks are not an appropriate place to bring up children. The local authority have introduced compensatory services/ facilities on the estate.

There is a Rainbow Club which caters for children on the estate and in the wider neighbourhood. Children from the age of three can attend the club.

The steering group consider the council to be a poor one. They take part in regular consultation with them. The steering group report that four years ago the council wanted to redevelop the estate but the government wouldn't provide the money, and so the HAT proposal was made.

Since the beginning of the HAT process, council and tenants have been working together, along with the DoE, archictects and the HAT board. They have regular meetings, including meetings on the estate.

VPXIAYFLDBS

St. Michael's Tower and Dyke Court Tenants' Association, 51 St. Michael's Tower, Gosport Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 7NB. Tel: 081 521 7545. Contact: Ms L Thompson.

The tenants' association describe their estate as an inner-city one. They represent two tower blocks, one of 6 to12 storeys and one of over 18 storeys. The tower blocks contain 170 homes. The blocks were built between 1963 and 1965. The method of construction used was large panel Wates.

No blocks have been demolished on the estate and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating. The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are maintenance and repairs, fire, flooding, security and cleaning.

The TA report that they have been active for over three years and have managed to get a room at the bottom of a tower block painted, heated and lit in order to have meetings. This took two years to achieve.

They report that the windows are unsafe and that the council's own health and safety section say that they cannot hold an organised playgroup until the windows are dealt with. The association report that the estate has been earmarked for structural strengthening and improvement for the last five to six years but a lack of money has prevented any action being taken. The tenants' association feel that their estate is blighted because its long-term future is not clear.

People are unable to get transferred from the blocks and there is a general feeling of desperation. The association report that Waltham Forest Council is only housing homeless families, and there is very little movement off the waiting list or the transfer list at the moment.

They have single parents and couples with children in one- bedroomed flats "and then they are stuck". Young children live up to the 20th floor and pensioners are living as high as the 19th floor. There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and local people are concerned about this. They have put pressure on the council to move families out but they have received little response.

The council have introduced compensatory services and facilities into the block: there is a children's play area with swings and grass but there are problems in the summer with dogs.

The tenants describe their relationship with the council as awful. They are affiliated to the Federation of Waltham Forest Tenants through which they take part in consultation, "with many meetings with the council over issues as they occur".

VHPXIAYFBSE

WANDSWORTH

Arthur Central Tenants' Association, Arthur Central Club-room, Charlotte Despard Ave, Battersea, SW11 5HN. Tel: 071 720 0335. Contact: Wendy Langhorne/ Pauline Taffurelli.

This inner city estate has12 blocks of 6 to 12 storeys and represents 1,144 homes. This is three-quarters of the estate which was built around l965. None of the blocks has been demolished or transferred to other owners.

When describing the management schemes operating in the blocks, the association report that they provide housing for single people. Also, when a young person living on the estate reaches 18, they are given priority for housing in the blocks. There have been many problems with the blocks.

However, a community centre/ tenants' hall was built, providing recreation facilities, training, education and self-employed business units. Play facilties have been provided, security doors and intercom systems fitted, linking bridges taken away, outside buildings revamped, and asbestos removed.

When describing the estate generally, the association note that burglaries have dropped slightly. There are good facilities for shops, services and transport but a lack of parking space. There are substantial numbers of children living in the flats and the council have introduced full-day and after-school facilities. The council have regular consultation meetings and are considered to be a good landlord.

CVPXIAYLRDBSE

Holmsley House Residents' Association, 21 Holmsley House, Tangley Grove, London, SW15 4EH. Tel: 081 878 8914. Peggy Walker.

The Holmsley House Residents' Association describe their estate as an outer estate. There are 15 blocks on the estate, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain about 660 flats and represent roughly one half of the estate. The blocks were built between 1961 and 1965. The method of construction is thought to be in situ

concrete. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of their tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern is what to do in a fire. They report that they are lucky with their blocks and havn't experienced any major problems.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. The association consider their council to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with them. They attend three monthly meetings with representatives of the council.

F

Winstanley Residents' Association, 17 Sporle Court, Winstanley Road, London, SW11 2EP. Tel: 071 223 1082.

The Tenants' Association describe the estate as an inner-city one. There are four tower blocks on the estate, three of 6 to 12 storeys and one of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 238 flats and represent about a third of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1962 and 1964.

The method of construction used is believed to be in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks.

The aspects of the tower blocks which give the association most cause for concern are building defects, lifts, dogs and fire safety. When describing the estate generally, the tenants are concerned about the high levels of crime and drug abuse.

There are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks and the association estimate the number at more than 100. The association are concerned about this. The authority have not introduced any compensatory services or facilities. The association feel that their relationship with the council is awful and they take part in regular consultation through the Borough Housing Panel.

VHPXYFLBS

WARRINGTON

Warrington Borough Council, Bank House, Sankey Street, Warrington, WA1 1SF. Tel: 0925 444400. Contact: Peter Mercer.

Warrington own two tower blocks of 6 to12 storeys. The blocks contain 132 flats and represent 1.13% of their council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1972 and 1975. The methods of construction used were Wimpey No-Fines and large panel Bison.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. They report that all the properties are secure tenancies and that they face no major problems. They have installed new heating systems, provided a community house, undertaken ongoing preventative maintenance work and installed entry-phone systems.

The main pressure on their allocations policy is the growth of the waiting list. Households with small children are offered tower block accommodation; there is no theoretical limit as to which floor but in practice children are generally not housed above the second floor. Most of the flats are occupied by single pensioners.

These policies have not changed in the last ten years. The other category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower block accommodation is people with disabilities. An indefinite number of offers are made to people on the waiting list but only one offer of accommodation is made to homeless people. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks, and they have specific policies to move those that do. The transfer system encourages the movement to houses of children in flats under the age of 16. No compensatory services/facilities have been introduced.

The authority report that their relationship with the tenants is a good one and that they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. There are active tenants' associations in both blocks who are consulted on all issues affecting them.

HYBS

WATFORD

Watford Borough Council, Housing Department, Town Hall, Watford, WD1 3EX. Tel: 0923 226 400. Contact: Clive Taber.

Watford Borough Council own two tower blocks of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 188 flats and represent 3% of the council-owned property. They were built between 1964 and 1966.The method of construction used was in situ concrete with brick cladding.

No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. Standard management arrangements are carried out. The aspects of the tower block stock which give the most cause for concern are security in the communal areas and the condition of the external fabric.

They have tackled a range of tower-block problems: they have installed entry-phone systems and replaced lifts, and they have an estate action bid designed to tackle poor design and layout issues. The main pressure affecting allocation policies is the high level of homelessness.

Households with small children are offered tower block accommodation; the policy has not changed in the last ten years. There is no category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. There is no

prescribed number of offers made to each person on the waiting list. However, homeless applicants receive only one "reasonable" offer of accommodation. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks and they do not have any specific policies to move those that do.

They have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. The authority report their relationship with their tenants is good one and that they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. The council actively support the establishment of tenants' and residents' associations.

There are now nine associations covering 80% of their housing stock. Associations can send two representatives each to the tenants' advisory sub-committee to discuss issues with councillors and officers. Officers regularly attend association meetings.

ALDBSE

WAVENEY

Waveney District Council, 80 Clapham Road, Lowestoft. Tel: 0502 53141. Contact: Mrs Pointon.

Waveney District Council own one tower block of 12 to 18 storeys. This represents 84 homes and is 1% of council-owned stock. It was built in 1978 and is constructed of no-fines concrete. No blocks have been demolished or transferred to other owners. The aspect of their block which gives them most cause for concern is the implications of children living in the flats. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes. This policy has changed in the last ten years. It is now council policy to offer tower block homes only to couples/single people over 40 and to elderly people. The other category of tenant to whom they are reluctant to offer tower-block flats is wheelchair users. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the block. They do have policies to remove those that do and they have succeeded in moving all children out.

The authority have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities. They consider their relationship with the tenants to be good. There is no regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

WELWYN

Welwyn Hatfield Council, 16 St Albans Road East, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 08L. Tel: 0707 268282. Contact: Miss D Bennett.

Welwyn Hatfield own two tower blocks of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 138 flats and represent 1.1% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1968. The method of construction used was in situ concrete. No blocks have been demolis ied and none has been transferr d to other owners.

They do not operate any specific management schemes. The main aspects of their tower block stock which gives the authority cause for concern are vandalism and low demand.

The main pressures on their allocation policies are that demand outweighs supply substantially, because of the increasing number of homeless people, the sale of family accommodation under the right-to-buy, and under-occupation by ageing households.

Households with small children are never offered tower-block accommodation. This policy has not changed in the last ten years. The other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat is elderly people. There is no limit to the number of offers made to each potential tenant before they must accept a tower-block home. There are not substantial numbers of children living in their tower blocks and they do have specific policies to move those that do. Child-in-flat points are awarded to those on the transfer list: 15 points per child per year for a first-floor plus two additional points for every floor above that level.

They have not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into their blocks. The council report that their relationship with their tenants is fair but they do not take in part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

ILDBS

WESTMINSTER

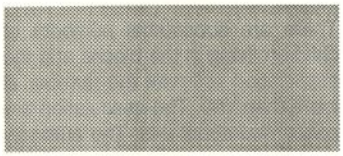
London Borough of Westminster, Housing Department, 83 Victoria Street, London SW1. Tel: 071 798 2606. Contact: Mr G.England.

The London Borough of Westminster own 195 tower blocks. The methods of construction used include in situ concrete, load-bearing brick and large panel systems. No blocks have been demolished.

Two blocks, Hermes and Chantry Points on the Walterton and Elgin Estates, have been transferred to a housing association, Walterton and Elgin Community Homes.

The council report that a wide range of remedial and improvement works are constantly underway. A number of major works are being carried out on the blocks.

Households with small children are offered tower-block homes. The authority attempt to keep them to the lower floors where possible, but the high demand for housing makes this difficult in practice.



Walterton and Elgin Community Homes, 204 Shirland Road, London, W9 3JF. Tele: 081 960 5123. Contact: Jonathan Rosenberg.

Walterton & Elgin Community Homes (WECH) describe their estate as inner city. They represent an estate which contains two tower blocks, both of over 18 storeys. The blocks contain 202 flats and represent about a quarter of the total estate. The blocks were built between 1966 and 1969.

The method of construction used was steel frame with an inner concrete core (SF1) . The blocks were built by the GLC. No blocks have been demolished to date, but it is likely though not certain that WECH will have to take down the two blocks.

The reason for demolishing the blocks would be the excessive cost of renovationg. Both blocks are currently empty because of the asbestos danger. These blocks are of the same design as the blocks in Watney Market, London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

All previous schemes to renovate the blocks over the past seven years have been rejected by government. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of the tower blocks which gives them most cause for concern is the asbestos.

They report that they succeeded in getting the council to act on the asbestos problem solely as a result of enormous campaign pressure. They have also had problems with squatting and vandalism, with flooding, water penetration and lifts, and with the heating system.

WECH feel that tower blocks are not a suitable place for children to live. They describe their relationship with the council as awful. WECH used the Tenants' Choice policy to become an approved landlord and take over the ownership of the Walterton and Elgin Estates in spring 1992. They did this to prevent Westminster Council from selling homes on the estate to developers and to secure the money needed for repairs from the council. WECH obtained £21 million for repairs. They have no regular consultation with the council.

CVHAFLDBSE

WIGAN

Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council, 50 Millgate, Wigan, WN1 1YD. Tel: 0942 44991. Contact: Mr Mike Simpson

Wigan own seven tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 790 flats and represent 2.6% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1961 and 1969. The methods of construction used are described as traditional brickwork and concrete beams.

Three blocks have been demolished because of asbestos material in external panels and poor demand. No blocks have been transferred to other owners. The main aspect of their tower-block stock which gives them cause for concern is security: concierge systems have been installed in the three blocks.

Some small communal facilities have also been provided. Because the tower blocks are in the centre of the town, applicants "of excellent standard" are sought if possible. Other pressures on their allocation process are the need to allocate the lower floors to pensioners.

Households with small children are not offered tower block accommodation; the policy has not changed in last ten years. The other category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat are people with a history of psychiatric disorders. In answer to the question about the number of alternative offers made to each potential tenant before they must accept a tower block home, the authority reports that each case is assessed on individual merit, as are the reasons for refusal. There are not substantial numbers of children in the tower blocks and they do have specific policies to move those that are there. They receive a high priority classification on the transfer list.

No compensatory services/facilities have been introduced. The authority report that their relationship with their tenants is a good one but they do not take part in any regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

HIAYBS

WINCHESTER

Winnall High Rise Tenants' Association, 33 Dennett House, Winnall, Winchester, Hants, S023 8LZ. Tel: 0962 854569. Contact: Mr G. Brown.

Winnall High Rise Tenants' Association represent an estate which includes four blocks of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 156 flats and are a quarter of the estate. The blocks were built between 1960 and 1961.

The method of construction was traditional. No blocks on the estate have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. There are no particular management schemes operating in the blocks. The aspect of their tower blocks which give the association most cause for concern is inadequate parking space.

This is a serious problem because fire engines cannot get access to the blocks in emergencies. The association report that the council have a policy of not allowing vans and lorries to park outside the blocks but the policy is not enforced.

A variety of other problems are being experienced in the blocks, many as the result of mixing families with elderly tenants. The association report that a substantial number of children live in the blocks. The families are worried about safety standards and the lack of play facilities. The elderly, long-standing tenants, are disturbed by

the noise of children in the flats. Winchester Council are committed to moving families out of the flats and have reduced the waiting time for transfers from three years to 15 months.

The association welcome this policy and had petitioned the council to remove children and improve safety. As a result chains and locks have been fitted to the flats with children. However, because of this policy and the fear of vandalism, the council were unwilling to agree to the tenants' suggestion that a portacabin be used to provide play facilities.

A playbus does visit the estate for two hours a week but the association report that this is inadequate by itself. The long-standing tenants also feel that they are living in a 'transit camp' where people have little commitment to the blocks and to maintaining standards when they expect to move shortly.

The association consider their council to be a fair one and they take part in some consultation with them. They meet with the area housing manager. They would like to be represented at council meetings but this has not been possible as they are the only tenant' association in Winchester. They are encouraging tenants on other estates to form TAs.

PYFL

WINDSOR

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Housing and Health Directorate, York House, Sheet Street, Windsor, Berks. Tel: 0628 796642. Contact: Ian Leslie.

Windsor own five tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 254 flats and represent 3.5% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1965 and 1966. The methods of construction used were Wimpey No Fines (4) and large panel Bison (1). No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. The aspects of their tower-block stock which give the authority most cause for concern are those problems associated with the age of the blocks, roof failure, lift problems and windows.

They have tackled a number of tower-block problems: underfloor heating is being replaced with storage heaters, door-entry systems are being fitted, rooves are being renewed, and environmental improvements/planting schemes are being undertaken.

The main pressures affecting their allocation policies are shortage of accommodation and increasing homelessness. Households with small children are offered tower block accommodation and there are no restrictions as to which floor.

This policy has not changed in the last ten years. There is no category of tenant to whom they would never offer tower block accommodation. Each potential tenant receives three offers of accommodation, except homeless people who get only one offer.

Forty children are estimated to live in their tower blocks and they consider this to be unavoidable. They have not provided any compensatory services/facilities in the blocks. The council consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one. They take part in regular consultation with the one formal tenants' organisation.

HLBSE

WIRRAL

Metropolitan Borough of Wirral, Westminster House, Hamilton Street, Birkenhead, Merseyside, L41 5FN. Tel: 051 647 2320. Contact Mr A Lampkin.

The Metropolitan Borough of Wirral own 26 tower blocks; nine of 6 to 12 storeys and 17 of 12 to 18 storeys. The blocks contain 1,824 flats and represent 8.89% of the council-owned stock. The blocks were built between 1958 and 1970. The methods of construction used were Wimpey No Fines, large panel Crudens, large panel Bison, Prometo and Unit Construction. Wirral have demolished seven tower blocks containing 516 flats.

The reasons given for demolition were "social acceptance of high rise, future needs for this type of dwelling, costs of maintenance, and cost of upgrading existing services to modern standards." No blocks have been transferred to other owners.

A variety of management schemes operate within the blocks. Cleveland Gardens provides housing for young singles/couples/homeless people and is being refurbished. Victoria Court provides housing for singles and couples between the ages of 25 and 35 and is also being refurbished. Flambards, Brackendale, and Sunningdale all provide sheltered accommodation, which has been specially adapted for the elderly.

The aspects of their tower block stock which gives the authority most cause for concern are vandalism, crime, the abuse of lifts and the need to improve camera security. The authority have confronted a range of tower-block problems. They have installed door-entry systems and given ground-floor flats to residents' associations for community use.

Three blocks in central Birkenhead are part of Estate Action schemes. Work will include the refurbishment of blocks, environmental treatments, replacement of brickwork, replacement of windows, re-roofing, improvements to insulation and repairs to spalling concrete. When outlining the pressures which affect their allocation policies, the authority report that they do not consider tower blocks to be suitable accommodation for families with young children.

Therefore, they tend to be used for other groups, such as, 'mature' people, singles, couples, and elderly people. Households with small

children are not offered tower-block homes. This policy has changed in the last ten years; previously in urgent-need cases young families had been placed in flats on the lower floors. The authority would never offer tower block accommodation to wheelchair users, to people with medical evidence of suicidal tendencies, or to people with dogs.

References are required for people seeking to be housed in some of the blocks. There is no limit to the number of offers made to each potential tenant. There are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks. Applicants with children are given an extra three years points, provided they are not pregnant when accepting the tenancy.

The authority has introduced compensatory services/facilities into the blocks. They have adapted some ground-floor flats for community use, e.g. luncheon clubs. They have also made some play provision.

The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. All estate managers have monthly meetings with residents' associations or as and when they are required, e.g. when major works are taking place on estates.

HIAYLDBSE

WOLVERHAMPTON

Wolverhampton Metropolitan Borough Council, Housing Department, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1RB. Tel: 0902 314758. Contact Sandra Jones.

Wolverhampton Metropolitan Borough Council own 50 tower blocks; 39 of 6 to 12 storeys, four of 12 to 18 storeys and seven of over 18 storeys. The blocks include 3,761 and represent 11% of the council owned stock. The blocks were built between 1945 and 1973. The methods of construction used are described as concrete and ring beam frame with traditional brick infill panels and no fines concrete. No blocks have been demolished. They are in the process of transferring two blocks to other owners.

One is going to a housing association and one to the health authority. Franchise House is being transferred to Focus Housing Association, which is an amalgamation of three associations led by Copec Housing Trust. Focus will be refurbishing the 134 flats in conjunction with Tarmac Construction, for rent.

The scheme is intended to house single people and couples. When describing the type of management scheme currenlty operating in their blocks, they report that they have sheltered housing schemes, housing for single people, and very sheltered housing.

The aspects of their tower blocks which give them most cause for concern are maintenance, heating and insulation, and the difficulty of letting some properties. Wolverhampton have responded to a variety of tower-block problems. They have removed asbestos-containing materials.

Their current priorities include the removal of asbestos from two tower blocks on the Hickman Estate, the high-rise blocks in Bilston, the properties on the Merry Hill Estate and the proposed Brantley Avenue sheltered scheme.

They are undertaking a programme of lift repair and replacement. In certain parts of the borough a wide range of structural problems affect the council's stock. They have initiated a formal strategy for dealing with these problems.

The council have carried out a survey to check the adequacy of fire-stopping and fire-fighting equipment in all its high-rise blocks. In addition a more detailed sample pilot survey of fire safety in selected high-rise blocks has been undertaken. They are currently upgrading fire resistence and fire-stopping measures in a number of their blocks.

Further detailed surveys alongside a rolling programme of remedial works are to be carried out over the three-year period 1992/3 to1994/5 at an estimated cost of £0.3m. Wolverhampton council have developed a number of initiatives to tackle the growing problem of the unpopularity of many of their blocks of flats.

These initiatives, designed to ensure the best use of the existing stock, include conversions to sheltered schemes, provision of replacement heating systems, redesign of the blocks, security and crime prevention measures, and environmental improvements.

The principal element of their strategy to upgrade difficult-to-let estates is Estate Action, which has been received for six estates in the borough since 1987. The authortiy report that the pressures affecting their allocations policy include current supply and demand trends, political pressure and pressure from tenants' groups.

Households with small children are offered tower-block homes and there are no restrictions as to which floor. This policy has not changed in the last ten years. There is no category of tenant to whom they would never offer a tower-block flat. People seeking accommodation receive three offers before their application is deferred for 12 months from the date of their first offer.

There are not substantial numbers of children living in their blocks. The authority do have specific policies to remove those that do. They award generous points to families with children living in tower blocks, extra points are awarded per child per year. The authority has not introduced any compensatory services/facilities into

its blocks. However, research has recently been completed into the needs of single parents which may lead to some services or facilities being introduced. The authority report that their relationship with their tenants is a fair one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations.

The number of tenants' and residents' associations in Wolverhampton has more than doubled in the past few years to 51. More than half of these are affiliated to the Woverhampton Federation of Tenants' Associations (WFTA). WFTA has representatives on the housing services committee and the housing management sub-committee.

HAFLBE

WORCESTER

Worcester City Council, Farrier House, Farrier Street, Worcester, WR1 3ES. Tel: 0905 723471. Contact: Peter John.

Worcester City Council own three tower blocks, all of 6 to 12 storeys. The blocks contain 149 flats and represent 2.5% of the total council stock. No blocks have been demolished and none has been transferred to other owners. All three blocks provide sheltered accommodation for the elderly and have a resident warden.

The aspect of their tower-block stock which gives the authority most cause for concern is a difficulty in letting flats on the higher floors. They also fear that the obsolescence of lifts will be a problem in the next three to five years.

The authority report that the flats are in good condition structurally, although there has been some water penetration through the rooves. Capital works are underway to deal with this problem. When the flats were designated as sheltered schemes, security was upgraded and community facilities provided. Households with small children are not offered tower-block homes. This policy has changed in the last ten years - when the blocks became sheltered. Therefore, there are not substantial numbers of children living in the blocks.

The authority consider their relationship with their tenants to be a good one and they take part in regular consultation with tenants' organisations. There is regular contact through established residents' groups in the sheltered-housing blocks.

B

KEY TO CODES

Cockroaches	C
Other vermin	V
Inadequate heating systems	H
Inadequate play facilities	P
Lack of safety for children	X
Tenant isolation or depression	I
Asbestos	A
Lack of community facilities	Y
Poor fire safety	F
Inadequate or unreliable lifts	L
Racism/racial harassment	R
Dampness/condensation	D
Building defects	B
Lack of security	S
Poor layout/environment of estates	E

REGIONAL CONTACTS

LONDON

Community Land and Workspace Services Ltd., 61/71 Collier Street, London, N1 9DF. Tel: 071 833 2909. Contact: Lesley Klein.

Community Land and Workspace Services Ltd (CLAWS) are a group of architects, town planners, management and funding consultants whose aim is to provide technical services to to community groups, tenants' associations and other non profit-making organisations in greater London who want advice on using land and buildings. Initial advice is free and support is offerred in obtaining grants to cover their fees.

CLAWS have been involved in supporting a group of tenants on the Walpole estate; they have carried out a feasibility study of the estate. They have taken part in Estate Action bids, undertaken social surveys, and organised tenant participation and consultation days using their caravan.

BE

London Hazards Centre, 3rd Floor, Headland House, 308 Grays Inn Road, London, WC1X 8DS. Tel: 071 837 5605.

The London Hazards Centre serves the London area. They offer advice on health hazards, health and safety in the home, at work and in the environment. They have offered support to tower block tenants' groups on issues such as infestations, dampness and asbestos. They supported tenants on the Kingsland Estate in Hackney with their campaign about asbestos. These blocks are now due for demolition as they would be too costly to repair.

VAD

Planning Aid for London, 100 Minories, London, EC3N 1JY. Tel: 071 702 0051. Contact: Ruth Cadbury

Planning Aid for London (PAL) was established in 1988. The organisation provides free and independent town-planning advice to community groups, residents' associations and individuals who can't afford a planning consultant. PAL will help groups to compile community plans. They supported the Taylor Woodrow Anglian group of TAs in the preparation of their community plan for the redevelopment of the old Ronan Point (Freemasons Road) site in Newham.

E

Playlink, 279 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 1BY. Tel: 071 377 0314. Contact: Sandra Melville.

Playlink provide advice and support to groups wishing to set up adventure playgrounds or to run other play activities for school age (5 to 16) children, in the London area. They produce a magazine called Playlinks.

P

Tenants' Energy Advice Service/ Energy Conservation and Solar Centre, P.O Box 1802, London NW1 1UW. Tel: 071-833 5597. Contact: Caroline Heijne.

The Tenants' Energy Advice Service (TEAS) work throughout Greater London with tenants of inner-city and outer estates. TEAS and the condensation advice service offer free advice and support on problems relating to poor thermal qualities, inadequate heating systems, condensation and dampness.

These services are available to all tenants' groups and any agencies working with them in the Greater London area. TEAS offer advice sessions on self-help measures, campaign strategies for improvements, the causes of condensation and dampness, and on other heating problems.

They provide technical written reports to back up tenants' initiatives and campaigns. They provide a general energy efficiency advice service. And they can help with campaign support material.

HD

Theories Landscapes, 99 Eleonor Road, Hackney, London, E8 1DN. Tel: 071 254 7186. Contact: J. Cooper.

Theories Landscapes is a community landscape design and build organisation. Their work, completed in 1986, on the Pepys Estate in Deptford, London, was featured in the first National Tower Blocks Directory. Theories undertake landscaping and environmental work, and offer services such as production of feasibility studies and reports, presentations of costed designs and specifications.

They use landscape to create play facilities, and they design, construct and install safe, imaginative play equipment They undertake landscaping for community gardens. Theories Landscapes report they are committed to working collaboratively with groups in the community to help create attractive, useful and friendly outside places. They work with tenants' and residents' associations, community groups, voluntary organisations, local authorities, housing associations and schools.

YORKSHIRE

West Yorkshire Housing Aid, Fourth Floor, Provincial House, Albion Steet, Leeds, LS1 6HX. Tel: 0532 442480. Contact: Frazer Neasham.

West Yorkshire Housing Aid provide a second-tier advice service, in conjunction with the Citizens' Advice Bureau. They advise individual council tenants and they are willing to provide information for tenants' associations.

Working Architects' Co-operative Ltd., 1017 Great Horton Road, Bradford, BD7 4AH. Tel: 0274 575406. Contact: Jane Hughs.

Working Architects' Co-operative Ltd. is a non profit-making co-operative which offers a range of architectural and technical advice to tenants' associations. They have provided advice on building defects, and education and training on environmental issues.

The co-operative supports local groups in obtaining grants which will cover the cost of their fees. They serve the area of West Yorkshire, South Humberside, Barnsley, Skipton and Harrogate.

BE

SCOTLAND

Tenants' Information Service, 1 Foundry Lane, Dundee, DD4 6AY. Tel: 0382 25012. Contact: Greg Brown

and

Tenants' Information Service, The Volunteer Centre, 27 Elmbank Street, Glasgow. Tel: 041 226 3431. Contact: Eileen Campbell.

The Tenants' Information Service (TIS) offer advice, information and training to tenants' organisations in Scotland. Individual tenants' groups, federations and national bodies make up the membership. TIS is a tenant-controlled and managed organisation.

The membership includes tenants' associations which represent tower-block tenants. T.I.S. operate from two offices, which between them cover the whole of Scotland.

TPAS Scotland, 20/24 St Andrews Street, Glasgow, G1 5PD. Tel: 041 552 3633. Contact: Ann Clark.

The Scottish Tenants' Participation Advisory Service (T.P.A.S.) is a membership organisation working for landlords and tenants involved in tenant participation initiatives.

They provide information, advice and training on a range of housing issues and support tenants' groups with written information and advice.

T.P.A.S. is open to landlords and tenants' organisations in Scotland. They have several hundred tenants' groups and tenants' federations in their membership, several of whom represent tower-block tenants. TPAS have worked with Glasgow Council in supporting the formation of tenant management co-ops.

NATIONAL CONTACTS

Miles Horsey, 13 Brandon Street, Edinburgh. Tel: 031 225 5994.

Miles Horsey is employed by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. He has undertaken research into the history of the construction of flats in Scotland, focussing on Glasgow.

He has also carried out research into the history of multi-storey flats in the United Kingdom, between 1945 and 1975. The results of the research, including a gazetteer of all multi-storey public housing blocks in the UK, is being published as a book by Yale University Press. This work is being underaken with Stefan Muthesius.

WALES

Shelter Cymru, 25 Walter Road, Swansea, West Glamorgan, SA1 5NN. Tel: 0792 469400. Contact: Ashley Williams.

Shelter Cymru run three advice centres in Wrexham, The Rhonnda and Swansea. Their advice centres offer advice and information to individuals and to tenants' groups on the range of housing issues. They employ a tenants' rights worker for the whole of Wales who helps tenants to form new associations, and supports and services those that already exist.

Association of Community Technical Aid Centres Ltd., Royal Institution, Colquitt Street, Liverpool, L1 4DE. Tel: 051 708 7607. Contact: Sara Williams.

The Association of Community Technical Aid Centres Ltd. (ACTAC) is the national networking organisation for community technical aid and its practitioners. It provides information and training to members and others on how technical services can be provided in participative ways as well as advice and a range of publications.

ACTAC members are committed to encouraging and enabling people to participate in the development of their community, its environment and its facilities.

They have produced a 'Good Practice Guide' covering the relationship between community technical aid centres and local community/tenants groups. The guide covers the appointment of a consultant, briefing the consultant, the feasibility process, project design and planning, project implementation and maintenance and management of the completed project.

BE

BRE Energy Conservation Support Unit (BRECSU) Tel: 0923 664258. Contact: Don Ward

BRECSU manage and promote technical programmes on energy efficiency in buildings. Clients include the Energy Efficiency Office (Best Practice programme), the Department of the Environment (Greenhouse programme) and the European Commission.

BRECSU advise professionals in all building sectors, and produce detailed literature on energy efficiency within the Best Practice programme, which is freely available. BRECSU is based at the BRE in Watford.

The Brittish Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres, 13 Stockwell Road, London, SW9 9AU. Tel: 071 733 7428/9. Contact: Vashti Ledford.

The British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres (BASSAC) is a network of 60 local voluntary organisations mainly working in inner-city areas and sharing a wealth of experience and a long history of working with inner-city communities.

Each member organisation's work varies in particular details but they have in common that they are independant, multi-purpose and centrally concerned with local community development. Several of BASSAC's members are actively involved with tower-block tenants' groups and with high-rise issues.

BASSAC's small national office is the key element in the work of the national network in linking local members, providing information, promoting local and national issues, assisting with members' funding, stimulating ideas, providing and developing models of good practice, linking volunteers, workers and members together (eg. at the AGM), lobbying and advocacy for members, promoting shared values, and providing education and training for worker support.

Y

Building Research Establishment, Garston, Watford, WD2 7JR. Tel: 0923 674040. Contact: Brian Muckley.

The Building Research Establishment (BRE) is an executive agency of the Department of the Environment. The BRE provides information to local authorities on the avoidance of

common defects in housing construction. The BRE has published a range of reports on large panel-system tower blocks

The Children's Legal Centre, 20 Compton Terrace, London, N1 1UN. Tel: 071 359 6251. Contact: Val Williams.

The Children's Legal Centre is an independent national organisation, concerned with law and policy affecting children and young people in England and Wales. The core activities of the centre include running a free advice and information service by letter and phone, pursuing selected cases, initiating research, running courses and conferences, and monitoring and responding to policies and proposals which affect children and young people.

The centre's publications include leaflets, handbooks, reports and a monthly bulletin Childright. One of the centre's aims is the creation of a safe, healthy and appropriate environment for children and young people to grow up in.

The centre have been involved in supporting the work of the National Tower Blocks Network on the issues surrounding children living in tower blocks. These issues are becoming increasingly worrying as more and more authorities are housing children in high-rise flats.

CX

Commission for Racial Equality, 10-12 Allington Street, London SW1E 5EH. Tel: 071 828 7022. Contact: Colin Hann.

The Commission for Racial Equality provide information and advice on how to make tenants' associations and community activity accessible, open and welcoming to all tenants. They have produced a statutory housing code for the rented sector which is a useful code for tenants' groups to refer to. They are in the process of publishing a research report on tenants' associations and race equality.

Estate Action, Department of the Environment, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1 3EB. Tel:071 276 3971. Contact: Nigel Dotchin.

Set up in June 1985, Estate Action promotes new ways of tackling run-down council housing estates with the aim of improving the quality of life of their residents.The types of measure Estate Action promotes are intended to improve the physical condition of dwellings and common areas, and layout of estates; to encourage improved housing management and tenant involvement (outlined in the Council Tenants' Charter, launched in January 1992); to provide tenants with variety and choice in housing; to promote economic and social development; and to create employment opportunities for tenants.

In February, 1991, the programme was relaunched with increased resources.

In allocating resources under the expanded programme, the Department of the Environment looks in particular for schemes in which authorities can demonstrate a strategic approach which promotes comprehensive regeneration, effective partnership between central and local government, tenants and the private sector, and housing investment which can complement other government programmes.

The Federation of Black Housing Organisations, 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8BB. Tel: 071 837 8288. Contact: Louis Julienne (Director)

The Federation of Black Housing Organisations (F.B.H.O.), set up in 1983, act as a national pressure group for black people in housing. F.B.H.O.'s membership includes individuals and organisations.

They work with groups to help improve housing opportunities for black people, and promote local, regional and national housing initiatives. F.B.H.O. also contribute to the fight against racism, particulary in housing.

R

Health and Housing Group,120 Wilton Road, London, SW1V 1JZ. Tel: 071 233 7780. Contact:

The Health and Housing Group are a group of independent environmental health officers who serve the whole country. They provide advice and assistance to tenants and community groups on a variety of issues, such as public health and housing standards, and enforcing these standards, and technical issues associated with housing and public health.

Their work on behalf of individual tenants and tenants' groups is largely funded through legal aid or the green form extension. They undertake inspections of flats and of whole blocks, as necessary. For instance, they reported on the unhealthy conditions in Winterton House, Tower Hamlets.

BVAEDH

Land Use Research Unit, King's College, Strand, London, WC2R 2LS. Tel: 071 873 2610. Contact: Alice Coleman.

The Land Use Research Unit report that they have carried out research on many thousands of houses and flats since 1979. They report that they survey "estates experiencing environmental degradation, anti-social behaviour and exploitation by criminals, with a view to establishing how their design and layout make them vulnerable." They then devise

ways of dealing with the defects. They report that they believe "it is the places not the people which are the problem and consult fully with tenants during the implementation of their schemes". Success with small partial schemes has led to the establishment of the Design Improvement Controlled Experiment (DICE), which is funded by the DoE (£50m) and directed by Alice Coleman.

Seven DICE schemes started on site in 1991. Several include tower blocks, e.g. in Durham and Manchester. The scheme on the Ranwell Estate in East London is currenlty the largest estate improvement project currently underway in the country. The Land Use Research Unit undertake similar work outside the DICE initiative for local authorities and tenants' associations; they charge for this work.

Stefan Muthesius, University of East Anglia, Art History Department, Norwich, NR47TJ. Tel: 0603 56161

Stefan Muthesius works as a lecturer at East Anglia University. He has carried out research into the history of multi-storey flats in the United Kingdom, between 1945 and 1975. The results of the research, including a gazetteer of all multi-storey public housing blocks in the UK, are being published as a book by Yale University Press. This work is being underaken with Miles Horsey.

National Children's Bureau, Information Service, 8 Wakley Street, Islington, London, EC1V 7QE. Tel: 071 278 9441. Contact: Nicola Hilliard.

The National Children's Bureau is an independent research and development organisation concerned with the welfare of children. They run an information service which has produced a range of fact sheets, reading lists, address lists and highlight sheets on subjects relating to children. The sheets contain information about children and housing, the needs of children in tower blocks and reviews of research findings.

XP

The National Housing and Tenants' Resource Centre, 131 Avenell Road, London, N5 1BH. Tel: 071 359 4047. Contact: Margy Knutson.

The aim of this organisation is to establish a National Housing and Tenants' Resource Centre which will provide training for tenants from a wide range of organisations. The training will focus on developing the skills and knowledge involved in housing management, thereby enabling tenants to manage their own homes.

National Tenants' and Residents' Federation, 41/42 Estate Buildings, Huddersfield, HD1 1JY. Tel: 0484 434943. Contact: Cora Carter.

The National Tenants' and Residents' Federation were established three years ago. They have 40 members. Most of the members are federations but they also welcome individual tenants' associations. Where three individual associations from the same area join, they encourage them to form a federation.

The federation are run and mangaged entirely by volunteers. They receive no statutory funding at present but receive support in kind from member federations. For example, they are based with the Kirklees Federation of Tenants and different federations host their AGMs. Several of their member federations represent areas with a high tower-block stock, e.g. Liverpool and Southwark.

National Tenants' Organisation (NTO), The Voluntary Action Centre, 51 Grove Road, Hounslow, TW3 3PR. Tel: 081 890 8928. Contact: Dave Archer, General Secretary.

The NTO consist of affiliated tenants' federations and individual tenants' associations. They report that they are consulted by authorities and government departments on matters affecting tenants. NTO report that they act on behalf of individual associations where necessary, while presenting a broad unified front to officialdom.

It aims to fight for equality in housing; to get housing of good quality at a rent people can afford; and to improve the rights of all tenants in the public and private sectors.

Recent work has included training and awareness of housing for a greater number of tenants, and campaigning against the voluntary transfer of council housing stock to housing associations. Future work will include continued compaigning on a Tenants' Participation Charter; a consultancy service and seminars, and establishing links with tenants' groups in Europe. NTO produce publications and newsletters, give advice and information, and undertake training, campaigning and lobbying. They have 13 branches and are financed by grants from local authorities, subscriptions and fundraising. NTO are a full member of the organisation of the International Union of Tenants.

The National Tower Blocks Network, Community Links, Canning Town Public Hall, 105 Barking Road, London, E16 4HQ. Tel: 071 473 2270. Contact: Frances Clarke.

The National Tower Blocks Network (NTBN) is a Community Links project. The organisation was formed nine years ago and has bases in London

and Sheffield. NTBN grew out of local work with tenants in the London Borough of Newham.

Their objectives are to share and promote good practice in tackling tower-block problems and thereby raise the quality of life in Britain's tower-block homes.

The organisation provide a range of services to tenants' groups, tower-block landlords and interested professionals. They run an information service, produce a quarterly newsletter, publish information packs on particular high-rise issues, and organise a wide range of training sessions and conferences across the country.

In-depth research projects are undertaken – for instance, for this directory. Two aspects of high-rise living have increasingly concerned members of NTBN, fire safety and children's play and safety standards.

Neighbourhood Energy Action, 2/4 Bigg Market, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1UW. Tel: 091 261 5677.

Neighbourhood Energy Action (NEA) was established to combat fuel poverty by promoting energy efficiency to low-income households. N.E.A. is a national organisation which facilitates and supports local insulation projects. The local projects provide insulation services to the elderly and those on low incomes.

Through insulation they aim to deal with problems such as condensation as well as to reduce fuel bills. They give advice on the efficient use of energy in the home and may also give individual welfare benefits advice including liaising with fuel boards over payment difficulties.

The insulation measures are seen by N.E.A. as a "contribution to energy efficiency and income support in low-income households". Local authorities and groups in the community operate these local insulation projects.

H D

PEP North, 5th Floor, 504/509, Corn Exchange Buildings, Manchester M4 3DD. Tel: 061 839 2146 Contact: Trevor Bell.
PEP South, 2 Albert Mews, Albert Road, London N4 3RD. Tel: 071 281 1421. Contact: Tricia Zipfel.
PEP Training (London Office). Tel: 071 281 3178. Contact: Roger Saunders.
Central Office (London Office). Tel:071 281 0438. Contact: Mary White.

The Priority Estates Project Ltd (PEP) is a national non-profit making housing consultancy, working to promote and develop better housing management with a strong emphasis on tenant involvement. Since being formed in 1979, PEP has worked with tenants' groups and local authorities on more than 50 projects, often focused on the least popular and most difficult to manage estates. PEP specialises in practical on-site support and training but also organises an extensive programme of conferences, seminars and training events, the majority of which are targeted at residents as well as housing professionals. PEP has a southern and northern team together with a specialist training unit and central support staff.

The organisation employs about 40 people, most of whom are fieldworkers operating in different parts of the country. PEP's work has involved a wide range of estates from semi-rural to inner-city, and brick-built cottage estates to high density system-built blocks.

Although the issues and problems vary enormously, they find that responsive housing management linked to resident involvement are often a key part of a strategy for estate improvement. The following are examples of the type of work they do.

In the Autumn of 1991, PEP was one of four agencies appointed to support and advise the residents of 71 multi-storey blocks in Liverpool who are to be asked to vote on a proposal to set up a Housing Action Trust to improve their dwellings.

PEP's role has been to arrange block meetings, support resident representatives, help keep residents informed, provide training and contribute to the drafting of a tenants' expectation document which will aim to protect the tenants' position. At the time of writing the High Rise Tenants' Group is negotiating with the newly-appointed Shadow HAT Chair and a ballot is expected in late May.

In 1989 PEP helped to set up one the of the first Estate Management Boards in England on the Bloomsbury Estate in Birmingham. PEP helped the resident Steering Group to negotiate a Management Agreement with Birmingham City Council. Consultations included block-by-block meetings over all 1200 homes and the organisation of a Fun Week.

In 1991 PEP carried out a survey of the residents of the tower blocks in Clapton Park Estate, London Borough of Hackney. This involved knocking on all the doors of five 19-storey blocks each containing 114 flats. The aims of the survey were to find out residents' views on the management of the estates and the various options for the future of the estate.

Community Projects Fund, Royal Institute of British Architects, 66 Portland Place, London, W1N 4AD. Tel: 071 580 5533. Contact: The Co-ordinator

The Community Architecture Resource Centre at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) provides an information service for voluntary and community organisations, RIBA members and the general public.

The Resource Centre has a small library and a range of information resource lists relating to community architecture. They can suggest local architects who have shown an interest in working on community-led building projects. The centre administers the Community Projects Fund which is intended to help local groups, including tower-block tenants' groups, pay for architects' or other professional advisors' fees for the preparation of feasibility reports on refurbishment or improvement schemes.

The average grant is between £750 and £1,000. Larger grants are made, up to £3,000, for work on housing projects and for community planning exercises. Tower-block groups have received these grants, e.g. for the Phipps Bridge Estate where the work formed part of an Estate Action bid and an estate managegment board proposal; and for work on tower blocks in Warrington Green in West London.

Safe Neighbourhood Unit, 4th Floor East, Nell House, 7 Whitchapel Road, London, E1 1DU. Tel: 071 247 4227. Contact: John Farr.

The Safe Neighbourhood Unit (S.N.U.) offer a range of services to tenants' organisations and local authorities, primarily involving estate improvement projects.

They will co-ordinate improvement programmes, analyse local authority housing services, help establish and strengthen tenants' organisations, promote measures to improve safety and policing, and encourage the provision of facilities for children and young people.

They also produce a range of reports and briefing papers on a wide range of housing-estate issues. The Unit describe their main aim as to "ensure that estate improvements, community facilites and changes to service delivery are planned and implemented in accordance with tenants' wishes." SNU operates nationally and has offices in London, Birmingham and Bristol.

S

Tenant Participation Advisory Service, 48 The Crescent, Salford M5 4NY. Tel: 061 745 7903

TPAS is run by tenants and landlords, it promotes tenant participation in decision-making.

TPAS Midlands is based in Birmingham and serves an area with over 400 tower blocks. They have provided information on services, service charges, disabled access, condensation, dampness, heating, and grant applications. In Sandwell they held training sessions in tower block community rooms (see the entry for the Three Blocks Tenants' Association, Birmingham).

TPAS London and South East have supported tower-block tenants in Coley Park, Reading, in their efforts to get a concierge scheme. They supported the establishment of an estate management board on the Chalkhill Estate in Brent.

TPAS East helped tenants in Brentwood to set up a tenants' association and to take part in an Estate Action bid.

HD

Tenants' Resource & Information Service (TRIS), c/o Newcastle Tenants' Federation, Ist Floor, 1 Pink Lane, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 5DW. Tel: 091 232 1371 & 091 233 0467 Contacts: Dave Hanson & Tim Shotton.

TRIS is an independent resource and information service for tenants. They are based in Newcastle upon Tyne but work with tenants in all parts of England. They also keep in touch with tenants' organisations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

There are two workers: Tim Shotton and David Hanson. TRIS are a responsive service. They do whatever work they are asked to do by tenants. The workers don't speak for the tenants' movement but simply aim to help. TRIS are run by tenants for tenants. TRIS can help in a variety of ways.

Members have free access to a library of information and are part of a network of legal, technical and other contacts willing to help tenants. When a tenant from Blackburn wrote about underfloor heating, they were able to send general information and put her in touch with groups who could give specific advice.

TRIS also give advice to tenants trying to organise, and have produced "Tenants' Action" - a resource pack for tenants getting together to take up housing issues.

Tenants are put in touch with other groups sharing the same interests. A tenants' association near Halifax were helped to find contacts with groups in similar system-built homes.

Town and Country Planning Association, 17 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AS. Tel: 071 930 8903/4/5. Contact :Adrian Webb.

The Town and Country Planning Assocation (TCPA) is committed to improving the environment through effective planning, public participation and sensitive development. It is Britain's oldest independent voluntary organisation concerned with planning and the environment.

The association believe: "That a primary aim of planning must be to improve the quality of people's lives and the environments in which they live. That everyone has a right to a decent home in a good environment which combines the best features of town and country. That effective planning is good for business and economic well-being.

That planning policies should reflect the needs and aspirations of local communities. That decision-making should be devolved to the lowest level consistent with the needs of the wider area.That people should have the power to influence the decisions that affect them. That planning policies should promote sustainable development as a means of conserving natural resources and reducing pollution."

The TCPA report that they have promoted many successful campaigns and initiatives, several of which directly relate to tower blocks.

They report that they campaigned for the abandonment of government national policies for high-rise flats and they worked with tenants of the Divis Flats in West Belfast in their demolition campaign.

BE

Sam Webb, Walnut Tree Cottage, 68 Shalmsford Street, Chartham, Canterbury, Kent, CT4 7RH. Tel: 0227 738296.

Sam Webb has advised tenants on a wide range of estates in the United Kingdom. He has dealt with all types of high-rise flats but focussing on large panel systems. Several of the blocks he has been asked to advise on have been demolished because of building defects.

The major causes for concern in blocks now, for Mr Webb, are fire safety, asbestos, dampness, structural conditions, and social conditions. Mr Webb was the consultant architect to Newham Tower Blocks Tenants' Campaign during the surveys and demolition of Ronan Point from 1983 to1987.

All the tenants on Freemasons Road Estate nine large panel Taylor Woodrow Anglian (TWA) blocks were rehoused. The demolition of the remaining eight blocks is underway. Mr Webb gave advice to tenants on Taylor Woodrow Anglian Estates throughout London (Morris Walk series), and undertoook surveys of the Morris Walk Estate, the Ocean Estate, Hartopp and Lannoy Points, Broadwater Farm etc. for tenants' groups.

Mr Webb has also undertaken work for councils, eg Greenwich and Newham. In the wake of the findings at Ronan Point, Mr Webb was asked for advice by tenants all over the country. Mr Webb carried out fire-safety surveys for the National Tower Blocks Network national fire-safety survey.

He has given advice to Waltham Forest Council and tenants over the selection of an architect for estates. He is presently the consultant for tenants in Winterton House and Gelston Point and Kedge House in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

ABD

Stephen Willats (Community Arts Projects), 5 London Mews, London W2 1H4. Contact: Stephen Willats.

Stephen Willats has undertaken arts projects on a range of inner-city and outer estates in Great Britain. His aim is to encourage community involvement and to combat feelings of isolation. He has worked in Hounslow, Hillingdon, Westminster, Camden, and Tower Hamlets in blocks of all shapes and sizes.

He has found that there are substantial numbers of children living in the blocks he has worked with. He has also found that relationships between the councils and tenants on estates where he's worked have been poor.

GLOSSARY of structural terms

In Situ Concrete is concrete which is poured into a mould on site. When the concrete sets the mould is removed.

Reinforced concrete is concrete which is strengthened with embedded steel bars. This term is used by some authorities to mean in situ concrete.

Steel frame have steel columns and beams which carry the weight of the building and its contents.

Large panel system buildings are those which were assembled on site using precast panels. These panels carry the weight of the building and its contents.

Traditional is used by some authorities to describe blocks which are not large panel systems, blocks which are constructed with a steel or reinforced concrete frame or with load-bearing bricks.

Slip-form concrete is a form of in situ concrete.

No fines concrete is concrete which contains no sand.

Enveloped blocks are those which have had a form of cladding or screen put round them with the intention of keeping rain out.

LARGE PANEL SYSTEMS IN GREAT BRITAIN

Anglia
Balency
Basingstoke Development Group
Beale & Son
Belfry
Bison
Bryant
Camus
Carlton
Cebus
Conclad (Reema)
Fram
Fram/FRS
Gerrard "Incon"
GLE
Gregor
Housing Development Construction
HSSB (Lindsay Parkinson)
Laing/BRS
Larsen and Neilson (TWA)
Lecaplan
Metracon
MFC (Moss & Sons)
Modus
NCB
PAC (Trollope & Colls)
Reema
Ridgway
SB2
Skarne
Southend 3M
Spacemaker (Shepherd)
Stubbings Ind. Low Rise
Sundh
Tracoba
Trentox
Wates (XW Selleck Nicholls)
YDG Mark 1
12M Jesperson
Local Authorities' own:
Dudley

Information supplied by the Building Research Establishment

ISSUE INDEX	Cock-roaches	Other Vermin	Heating	Play	Child Safety	Isolation	Asbestos	Community Facilities	Fire Safety	Lifts	Racism	Damp	Building Defects	Security	Environ-ment
Aberdeen District Council(p3)															
Barking and Dagenham Council(p3)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Independent Advice Centre(p4)															
T. Neal, Oldmead House(p4)			✓	✓			✓		✓	✓				✓	
London Borough of Barnet(p4)	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
Barnsley Met Borough Council(p4)									✓				✓		
Barnsley Federation of Tenants(p5)															
Basingstoke & Deane B.C.(p5)			✓									✓			
London Borough of Bexley(p5)				✓		✓		✓					✓	✓	
Birmingham City Council(p6)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Community Energy Research(p6)			✓									✓			
Druids Heath Tower Blocks Assoc(p6)		✓	✓				✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Birmingham Settlement(p7)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The Three Blocks Tenants Assoc(p8)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Queens Park Flats Residents Assoc(p8)	✓		✓				✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
Blackpool Borough Council(p9)					✓	✓				✓				✓	
Bolton Met Borough Council(p9)						✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	
Bracknell Forest Borough Council(p9)			✓				✓					✓			
City of Bradford Met. Council(p10)			✓										✓	✓	
Parkwood Rise Tenants Assoc.(p10)				✓	✓					✓			✓		
Triangle Proposed Co-op(p10)			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓				✓	✓
Yorks Community Housing Services(p11)															
London Borough of Brent(p11)	✓	✓					✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Brent Tenants Action Group(p11)	✓														
Chalkhill Management Board(p11)	✓														
Brentwood District Council(p12)				✓				✓						✓	
Brighton Borough Council(p12)		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
Brighton Federation of Tenants(p12)									✓						
North Whitehawk TA(p13)						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Bristol City Council(p13)															
Barton Hill Settlement(p13)				✓	✓										
Bishport Five TA(p14)				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
Families Need Fathers(p14)		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓				✓	
Fulford Family Centre(p14)				✓	✓										
St Annes/Area 9 Committee(p15)		✓	✓							✓		✓			
London Borough of Bromley(p15)			✓												
Calderdale Met Borough Council(p15)		✓	✓	✓	✓										✓
London Borough of Camden(p16)			✓	✓				✓			✓		✓		

ISSUE INDEX	Cock-roaches	Other Vermin	Heating	Play	Child Safety	Isolation	Asbestos	Community Facilities	Fire Safety	Lifts	Racism	Damp	Building Defects	Security	Environ-ment
Camden Federation of Tenants(p16)														✓	
Canterbury City Council(p16)										✓				✓	
Cardiff Tenants Federation(p16)															
Butetown Residents Assoc(p16)		✓	✓							✓			✓	✓	
Chelmsford Borough Council(p17)														✓	
Cheltenham Borough Council(p17)				✓		✓				✓		✓			
Chester City Council(p17)								✓		✓				✓	✓
City of London(p18)	✓						✓					✓			
Coventry City Council(p18)							✓			✓		✓		✓	✓
Coventry Resource & Info. Service(p19)															
Crawley Borough Council(p19)															
Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council(p19)															
London Borough of Croydon(p19)			✓			✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Delyn Borough Council(p20)									✓						
Derby City Council(p20)						✓		✓				✓	✓		
Doncaster Met. Borough Council(p21)			✓						✓					✓	
Doncaster Tenants Federation(p21)		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Dover District Council(p21)															✓
Chapel Street TA(p22)			✓	✓								✓		✓	
Tanhouse Residents Association(p22)			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
Dumbarton District Council(p22)			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
City of Dundee District Council(p23)		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Dundee Federation of TAs(p23)															
Ardler Tenants Action(p23)			✓			✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
South Acton Residents Assoc(p24)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Moat Housing Society Ltd(p24)				✓				✓				✓		✓	
Dunlop Tower Residents Assoc(p24)		✓													
Eastbourne Borough Council(p25)			✓						✓					✓	✓
Edinburgh District Council(p25)			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Edinburgh Community Design Serv.(p25)													✓	✓	✓
Craigour High Flats Action Group(p26)			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
Edinburgh SHAC(p26)															
Ellesmere Port & Neston B.C.(p26)										✓				✓	
London Borough of Enfield(p27)			✓	✓				✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Exeter City Council(p27)									✓				✓		
Rennes House TA(p28)			✓			✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	
Falkirk District Council(p28)			✓			✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	
Callendar Park TA(p28)			✓					✓	✓			✓	✓		

ISSUE INDEX	Cock-roaches	Other Vermin	Heating	Play	Child Safety	Isolation	Asbestos	Community Facilities	Fire Safety	Lifts	Racism	Damp	Building Defects	Security	Environ-ment
Glasgow City Council(p29)															
Assist Architects(p29)													✓		✓
Balgrayhill Tenants Co-op(p29)															
14 Storey TA(p29)				✓				✓							
Heatwise Glasgow(p29)			✓									✓			
Kennishead Tenants Co-op(p30)		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	
Lomond Tenants Co-op(p30)							✓							✓	
Shelter Glasgow(p30)			✓										✓		
Glenrothes Development Corp(p30)			✓										✓	✓	
Gloucester City Council(p30)		✓	✓					✓					✓	✓	✓
Gosport Borough Council(p31)			✓							✓					
Seaward Tower Residents Assoc.(p31)										✓			✓	✓	
London Borough of Greenwich(p31)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Greenwich Tenants Federation(p32)													✓		
Elmley Street TA(p32)			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Greenwich Housing Rights(p32)												✓			
Great Grimsby Borough Council(p32)			✓			✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	✓
Guildford Borough Council(p33)										✓					
London Borough of Hackney(p33)															
Hackney Tenants Federation(p33)							✓								
Gascoyne TA(p33)			✓		✓										
Trowbridge TA(p33)			✓	✓	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Halton Borough Council(p33)															
Hamilton District Council(p34)														✓	
London Borough of Hammersmith(p34)			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hammersmith & Fulham Tenants Fed(p34)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ashcroft Square TA(p35)			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
Caroline Estate TA(p35)		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Charecroft TA(p35)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Clem Atlee, Roque & Maton Res Ass(p35)			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	
Field Road TA(p36)				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Jepson House TA(p36)			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Sullivan Court Residents Assoc(p37)		✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓				
Harlow District Council(p37)			✓							✓		✓			
Hastings Borough Council(p37)			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
Four Court Residents Assoc(p38)				✓	✓	✓				✓					
Havant Borough Coucil(p38)															
Havering Tenants Federation(p39)				✓	✓									✓	

ISSUE INDEX	Cock-roaches	Other Vermin	Heating	Play	Child Safety	Isolation	Asbestos	Community Facilities	Fire Safety	Lifts	Racism	Damp	Building Defects	Security	Environ-ment
Chase Cross TA(p39)															✓
Mardyke Village TA(p39)												✓		✓	
London Borough of Hounslow(p39)				✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clements Court Residents Assoc.(p40)							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Heston Farm Residents Assoc.(p40)				✓					✓	✓				✓	
Hull City Council(p41)			✓	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Ipswich Borough Council(p42)			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
London Borough of Islington(p42)															
South Islington Law Centre(p42)	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Inverclyde District Council(p42)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Hornimans Adventure Playground(p43)	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓					✓
Pottery Lane Advice Centre(p43)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	
Kirklees Federation of TAs(p43)			✓				✓	✓		✓				✓	
Kingcliffe & Miln Road TA(p44)							✓		✓	✓		✓			
Rashcliffe Hill TA(p44)						✓			✓	✓		✓			
Knowsley Borough Council(p45)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Jay Allen, Rundell Tower(p45)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Lancaster City Council(p45)			✓				✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	
Langbaurgh-on-Tees Borough Council(p46)						✓			✓				✓	✓	✓
Leeds City Council(p46)									✓					✓	
Briarsdale/Gipton Gate TA(p46)									✓				✓	✓	
Leeds Energy Advice Project(p47)			✓									✓			
Lincoln Green Residents Assoc(p47)			✓						✓			✓			
Edward Walker Architects(p47)			✓									✓	✓		
Leicester City Council(p47)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓		
Leicester Tenants Federation(p48)														✓	
Rowlatts Hill TA(p48)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
St Peters' TA(p48)	✓			✓		✓					✓			✓	
London Borough of Lewisham(p49)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lewisham Federation of Tenants(p49)							✓							✓	
Woodpecker Patch 5 Assoc.(p49)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Wydham and Comber TA(p50)	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓				✓	
Lincoln City Council(p50)			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Liverpool City Council(p51)			✓			✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Community Tech Services Agency(p51)													✓		✓
High Rise Flats Tenants Group(p51)			✓					✓					✓	✓	✓
Liverpool CVS(p51)		✓								✓			✓	✓	
Netherley CAB(p52)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

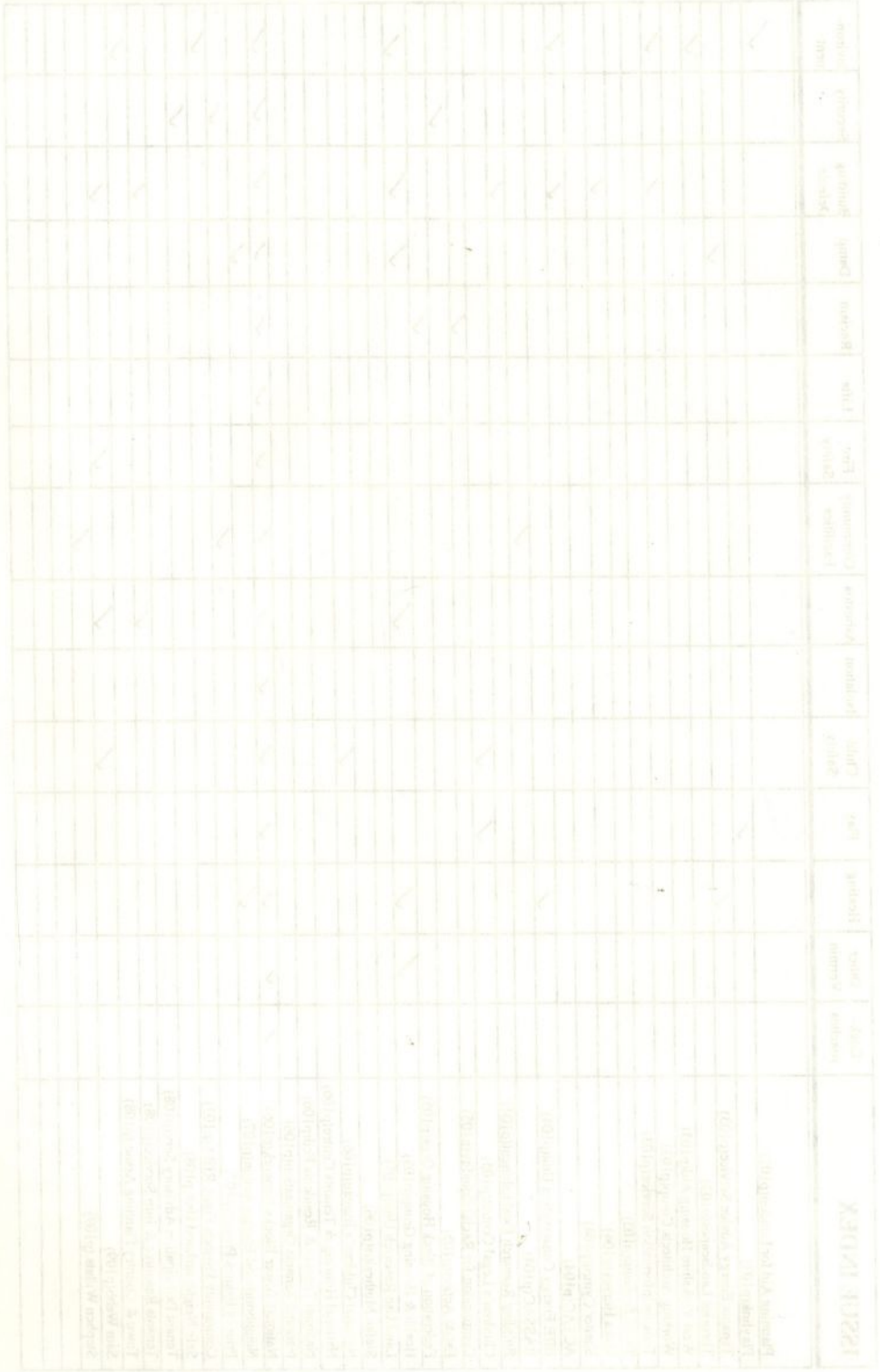
ISSUE INDEX	Cock-roaches	Other Vermin	Heating	Play	Child Safety	Isolation	Asbestos	Community Facilities	Fire Safety	Lifts	Racism	Damp	Building Defects	Security	Environ-ment
Olive Mount Residents Assoc.(p52)			✓												
St Georges Heights TA(p52)		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	
Vauxhall Neighbourhood Council(p52)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
West Everton Community Council(p53)		✓								✓			✓	✓	
Macclesfield Borough Council(p53)														✓	
Hurdsfield TA(p54)						✓								✓	
City of Manchester(p54)	✓		✓											✓	
Northern Counties Housing Assoc.(p54)														✓	✓
Fed of Assocs on Manchester Estates(p55)			✓		✓		✓					✓			
Abbey Court TA(p55)			✓	✓		✓						✓	✓	✓	
Artillery Court TA(p55)							✓							✓	
Deepdale Court TA(p56)												✓			
Langley Residents Assoc(p56)			✓			✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	
Roach Court TA(p56)				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
Sawley Estate TA(p56)			✓			✓		✓	✓					✓	
Shelter Manchester(p57)															
Wilton Court TA(p57)				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council(p57)															
London Borough of Merton(p57)	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Middlesborough District Council(p57)	✓			✓		✓	✓								✓
Netherfields Steering Group(p58)			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓
Mid Sussex Housing Association(p58)															
Milton Keynes Borough Council(p58)						✓				✓		✓		✓	
Motherwell District Council(p59)			✓												
City of Newcastle(p59)			✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
North British Housing Assoc(p60)			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		
Newcastle Federation of Tenants(p60)			✓						✓						
Vallum Court TA(p60)			✓			✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		
London Borough of Newham(p60)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Newham Federation of Tenants(p61)									✓						
Bemersyde Point TA(p61)			✓					✓							
Community Links(p62)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ferrier Point TA(p62)									✓						
Newtown TA(p62)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Taylor Woodrow Anglian TAs(p62)							✓						✓		
Newham Rights Centre(p63)					✓				✓						
North Bedfordshire Borough Council(p63)															
Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Assoc(p63)			✓			✓		✓					✓	✓	

ISSUE INDEX	Cock-roaches	Other Vermin	Heating	Play	Child Safety	Isolation	Asbestos	Community Facilities	Fire Safety	Lifts	Racism	Damp	Building Defects	Security	Environ-ment
Greyfriars Residents Association(p63)								✓							
Queen St Residents Committee(p64)														✓	
Northampton Borough Council(p64)			✓				✓							✓	
Norwich City Council(p64)														✓	
Nottingham City Council(p64)														✓	
Nottingham Federation of Tenants(p64)				✓			✓							✓	
First Report(p64)			✓						✓				✓		
Highcross Court TA(p64)															
Northern Ireland Housing Executive(p65)														✓	
Belfast Tenants Federation(p66)															
Amalgamation of Tenants Assocs.(p66)															
Carlisle & Victoria Barrack TA(p66)			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Divis Tower TA(p66)				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Rathcoole Self Help Group(p66)				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓					
Tenants Lobby Group(p67)									✓						
Tullycarnet Residents Assoc.(p67)						✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
North Tyneside Council(p67)			✓				✓							✓	
Oldham Met Borough Council(p68)															
Northway/Marston TA(p68)				✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
Peterborough City Council(p68)															
Plymouth District Council(p69)														✓	
Plymouth Assoc. of Tenants(p69)									✓						
Tamar House TA(p69)			✓			✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Poole Borough Council(p70)			✓	✓								✓	✓		
Barry Russell(p70)													✓		
London Borough of Redbridge(p70)														✓	✓
Broadmeade Family Centre(p70)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Reigate & Banstead B.C(p71)			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Restormel Borough Council(p71)					✓		✓							✓	
Rochdale Metropolitan B.C.(p71)			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	
Rochdale Federation of Tenants(p72)															
Rochester-upon-Medway Council(p72)															
Medway Housing Society Ltd(p72)															
Rotherham Met Borough Council(p72)														✓	
Rugby Borough Council(p72)			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
Runnymeade Borough Council(p73)									✓	✓				✓	
Sandwell Met Borough Council(p73)			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Darley House TA(p74)			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

ISSUE INDEX	Cock-roaches	Other Vermin	Heating	Play	Child Safety	Isolation	Asbestos	Community Facilities	Fire Safety	Lifts	Racism	Damp	Building Defects	Security	Environ-ment
Dave Bird(Merry Hill Court)(p74)									✓	✓				✓	
Scunthorpe Borough Council(p75)	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Sedgemoor District Council(p75)										✓				✓	
Sefton Met Borough Council(p76)						✓								✓	✓
Sheffield City Council(p76)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Northern Counties Housing Assoc.(p77)															
Netherthorpe TA(p77)			✓				✓					✓			
Sheffield Polytechnic Students Union(p78)			✓						✓						✓
Stannington TA(p78)			✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Slough Borough Council(p78)	✓													✓	
Solihull Met Borough Council(p79)			✓	✓	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Twin Towers TA(p79)			✓									✓		✓	
South Tyneside Met Borough Council(p79)			✓	✓	✓									✓	✓
Southampton City Council(p80)				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
Southampton Tenants Federation(p80)				✓				✓							
Northam TA(p81)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓			✓
Thornhill Tower Blocks Assoc.(p81)						✓		✓	✓					✓	
Balmoral Community Committee(p81)									✓	✓				✓	
London Borough of Southwark(p82)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Southwark Group of TAs(p82)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adders TA(p82)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Draper TA(p83)	✓	✓		✓						✓				✓	
Kipling TA(p83)				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Ledbury Estate TA(p84)	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Portland TA(p84)						✓		✓					✓	✓	✓
Sceaux Gardens TA(p84)	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Southampton Way TA(p85)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Tustin Estate TA(p85)	✓	✓				✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Willowbrook TA(p85)	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓						✓	✓	✓
Spelthorne Borough Council(p86)			✓							✓					
St Albans District Council(p86)			✓							✓			✓		
Stafford Borough Council(p87)														✓	
Stevenage Borough Council(p87)										✓				✓	
Stockport Met Borough Council(p87)	✓													✓	
Sunderland Borough Council(p88)			✓				✓		✓				✓	✓	
London Borough of Sutton(p88)		✓		✓	✓		✓						✓	✓	
Tameside Met Borough Council(p88)			✓	✓	✓					✓				✓	✓
Teignbridge District Council(p89)															

ISSUE INDEX	Cock-roaches	Other Vermin	Heating	Play	Child Safety	Isolation	Asbestos	Community Facilities	Fire Safety	Lifts	Racism	Damp	Building Defects	Security	Environ-ment
Thamesdown Borough Council(p89)															
Penhill Neighbourhood Centre(p89)						✓									✓
Three Rivers District Council(p90)		✓			✓									✓	
London Borough of Tower Hamlets(p90)															
Brodick House(p90)			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
The Environment Trust(p91)															✓
Farrell House(p91)		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Glamis Tenants Association(p91)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	
Ranwell Towers TA(p91)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Stifford Towers TA(p92)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		
Tower Hamlets Law Centre(p92)											✓				
Winterton & Gelston Action Group(p92)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Trafford Met Borough Council(p92)		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Wakefield City Council(p93)			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Concil(p93)			✓									✓	✓		
Austin House Community Association(p94)		✓	✓									✓	✓	✓	
Booth & O'Hare TA(p94)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
London Borough of Waltham Forest(p94)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Waltham Forest Federation(p95)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Boundary Road Steering Group(p95)		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
St Michaels Tower TA(p96)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
Arthur Central TA(p96)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Holmsley House Residents Assoc(p96)									✓						
Winstanley Residents Association(p97)		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
Warrington Borough Council(p97)			✓					✓					✓	✓	
Watford Borough Council(p97)							✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Waveney District Council(p98)															
Welwyn Hatfield Council(p98)						✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	
London Borough of Westminster(p98)															
Walterton & Elgin Comm Homes(p99)	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council(p99)			✓			✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	
Winnall High Rise TA(p99)				✓				✓	✓	✓					
Royal Bor of Windsor & Maidenhead(p100)			✓							✓			✓	✓	✓
Metropolitan Borough of Wirral(p100)			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Wolverhampton Met. Bor Council(p101)			✓				✓		✓	✓			✓		✓
Worcester City Council(p102)														✓	
Community Land & Workspace Ser(p102)													✓		✓
London Hazards Centre(p102)		✓					✓					✓			

ISSUE INDEX	Cock-roaches	Other Vermin	Heating	Play	Child Safety	Isolation	Asbestos	Community Facilities	Fire Safety	Lifts	Racism	Damp	Building Defects	Security	Environ-ment
Planning Aid for London(p102)															✓
Playlink(p103)				✓											
Tenants Energy Advice Service(p103)			✓									✓			
Theories Landscapes(p103)															✓
West Yorkshire Housing Aid(p103)															
Working Architects Co-op(p103)													✓		✓
Tenants Information Service(p103)															
TPAS Scotland(p103)															
Miles Horsey(p104)													✓		
Shelter Cymru(p104)															
ACTAC(p104)			✓										✓		✓
BRE Energy Conservation Unit(p104)								✓							
BASSAC(p104)													✓		
Building Research Establishment(p104)				✓	✓										
Children's Legal Centret(p105)											✓				
Commission for Racial Equality(p105)															
Estate Action(p105)											✓			✓	
Federation of Black Housing Orgs(p105)		✓	✓				✓				✓	✓	✓		✓
Health & Housing Group(p105)															
Land Use Research Unit(p105)															
Stefan Muthesius(p106)					✓										
National Children's Bureau(p106)															
National Housing & Tenants Centre(p106)															
National Tenants & Residents Fed(p106)															
National Tenants Organisation(p106)															
National Tower Blocks Network(p106)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Neighbourhood Energy Action(p107)			✓									✓			
Priority Estates Project(p107)								✓						✓	
Community Projects Fund, RIBA(p107)															✓
Safe Neighbourhood Unit(p108)														✓	
Tenant Participation Advisory Serv(p108)															
Tenants Resource & Info Service(p108)							✓						✓		
Town & Country Planning Assoc.(p108)															✓
Sam Webb(p109)					✓		✓		✓				✓		
Stephen Willats.(p109)								✓							



Where kids can't be kids

"Kids can't be kids in high-rise," said a Bristol woman at the "Growing up in high-rise" conference.

Experience and academic studies have shown that living in a tower block can adversely affect children, both physically and psychologically.

Although many local authorities have had policies in the past preventing children from living in blocks or restricting children above certain floors, pressure from a lack of appropriate housing and increasing homelessness has made such regulations hard to follow.

NATIONAL PATTERN

Just recently, Birmingham Council, noted for their more progressive housing policies, have decided to make only one housing offer to homeless families, and families with children will be housed in tower blocks.

Our research for this directory clearly shows that this pattern is being repeated throughout the country.

A major concern for NTBN is to find ways of making tower-block living safer, more suitable and more enjoyable for children, to overcome some of the problems outlined below.

A CHILD'S LIFE

Problems for children living in blocks are highly complex. **Firstly**, there are the safety aspects, for example:

❑ There are the obvious safety hazards posed by the design of blocks. The dangers associated with windows, stairwells, rubbish chutes, ventilation and lift shafts. There have been fatal accidents where children have fallen from windows and balconies.

❑ Children have also been killed and seriously injured in Glasgow, Newham and Brent (in lift accidents). These and other terrible incidents have been reported to NTBN. Incidents, such as crane riding in Tower Hamlets and climbing halfway up the block on ropes left hanging from scaffolding in Newham.

These problems require not only improvements to safety standards but also to the range of community and youth facilities available on our high-rise estates.

Secondly, there are the public health aspects for example:

❑ Dampness is common in many flats due to their design and method of construction. Dampness exacerbates chest conditions such as asthma.

❑ Exposure to asbestos is even more dangerous for children than for adults. "Tissues in which natural growth is taking place may be more susceptible to carcinogens than adult tissues", said the 1979 Health and Safety Executive.

❑ Examples of cockroaches and other vermin in tower blocks abound. Tenants tell of cockroaches crawling in their baby's cot, over their children's beds, over their children's toys and through their food cupboards.

In Brent, children on a contaminated estate vomitted cockroaches.

HEALTH ASPECTS

Thirdly, there are other health aspects, those affecting emotional development. These are less immediately obvious but are just as worrying.

❑ Parents in flats feel that their children's health suffers from lack of time outside. The physical development of children may be impaired by lack of outside playtime or the space to run and jump; also the storage of large toys is a problem in a flat.

❑ Intellectual development can be impaired through the lack of access to physical play, and viewing the world from above can have serious consequences for a child's development of perspective.

❑ Soundproofing in flats is poor and so each flat is more vulnerable to disruption from neighbouring flats. Parents find it necessary to tell their children to be quiet more, thus adding to the stress being experienced in the already restricted environment. Children's friends are less likely to be invited in to play because of this.

❑ Social development can be hindered by being brought up in a tower block, it is possible to become very isolated and children in blocks go out to play independently at a much later age than other children.

❑ There is evidence that speech development is slower because of less mixing with other children.

CHILDREN IN NEED

In Bristol, workers at the Fulford Family Centre, who were concerned with the large number of children living in the 11 tower blocks on the Hartcliffe/Withywood estates, initiated the Children in High Rise Working Party.

The main concerns of this group have been the play needs of children in blocks, particularly the need for primary outside-play provision on high-rise estates, and the implications of the 1989 Children's Act which defines "children in need".

They have been making a case which recognises children in blocks as 'children in need' and therefore entitled to services which would compensate for the restrictions which high-rise living imposes on the child's development. Unfortunately there can be no blanket policy on the interpretation of the act, each local authority can decide its own interpretation.

CHILDREN'S ACT 1990

There appear to be two approaches to tackling the act, an individual test case ('my child is in need because....') or a

continued on next page

continued from previous page

collective approach from tenants and community workers in each local authority area focussing on the definition contained in Part lll s17(10) of the Act. Section 17 states that a child shall be taken to be in need if:

a) he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a local authority under this Part;

b) his health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services; and in this Part 'development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development, and 'health' means physical or mental health.

Below and on the next page are summaries of two recent pieces of research concerning children in tower blocks.

Safe as houses

by Andy Benson

Much child safety work in the past has concentrated on teaching children about safe behaviour and has placed the main responsibility on parents for preventing accidents.

Although many of the features inside people's homes, which may present a danger to children, are the responsibility of parents and house-holders, many others can be the result of poor initial design – things like insecure window catches.

Outside of the home, poor maintenance and repair may contribute to the risk of accident – such as the failure to remove broken glass from grassed areas or common parts.

Accidents can also result from children being able to get into dangerous places – for example, flat roofs, and lift machine rooms.

PROVIDING INFORMATION

To help tenants wanting to take action to improve child safety in and around their homes, the Child Accident Prevention Trust has been working to gather information about common problems and solutions suggested to them. This has included looking at what regulations and technical guidance exists to help deal with these hazards.

Information has been collected on:

- ❑ outside features – fences and gates, lighting, outbuildings, paths/ramps/steps, play areas, refuse disposal, roof access, services (including drains/equipment rooms), stairs, decking, balconies and high level wall :ways, vehicle access;
- ❑ interna. features in communal areas – circulation spaces, doors, flooring, lifts, lighting, stairs, windows;
- ❑ fixtures inside homes – circulation spaces, doors, electrical and gas safety, flooring, heating and ventilation, lighting, stairs, storage, windows, bathrooms, kitchens;
- ❑ general matters – site layout, fire safety, glass, site works in progress.

The idea is that this information could help tenants and estate managers carry out 'child safety audits' of their estates, to support the case for action in removing dangerous features and reducing the risk of child accidents.

Many of these things are quite easy to check. Here are some examples:

Bannisters and balustrades. The gaps between bannisters should prevent children squeezing through them – the building regulations say that you should not be able to pass a 100mm sphere through the gaps. Bannisters should not have horizontal bars which would allow a child to climb them and topple over the edge.

Low-level glazing. Serious accidents can be caused by children falling into glass panes. Low-level glass – as in balcony doors – presents a particular danger here. Any low-level glazing should use safety glass conforming to British Standard 6206.

Windows. Although not many children fall out of windows, when they do the results are almost invariably serious, if not fatal. Many flats in this country are fitted with centre-hinged windows, which can be dangerous if the degree of opening is not restricted or if not fitted with serviceable safety catches.

Make sure that all windows within 1350mm of the floor have their opening restricted to 100mm by an automatic device. Make sure that all windows which can reverse for cleaning are fitted with automatic bolts or other devices to lock them in the fully reversed position. These bolts should be regularly checked.

Access. Can children easily gain access to dangerous parts of the estate - lift motor-rooms, water tanks, flat roofs? Are doors to these areas locked and secure? Is it possible to climb to these areas from balconies or walkways?

Work is underway in developing a tenants' checklist, which will look at these and other common features. This will be widely available to tenants' groups and housing managers. Thereafter some limited support may be available to those wishing to take action around those issues.



Community Links' Brooks Road Estate playscheme in Newham

HIGH-RISE TODDLER TOOTH CARE

This is an outline of a report of a dental health initiative for a group of residents with children under five living in a tower block in Southampton.

SETTING THE SCENE

As the pressure to house families living in bed and breakfast accommodation increases, the Housing Department in Southampton has changed its policy of not allowing families with young children to be allocated flats above the fifth floor. The session is led by a supervisor as well Families can now be moved onto all 15 floors. Shirley Tower has the highest number of under fives among the 20 tower blocks in Southampton. There were 74 families with 105 children under five in October 1990.

The Community Development Department in Southampton runs a playbus which visits Shirley Tower on a regular basis. It is a fun bus where pre-school children can play as well as a venue where women can meet informally as a play worker who stays with the children. There are 15 families who use the playbus regularly at Shirley Tower.

DENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

Concerns were first raised by health visitors who worked in the block. They were concerned that parents who were stuck in their flats all day with young children resorted to giving their children sweets as comforters, so that they might not make so much noise in the flats.

Aware of this concern, the playbus supervisor involved the community dentist at one of the sessions at Shirley Tower. The bus regulars were informed that the community dentist would be visiting the bus and that he would be willing to answer questions on dental health. The meeting was conducted in a very relaxed and informal atmosphere and the women were very enthusiastic.

David Wong, the community dentist, found the barriers to dental care included previous bad dental experience and associated fear, physical difficulties of getting to the surgery, lack of play/creche facilities at dental surgeries, and cost.

He also found that the women were aware of their dental health needs but that their housing conditions were such that healthy choices were more difficult to make.

SWEETS AS COMFORTERS

For example, in overcrowded flats the need to get children sleeping in the same room off to sleep, combined with the lack of noise insulation, meant that parents were more likely to give their children sweets as comforters.

The result of this consultation exercise is that Southampton Community Dental Service is proposing to develop a dental health and care programme for mothers and toddlers living in high-rise blocks in the city.

CONTACT

David Wong, Dental Department, Shirley Health Centre, Grove Road, Shirley, Southampton. Tel: Southampton 783611 ext. 225.

WORKING FOR PLAY

Here are some examples of schemes which have been set up to attempt to compensate children for living in tower blocks.

In Southampton, the local authority are starting to develop play resources in blocks, in Sheffield the council's Norfolk Park Project is based on a tower-block estate and is particularly concerned with the needs of young families, and in the London Borough of Newham Community Links is running playschemes and play projects on tower-block estates.

ENFIELD - PLAYBUSTERS

The Housing Department in the London Borough of Enfield are taking very seriously the play needs of the children living in their tower blocks:

In buildings.....

At Merlin House, a tower block of 22 storeys on the Alma Road estate, the department, in an initiative with the residents, have created a play space for the estate's young residents.

The void space at the foot of the block has been walled in to create a playgroup area, there is a large play facility, a lounge, an office area and toilets. In addition there is a small play area directly outside the playroom which caters separately for younger and older children.

A local community association is taking the playspace under its umbrella so as to apply separately for funds to run playgroups and other children's activities.

The idea is to develop a joint working approach between the housing department, the community association and social services. What was once a very rundown patch of land with a slide and a couple of swings is now becoming a lively and well-used children's centre.

And in buses.....

Another project which has been sponsored by the Housing Department is Playbusters, two playbuses that make visits after school to high-rise and high-density estates. The project has been established since January 1991 and currently visits one site per day per week. There are requests from tenants' associations to visit another seven sites because the project is so successful.

The bus arrives at 3.30 pm and is there until 5.45 pm. It is a free service and attracts between 14 and 70 children, depending on the site.

Activities include cooking, arts and crafts, sand and water play, and library facilities inside the bus, and snooker, and table tennis outside the bus. Fire drills are carried out regularly.

The target age group is five to 12 and contact is made with the parents to encourage them to become involved.

There are attempts to enhance the community development aspect of the project by working more closely with the parents' and the tenants' associations.

Free service

A bus driver and supervisor are employed on each bus. Playbusters are able to offer a free service to children on these tower-block estates by charging for some of their other services.

For example, the buses are hired out for private children's parties and Playbusters runs a fee-paying playscheme project for the children of council staff.

CONTACT

Nicky Dawson, Ponders End Area Housing Office, Curlew House, Napier Road, Enfield, Middlesex. Tel: 081 443 4014.

Ann Godwin, Playbusters, Wessex Hall, Exeter Road, Ponders End, Enfield, EN3 7TN. Tel: 081 443 2021.

COMMUNITY LINKS

Community Links run a very wide range of activities for children and young people. They are the UK's largest local voluntary sector providor of out of school activities. During the summer of 1991, Links' summer playscheme programme, for example, provided 6,000 child days. Why have these activities been so successful?

The background

A variety of schemes take place throughout the borough. Some schemes are based in buildings, in schools, community centres and youth centres. Some schemes are based in parks, recreation grounds and open spaces.

Some of these locations have a building where equipment can be stored and some don't. Where there are no buildings, equipment is taken to the site each day.

Community Links Children's Work Co-ordinator, Kevin Jenkins, explains that "it is the very sites where there are no buildings that the need is often the greatest." In the past playschemes in the borough were confined to a limited number of park sites and took place in and around playhuts. These play activities reached only a limited number of children.

Breaking the mould

Community Links broke the mould. They decided to try to provide as many truly local schemes as possible. Schemes are run largely by local people who know the needs of their estates and of their neighbourhoods.

All of the children's work programme is heavily dependent on volunteers, parents and older youths who have grown up with Links. There is only one full-time permanent worker co-ordinating the entire programme. Links have sought to provide schemes that are accessible – are within easy reach of young children and their parents and carers.

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Community Links' Hathaway Crescent playscheme in Newham

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High-rise schemes

Several of the schemes take place on Newham's high-rise estates. Newham have over 100 tower blocks spread out across the borough.

A particularly exciting innovation was the development of a mobile scheme.

A large van packed with equipment, plus three playleaders, visited a different high-density estate each day.

The intention was to spread resources as far as possible and to try to reach a situation where everyone, no matter how far-flung the estate, can take part in something. This scheme was funded by the housing department.

Many tenants' groups in the borough have approached Links for support in establishing play services on their estates.

To ascertain the level of demand, one-off fun days are organised on the estate and if they are successful the group then go on, with our support, to raise funds from the council or from voluntary or commercial sources for more regular activities.

REFERENCES AND OTHER CONTACTS

Kevin Jenkins, Community Links, Canniong Town Public Hall, 105 Barking Road, London E16 4HQ

Hartcliffe Under-Fives Working Party; Normal for Hartcliffe, June 1990. Contact Jackie Sims.

Fulford Family Centre, 1 Fulford Road, Hartcliffe, Bristol BS13 9PD. Tel. 0272 782441.

Stella Lowry; Housing and Health, Families and flats in the British Medical *Journal, volume 300, Jan 1990.*

LIVING TOGETHER: A NEW FORM OF PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN COUNCIL AND TENANTS

Camden Council, in London, are breaking new ground by being the first local authority to propose estate agreements between the council and their tenants.

by Mandy Farmer, Policy and Information Unit, Housing Department, London Borough of Camden.

Tenants often say they do not know what is going on and have no control over the services they pay for through their rents. Estate agreements aim to change this.

According to Director Chris Holmes: "They will be an invaluable way to develop a better partnership between the council and their tenants. They will help us listen to and learn more about tenants' priorities and be clear about what we agree to do as well as those things we can't do."

WHAT ARE THEY?

Estate agreements are made between the housing department and tenants for an estate. They include:

- ❑ Details of all services provided and standards to be kept to. If the council fail to meet the standards theyt will be answerable to tenants, who will get a copy of the agreement so everyone will know exactly what has been agreed.
- ❑ A list of key problems that need tackling on the estate and how they will be dealt with.
- ❑ Names, phone numbers and availability of staff supervising the estate.
- ❑ How to make a complaint if a tenant is not satisfied with any of the services provided by the council.
- ❑ A timetable for regular meetings between tenants and council officers to monitor the agreement.

BENEFITS FOR TENANTS

Over the last decade the massive cutbacks in money available for public housing have made it all the more important that the money available is used as effectively as possible.

Estate agreements allow tenants and the council to agree together how to provide the best level of services and maintenance with the money available. At the same time it is hoped that tenants will have more control over what happens on their estate and that services will become more accessible and responsive.

HOW THEY WORK

Initially four estates were chosen to pilot the agreements, including Tybalds Estate and Kenbrook House, which contain high-rise blocks over five storeys. In October 1991 meetings were set up between officers and the tenants' associations to work together on the production of the agreement.

A four-stage process was devised to ensure that all tenants had a say in what goes in the agreement. The stages were:

1 A questionnaire was delivered by the tenants' association to every tenant on the four estates. Its purpose was to find out what tenants thought about the present services, what problems existed and what changes and improvements they would like to see. Help was available for tenants who had any queries or needed help in filling it in.

2 There was a 'walkabout' of the estate by council officers and tenants to view and discuss the most urgent problems highlighted by the questionnaire results.

3 Officers then drafted the agreement and a public meeting was called to discuss the draft.

4 Following this, any changes were made before the finalised agreement was sent to all tenants on the state. Each year there will be a review of the council's performance and the agreement will be updated.

ASSESSMENT OF PILOT

An assessment of the pilot was made in July 1991. The view of the officers and tenants' associations involved was that the process of establishing the agreement had been successful.

Producing the agreement had focussed attention on each estate and had provided invaluable information. The overall response rate of 62% for the questionnaire meant that the majority of tenants had the opportunity to express their views.

It was felt that the consultation process strengthened and improved relationships between officers and staff. The present situation is that Camden Council have no capital programme for the year 92/93 but the pilot is continuing with reviews of the four estates planned for May-July 1992.

The pilot has highlighted the need for more resources and for a review of current policies.

A GOOD EXAMPLE

For example, the estate agreement for Kenbrook House, an eight-storey block, contains a list of key priorities highlighted by the tenants: faulty heating system, frequent lift breakdown, dog nuisance, security and vandalism, rubbish dumping, caretaking and poor repair of the building.

The list is familiar to many tower-block tenants and councils. Camden Council are only able to offer to monitor and carry out minor repairs to most of the problems because of a lack of finance.

Housing officers have expressed concern that tenants wanted more from their estate

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agreements than the council are able to offer. The problems which will be highlighted, by tower-block tenants especially, often require major refurbishment and repair because of the nature and structure of blocks.

Other issues concerning the maagement of the blocks are more easily remedied and could improve the day-to-day living of tenants.

Estate Agreements could be wholly successful if the resources, especially the funding, were adequate to solve the problems highlighted by tenants in blocks.

Nonetheless the agreements are a clear contract between the council and tenants as to what each can expect or provide.

Drawing up an estate agreement can help strengthen a flagging or weak tenants' association. The agreements are an important development in both tenant consultation and housing management.

However, all involved felt that the real test will be whether the council can deliver the level and quality of services agreed for each estate.

Housing associations: meeting the challenge



Hyde Park, Sheffield (now called Castle Court) before refurbishment

As a range of government policies encourage local authorities to be seen increasingly as facilitators rather than providors of housing, the number of housing associations controlling tower blocks is increasing, although the numbers remain relatively small overall.

The decisions facing housing associations are broadly similar to those facing local councils. The majority of blocks are over 20 years old and major works are now frequently required.

NORTHERN COUNTIES HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Ian Simpson describes a successful housing association refurbishment scheme which has been progressing in Sheffield through Northern Counties Housing Association (NCHA).

The association was founded in 1966 and aims to meet the housing requirements of a wide spectrum of the community throughout a large geographical area of Northern England.

Since completing their first development in Sheffield over 15 years ago, NCHA have forged strong links with the city council who, along with the housing corporation, have now provided funds for over 2500 homes across the city.

Housing associations today find themselves having to carry out their long-standing role as providers of affordable and low-cost housing in an increasingly challenging environment.

Northern Counties have tried to meet this challenge with the recent refurbishment of Castle Court, in Sheffield.

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Castle Court is on the Hyde Park Estate, a 1960s high-rise estate with three-deck access blocks. The estate followed what was at the time an innovative concept – all the dwellings were served by 'streets in the sky'. These streets were wide enough to enable milk to be delivered from electric trolleys and were supposed to reinforce the sense of community amongst residents.

Hyde Park lies very close to the city centre and was selected for the city council's first redevelopment scheme after the second world war because it included the oldest slum clearance orders in the city, with much of the land already cleared.

The deck-access blocks more than catered for the 800 local families displaced by slum clearance and provided a surplus of around 1400 homes, which allowed the council to rehouse people from other clearance areas in the city.

But by the mid-1980s major structural problems as well as the social problems of

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high-rise living led to the council taking the positive decision to empty the blocks, leaving doubts over their future. The blocks stood empty for several years but the future became clearer when Sheffield City Council chose to host the 1991 World Student Games.

NATURAL CHOICE

The council needed to provide a student village and Hyde Park seemed a natural choice, being close to the city centre, empty and ready for refurbishment.

NCHA won the development competition sponsored by Sheffield City Council and the Housing Corporation to redevelop Hyde Park. In recognising the many factors that had led to the estate's past problems, all the partners were keen to ensure that a comprehensive approach to redevelopment was taken.

High on the agenda, therefore, was a commitment to seek the best solutions to all the complex technical and social issues surrounding the old estate and to leave a legacy of trouble-free, quality housing that would not need major redevelopment in 30 years.

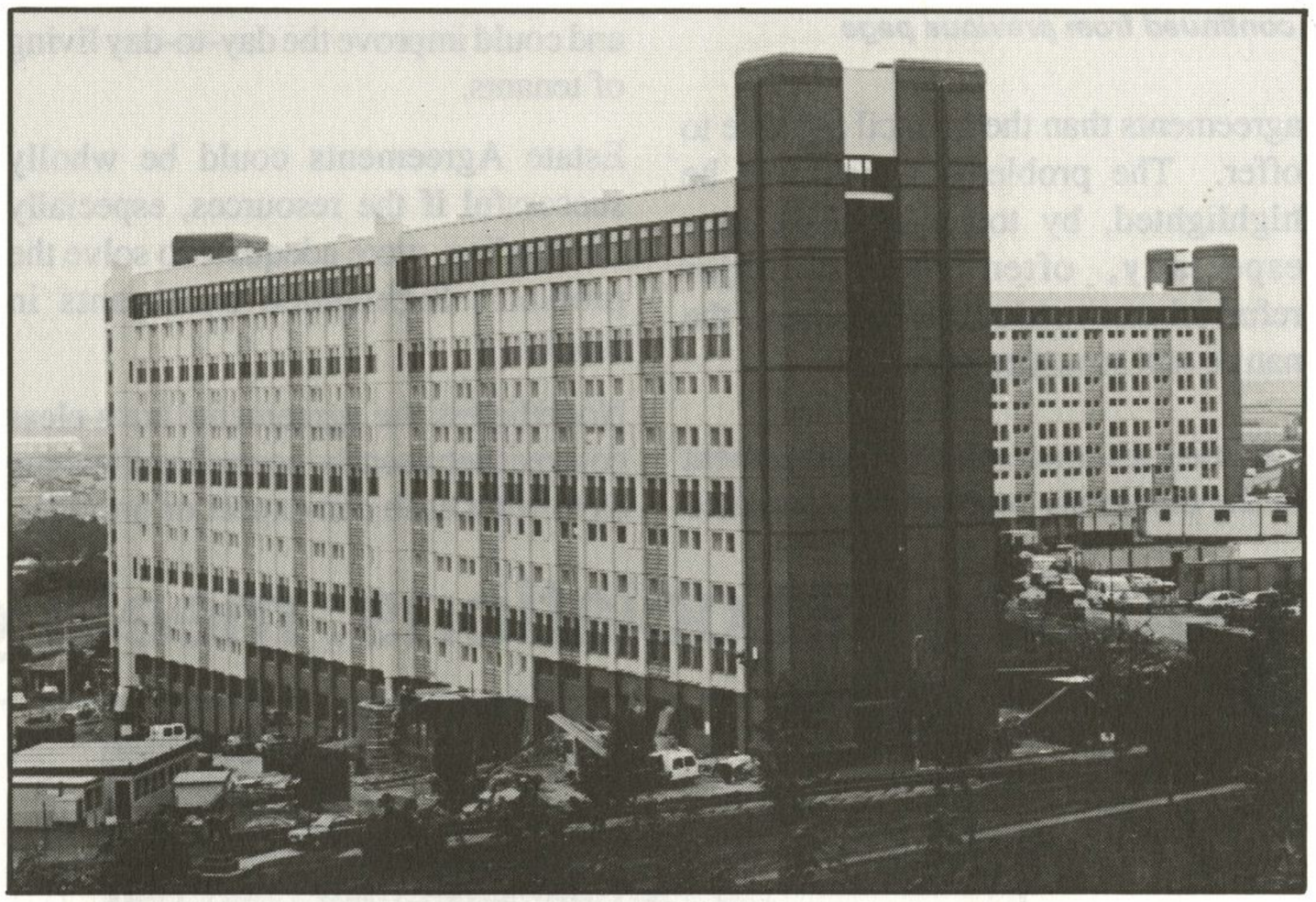
The refurbishment of Castle Court, formerly known as Block A, was intended to provide 311 homes to rent and the establishment of an estate-based management office. High on the list of priorities for the redevelopment of Castle Court was the need to provide warm homes which could be heated at a reasonable cost.

AIM ACHIEVED

This aim has been achieved by overcladding the block and fitting new high-performance and double-glazed windows.

Each flat in the block has been completely refurbished with new kitchen and bathroom furniture. A range of communal facilities including a community room, launderette and a health club are provided for the exclusive use of residents.

There is a display area where community information can be posted and tenants' association activities publicised. At the heart of this communal area is the main entrance to Castle Court where reception staff are on duty 24 hours a day. All visitors pass through this reception area and the concierge checks with residents before allowing admittance.



Hyde Park, Sheffield (now called Castle Court) after refurbishment

There are new lifts and the corridors have been enclosed and carpeted.

LANDSCAPED

The setting of Castle Court is enhanced by landscaped grounds, and private gardens are provided to most ground-floor homes. Well-lit parking areas are close to the building.

Headed by the resident scheme supervisor, a team comprising the concierge, who oversees the reception desk, and cleaners who are responsible for the upkeep of all communal areas, ensure the smooth running of the development.

Alongside Castle Court, is Harold Lambert Court, formerly known as Block C, which is being refurbished by Sheffield City Council.

Block B, the largest on the estate which sits on the top of the hill is being demolished and the site will be redeveloped with about 180 low-rise homes – 60 by NCHA, 60 by Sheffield City Council through UKHT, and 60 built for sale.

The Castle Court scheme itself was secured with a £20 million grant from the Housing Corporation, the umbrella agency which funds and controls the activities of housing associations nationally, towards overall costs of around £24 million. The balance has been raised by NCHA through a combination of investments on the money market and a long-term loan which is repaid by rental income.

NCHA worked closely with Sheffield City Council and received support from the Housing Corporation during the refurbishment project.

The estate was once a run-down and depressed area of inner-city Sheffield but with the adjoining improvements to the Bard Street Estate and the refurbishment of Hyde Park Walk and Terrace by the council the rejuvenation of this sector of Sheffield seems assured.

Ian Simpson
Castle Court Housing Manager
Northern Counties Housing Association

NCHA welcomes tenants and other interested people to come and look at the successful scheme. The blocks are 90% full within a few months and teething problems so far seem to have been minimal. Contact Ian Simpson at 2 Castle Court, St. John's Road, Sheffield S2 5JX. Telephone (0742) 795710.

Evicting the pests – action on infestations



COCKROACHES IN GRETNEY WALK – CAUSE FOR CONCERN

Gretney Walk is a ten-storey large-panel system block on an estate in Manchester. During the long hot summer of 1984 the already appalling problem of infestation worsened.

Tenants, realising that individually they were making no impact, formed a tenants' association and started to take some positive action. A survey carried out by the tenants' association found that, of the flats they gained access to, 36 units had cockroaches, 30 units had cockroaches and mice, and five units had mice.

The tenants estimated that about 90% of the occupied flats suffered from an infestation of cockroaches and it was possible that all the units had vermin of one sort or another.

"They are disgusting insects and when they first appear it is a shock."
"Will they travel into the bedroom and crawl over me during the night?"

These quotes from tenants are typical of the fear that people feel when they are living in a home infested with cockroaches. People are ashamed and embarrassed about friends and family visiting and often become socially isolated.

COMPLETE ERADICATION

At Gretney Walk, following negotiations with the local authority, the tenants got the planned vermin control they wanted.

The environmental health department reconsidered their past methods of treating cockroaches and decided that complete block treatment was the only way to eradicate the roaches. At the start of the work all tenants were sent a letter outlining the council's proposals. First of all, an empty flat was dismantled to determine the routes of access to voids and cavities.

Following initial tensions and hitches, weekly meetings were held with the tenants' association in addition to inter-departmental progress meetings.

These were to prove invaluable in making all concerned aware of the problems, the work in progress and future plans.

The treatment worked proving that joint working, a well-thought-out programme of eradication, rather than just spot spraying in flats as they are reported, and a follow-up maintenance programme are well worth the investment.

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WHY A TOWER BLOCK ISSUE?

The cockroach is a well-established survivor and possibly the oldest living thing, having existed for 250 million years. Often, people are afraid to admit that their homes are infested with cockroaches because they believe that they are an indicator of poor hygiene.

This is not the case. The reason that tower-block tenants suffer this problem has a lot more to do with the fact that cockroaches multiply rapidly in warm conditions – heating ducts in tower blocks provide an ideal breeding ground. Once the cockroaches have established their habitat within the heating ducts, they can spread easily and quickly from flat to flat.

INFESTATIONS

The female cockroach produces four to eight egg capsules at about monthly intervals and each capsule can contain 30 eggs. At room temperature the full development to adult stage takes about six months. The German cockroach is particularly successful and, if left untreated, one pair of adults can produce many thousands of cockroaches in one year.

As cockroaches prefer the dark, they thrive inside dark food cupboards and are more likely to be active at night so people don't always notice them until there is a large infestation.

Cockroaches will eat anything, even in a spotlessly clean kitchen they can survive and infest food sources. They are, of course, more encouraged where food is left lying about. Cockroaches don't live in groups or nests, they are difficult to locate and can infest a building very rapidly.

PROVING THERE IS A PROBLEM

If after having called in the council to deal with cockroaches nothing is done, then there are several ways in which tenants can make their case. A monitoring exercise may be successful, focussing on education, organisation and co-operation.

If you have an active tenants' association, then it could call a public meeting and invite along a representative from a local pest control company to explain the nature of the cockroach, the health hazards and the need to act quickly.

This outside 'expert' may well help with the monitoring exercise, particularly if there is likely to be a contract going at the end of it. If the association have any money, then they could always hire the pest controller.

Otherwise tenants can undertake the exercise for themselves, though traps will still have to be purchased.

Leafleting is another option, after all cockroaches make quite dramatic images! The leaflet could state the health risks, point out that cockroaches aren't an indicator of poor cleanliness, and explain that the tenants' association wishes to carry out a monitoring exercise in the hope of getting the local authority to do something positive. This will mean placing traps in flats.

COLLECTING THE EVIDENCE

Not all the flats in a block need to have traps laid for the purpose of the monitoring exercise but obviously the greater the number of flats that are monitored, the stronger the evidence.

Give each trap a number and label each trap with the number of the flat and the date it is installed. Leave the traps in place for one to two weeks only and then check the levels of infestation.

Up to ten cockroaches on the trap could be classed as light infestation, ten to 30 cockroaches as medium infestation, and 30 or more as heavy infestation.

The next step is to write out a report stating the level of infestation and identifying the type of cockroach e.g. German or Oriental. Then arrange a meeting with relevant local councillors and present them with both the written evidence and the real thing.

TAKING LEGAL ACTION

If the council still fail to respond, then there is the option of applying to the local ombudsman and/or taking legal action.

Probably the fastest means of securing block treatment is to find tenants with a significant cockroach problem and who are eligible for Legal Aid and obtain an Environmental Health Officer's Report followed by a Court Order under the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. (An Environmental Health Officer Report is estimated at about £160 but one can be obtained under a 'Green Form extension' to Legal Aid.)

Each householder can proceed against the local authority for neglect of statutory health and safety responsibilities and claim compensation for stress, anxiety, discomfort and damage. Tenants on the Lancaster West Estate in London received £1,000 compensation (£500 for damage to food, furniture etc. and £500 for general nuisance caused), following legal action against their local authority in the county court.

WHAT COUNCILS CAN DO

Local authorities have a statutory duty to deal with cockroach infestations.

- ❑ All units need to be treated thoroughly, including service areas such as boiler rooms, chutes etc. Each flat needs to be treated four times in the first year at three- monthly intervals.
- ❑ Full and total disclosure of all information about the chemicals being used and the methods of application, and the precautions that need to be taken.
- ❑ Monitoring visits need to be conducted on a regular basis because, even if the treatment appears to have been effective, the cockroaches can come back. Monitoring traps should therefore be used for up to two years.
- ❑ The structure and fabric of buildings should be upgraded, all cracks and crevices should be sealed.

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PIGEON PROBLEM

Pigeons are a common cause for concern to people living in tower blocks. Pigeons roost and foul on balconies, exposed staircases, drying areas and chute areas as well as windowsills and parapets over entrances.

DISEASE

The most worrying diseases associated with exposure to droppings (nasal, feather fragments and excreta) are a type of allergic alveolitis (often known as bird fancier's lung) and chronic rhinitis (sore runny nose).

Both these diseases are debilitating. Children, elderly people and people with pre-existing lung conditions are vulnerable, as they are particularly susceptible to allergens. Pigeon droppings and feather fragments are potent allergens.

In 1986 an Environmental Health Officer from Lambeth Council proved that short-term exposure to pigeon droppings had caused his chronic rhinitis and he was awarded about £1000 compensation.

Between ten and 20% of the population is atopic (sensitive to a range of allergic reactions) so this isn't likely to be an isolated case.

Tower-block tenants have prolonged exposure – the pigeons often live in close proximity for many years without any successful efforts by councils to deal with them.

TAKING ACTION

A number of attempts have been made to rid tower blocks of pigeons, unfortunately the success rate is very low. Certainly, all accumulations of pigeon droppings need to be cleared regularly, from outside pavements, ledges and balconies.

In addition, nests should be removed. Some authorities have tried a bird repellent gel though with little success. A similar lack of success has resulted from the regular flying of a falcon around blocks or the strategic placing of plastic owls!

The most successful methods appear to be netting on the outside of blocks so that the birds cannot perch, though this may be very unattractive, and trap pigeons on the roof.

STATUTORY NUISANCE

Clearly pigeon droppings and the associated flies constitute a 'statutory nuisance' under s92 of the Public Health Act 1936 (they are termed 'an accumulation' under s92 (2)(c) of the Act).

If the Environmental Health Department refuses to support tenants in getting the problem resolved, it may be worth considering using Section 99 of the same Act which, if successful, compels the council to undertake the work.

Alternately, the Environmental Health Act 1990 (s79) may be used as this also refers to statutory nuisance and offers more leverage than s99.

To use these regulations it is probably worth contacting your local law centre or an independent environmental health officer and getting more information first.

TENANTS TAKE THE LEAD

In the NTBN questionnaire we asked tenants to identify their major concerns: dogs were seen as a widespread problem. In response we include an excerpt from the Priority Estates Project (PEP) booklet, 'Dogs on the Lead', by Tim Morton, which presents "a good practice guide" for dogs on housing estates.

EXPERIENCE FROM PRIORITY ESTATES (Chapter 5)

PEP has been working with local authorities and tenants on difficult-to-manage estates since 1979. When we begin work on any new estate, we carry out a consultation exercise to establish what the problems are from the residents' point of view.

Dogs and what to do about them is always in the top three issues raised. This paper has looked at the issues and suggested some possible remedies. However, it is on the estates themselves that the issue is being tackled. This chapter looks at some of the ideas that have been tried and the methods used to put across a positive approach to the problems.

Wenlock Barn, LB Hackney

PEP began work on the estate in the early 1980s and this inner-city estate already had a problem with dogs. Having established an estate office, the tenants then campaigned for a dog warden, the first in the borough.

Today the animal warden at Wenlock Barn is responsible not just for the estate – though she is responsible to the Tenants' Board - she also assists the borough's other dog warden in dealing with the many dog and other animal problems.

She is directly responsible for some 2000 properties, and spends her time offering advice and support to owners, rounding up strays, running obedience classes twice a week, publicising the National Dog Register, and supplying free worming tablets from the estate office. The last initiative is supported by a dog food manufacturer.

The estate has produced a video, 'Dogs in Town', which is available for hire and covers the issue of dogs in Wenlock Barn. In addition to dog-free areas, they are looking into people-free areas to give something back to the dogs and their owners.

Ideally the Warden would like to see dogs on the lead at all times, and real sanctions on noise, which is a major headache.

(The video can be hired from Wenlock Barn Dog warden, WIS Centre, Bletchley Court, Cropley Street, London N1.)

Kelvin estate, Sheffield

The estate is a large deck-access scheme in inner Sheffield, a typical 'streets in the sky' estate. It has many entrances and exits with a large green area at the base of the block with little or no play provision.

There has been a continual problem with dogs fouling the stairs and walkways, as well as the greens. The Tenants' Association have been active for many years and also support the Kelvin Kids Association who are active in voicing the needs of young people on the estate.

The Kids Association were concerned about the lack of play provision, and that the obvious play spaces were fouled by dogs. They asked the TA to screen a video on the problem of toxocara (a blinding disease transmitted through dogs' faeces), to raise awareness amongst tenants.

Dogs on the Lead, Good Practice for Dogs on Housing Estates, is available from The Priority Estates Project Publications, price: £5.00, students and tenants' groups £3.00.

To all dog owners

by Carole Williams, Secretary, Lancaster West TA RBKC

If your dog has bad taste,
Does his whoopsies any place,
Please be advised that your TA,
Has pooper scoopers to give away.
So please your neighbours, and avoid a row,
Get your pooper scooper now!

We want an estate that is clean and safe,
Where our children can play and be fit,
But this is difficult to achieve,
When the walkways are covered in shit.

Now that we have a dog warden service,
Those residents that will persist,
in sending their dog out on its own,
may find that it's not coming home.
So if you want man's best friend to stay,
Keep him on a lead and don't let him stray.

PAYING FOR PARTNERSHIP: the case for tenant levies

The research undertaken for this directory has clearly shown that where there is a strong and active tenants' and residents' federation it is much easier to make contact with the individual tenants' associations on the estates.

Federations help to inform, support and bring together a range of individual tenants' groups. They can facilitate the exchange of information with national groups, such as NTBN, and with local bodies, such as the council.

When working effectively they can facilitate tenant participation at a range of levels.

The existence and strength of federations varies enormously, with several major tower-block cities, such as Birmingham, Leeds and Bradford, having no federation at all.

In some parts of Britain, such as Northern Ireland, federations have struggled into existence and are working hard to survive and develop.

In other areas federations have existed on a shoestring for many years and in other places, such as Brighton, federations have lost their council funding and their services and activities have contracted.

In these cases a rent-levy system might offer a solution, at least in part, to the problem of inadequate resources.

WHAT IS A LEVY

A levy is a sum of money paid by tenants with their rent, collected by the landlord and passed over to tenants' organisations to spend on behalf of tenants.

It provides tenants' organisations with resources which are independent of the landlord, so that tenants can choose how to use the resources enabling them to become more equal partners.

The main benefit of a tenant levy for tenants' organisations is that, instead of having to raise funds or hunt for grants, their income is predictable, reliable and independent.

The main benefit for landlords is that the quality and intensity of tenant participation and involvement in housing services may well improve as a result of a stronger, more equitable partnership with tenants.

WHY CONSULT TENANTS?

Councils began to realise that if they had listened to tenants – asked their opinions and involved them in designing their homes and estates – then mistakes would have been avoided, neighbourhoods would have been healthier and happier, and millions of pounds could have been saved.

It is now against the law for housing departments to make big changes to the way they run their service without asking tenants for their views first. And everyone now agrees that tenants have much to contribute when decisions are made.

TENANT PARTICIPATION

Manchester City Council have been taking tenant consultation and involvement seriously since 1984. The council employ tenant liaison officers to help people start up and run local tenants' groups.

There is also the independent Federation of Manchester Estates (FAME) who help to set up and support groups, and campaign for better conditions for Manchester council tenants.

Most tenant involvement in Manchester takes place through tenants' associations and organisations. For tenants to be involved from the earliest planning stages of any change to their estate, the groups need to be strong and well funded.

They need to be open to everyone, independent of the council and to meet regularly with housing and other council officials and councillors. They also need to be well informed and up to date with the law and the way the council works.

That is what the changes proposed to the tenant levy in Manchester are about.

INDEPENDENT AND TENANT CONTROLLED

A new independent and tenant controlled system of funding for tenants' associations should be operation in Manchester by July, 1992. The system, proposed by both FAME and officers from the housing department, involves the setting up of a tenant resource fund, which would be used for the funding of tenants' associations, community facilities and FAME. The tenant resource fund will be financed by a tenants' levy and be paid as an integral part of the rent. The advantages of this are:

1 As everybody contributes, the fund has to be used to benefit all tenants.

2 It is easy to administer and collect, and is eligible for Housing Benefit.

3 Income is predictable and guaranteed.

4 New tenants will be drawn into the tenants movement and a stronger relationship will develop between the council, housing staff and tenants.

The tenant resource fund will be controlled by an independent management committee made up of five tenants' representatives and two housing committee councillors, which would mean that tenants would effectively control the fund.

WHO PAYS?

At present seven pence a week from every tenant's rent goes towards paying for the tenant participation unit, association grants and FAME. What FAME and the report propose is that this seven pence should be

continued on next page

Questions to consider

If you are considering a rent-levy scheme, here are some useful questions to think about:

1 What is a levy scheme for?

a) Why is a levy scheme being proposed?
b) What are the aims of the scheme?
c) How will the scheme be put into practice?

2 How can a levy scheme work?

a) How will the money be collected?

- will it be collected as part of the rent?
- will owner-occupiers on estates contribute?
- how is the level of the fund to be decided?
- what other resources are available to tenants?

b) How would the money be controlled?

- what will happen to the money collected?
- can a levy provide independent funding?
- who will manage the money that is collected?
- what would be the remit of this managing body?

c) How would the money be shared out?

- what proportion would be reserved for the federation?
- how would the money be shared between local groups?
- would there be a basic allowance per group?
- what happens to any money left over?

d) Who would be able to claim the money?

- which groups can claim funding under the levy?
- what would be the recognition criteria for groups?
- what can groups spend the money on?
- how would the spending be monitored?

turned into a sort of levy and paid into the tenant resource fund.

This would mean that the money used for tenants' participation would no longer be controlled by the housing committee and couldn't be diverted to pay for other housing department services.

In order that the council can't go back on its agreement to collect and hand over the tenant resource fund money, the report proposes that the tenancy agreement should be changed.

MUST HAND OVER THE MONEY

This would mean that a clause would be included in the tenancy agreement stating that all tenants make a payment with their rents towards the fund and that the city council are obliged to hand over these payments to the tenant resource fund.

To make this amendment, the city council will have to consult with all their tenants. This means all tenants will be able to say whether they agree or disagree with the scheme, and the council can't get rid of the tenant resource fund without further consultation with all tenants.

It will also mean that payments made by tenants into the fund will continue to attract Housing Benefit.

It is hoped that one of the results of the tenant resource fund will be a better and more generous system of funding for tenants' associations. At present all associations receive the same grant regardless of their size.

With the introduction of the fund, the size of grants an association receives will depend on the number of properties or tenancies they represent. There will be a minimum grant so that small associations won't lose out.

There will also be a ceiling on the number of properties a tenants' association can claim funding for, to avoid associations empire building and therefore claiming massive grants.

It is generally accepted that the most effective associations are the ones that keep to a reasonable size.

TENANTS' RESOURCE FUND

The tenants' resource fund will provide an independent source of funding for all tenants' associations and FAME.

It will mean a more generous system of funding for many tenants' associations and will encourage the growth of more associations across the city.

It will also enable FAME to be a stronger and better-funded federation to support and unite Manchester's tenants.

FIGHTING FIRE

A survey of tower blocks across Britain by the National Tower Blocks Network highlighted the appalling state of fire safety in many of the blocks.

Structural defects, shoddy maintenance and cuts in fire testing have put many of Britain's tower blocks in breach of regulations and below the standards of bed and breakfast accommodation.

The NTBN is continuing to campaign on the issue of fire safety and has produced a fire-safety information pack. The recommendations we are campaigning on are:

1 Tower blocks should be subjected to fire certification.

2 Smoke alarms should be provided by the landlord for each flat and for the communal areas. These alarms should be maintained by the landlord.

3 Fire notices should be provided on every floor, in the lift and in different community languages.

4 Each floor should be numbered and direction arrows placed showing the fire-escape route.

5 A logbook of all the repairs and refurbishment of every tower block should be kept by the landlord. This will assist in the monitoring and evaluation of any refurbishment and repair work to ensure it meets the fire safety regulations.

It's not a long list, tenants' associations who are campaigning on fire safety will add their own demands.



A fire in 1990 in Merry Hill Court spread rapidly up several storeys, trapping and killing Jennifer Noble. As a result, NTBN began a national campaign to improve fire safety standards in Britain's tower blocks.

FIRE CERTIFICATION

That tower blocks should be subject to fire certification is a demand of the NTBN. This would ensure that standards of safety were regularly inspected by the fire brigade and that landlords were required to comply with their instructions by law.

Fire certification would ensure that blocks were properly maintained by the landlord, that the means of escape were kept clear and that fire doors, vents, etc., were maintained and repaired whenever necessary.

Fire certification would require instructions to be provided to each tenant and in the communal areas about what to do in the event of a fire.

UNION SUPPORT

The Fire Brigades Union is supporting the call by the NTBN for tower blocks to have compulsory fire certification by the commencement of Section 3 of the Fire Precautions Act 1971. This would mean that many blocks would have to be

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brought up to current fire-safety regulations, as a matter of priority, or the building could subsequently be declared dangerous and unfit for people to live in.

A FIRE-SAFETY CHARTER

The National Tower Blocks Network fire-safety survey in 1990/91 revealed a range of fire-safety procedures and standards for tower blocks across the country. The information tenants receive varies according to what the council or local fire brigade produce.

There can even be a difference between estates within the same council. The NTBN is calling for a fire charter for all tenants. This charter will set a standard for fire safety to be applied across Britain. It could include the fixing of fire notices, smoke alarms and instructions as to what to do in the case of a fire. Tenants are already beginning to meet to discuss what the fire charter could include.

TAKING ACTION

Newcastle Tenants' Federation convenes a regular meeting of tower block tenants. The meeting is attended by council officials from the Housing Department and City Works. The tenants put their list of demands and complaints to the officials. Fire safety has featured prominently on the list.

The issue of fire safety was raised by several tenants' associations at one particular meeting and it was agreed that the Federation would co-ordinate a forum for tenants to begin to compile a fire safety charter that would apply across the city. The information compiled about fire safety will be fed into the forum to provide the tenants with a stronger voice to demand a standard charter.

TENANTS' SUCCESSES IN FIRE-SAFETY CAMPAIGNS

Tower-block tenants' associations in Newcastle have used the NTBN spot safety check to examine fire safety in their blocks. This information has been used to compile the fire-safety charter and act as a campaigning tool for tenants to improve the fire-safety standard in their blocks.

The fire-safety charter is due to be ratified by the tenants at a public meeting in May, 1992, and it will then be presented to the council.

The charter emphasises the importance of training and education in preventing fire, as much as the importance of fire-safety equipment. Therefore, many of the issues raised in the charter would involve little or no new money to deal with them effectively. For example, the charter asks for local housing offices to organise fire-safety meetings for all tenants in each block from time to time.

It asks that these meetings should be used to stress the importance of fire safety and discuss tenants' issues of concern. Copies of the fire safety leaflets already produced by Newcastle City Council should be available at these meetings and redistributed throughout the blocks – a simple yet effective way of seeing tenants are aware of fire safety in their blocks.

FINANCIAL RESTRAINTS

The charter recognises the financial restraints which might prevent new capital investment in fire-fighting equipment but asks the council to give priority to these issues and investigate all avenues of possible funding, including city challenge and partnership, as a matter of urgency.

The tenants' demands are realistic and the charter sets out a common standard for the whole of the city. The charter is not unique to Newcastle but is applicable to every town, city and estate.

What is unique is that it is the first to be produced by tenants and could set its own standard for fire safety in blocks across Britain.

CONTACT

Davina Brain, Newcastle Tenants' Federation, First Floor, 1 Pink Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne, NEI 5DW.

LEEDS AHEAD

Tenants' associations in Leeds have been active in campaigning for fire safety in their blocks. The campaign's success is highlighted by the number of measures now adopted by Leeds City Council to improve the fire safety of their blocks.

The tenants began campaigning by raising the issue of fire safety at their local housing consultative committee. Kathy Watson,

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The Fire Brigades Union

GENERAL SECRETARY: KEN CAMERON

The Fire Brigades Union is supporting the call by the National Tower Blocks Network for tower blocks to have compulsory fire certification by the commencement of Section 3 of the Fire Precautions Act 1971. This would mean that many blocks would have tobe brought up to current fire safety standards as a matter of priority or the building could subsequently be declared dangerous and unfit for people to live in. It is important to campaign on fire certification as there is already legislation that covers tower blocks but which is not being implemented, simply because of the cost it is anticipated it would mean. So raise the issue with your local authority and your local MP, and tell the NTBN what news you receive!

Glyn Evans, Officers Executive Council Member

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from Lincoln Green Tenants' Associations, raised three important questions at the Leeds North East Housing Consultative Committee:

1 How was the fire-safety review proceeding?

2 What, if any, fire precautions do Leeds City Council have for their tenants in high-rise flats?

3 Do Leeds City Council have fire certificates for their tower blocks?

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME

As a result of the meeting, the subsequent media coverage and the consistent pressure by tenants, Leeds City Council have adopted a series of measures to improve fire safety. A working group has been set up to look at fire safety in tower blocks, consisting of councillors, housing officers and tenant representatives. The group have proposed, and the housing committee accepted, that every tower block in Leeds should be surveyed for fire stops and the dry-riser system checked. The checks will be done as a rolling programme.

The group are examining every aspect of fire safety in conjunction with the local fire service who are giving talks to tenants about fire safety in their blocks. The council conducted a survey of tower-block tenants to find out their concerns about fire safety.

Using the results from the survey and statistics provided by the fire service has led to a series of measures being adopted. The information showed that the major cause of fire in Leeds tower blocks was rubbish being set alight. The council have implemented a policy of 24-hour removal of rubbish dumped by tenants in blocks. Caretakers are being trained to spot fire hazards and check fire equipment. If, for example, any fire doors are broken this will be reported by the caretaker. The management of blocks is crucial, particularly in relation to fire safety. Leeds City Council are planning to introduce block management, with a manager rather than a caretaker in each block, with a high profile on security.

The council have adopted a series of fire-safety measures as a result of the pressure from the tenants. The Leeds tenants are continuing to campaign on the issue of fire certification and fire precaution work.

CONTACT

Kathy Watson, Lincoln Green Tenants' Association, c/o 91 Naseby Grange, Leeds LS9 7TE.

GETTING MESSAGE ACROSS

The Tenants' Lobby Group in Belfast have carried out their own spot check on fire safety in tower blocks in Greater Belfast. Using the guidelines provided by the NTBN in their fire-safety information pack, the group were shocked to find that smoke could filter up from the lower floors due to gaps in the structure of some of the blocks, and many fire doors didn't work. Their findings were similar to those found in the NTBN survey of other blocks across the country.

The Tenants' Lobby Group took their findings to the local Sunday News, with the chair of the group, William Pollock, calling for the Northern Ireland Housing executive to: "urgently inspect all multi-storey blocks to make sure they meet health and fire-safety standards". The group recognised that it was important to keep the issue of fire safety in the headlines and have continued to produce publicity and raise the issue whenever possible.

LINKS WITH TALL SHIPS

The tenants organised a successful publicity day in July 1991 to highlight the lack of fire safety in their tower blocks. Using the recent arrival of the Tall Ships race in Belfast, the tenants caught the media's attention by calling their day: "Tall Ships to Tall Buildings".

Parking a caravan on ground in front of Belfast City Hall (with permission!), the Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations (Greater Belfast) and the Tenants' Lobby Group raised the public profile of fire safety for tower-block tenants.

WORDS ARE NOT ENOUGH

The Housing Executive is carrying out major fire safety improvements to Moveen House in Finaghy and in the Divis Flats, following pressure from the tenants. Tenants in Divis will be losing part of their second bedroom for the council to fit a ventilated corridor in the block so that fire escape routes will be improved.

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A CAMPAIGNING IDEA

Organise a fire-safety day on your estate or in your block. Carry out a spot safety-check. Invite the housing department and the local fire service along. You could also invite the local representative of the Fire Brigades Union. Using the information from your spot safety check and examples of previous fires and problems, ask them to explain fire safety in your block.

Ask about
- **fire alarms**
- **smoke alarms**
- **fire extinguishers**
- **bulky rubbish removal**

Ask about
- **fire escape and safety instructions to tenants**
- **fire notices on each floor and in the lift**
- **what about direction arrows for the fire escape**
- **is each floor numbered so the fire brigade can find the right floor fast?**

Ask about safety checks and fire fighters access to your block. All these questions can be raised and answered at a fire safety day. It will keep you informed of what is expected of you as tenants and what the housing department and fire brigade are responsible for.

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So far the campaign by the tenants in Belfast has succeeded in persuading the Housing Executive to:

- ❑ issue a new leaflet on fire safety in high-rise blocks;
- ❑ appoint a fire safety consultant and carry out checks on all high- and medium-rise blocks;
- ❑ agree to carry out fire safety work on Moveen House and Divis.

William Pollock speaks for the determination of the tenants when he says: "We will continue to keep the pressure hose of publicity fully turned on the Executive".

CONTACT

Tenants' Lobby Group, c/o William Pollock, 103c Shaw Road, Belfast, BT11 9PS.

EXTERNAL FIRE PROTECTION : A CHECKLIST

There are huge benefits to be obtained for tenants from externally insulating and overcladding high-rise blocks.

These include the elimination of condensation and rain penetration, the reduction of energy consump-tion (creating cheaper heating for tenants), and the revitalisation of the blocks' external appearance.

However, as a result of experience gained from previous fires in high-rise buildings, new codes and standards have been established to ensure protection and eliminate fire spread (see Knowsley Heights example).

We provide here a general guide to best practice and the legal requirements, and in particular the new building regulations which came into force after June, 1992.

GOOD PRACTICE CHECKLIST

1 Use masonry cladding or concrete on the ground floor.

2 Use street furniture or bollards to remove risk of rubbish storage against the building.

3 Provide disposal areas for large items of household waste, remote from the building.

4 Extend the duties of site managers/caretakers to regularly inspect the interior and exterior of the building, and to arrange for any dumped rubbish to be removed immediately.

5 Fire protect any bin stores adjacent to the building.

6 Ensure that any overcladding systems to be used are well proven and have been independently tested (i) for materials of construction (ii) for any fire barriers to be used, and (iii) that the system will still function properly with fire barriers installed, particularly the ventilation of the cavity.

BUILDING REGULATION REQUIREMENTS FOR BUILDINGS OVER 15 METRES HIGH

1 Cladding material to be class "0" front and rear face.

2 Non-combustible insulation to be used.

3 Fire barriers to be inserted horizontally at every floor level.

4 Fire barriers to be inserted vertically corresponding to the external walls of each flat unit.

(Information from Capex, an overcladding company who have redesigned their system following the fire in overcladding, provided by them, at Knowsley Heights on Merseyside).

LESSONS LEARNT FROM KNOWSLEY HEIGHTS

On April 5th, 1991, at Knowsley Heights near Liverpool, a fire broke out in a block of flats which had recently been refurbished throughout.

The fire was started deliberately in a rear corner of the building by igniting discarded foam filled furniture which had been stacked against the cladding in the bin store area for some time.

The building had been designed to minimise energy usage and promote affordable warmth for the tenants in addition to the many internal and external improvements.

As part of that scheme the Capex overcladding system had been used with 100mm of insulation and the tenants had seen an improvement in the heating and condensation problems of their flats.

The fire spread into the cavity behind the cladding, with temperatures up to 100°C being experienced. The length of time that the fire blazed before detection is not known because the fire had started in the early hours of the morning.

The result of the fire was a vertical section of the cladding, the width of the original source of the fire, was damaged. However, this was in a stairwell area and although smoke penetrated the corridors damage to the flats was minimal. There were fortunately no injuries to tenants, though some were treated for smoke inhalation.

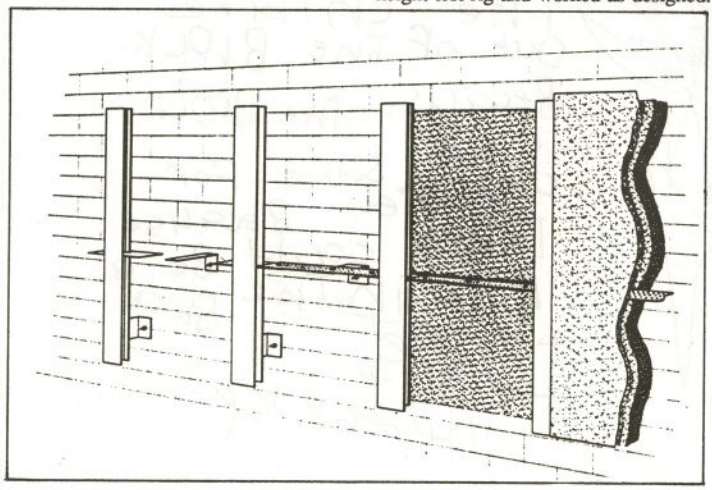
CHANGING THE DESIGN

The fire had spread up the block but not along each floor. As a result of the questions raised about the fire, Capex immediately decided to develop a fire barrier system to prevent a recurrence.

A number of designs were considered and a final solution, which did not compromise the effectiveness of the ventilated cavity, was developed. This was then thoroughly tested at the Warrington Fire Research Station and met all the design requirements.

Testing procedures were discussed with the British Research Establishment (BRE) and Fire Research specialists as no British Standard methods were available for the new system.

The fire barrier was tested on a storey height test rig and worked as designed.



Capex high-rise fire-barrier system

The fire barrier was immediately incorporated in Capex systems to prevent a Knowsley situation recurring.

At the same time as the fire testing was being carried out, test work by independent environmental consultants was carried out to ensure that the inclusion of fire barriers did not cause condensation problems in the cavity and reintroduce problems which overcladding was designed to eliminate. The system passed these tests.

CHANGING THE REGULATIONS

The extensive test work undertaken by Capex and the success of the fire barrier's performance helped to prove that rainscreen overcladding could be used safely.

At the same time the BRE, which had approved the original system, were carrying out their own enquiries with the intention of upgrading the Building Regulations. Using the research by Capex and the BRE, new regulations have been introduced, from June 1992, which incorporate fire barriers horizontally at every floor level on buildings over 15mm high and vertically between party walls.

The new regulations have tightened the fire safety requirements of tower-block overcladding.

The practical knowledge gained from Knowsley and the extensive design and testing work undertaken by Capex and our consultants have provided systems which can meet the latest regulations.

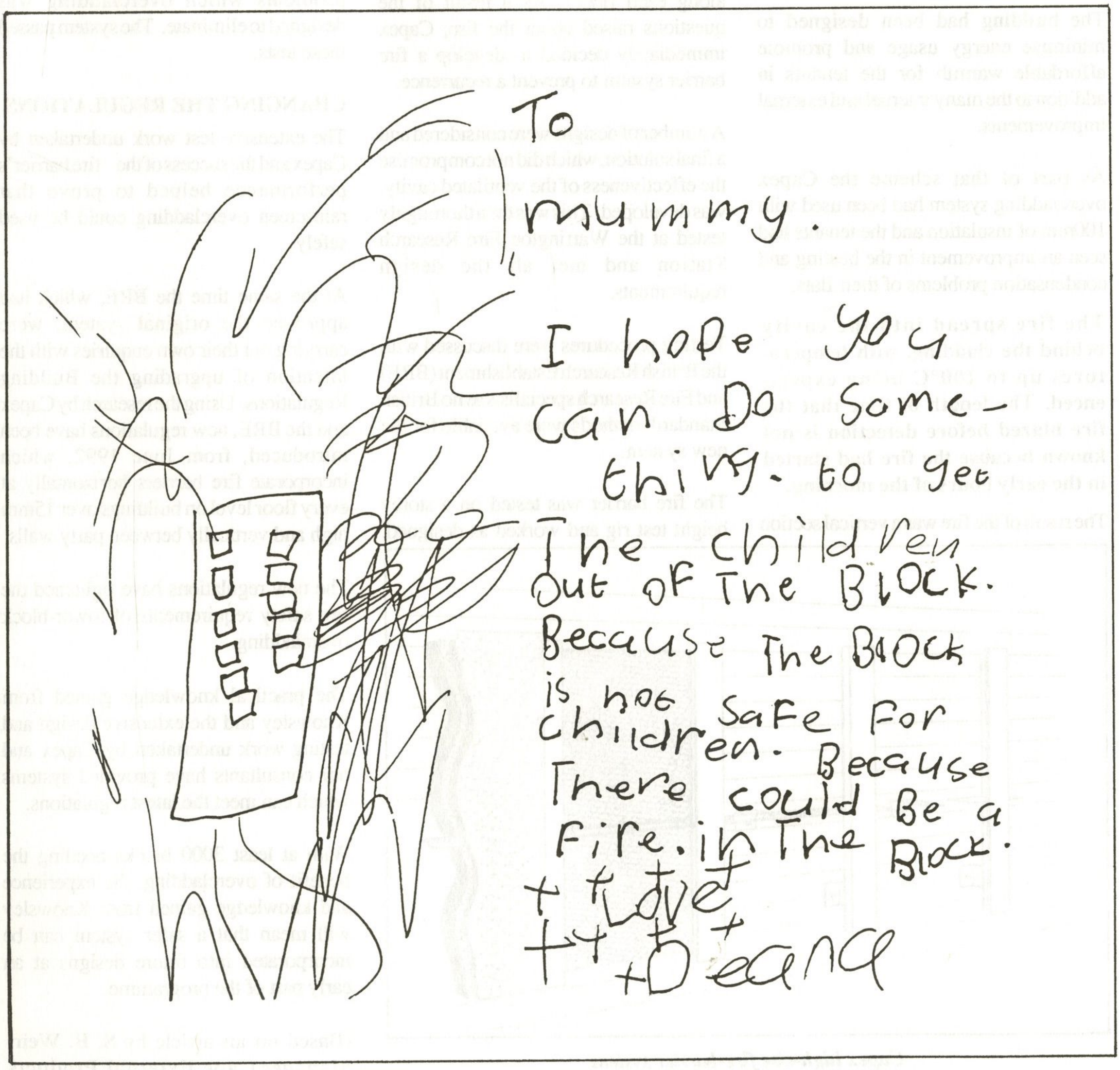
With at least 3000 blocks needing the benefit of overcladding, the experience and knowledge gained from Knowsley will mean that a safer system can be incorporated into future designs at an early part of the programme.

(Based on an article by S. B. Weir, Manager, Cape External Products Limited, Burnley.)

May 1992: Brassett Point

At the end of May a fire in a fifth floor flat in Newham's Brassett Point trapped mother Kim Hammond and five year old Stephen. They retreated onto the balcony. Kim threw Stephen to the ground. His fall was miraculously broken by neighbours. She jumped. The child suffered minor injuries. 32 year old Kim may never walk again.

Many tenants witnessed the appalling tragedy. Several subsequently asked to be rehoused. Some transfers were agreed. Others were refused. Deana Sheekey's family are amongst those who have not returned to the block and who have been refused a transfer. This letter was written by six year old Deana to her mother whilst the family were awaiting the result of their appeal.



A PLACE FOR EVERYONE

A tenants' association should be an association whose membership is open to all who live on a particular estate or in a particular area, regardless of race, colour, creed, sex, sexuality, disability, age or political views.

In this chapter we outline the discrimination and oppression faced by different sections of the community and positive ways in which tenants have tried to tackle it on their estates.

'DIFFERENT WAYS OF LIVING'

Harassment of lesbians and gay men is a problem in all forms of housing. Although local councils have a major role to play in tackling the problem, it is something that concerns all providers of housing and tenants. Netherthorpe Tenants' Association in Sheffield have recently published a report; 'Different Ways of Living', looking at cases of discrimination and harassment of lesbians and gay men in Sheffield housing. The report outlines the issues of anti-gay discrimination, discusses the cases of harassment and suggests ideas for action.

EXAMPLES

The tenants' association describe harassment as violence which may be verbal or physical, and which includes attacks on property as well as the person. Harassment is suffered by individuals and groups because of their sexuality. It is identified when the victim believes the perpetrator was acting on grounds related to the fact that the victim is lesbian or gay, and/or there is evidence of homophobia.

The case studies highlighted in the report show examples of harassment with comments on how the housing department treated each case. For example, Tom was accepted for rehousing because of harassment but discovered that the first flat he was offered was in an area where gay attacks had taken place. Allocation of safe, suitable properties should not be a hit-and-miss affair.

In the case of James, the tenants' association on his estate refused to support him. Many tenants' associations have to adopt an equal opportunities constitution to be recognised by the council. Yet in Sheffield, although lesbians and gay men are included in the council's own equal opportunities policy, it is up to individual tenants' associations whether they include sexuality.

IDEAS FOR ACTION

Ideas for action include publicity, training and education for council housing departments and tenants' associations. There is a series of recommendations presented by the Association of London Authorities in their publication; 'Equality in Housing - Lesbians and Gay Men'. These include: All published material should be reviewed for language which discriminates against lesbians and gay men where it covers service areas which are particularly relevant.

It is also important that such material is available in the main languages spoken in the area, and that interpreters used by the housing department are as familiar with anti-discrimination policies as English-speaking staff.

Training of staff and tenants is an important part of the development of anti-discriminatory policies. Publicising policies and commitment to lesbian and gay equality can also educate the wider community to accept that discrimination and harassment are intolerable. The report concludes with a demand for action, as well as words on equal opportunities.

BLACK PEOPLE

Black tenants experience the same difficulties associated with high-rise living as white people – cockroach infestations, high heating costs, poor facilities for children, isolation, and so on. Just like white tenants, black tenants face years of waiting on the transfer list. However, for black people living in tower blocks, their isolation and vulnerability is not only the result of the often poor quality of their homes. It is also a consequence of tenants' groups being dominated by white people and more generally a consequence of racial harassment. It is therefore important that tenants' associations in tower blocks involve black and white tenants, recognise the particular problems facing black tenants and try to tackle racism on their estates.

Racial harassment refers to violence, either verbal or physical, which is suffered by black people because of their race, creed or colour and when the person experiencing racial harassment believes that the attack was of a racist nature and/or there is direct evidence of racism.

ROLE OF ASSOCIATIONS

Tenants' associations are in an ideal position to act positively to challenge racism. Your contacts can be useful; you can help to create a climate in which racism is not tolerated and culprits are penalised. Members of a T.A. can also support black people by showing positively that not all households in the area are hostile, and can ensure that the necessary outside agencies are contacted and do their job properly. Members can also assist by helping to identify perpetrators and by being vigilant at the times when attacks occur.

Positive measures to help prevent racist attacks are to the benefit of white residents as well as black. For example, we would all like better lighting in the entrance halls and stairwells, improved security such as hall porter schemes, secure front doors and fast removal of

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BLOCKED

People with disabilities are frequently discriminated against without able-bodied people even realising it.

How many tower-block entrances have steps? How many lift-control and entry-phone panels can be reached from a wheelchair?

How many community centres or local housing offices or town halls are fully accessible?

TENANTS WONDER WHY

Tenants all over the country have wondered aloud what the architects who designed their tower-block homes had in mind. In so many aspects they are inappropriate to the needs of their tenants.

People with disabilities do live in tower blocks, people with disabilities do visit people who live in tower blocks.

People with disabilities do want to play an active part in their local communities, they want to attend TA meetings, they want to go to the housing office and the council meetings.

But the barriers are everywhere. Tenants have waged long and ardous individual campaigns for improve-ments, such as ramps up to the front entrance of their blocks.

Local groups, made up of such individuals, have been formed to campaign on the wider issue of access for all within our community. One such group is Action and Rights of Disabled People in Newham. The group was formed 11 years ago and has been enormously successful in bringing the access issue to everyone's attention.

Newham's Town Hall wasn't accessible to disabled people, who could not attend council meetings in the council chamber. For many long, cold months members of Action and Rights sat at the bottom of the stairs while a range of council meetings took place.

They were there when councillors went in to the committee meetings and they were there when they came out. It was not possible for councillors to ignore their message.

Success for their campaign came with the council's decision to make East Ham Town Hall and the surrounding area accessible. A range of alterations was made, including installing and building ramps.

The group now underake regular monitoring of all planning applications for access and they submit their comments to Newham Council's Environment and Planning Committee.

AVOIDING COSTLY ERRORS

It is their belief that it is at the planning and design stage that access and the needs of people with disabilities should be addressed, if costly errors and costly alterations are to be avoided.

Once again improvements that benefit people with disabilities are of benefit to the whole community.

Ramps up steps are of benefit to people with children in pushchairs and prams, to people moving heavy objects, such as furniture in and out of the blocks and to elderly people whose agility is reduced.

Lift and entry-phone control panels that can be reached from a wheelchair may also be able to be reached by children living in the block, who otherwise might have to ask people, often strangers, to help them.

The issue of access is clearly one which affects most of our institutions and buildings. People with disabilities cannot even attend tenants' or residents' association meetings to get the issues considered if they can't get in.

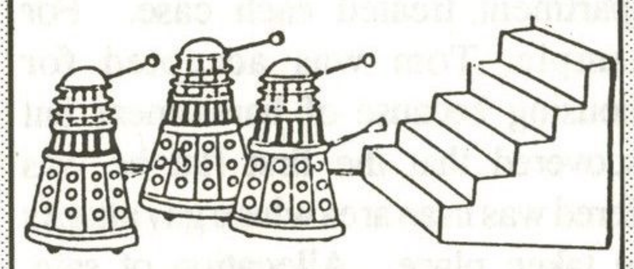
FIRST STEP

They may also feel it inappropriate to join a group which appears to be oblivious or unconcerned about such barriers.

A positive and essential first step is therefore to ensure that your buildings and meeting rooms are accessible.

Then disabled people will be able to identify the aspects of the tower blocks and of the estates in general which need to be addressed if they are to participate effectively in the life of the community.

Then these issues too can start to be progressed by the tenants' association, a truly representative group.



"Well, this certainly buggers our plan to conquer the Universe."

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graffiti. Tenants working together can dramatically change the atmosphere on an estate making people feel safer, friendlier and happier.

CHALLENGING RACISM

Some TAs have taken positive steps to make themselves more representative of and more useful to the whole community.

A group of tenants in Southampton are attempting to challenge the direct and indirect racism on their estate. Here is a brief outline of their story.

Northam Tenants' and Residents' Association (NTRA) represents an estate of 800 homes.

The residents are from a variety of backgrounds, including Caribbean, Asian, white European, Vietnamese, Maltese and British. In the heart of the estate is a community centre which is run by volunteers.

Although there are a variety of activities in the centre, almost all were attended exclusively by white people and there was evidence of racist remarks being made by people using the centre.

At the same time, NTRA had begun to receive complaints about the racist activity of a family in the tower block.

The tenants have kept logbooks to record incidents of racism and have petitioned about known racists but it was felt that a lot more positive work needed to be done.

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

NTRA, the local benefits advice group, the community group and the council's tenants' participation officer formed a group to look at the situation.

They asked themselves: what can we do? are we portraying the right image? do we encourage everyone? can we achieve anything?

At the second meeting the group tried to find ways of answering these questions and investigated training courses and support from other agencies. Three months later things have started to happen and they have developed some positive ideas.

TRAINING

A 10-week training programme has been set up by their local community work training group which is attended by a range of people on the estate.

The Tenants' Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) have met with the group and are drawing up a training plan for assessment by the group; the tenants' federation are using their resources to develop a comprehensive training package for all tenants across Southampton.

These ideas illustrate the commitment that the tenants and residents of Northam have in practising anti-racism and could be similarly developed on tower-block estates elsewhere.

CONTACTS AND REFERENCES

NTBN's pack entitled "Anti-racist tenants rule OK" is available from the Sheffield office, price £4 to local authorities, £2 to tenants/community groups. See the next column.



IDEAS FOR POSITIVE ACTION

NTBN has produced an information pack, 'Anti-Racist Tenants Rule OK', in which successful tenants' action is outlined along with a range of ideas for action.

These include:

* Door-knock every house/flat in your area and get to know who is there and what particular problems they face.

* Translate any publicity material such as leaflets/posters into all the relevant local languages e.g. Urdu, Bengali. Contact advice agencies or your local housing office to find out who may be able to help.

* If your tenants' association organises social facilities or runs a community room, find out what sort of activities everyone on your estate would like to see. If the only people participating in activities are white tenants, find out what black tenants would like to see and involve them in organising the activities.

* If you organise any public meetings, try to get someone along to interpret into relevant languages.

* Make people feel welcome. If you think someone may be interested in the T.A. call round to see them and perhaps call for them on your way to the meeting.

Because tenants' groups have the potential to serve all the tenants living in their particular area, they have the potential for being the basis for a truly multi-racial/anti-racist community life.

SAFETY AND SECURITY IN TOWER BLOCKS - WHAT IS THE BEST APPROACH?

JOHN FARR of S.N.U. outlines the options

One of the jobs of the Safe Neighbourhood Unit (SNU) is advising local authorities and residents' groups about how best to improve the management and security of their estates. There are currently two approaches to problem; the first approach may be called the 'design and layout' approach.

For example, one way of reducing the problems in blocks with long internal corridors might be to divide the corridors into separate sections each with their own means of access.

The assumption is that the small so called 'neighbourhood groups' created are more neighbourly, more cohesive and more able to control anti-social behaviour from within the groups or from intruders.

TELEVISION MONITORS

The second approach is where these kind of changes are not possible and where it is necessary to introduce staff into the block. Often the expense of staffing blocks with security guards, or receptionists or concierges, and the associated hi-tech security, is justified by its proponents on the presumed savings brought about by increased security.

A relatively recent development of this second approach is what have been termed 'dispersed concierge schemes'. This is where there are staff in one block and the other blocks are monitored using CCTV (closed circuit television).

This is an increasingly popular way of introducing concierge because it spreads the cost over a large number of tenants and it makes 24-hour cover affordable – though some might feel that a faceless monitor has little to do with making multi-storey blocks more human and less anonymous and intimidating.

UNDERSTANDING NEEDS

Though different in approach, the two methods are similar in that they are often adopted with little reference to the social realities of the block or group of blocks to which they are introduced. One block may differ from another in a variety of ways and these need to be understood if any plans for making a block safe and secure are going to succeed. There are two main contexts: the situation inside the block and the wider estate.

The starting point is the people who live in the block. The type of household and the age of residents has been an important dimension in the development of concierge schemes in Britain. A recent survey by the Department of the Environment indicates that over 60% of existing concierge schemes in high-rise blocks include special lettings schemes. These tend to exclude children and sometimes even 'women of childbearing age'. There is often an age qualification of 40, 50 or 60+. There are often policies of varying degrees of explicitness which may exclude vulnerable people who are being resettled from institutional care.

EXTERNAL PROBLEMS

The effect of these lettings schemes is to create a stable, homogeneous, cohesive and relatively small population. There will be similar life styles and similar outlook. So the problems - if there are any - are external to the block. These are the circumstances in which concierge and security schemes tend to work best. The problems are unambi-guous, they are about keeping out people who don't live here. A cynic might say that concierge schemes work best where they are least needed.

Paradoxically, one of the negative consequences of creating this kind of exclusiveness is to concentrate younger, poorer and more vulnerable groups in the least popular blocks. The failure of many local authorities to provide the kind of management required for this situation has created the 'unmanageable block', the fate of which is often demolition.

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Aubrey Moore Point concierge desk

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A HOUSING CRISIS

In an increasing number of authorities, however, it is not possible to practice this kind of segregation. So serious is the housing situation that tower blocks are once again being let to families with children. As in blocks with young single people, the role of the concierge becomes more problematic.

This is because the kinds of fears that residents experience, are primarily caused by people who live in the block and their visitors - neither of which can be refused entrance to the block.

For example, in the London Borough of Enfield the affect of allocation policies was to dramatically increase the number of young mothers in three of the four blocks. In one block there was about 100 children aged under five.

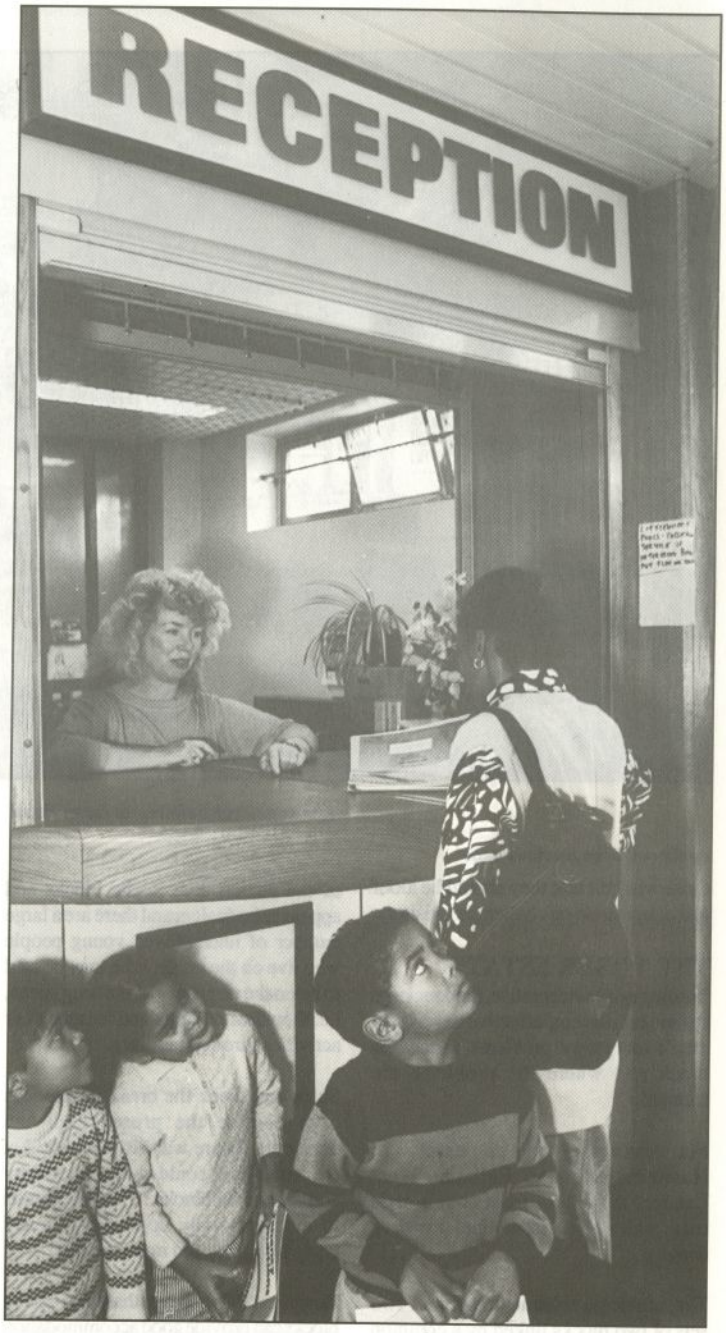
Although break-ins had never really been a problem, drunkenness, domestic violence, noise nuisance, dogs and vandalism were. The problems only became widely recognised because of a number of very serious arson attacks by two people who, as it happens, were residents.

ROLE OF THE CONCIERGE

Now the role of the concierge in this situation is of necessity very different. Most of the concierge are women and they were encouraged to adopt a good neighbour befriending role. This of course didn't stop the problems happening but there are a number of significant ways in which they have been able to contain the effect on other residents. So, for example, they have provided refuge to women and sometimes children being pursued by a member of their family. Domestic and neighbour disputes can cause considerable anxiety to other residents and knowing that the concierge is there is very reassuring.

But despite these achievements there was, certainly when SNU was involved, a very serious difference of opinion between those who welcomed the approachability of the concierge and

A GOOD RECEPTION



The reception desk of a tower block in Enfield

CONCIERGE BUILDING



The concierge building at Lund Point

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those who felt that they should be aloof and concentrate on challenging visitors.

THE WIDER ESTATE

Turning to the wider estate, the concierge system is at its most effective when there aren't too many problems inside the block and where the problems are external.

For example, on an estate in Hammersmith and Fulham, West London, the blocks front onto a main road which is a 'front line' for drug dealing.

The concierge scheme consists of two sets of two blocks linked by a common reception point. The majority of residents are on the whole very happy with these schemes but there are problems. Some of the addicts live in the blocks and appear to be dealers and there are a large number of unemployed young people who live on the estate, who may be said to be on the periphery of the drug scene, i.e. they deal in drugs and finance their activities through burglary.

So in one block the break-in rate was high despite the presence of the concierge. There was also the risk that the 'front line' could shift onto nearby and unsecured blocks. There are limits to a security-only approach to many types of blocks and many estates.

However, SNU believes that multi-storey blocks can provide good accommodation for young people and acceptable accommodation for families with children. But it is necessary to develop a broader understanding of the term concierge, rather than perceiving concierge as a quaint way of saying security guard.

RANGE OF POLICIES

SNU thinks it should denote an approach which recognises that making multi-storey blocks good places to live requires a range of policies.

These include policing, youth and other community provision, health and welfare policies, improvements to housing management and so on. Without these the doorkeeper can end up being the scapegoat.

CONCIERGE SCHEMES IMPROVE SECURITY

In the London Borough of Newham, the council have prioritised a programme to provide concierge schemes in their tower blocks, and nearly 30% of blocks in the borough now have a concierge system.

by Stephen Jacobs, London Borough of Newham.

Introduced by the housing department, it has taken years to implement and has been funded by a cocktail of differing resources. This article outlines the programme and points to some of the problems encountered and some of the dilemmas that still have to be resolved.

COST OF SECURITY

The council acknowledged very early on that relying on a door-entry system used by a large number of tenants was not successful.

Firstly, tens of thousands must have been 'wasted' on repairing and replacing door-entry systems. Secondly, as crime statistics show in Newham, burglaries within tower blocks were increasing, and the overall deterioration of communal areas, whether they supported a door-entry system or not, led to an expensive repair bill.

It was therefore decided, after the successful implementation of concierge schemes on three ex-GLC blocks in the south of the borough, to embark on a programme of concierge schemes in all tower blocks that had over 60 tenancies.

HOW TO PAY FOR IT

The two main elements in paying for a concierge scheme are initial capital costs and the running costs. Like many local councils, Newham did not have the capital resources to spend on the programme.

So it decided to use a variety of funding sources, including making full use of the estate action programme, which encouraged boroughs to incorporate concierge schemes in tower blocks.

Where little or no money was available, the council 'made do' with converting, very cheaply, boiler rooms and lobby areas into porter schemes.

Concierge schemes are not cheap – to provide cover 16 hours a day requires three porters per scheme. Newham used a variety of methods to try to make these schemes as cheap as possible to run. This was done by:

1 Linking a number of blocks where possible.

2 Making estimates for savings on repairs to door-entry systems and communal areas with the introduction of a scheme.

3 Substituting the cost of caretaking for a porter, where a block already had a caretaker.

However, even with these adjustments there was still a deficit. This was made up by tenants who before any scheme was commissioned were balloted as to whether they would pay the extra costs involved in running the system.

MOST AGREED

Even though the weekly costs were fairly large, around £4.50 per week, most blocks agreed to have a scheme installed.

The schemes have been successful so far in terms of tenant satisfaction but there are still a number of blocks, particularly those below the magic threshold of 60 tenancies, who are equally vulnerable to crime.

The way finances are at present, the costs to the tenants would be prohibitive, so the council are thinking of instituting a 'part-time' concierge scheme, or at least giving tenants the option of being charged an increased cost for the service.

Where blocks really are too small to finance a scheme, the council are introducing an intruder alarm, via the existing alarm system, whereby a mobile central control unit monitors the blocks via video.

EXISTING DILEMMAS

Clearly concierge schemes do work, they reduce vandalism and are popular with tenants. There are, however, associated problems:

- the nationally negotiated wage for porters is low so there is difficulty in recruiting staff.
- porters can feel vulnerable and isolatd in their lodges.
- to be really effective a porter has to stay in the lodge, which creates problems if they are asked to help an elderly tenant, etc.
- the porters do not perform cleaning duties, unlike caretakers.

INTEGRATING SERVICES

To overcome some of these problems, the council are now integrating the caretaking and porterage services so that the estate services supervisor (senior caretaker) can give adequate support to porters.

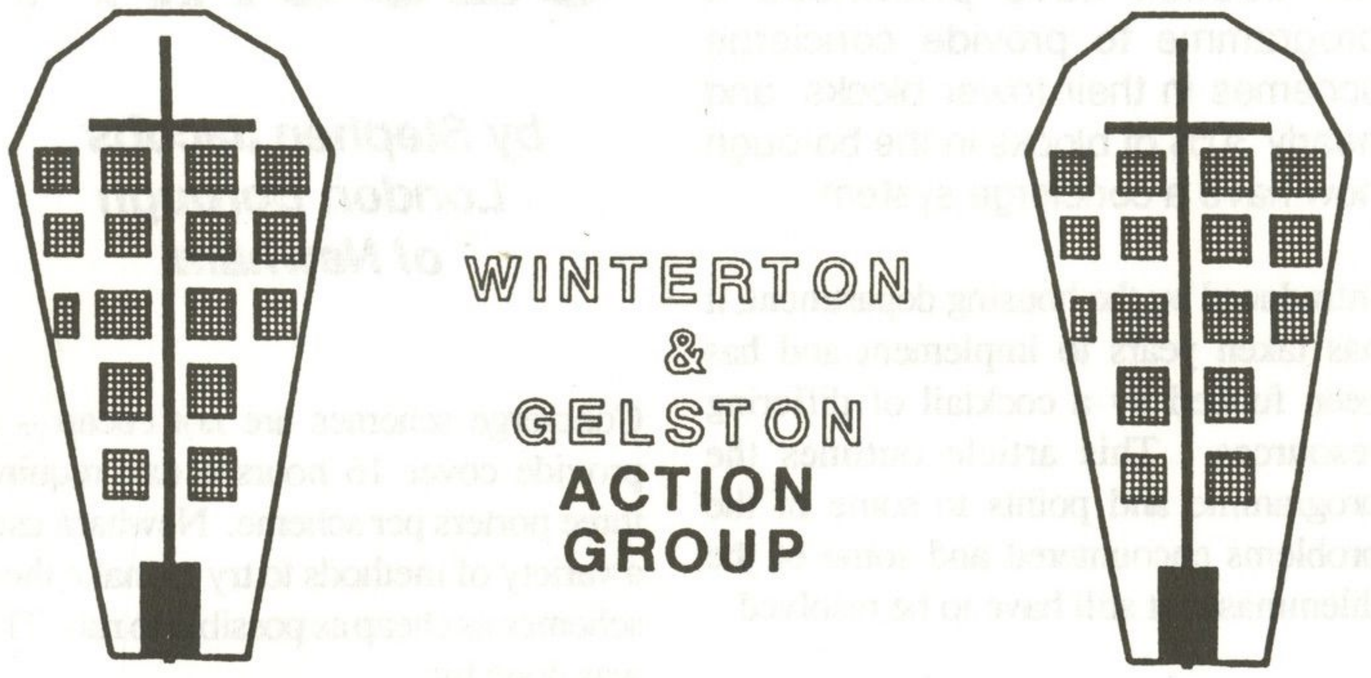
The job description might also be extended, for example by putting computer consoles in each lodge for local repairs to be logged and passed on. There will be a variety of training courses, including first aid, and a procedure manual for door porters will be produced to ensure a standard across the borough.

Finally, we still have the problem of vandalism and burglaries when door porters are not on duty (about eight hours a day). We are presently giving tenants the option of paying extra charges for a 24-hour-a-day service.

The problems are many but not insurmountable in the face of the increased security offered to tower-block tenants.

KILLER DUST CAMPAIGN

The use of asbestos is banned in buildings today but asbestos fibres take a long time to kill. A woman who had worked at Cape's asbestos factory in Barking for less than a year in 1927 died in 1978.



A witness at the inquest into her death, pathologist Professor Keith Simpson, told the coroner: 'I have known people who only worked in the factory for an afternoon to suffer the disease.' (Guardian 12 May 1978 'Asbestos dust took 51 years to kill'.).

In Winterton House and Gelston Point, in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, virtually every single internal wall surface in the flats is made of asbestos sheet. The tenants have fought a long campaign to be rehoused from the blocks.

Lobbying the council failed to get the results they wanted and the tenants decided to intensify the campaign and sought advice to back up their claims.

Here are just some of the startling points in a survey of the blocks by an independent consultant:

"The presence of asbestos in the two blocks poses a major health hazard, not only to the people who still live in them but everyone who lived in them in the past.

"Those with most to lose are children who are still living in the blocks. In some cases very young children will have been exposed to asbestos dust 24 hours a day, 7 days a week".

LICENCE TO KILL?

Over 200 tenants from Gelston Point and Winterton House marched on their town hall in April, 1991, to press their demands for the evacuation of the blocks. The tenants delivered a coffin to the town hall to emphasise the risk they, and their children, face just by living in their homes. Decanting of the blocks began in 1990 but one year later there were still 50 families living in the two blocks. Tower Hamlets Council have been operating a decentralisation policy and the blocks fall into the Wapping neighbourhood.

The council refused to rehouse the tenants on a borough-wide basis, claiming that Wapping neighbourhood was responsible, but there were not enough vacancies in the neighbourhood to rehouse all the tenants.

Carol Silverman, Chair of Winterton and Gelston Tenants' Association, said: "Our safety, the health of our children should come before policies and before party politics. We elect councillors to be responsible for our wellbeing, we pay them our poll tax, they can't turn their backs on us like this."

A SUCCESS FOR TENANTS

The tenants demanded to be rehoused across the whole borough and sought to gain further support for their rights. They managed to get the campaign highlighted by the press, including Thames TV, and as a result the council finally agreed to rehouse the tenants within six weeks.

A success for tenants! But the six weeks ran out at the end of June, 1991, and 38 flats remained occupied. There were four families with children aged from three years upwards, still in the flats.

Despite assurances from the council leader himself, tenants, including children, were still breathing in asbestos every day in their homes. The tenants reported that very few offers of alternative accommodation had been acceptable, because they included flats that are riddled with cockroaches, damp and mould.

"The tenants remain adamant that they should receive decent offers and not be forced to move from one unhealthy and dangerous home into another," explains Carol Silverman.

The tenants continued their campaign and Carol featured in the 'Them and Us' programme on BBC1 in which all the evidence of asbestos was on camera.

W.E.C.H. WINS

Tenants on the Winterton and Elgin Estates in the London Borough of Westminster have been actively campaigning about the dangers of asbestos. An incident in May, 1989, gave Winterton and Elgin Community Homes (WECH) – a tenants-led organisation approved under the Tenants' Choice legislation – their first lesson in dealing with asbestos.

Ceiling panels from about half a dozen floors in Hermes and Chantry Points, the two tower blocks on the estate, were stolen. The removal of the panels left yards of sprayed asbestos, barely seven feet above the floor, exposed.

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ASBESTOS DANGERS

When asbestos is separated into very fine fibres it becomes a serious health hazard.

The most common way for these fine fibres to enter the body is through breathing.

The fibres which are not coughed up or breathed out become trapped, causing irreparable scarring to the lungs and the development of cancers.

The three main types of asbestos diseases are:

Asbestosis, a disabling and ultimately fatal scarring of the lungs causing severe breathlessness and chest pains.

Lung cancer, a painful and nearly always fatal disease.

Mesothelioma, a rapidly fatal and painful cancer of the lining of the lung or the abdomen.

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The council's short-term solution was for men in 'spacesuits' to apply plastic sheeting and tape to seal off the asbestos but it kept falling down. WECH persuaded the BBC Panorama programme to film the asbestos in the blocks on their estate.

Despite the campaign and publicity, the council continued to move in homeless families and only after a vigorous campaign did the council agree to box in the asbestos. But this incident had confirmed WECH's fears about the asbestos danger and taught them their first lesson in dealing with asbestos.

THE FIRST REAL CLUES

When WECH was formed and applied for the estates to be transferred to them through Tenants' Choice, Westminster Council argued that the asbestos in the two blocks was safe and therefore the removal cost did not have to be included in the transfer. WECH disagreed and in February, 1990, received a report into the risks of asbestos in the Watney Market estate (see above) – the only blocks in the country of a construction identical to Hermes and Chantry Points. The report suggested that asbestos fibre was entering the flats through gaps in the casings which boxed in this asbestos.

The report also questioned the reliability of air tests which Westminster had claimed proved the Elgin blocks were safe. In the initial assessment of the asbestos risk in Hermes and Chantry Points, the council's asbestos consultants had relied on air tests to demonstrate that there was no release of fibres.

But air tests cannot assess the true extent of an asbestos problem. WECH decided to employ their own asbestos consultants and they set out to test what was really happening.

TESTS SHOW ASBESTOS

Samples of dust and debris were taken from the blocks at the beginning of June, 1990, to get an initial indication of the extent of the problem. These tests showed that asbestos fibres were entering the flats through electric-plug sockets and the warm-air heating system.

These results were presented formally to the environmental services department whose own officers then carried out similar tests with similar results.

At the same time WECH discovered that several flats in the blocks, which had been burned out, were in such an appalling and dangerous condition that they immediately called in the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Initially reluctant, the HSE agreed to investigate and a team of officers from the HSE inspected the worst burnt-out flat in 'spacesuits'. As a consequence, the council were ordered to clear the flats up immediately.

WECH stepped up the pressure on the council and began to look to the media for assistance in publicising their case. The Daily Mirror ran a front-page story about Westminster's failure to act in the face of overwhelming evidence, and soon after the HSE told the council they would be conducting a formal investigation.

WESTMINSTER GIVES IN

On 13 July, 1990, in a memo from the Director of Environmental Health to the Director of Housing, the council caved in. The director admitted there was a risk of fibres from deteriorating asbestos entering the flats and contaminating the heating systems. He ordered that immediate interim works should be carried out to seal gaps and decontaminate heating systems.

The housing department was told they would either have to remove the residents or remove the asbestos. As a result, all the homeless families were moved out and alternative accommodation was offered to the remaining secure tenants.

WECH's victory over the council is of national significance to those involved with or affected by asbestos.

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ASBESTOS AND CHILDREN

Children are particularly vulnerable to asbestos-related disease, " because of the rapid increase of risk with time, the lifetime effect of exposure in childhood is likely to be much greater than if exposure begins in adulthood": 1983 US Consumer Product Safety Commission.

"Tissues in which natural growth is taking place may be more susceptible to carcinogens than adult tissues": 1979 Health and Safety Executive report.

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WECH have proved that the asbestos was dangerous in the face of a hostile council, backed up by a range of professionals. In the space of six months the council have moved from arguing the blocks were safe for children to agreeing they were safe for no-one until the asbestos had been removed. The blocks remain empty today and residents on the Walterton and Elgin Estates have now voted for the right of transfer from Westminster City Council to WECH. As the valuation of the estates is less than the cost of repair, the blocks will remain standing empty for the foreseeable future until resources can be found to demolish or refurbish them.



Where to get help

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) are responsible for licensing contractors, enforcing the asbestos regulations and for enforcement of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

The act states that it is the duty of every employer to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees.

This duty is extended to third parties, such as tenants. Both tenants of the Walterton and Elgin Estate and the Watney Market Estate were able to gain the support of the HSE.

Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) employed by the council have powers under the Public Health Acts to control 'nuisances' which are 'prejudicial to health'. It is their duty to investigate any complaint made under Section 91 of the Public Health Act 1936 promptly.

The London Hazards Centre produce an asbestos fact pack from which many of the facts here have been taken.

It is packed with invaluable information. They can also provide helpful advice on campaigning.

MONITORING AND SAMPLING

1 BULK SAMPLING – taking a small sample of the material and examining under a microscope.

2 WIPE TESTING – taking a small sample of dust and examining under a microscope.

3 AIR MONITORING - drawing a sample of air through a filter using a pump, then counting under the microscope the number of fibres trapped on the filter.

PLANNING FOR PLAY

Jerry Cooper of Theories Landscapes describes how tenants – including children – can improve their estates and design their own play areas.

Gone are the days of council hand-me-down landscape designs. There are countless successful examples of environmental improvements instigated and developed by tenants, with the help of professionals such as Theories.

THEIR RIGHT

We like to involve the children too – e.g. we believe the young people have the right to take part in planning gardens and play areas.

Community-led estate improvements have been developing for decades.

To complete a community-involved project is a lot of hard work for everyone concerned. Success depends on the quality of the professional help brought in and on the tenants' own energy, level of organisation and willingness to bolster, bully and buoy involvement along. The process is lengthy, costly and energy sapping.

Where the estate has youth clubs, play groups etc. it is relatively easy to plug into them to get children involved.

CHOOSING A DESIGNER

The tenants' organisation's first task is to choose an appropriate designer. The local council planning department can often advise groups.

Organisations such as ACTAC have a membership list of groups that actively promote community involvement (contact them on 051 708 7607.)

Having chosen a short list of designers, they will need to be met and a final choice made. Costs and fees will need to be discussed. Some groups have funding to help tenants' organisations, whilst others will require separate funding to cover the costs of a feasibility report. Local councils may help.

The first stage of any project is to carry out a detailed survey of the whole area where improvements may be made. All the positive attributes, as well as the problems, of a particular site can be highlighted and discussed.

The most suitable areas to be changed can then be chosen and the places allocated where play can take place.

Then it is necessary to decide who the environmental improvements/play facilities are designed to serve - what age groups and in what numbers. Door-to-door surveys or questionnaires may be needed.

DIFFERENT GROUPS

The age categories usually chosen are under fives, 5 to 12, and teens upwards. The ages are not necessarily exclusive in terms of play equipment, but each age group has to be considered.

Questionnaire information and other responses are collated and fed into the design process.

Meetings will be necessary so that ideas can be evaluated. The meetings may simply be an addition to TA business.

By some stage a hard core of interested children and adults will have developed who wish to see how other estates or play projects have turned out.

As designers we find this useful because it offers a chance of extending the repertoire/vocabulary of play choices.

Place a child in a tarmac space, ask what they want and the result is a shopping list of play equipment ranging from the slide to swings. However, if the same child has been introduced to a wider selection of possibilities such as adventure gardens; decorative art projects; or a play area containing custom-built play features, the usual answers change because the choices are wider.

WORKSHOPS

The creative crucible of any project are the design workshops. With pen and pencils, plastercene and cardboard cutouts, wood and glue, paint and felt tips, models can be made to help represent the ideas that have been contributed.

It is then the designer's job to develop these ideas into something practical, imaginative and engaging to the children.

Running in parallel with all these stages can be an exhibition of the ideas as they are produced. A strategic exhibition site will be useful in ensuring that as many people as possible are able to keep track of developments.

Theories' particular expertise includes landscaping, gardens, play areas and decorative arts (mosaic/paint, etc.). We attempt to ensure that every solution is individual to that place and the people involved.

By the nature of the way we work, the product is crafted to a high degree, the elements are custom built and the enviroments are individualised.

FUNDING

A report is used to achieve adequate funding for the project. This stage can be long and fruitless. Many people begin to mutter about the futiliity of the process, and children who were actively involved move away or get older and lose interest. But when the Jack Pot comes in all the excitement begins.

When the project is successfully funded, site works can begin. The tenant/child inovolvement fostered during the design process can continue to help make the physical changes.

If a school has been involved, a class can

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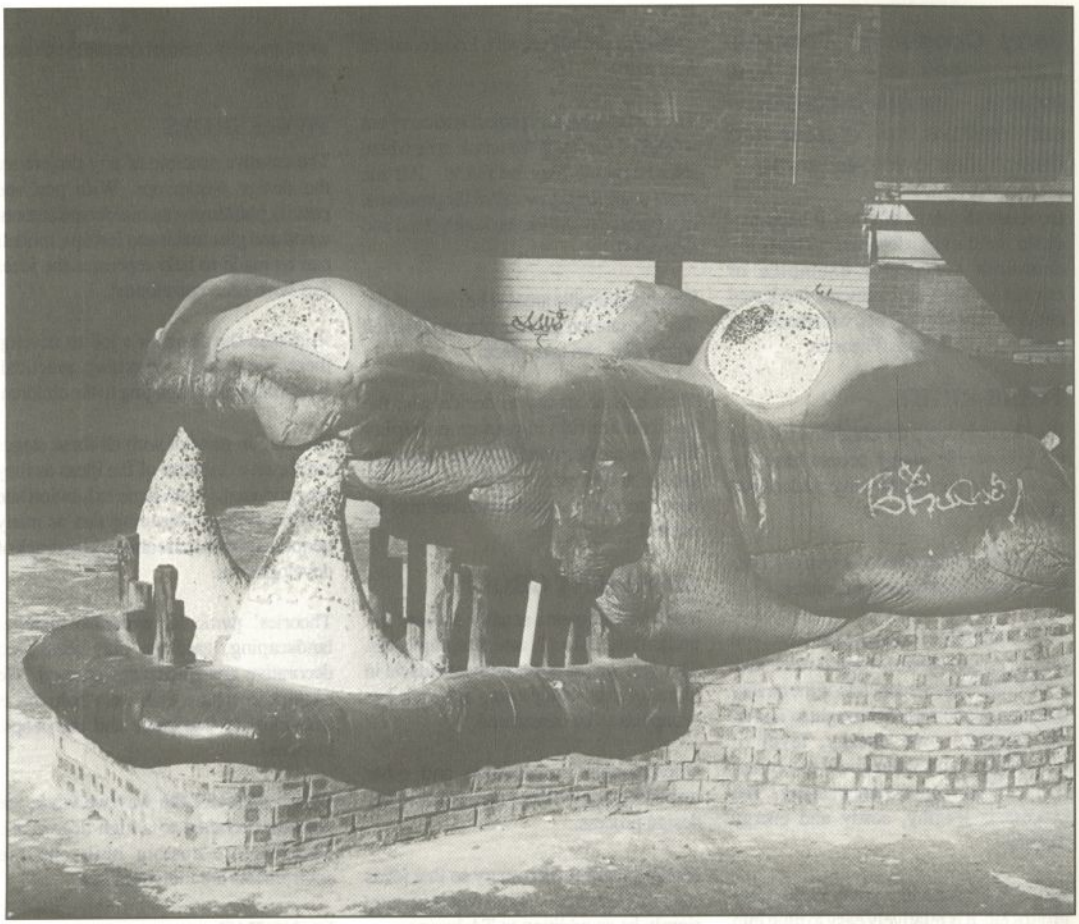
THE DRAGON GARDEN



The Dragon Garden, a completed play and landscape project containing a timber bridges entrance, slides, murals, a concrete dragon 's head scupture, and landscaping in the form of a dragon's body

Can become a school project

document the changes through a combination of written reports, photographs and drawings. Their work can be added to the exhibition.

If decorative arts have been funded, these can be carried out through workshops to make mosaic sections that can then built into the walls or ground.

Once the planting stage arrives, the whole community can again become involved. Children enjoy this work very much and are more proprietorial over the plants and their success than might otherwise be the case.

There will continue to be much work to be done mainitaining the site, its equipment and landscaping, and so it is to be hoped it was implemented with the fullest support of all the tenants and children alike.

Several tower-block landlords have decided that demolition is the right answer for some of their blocks. We feature here three examples and the differing experiences involved

DEMOLITION: THE ONLY OPTION

Tweedbank House and Teviotbank House, once part of the Edinburgh skyline, are no more: these two 14-storey tower blocks were spectacularly demolished in September 1991.

Situated in the heart of Niddrie House, a peripheral estate in north-east Edinburgh, the blocks each contained 57 flats. Built in 1969/70 along with the rest of the estate, they were relatively popular, but a combination of social and management problems led to their depopulation and decline. The flats became unpopular and difficult to let.

Back in 1987 the Niddrie House Planning and Rehabilitation Group (NHPRG) was set up to represent and involve local residents in the implementation of an improvement plan for the Niddrie House Area.

INITIAL AIMS

The initial aims of the plan were to improve local housing, including conditions in Tweedbank House and Teviotbank House, by comprehensive regeneration. The main objectives outlined within the plan were to:

- ❑ provide tenure choice
- ❑ provide a choice of house types
- ❑ provide supportive management forms
- ❑ develop local employment initiatives

The neighbourhood action plan set the framework for the multi-agency improvement package currently underway, involving Edinburgh District Council, Scottish Homes, Hunters Hall Housing Co-operative, Edinvar Housing Association, Wimpey, the Scottish Development Agency (which no longer exists) and others.

Within the original action plan, provision was made for the renovation of the two multis by the district council, but in 1988, the Niddrie House Planning and Rehabilitation Group asked the district council to delay a decision on the future of the blocks while alternative proposals were considered.

1 Moi Alli of Scottish Homes explains why the decision was made to demolish two hard-to-let blocks

The council agreed and the group then carried out a feasibility study on alternative options. A sub-group of NHPRG – comprising the district council, the Housing Corporation in Scotland (Scottish Homes' predecessor body), and local residents – was set up to examine options such as:

* refurbishment of the blocks by the district council
* refurbishment by a housing association or the then newly established Hunter's Hall Co-op
* demolition by a housing association
* demolition by the private sector
* refurbishment by the private sector

These options were presented to the district council in July of that year.

NOT GOOD VALUE

At this stage, the Housing Corporation in Scotland said it would not fund refurbishment proposals, as they were not considered to represent good value for money. It confirmed, however, that financial assistance might be available for demolition and new build options.

By May 1989, the two blocks were declared surplus to requirement by the district council, who agreed to transfer them to Hunter's Hall Co-op, following valuation. However, the valuation for demolition resulted in a negative valuation, which in turn meant that the complete proposal had to be reconsidered by the council.

Protracted negotiations about the future of the multis continued until January 1991. During that time, the local community and NHPRG were concerned about the detrimental impact of the blocks on the remaining regeneration of Niddrie House, should the blocks not be demolished. (Initially they had been against demolition, but before long they were keen supporters.)

ENDED DEADLOCK

Had the blocks remained this would have impacted on Lothian Regional Council's planned road improvement for the estate, and on Phase III of the development of the area, to be carried out jointly by Wimpey and Edinvar Housing Association.

In the interest of expediency, Scottish Homes (a new organisation formed in 1989 with the merging of the Scottish Special Housing Association and the Housing Corporation in Scotland) put forward the proposal that funding could be provided up front for the demolition of the multis, thereby ending the deadlock.

Eventually, in January 1991, the council agreed to package the multis site with two nearby sites, in order to achieve the complete regeneration of the Niddrie House area. It was also agreed that Wimpey would become the main packager of the sites.

Wimpey made a submission to Scottish Homes in March 1991 for the demolition of the multis. It was to be the first part of a package which would also involve demolition of Orlit housing on the two other sites. Replacement housing on the

continued on next page

three sites would be split between homes for low cost homes ownership and rented housing.

THE THEORY

Following an appraisal of Wimpey's submission for demolition, Scottish Homes approved £400,000 from its 'New Powers' budget to cover demolition costs. At a later stage, demolition costs for the multis and the Orlits will be deducted from the gross valuation of the site, with the net value being paid to the district council.

Wimpey accepted a tender from Controlled Demolition, a Leeds-based demolition company specialising in this type of work. Demolition by the controlled use of explosives was opted for because it is both cheaper and quicker than demolition by hand and machine, thereby minimising disturbance to local residents.

The demolition contractors gave assurances that tried and tested techniques assisted by 'State of the Art' engineering and explosive technology would ensure safe demolition of the buildings.

Intensive preparatory work was undertaken between July and September on five floors within each block, including selective pre-weakening of primary structural elements and drilling of charge holes. In the days prior to demolition each building was set with 50 lbs of high explosives, divided into 1,250 separate charge placements. Detonation was to take place in three stages, each time delayed by 1.5 seconds.

DEMOLITION DAY

In view of the proximity of the blocks to existing housing, a major consultation and information exercise had to be carried out by the council and Hunter's Hall Co-op to ensure that all tenants within the exclusion zone were informed of the arrangements for Demolition Day. Newsletters were circulated to tenants and public meetings were held to outline the process and what was to happen on the day.

Crowds from all over Edinburgh gathered to witness the first ever simultaneous tower blocks demolition in Scotland. In front of the assembled crowds, TV cameras, photographers and reporters, a local boy stepped forward to push the detonation button. A flare sounded and smoke billowed from the windows of the blocks, but the blocks failed to come down.



Demolition in Edinburgh

Following detailed examinations by structural engineers and demolition experts, a special crane was brought over from Glasgow and the blocks eventually came down at about eight o'clock that evening.

Meanwhile, residents - who had been evacuated from their houses for almost 12 hours - were understandably unhappy. An emergency plan was put into action to ensure that their requirements, for example food, creche facilities, nappies and babyfood, and overnight accommodation, would be catered for.

After the event, legitimate complaints were made by the community about the way the day was organised. With the benefit of hindsight, the partners involved recommend that:

* a contingency plan should be prepared
* it is essential for community representatives to be included on p lanning groups.
* the consultation process should not underestimated. It is of key importance.

DEVELOPING SITE

A redevelopment package is currently being worked up with the district council, Wimpey, Scottish Homes, the local community, Hunter's Hall Co-op and a proposed new housing association for the future development of the three sites in Niddrie. The plan is to provide a mix of housing for sale and rent probably on a 60:40 ratio.

Although proposals are at an early stage, broad agreement has been reached on the use of the three sites. A total of 160 new homes are to be built, 30 of which will be on the former multis site.

By choosing the demolition/new build option, housing and the environment in Niddrie have been improved. There is now a choice of housing tenure which did not exist previously, and a run-down area has begun to regain its confidence and to build a better reputation. That has to be good news for the people who live there.

THE WIGAN WAY

In the late 1980's Wigan embarked on a comprehensive Estate Action scheme to improve one of its most problematical estates, Worsley Mesnes. The estate built in mid-60s included three 16-storey tower blocks and, via Estate Action, it was proposed to improve the internal and external environment to help increase their popularity.

However, during the course of external repairs to the spalling panels of the Bison frame blocks, an asbestiform material was discovered in aggregate contained by two-thirds of the panels.

THE OPTIONS

Repair works ceased whilst consultants examined the blocks and reported on the options open to the council, which emerged were as follows:

1 Repair the blocks taking special precautions.

2 Demolition via a method which in effect reversed the building process.

3 Sell the blocks to the private sector.

4 Overcladding.

Full option appraisal led the council to conclude that demolition was the best option despite the massive (£1.7m) cost involved. Overcladding and repair options were rejected on the grounds of cost, disruption to tenants, and the uncertainty of the future popularity of the blocks.

Selling the blocks was unrealistic, given the problems which would be faced by any potential buyer.

Having agreed to demolish the blocks, with the full support of residents via a detailed consultative process, the Council faced the problem of securing the necessary funding.

Discussions with the Department of the Environment ruled out both a special HIP allocation and the possibility of Estate

2 Demolition by City Grant

Action funding. The council's reducing mainstream HIP allocation could not meet the cost involved. It was eventually agreed that City Grant offered the best chance of funding a solution, and the council sought, via competition, a private sector partner.

The partnership which emerged involved the council offering the three tower blocks, together with some adjacent sites, to Tay Homes Limited. The intention was for Tay to secure a City Grant which in effect allowed them to produce 162 low-cost homes for sale, desite the costs of demolition.

In late 1990 the application for City Grant was approved and work commenced in February 1991. The blocks were successfully demolished over a nine-month period and the new housing development is proving to be extemely successful.

The Worsley Mesnes Estate as a whole is also benefiting from the injection of confidence in the area via the private sector development.



A block being dismantled on Freemasons Estate, Newham, London

CONFLICT SYMBOL

"Throughout our culture the tower block has come to symbolise the conflicts of modern living. Whether or not a person actually lives in a tower block is not crucial to the power this symbol exerts." — Stephen Willats.

Stephen is an artist who, over a decade ago, developed his interest in portraying the lives of people living in tower blocks. His work has taken him all over the country and even to Europe. The art that he creates is unusual, even eccentric.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

His methods involve the active participation of tenants. He succeeds in pursuading people not only to trust him but also to share his enthusiasm and his motivation to create a pictorial expression of their lives. His ability to involve people is impressive.

His projects help to break down barriers that so often exist between people in blocks. They bring together people who may never have seen each other before, let alone have spoken.

This is a positive step towards developing neighbourly feelings and building tenants/community organisations in the blocks and on the estates. It is for these reasons that we feature the work of Stephen Willats here.

Stephen Willats sees tower blocks as projecting an image of institutional conformity which contrasts starkly with the chaotic variety of the lives of the tenants. It is their constant fight for self-expression that forms the basis of Willats' work and inspires the project featured here.

TOWER MOSAIC

Tower Mosaic was a series of exhibitions in the six tower blocks that comprise the Warwick and Brindley Estate in North Paddington (London).

The very fabric of the estate, its physical structure, and the language and

Working with tower-block tenants, artist Stephen Willats portrays their lives

experiences of the residents were central to the idea of Tower Mosaic. In this respect the two tower blocks, Brinklow House and Princethorpe House, selected from the six to house the exhibition, were considered to form part of the work.

Tower Mosaic is an artwork that evolved over time as a result of tenants' participation. Participants in Tower Mosaic were asked to develop pictures of how they see themselves, the network of people surrounding them, the immediate community and the wider society.

The responses of tenants to four problem situations contributed to the building up of a mosaic of images that formed a public statement about living in a tower block.

A small group of residents from Brinklow and Princethorpe were invited to take part in the work's development and focus it on different ways people perceive and understand themselves and their relationship with others.

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Stephen Willats worked individually with six residents to document photographically objects they had acquired in their homes, the ones they considered expressed something about themselves as well as those that specifically denoted a relationship with someone else.

He then tape-recorded a discussion with the residents about those objects. From this material the Tower Mosaic Book was produced.

The Tower Mosaic booklet contained four sheets, each with a problem situation for tenants to consider. Each section asked tenants to make a drawing showing how the objects presented as photographs in the book might influence:

1 How you feel about yourself.

2 Your relationship with someone else.

3 Your relationship with the community immediately surrounding you.

4 Your relationship with a wider society.

VOLUNTEERS

A desk was set up inside the ground-floor foyers of each building for either a morning or afternoon session each day. A group of eight volunteers administered this desk and encouraged everyone coming in and out of the building to join in.

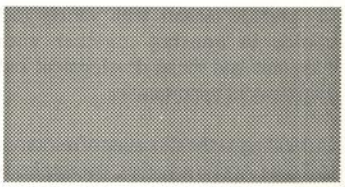
If a person agreed to take part they were given a copy of the Tower Mosaic Book and, using coloured pens and crayons provided, drew their responses there and then.

Inevitably and intentionally participation at the desk became a social event with exchanges between residents who were coming in and out and those who were already taking part.

ANONYMOUS DISPLAY

All the drawings were displayed anonymously on a series of four grids placed in the foyers of the two blocks. They were built up over a 12-day period.

All participants' drawings were considered equally valid and all contributed to the building up of the mosaics and the picture of life in those tower blocks.



The action plan – Estate Action's approach to high-rise housing

Many of the major tower-block improvements reported to us in our survey have been undertaken under the Estate Action programme. We, therefore, felt that it would be useful to ask the Department of the Environment (DoE) to outline their priorities for tower-block estates.

David Martin, Estate Action, DoE, explains:

By the time Estate Action was set up by the DoE in June,1985, there was already plenty of evidence to suggest that physical measures, on their own, could not solve the problems of rundown estates.

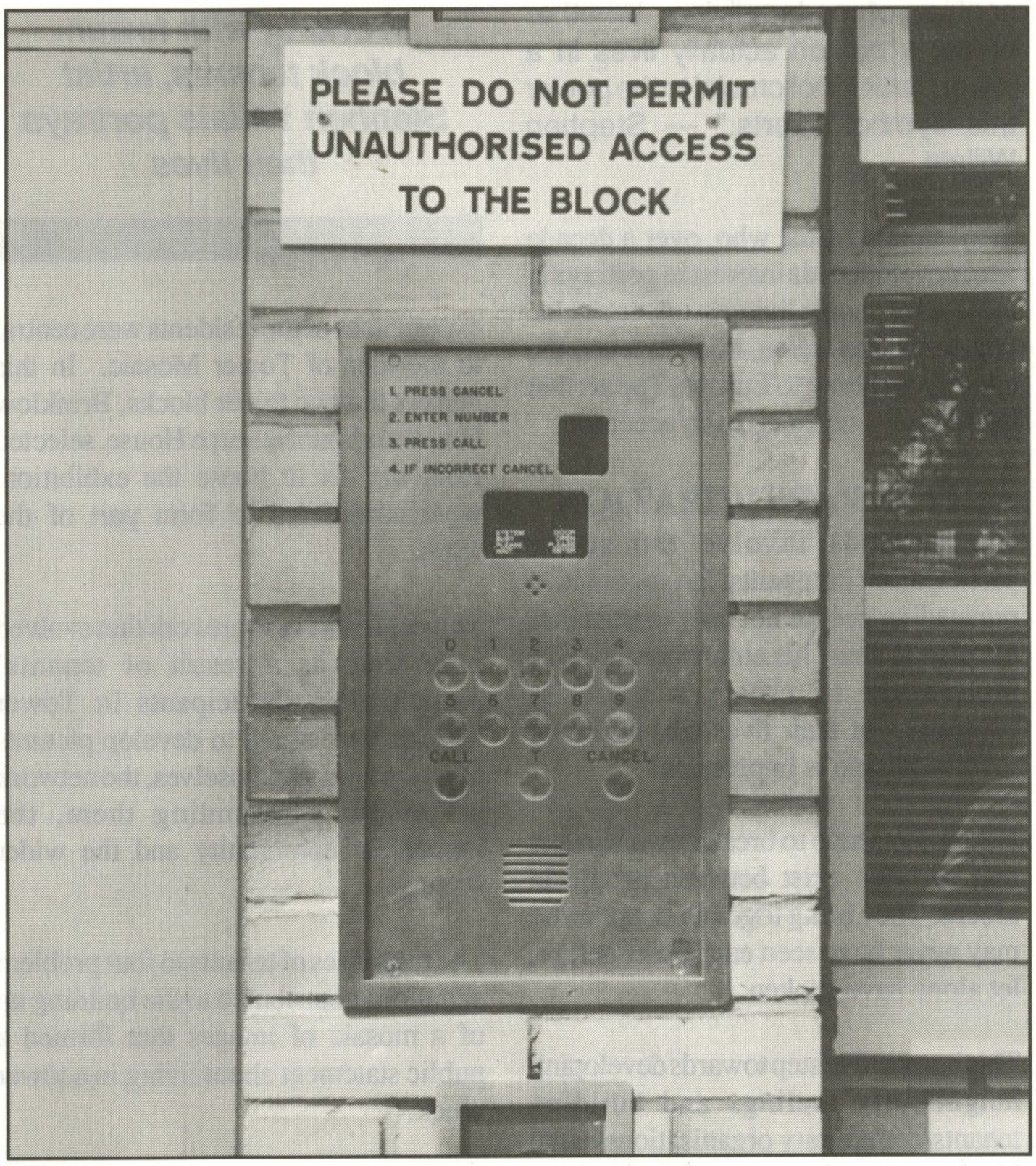
The approach adopted by Estate Action is, therefore, to help local authorities to address the full range of housing problems, social and economic as well as physical and environmental, and to recognise their inter-relationship, and then to devise packages of measures to deal with them.

CLOSE INVOLVEMENT

Central to the approach is the introduction of local housing management, coupled with the close involvement of residents. The measures which Estate Action promotes, and which local authorities are encouraged to take into account in their schemes, are intended to:

- improve not only the physical condition of dwellings and common areas but also the layout of estates;
- encourage measures which improve and strengthen housing management and involve tenants (developed further in the tenants' charter launched in January, 1992);
- provide tenants with variety and choice in housing together with economic and social development and employment opportunities.

In deciding on the allocation of resources to Estate Action schemes, the emphasis has been on innovative solutions tailored to the needs of each estate rather than relying on the application of stock solutions.



Door-entry panel at Lund Point

To aid the process of developing schemes the DoE have published the Estate Action Handbook. Part 1: 'Appraising Options' (published in August 1989) sets out a four-stage approach to estate improvement, starting with a thorough assessment of the problems, and including a step-by-step method for the economic appraisal of alternative options.

Parts 2 and 3 of the handbook provide design, technical and cost guidance on practical ways of improving external areas and dwellings themselves.

POPULAR HOMES

Tower blocks have often been used to symbolise all that is wrong with post-war housing and one of the more surprising, but encouraging, aspects of public-sector estate improvement has been the success with which some tower blocks can, with appropriate physical and management measures, provide popular homes.

The following paragraphs summarise some of the measures covered in Parts 2 and 3 of the handbook which local authorities should consider in consultation with residents when working up schemes to improve tower blocks.

continued on next page

Concierge links two blocks



The concierge building linking two blocks at Scott and Willett House

HOUSING MANAGEMENT

❑ A local and accessible housing management service is a requirement of most Estate Action schemes, and is considered essential for high-rise estates.

❑ Resident caretakers are recommended by the Priority Estates Project on all flatted estates, with a minimum ratio of about one per 120 dwellings.

Some local authorities have caretakers resident on all high-rise blocks on larger estates, performing a similar supervisory role to concierges but on a less formal basis and usually carrying out other tasks around the block.

❑ A selective allocations policy can be used by local authorities to offer and allocate flats in tower blocks to certain groups of residents: for example, to elderly or 'mature' residents without children at home, or to young single people, for whom high-rise flats can be acceptable. This is best combined with provision of communal facilities such as meeting rooms, day centres or launderettes, and with resident wardens or 'houseparents'.

SECURITY

Security measures need to be carefully considered in consultation with the residents and in the context of each block. Typical measures for high-rise and tower blocks are:

❑ Secure doors to main entrances, controlled by entryphone whether directly from flats or by a concierge (see below) and to individual dwellings.

❑ Zoning the common access ways within and between adjacent blocks to eliminate through routes and reduce the number of dwellings served by each main entrance.

This involves sub-dividing access decks or corridors with permanent partitions or security doors and in some cases blocking off or removing linking bridges between blocks.

Fire-escape routes must be maintained and zoning may necessitate new lifts and staircase towers.

❑ Concierges (receptionists, supervisors) to receive visitors and control access to blocks during all or part of a 24-hour period. They may also monitor lifts, fire exit doors and other points inside and outside the block using closed circuit television (CCTV).

The style of service varies from an emphasis on security to a 'reception-based' role in which concierges may carry out other housing management duties including reporting repairs or performing a caring role through their regular contact with residents. Concierges are most easily established in tower blocks where access can be confined to a single main entrance point, but the principle is also being applied to linear blocks with several entrances,

continued from previous page

usually involving more reliance on CCTV and zoning to limit the dwellings served by each entrance.

❑ Defensible space formed by enclosure around blocks to distance passers-by from ground floor flats, to provide secure open space and car parking, and to confine access to a single point. In linear blocks, defensible space can sometimes take the form of private gardens to ground-floor dwellings.

AFFORDABLE WARMTH

Difficulties with heating and insulation are not confined to residents in high-rise dwellings but the extra exposure of tall blocks can add to the severity of the problems. Condensation, mould growth and dampness resulting from outdated or inefficient heating systems, which residents cannot afford to run, mean uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions in flats, deterioration of the building fabric, and risk to life through unauthorised use of unsuitable heating appliances. Typical measures include:

❑ Energy-efficient heating systems designed to provide a comfortable level of heating at running costs which residents can afford. Heating needs to be considered in conjunction with insulation levels and room ventilation to ensure that the previous causes of condensation are not replaced by new ones. In some cases, the structural capability of blocks will affect the choice of heating system and fuel.

❑ Improved insulation to minimise heat loss through external walls of poorly-insulated blocks and to protect the building fabric against further deterioration. Methods may include insulated overcladding of a type appropriate to the block and its condition.

REFERENCES

Handbook of Estate Improvement:
Part 1: Appraising Options, published August 1989, ISBN 0-11-752232-5, £12.25
Part 2: External Areas, published September 1991, ISBN 0-11-752226-0, £30.00.
Part 3: Dwellings, published May 1992, ISBN 0-11-752534-0, £35.00.

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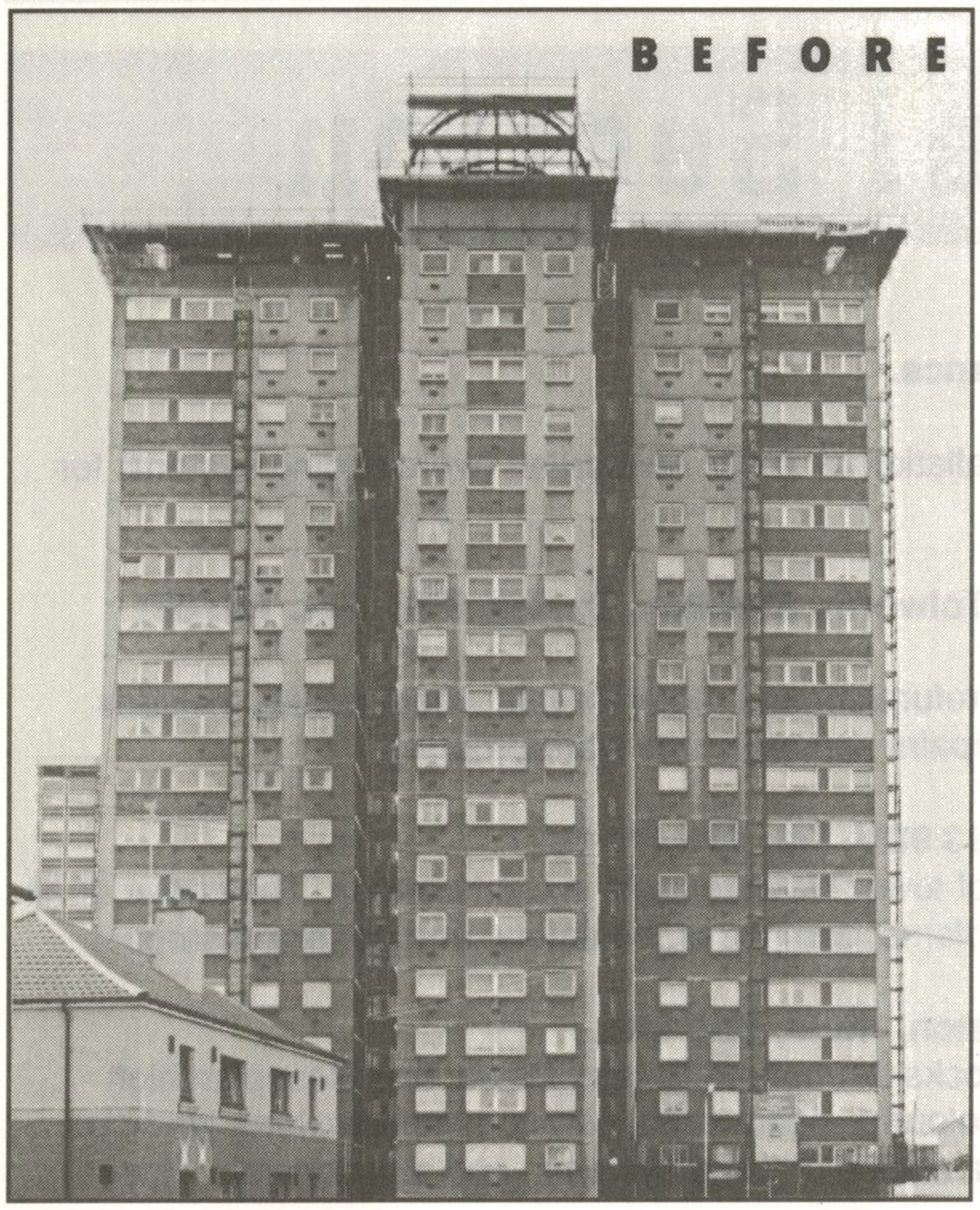



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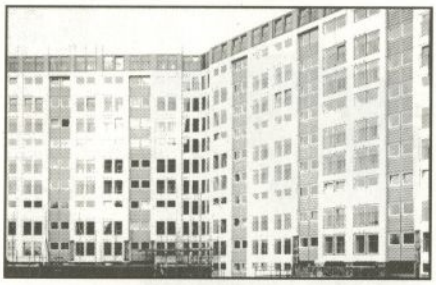

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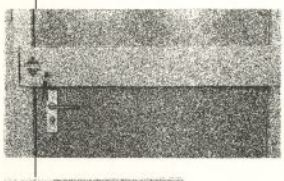

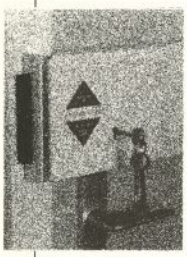

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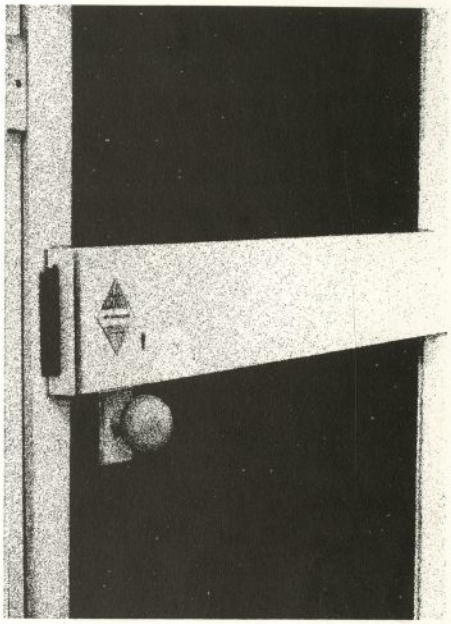

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