

Policy Implementation in Housing: A Study of the Experience of  
Portsmouth and Derby, 1945-74".

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This work is dedicated to the memory of M.S.C., who was my mother and mentor, but who unfortunately did not see the completed thesis.

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Any errors which may appear are solely my responsibility.

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## GLOSSARY

In the case study section of this thesis the following abbreviations are used:-

D.H.C.	Derby Housing Committee Minutes
P.C.C.	Portsmouth City Council Minutes
P.H.C.	Portsmouth Housing Committee Minutes

## ABSTRACT

The germ of this thesis was born when the author read "Implementation" by J.A. Pressman and A. Wildavsky. This book stimulated the author's interest in the interpretation of Central Government policy by local authorities of differing political complexions.

This thesis reviews and researches the impact of the implementation of Central Government policy by local authorities and attempts to assess the reasons for divergence in policy between Conservative and Labour controlled authorities. The question posed is whether politics accounts largely or wholly for policy divergences, or whether it is other factors.

From the research undertaken by the author, it would appear that political complexion is only one factor in a very complex network of influences upon policy implementation. The thesis covers factors such as the personality of the actors involved, inter and intra departmental relationships, and professional linkages as well as the more traditional elements of local and central government interactions. The focus is on the implementation of housing policy in Portsmouth, a predominantly Conservative controlled authority, and Derby, a predominantly Labour controlled authority, during the period 1945 to 1974. Both authorities were faced by similar problems in the period reviewed, and yet each adopted its own distinct policy, as the skylines of the two cities reflect today.

## CHAPTER ONE POLICY STUDIES

- i) Introduction
- ii) The British Tradition of Local Government Policy  
Studies
- iii) The American Tradition of State and Local Government  
Policy Studies
- iv) An Assessment of Expenditure Analysis
- v) An Assessment of the Time Dimension
- vi) An Assessment of Policy Styles

## CHAPTER ONE      POLICY STUDIES

### i)      Introduction

The purpose of this study is to look at the factors which determine the interpretation and implementation of Central Government policy by local authorities. An examination will be made of the implementation of housing policy in two major cities, one predominantly Labour controlled, Derby, and the other predominantly Conservative controlled, Portsmouth. The aim of the study is to account for the policy divergences between the two authorities. Can the divergences be accounted for by political factors or are other factors such as the personalities involved, ideologies, local "needs" and "resources", the relationship between senior members and officers of a similar, greater or lesser importance.

### ii)      The British Tradition of Local Government Policy Studies

Within the literature on British local government there have until recently been two main traditions, on the one hand the legal - constitutional - institutional works and, on the other, historical accounts of particular local authorities. The former tradition has produced most of this century's local government textbooks; classics include E.D. Simon (1926), W.E. and W.O. Hart (1934), R.M. Jackson (1975), P.G. Richards (1975). There is clearly a place for such books but they convey largely information. Some general surveys on local government of a more behavioural and analytical kind have, however, appeared. As explained below, the field of central/local relationships has in particular produced several like J.A.G. Griffith (1966) and R.A.W. Rhodes (1979).



The latter tradition, the historical case studies, has also developed in new ways. Early examples of the genre, even when the authors were insiders like Simon (1926) were little more than municipal histories. Since the war such books, usually written by independent scholars, have tended to attempt community power analyses. With varying degrees of success they have sought to portray how towns or counties were run over a period of years - see for instance Bealey, Blondel and McCann (1965), J.M. Lee (1963), G.W. Jones (1969). Nevertheless they have said little about policy processes and less about policy outcomes. There are exceptions like W. Hampton (1970) on Sheffield and J. Dearlove (1973) on Kensington and Chelsea in which both pay much attention to policy.

Work by social administrators as opposed to local government specialists are often concerned with policy inputs or outputs. J.B. Cullingworth's (1965) work is an excellent summary of research up to 1965 and likewise D.V. Donnison (1967) gives a clear overview of housing policy. Both of these writers take the standpoint of a social administrator. Clearly in the area of policy analysis within political science there is an overlap with the interests of other social scientists. In the comparable field of education for instance, there is the important work of M. Blaug (1965), an economist who undertook a study of the rate of return on investment in education in Britain. The only kind of British Local Government writing which has concentrated on policy outcomes has been the quantitative study. Such studies are undertaken by political scientists who have accepted the value of expenditure analysis as

a method of policy analysis learning no doubt from American studies reviewed in this chapter. Such work is illustrated by N. Boaden (1971), who studied the expenditure of eight services in County Boroughs, and examined the data for the effect of local needs, resources and party disposition. He concluded that the differences between local authorities mainly arise from three factors, namely:-

1. the social composition of the area
2. the nature of party control
3. the flexibility of finance

Boaden (1971) says that variations in expenditure contradict traditional beliefs that central control imposes uniformity. Local authorities allocate resources on the grounds of their view of social justice and political feasibility and this is as important as central standardisation. Councillors and administrators have definite views about local needs. They are, Boaden claims, influenced by parties and pressure groups, by the relations between councillors and officers, and by the reaction of voters, the consumers and the general public. These influences vary from one service to another. Party policy plays a large part in education whereas the pressure of social needs appears as the main factor in housing. In health and welfare, councillors' views and officers' professional values are decisive. Social needs are equally pressing. The poorest authorities - those with the smallest tax yield in relation to need are the ones most likely to spend on expensive social services. This reflects the pressures their services have to meet. Boaden concludes that the main variations between authorities arise from party politics.

Labour spends more on the bigger services and those which appear to benefit their traditional supporters. Boaden's general conclusion indicates that social conditions and a council's views about them are clearly related and determine what level of service is provided.

James Alt (1969) reaches similar conclusions in his researches, in which he considers the expenditure by 43 boroughs on housing, education and health services. However, Alt's work fails to take account of need, and therefore may be criticised on these grounds. His conclusions bear out the importance of party in policy determination in British Local Government particularly with regard to housing policy.

Bleddyn Davies in his study of "Variations in Children Services among British Urban Authorities", (1972), a parallel to, but extension of his study of "Variations in Services for the Aged" (1969) asserts that patterns of provision of services that are partially substituted for one another at the margin in meeting the needs of a high proportion of the services' clients are interdependent. The pattern of interdependence is such that supply of other services tends to respond to pressures resulting from the supply of those services whose supply is least adjustable. The causal factors that influence the behaviour of these interdependent systems of services have their effect not only at the level of the spending department, but also at the highest level of the authority. Further, he believes that some of the factors of causal importance are to some degree determined by other causal factors which sometimes have a direct

as well as an indirect effect on the pattern of provision. Davies suggests that services are interdependent - that, for instance, the number of children boarded out responds to the number of places in homes. In the case study section of this work we shall see in both Derby and Portsmouth the level of building was determined not only by the level of need but also by the allocation of resources in terms of land and money, and by the level of political will or ideological belief being carried out. Interdependent variables are of significant importance and as Davies points out, calibre of staff and competition for other needs influence the standards of provision.

iii) The American Tradition of State and Local Government Policy Studies

In the last 15 years or so in the United States there has been an increasing interest in Policy Analysis. This interest is expressed by such questions as - "How important are political factors as opposed to non-political factors in policy outputs and policy outcomes?" - "Do politics matter?" - "Do political factors make any difference to policy outputs and policy outcomes or are policies determined by environmental factors?" Much of the early work (in the 1960's) suggested that politics do not matter and that much of the output variation was to be explained by environmental factors. It is against this background that we need to view the American literature. Before this can be done it is necessary to define certain terms:-

- Policy Output/Programmes - The items in the statute book, the expenditure, the goods and services produced and consumed.
- Policy Outcome - The effect it has on schools built, houses built, the impact of the policy output on, say, homelessness.
- Feedback - Peoples' perceptions of the outcomes.
- Spillover - The unintended consequences of policy outcomes.

The literature on the relative policy impact of "party", "needs" and "resources" is immense.

Some scholars have applied this kind of analysis to state and local government. One of the pioneers was V.O. Key (1949), stressed the importance of two-party competition or bi-factionalism in one party states as a determinant of policy. Key saw the degree of party competition as crucial because it reflected the extent to which politics were organised or unorganised. Party competition, by producing some semblance of organised politics lessens the difficulty of lower status groups in sorting out political actors and issues, thereby enabling them to promote their own interests more effectively. Since the states welfare policies are in the interests of the "have-nots", state expenditure levels were used as a measure of the success that these groups had enjoyed.

Duane Lockard (1959) somewhat modified this notion, by arguing that states with complex economies would be more likely to have competitive parties since the diversity of economic interests would provide a context within which two partyism could flourish. He also noted that this diversity made it difficult for a few more powerful interests to dominate policy-making.

The more recent literature however, rejects the developmental sequence predicted by the Key-Lockard observations. Work by such people as R.E. Dawson and J.A. Robinson (1963), and T R Dye (1965) utilise multiple and partial correlational analysis. This more recent literature found that when socio-economic factors are held constant, the impact of party competition largely disappeared; the effects of socio-economic development did not vanish when party competition was held constant. From these findings these researchers conclude that party competition does not serve as an intervening variable between socio-economic development and policy and they conclude that party competition and policy are both dependent on socio-economic development. Their model states that any association between competition and social welfare expenditures is spurious. There is no causal connection between competition and welfare, rather they are both dependent on socio-economic development. The model is surprising in that the theoretical formulations, if not the conclusions of the recent studies, are perfectly consistent with those of Key and Lockard. A problem arises nevertheless in determining which is the independent variable(s). The framework common to these studies is that of D. Easton's (1965) systems

analysis which employs the model of environment, inputs, throughput, outputs and feedback. Economic and social development are treated as aspects of the environment; party competition is categorised as an aspect of the political process, and governmental expenditure as the outputs of the system. Easton's notion that aspects of the political process are a consequence of the environment and serve to translate factors of that environment into policy output is also common to authors like Dye and Dawson. Their research designs like Lockard's began with the hypothesis that political factors such as party competition act as intervening variables between the socio-economic environment and output measures. Since this hypothesis appears not to be confirmed, serious questions concerning the importance of political variables in explaining policy outcomes are raised. However, if the notions underlying the prediction from Key and Lockard are re-examined then it may be possible to find grounds upon which to re-assess the relevance of political variables. From Key's analysis one would expect that party competition, like other political variables, would serve as an important explanation for public policy outputs. Whilst this statement may seem trivially true, it leads to an important question "what kinds of policy would party competition be important for?" Key's answer depends on what he believed to be the politically significant questions - questions of the sort which appear to have been forgotten in recent literature - "Who benefits from political disorganisation?" "Who benefits from policy outcomes?" or perhaps more to the point "Who does not benefit?" These are questions which I will apply to the housing policies of Derby and Portsmouth the case-study chapters of this thesis.

Party competition may not have an appreciable impact on some types of policies, but Key's discussion would enable us to specify the conditions under which it would have its greatest effect - the "have-not" orientated policies. If party competition serves to provide political organisation useful to the "have-nots" in their struggle with the "haves", then party competition would be most intimately related to those policies which are central to that struggle. Key's status conflict formulation enables us to discard the simplistic hypothesis that party competition is important for explaining policy in general. Moreover in the United States, but not necessarily in Britain, it suggests that party competition is not related to ideology. It could be hypothesised that party competition would differentially explain policies as a function of the centrality of the policy areas to the "have/have not" struggle.

If we expect the explanatory strength of party competition to vary with the type of policy, it seems only a short step to expect similar variation in the importance of other characteristics of the political system. Indeed sometimes other variables such as need are more important than party competition, although ideology is likely to influence other variables. Here one would be thinking of the perceptual and attitudinal distributions of the individuals who occupy the important political roles in state or local government systems. Hence, Lockard points out that competition may place rather rigid electoral restraints upon the kinds of policy appeals that can be made. However, he says, that where such external restraints do not exist, or are weakest, the greatest room would seem to exist for



individual variation in policy-making. In such situations the level of exploration would remain meagre (as long as a restriction on the measurement of non-individual based variables existed) where one cannot point to the influence of individuals. Such variables, however, may never be gathered systematically for any but a few states at any one point in time.

In Cnudde and McCrone's paper (1969) they raise a similar point in order that the importance of such variables should not be forgotten. They were trying to draw attention to the fact that very little effort has been given to looking at the measurement of the many political variables. From these additional theoretical considerations they derived a new model. The model states that there are an infinite number of political variables all of which serve to transform aspects of the environment into public policy. They did not know if the new model would fit any data. They claim however that it could be used to make predictions about what would happen if it was descriptive of the policy making process. It could be especially useful if only one or a few intervening variables were measured in a single study. Cnudde and McCrone therefore considered primary models which they believed had some kind of relevance to the issues of the literature. The first they called the Key-Lockard model because it was derived from their work and it called for a developmental sequence between three types of variables. The second they called the Dawson-Robinson model because those authors were the first of a series to postulate a spurious relationship between competition and social welfare policy. The third model set out by

Cnudde and McCrone was derived from a re-working of the theoretical strains of the other two and is really a hybrid of them both. This model predicts effects from both party competition and socio-economic development with party competition's effect as part of a developmental sequence. Cnudde and McCrone concluded in their paper that the examination of the methodology utilised in previous research into the effects of political variables on state expenditure policies found that the spurious model predominant in state politics literature rests on two weak pillars - first shaky empirical formulations and secondly over reliance on correlational analysis which can lead to unwarranted causal inferences. Further, that only for two of the six policy areas (per pupil expenditure policies and old age assistance) was the spurious model the more appropriate inference. Per pupil expenditure policies they concluded seem to be virtually a pure case of spuriousness as a function of the wealth of a state. They did not find sufficient support for relatively simple models in the areas of aid to dependent children and unemployment compensation, and they recommended their hybrid model as an alternative. They concluded by saying that in their opinion different models appear to be required for different policies.

iv) An Assessment of Expenditure Analysis

As may be seen from the preceeding two sections, therefore, some of the most interesting writing by both British and American scholars on Local Government policy making has used quantitative analysis. This methodology has however its drawbacks. It must be remembered that Government and Local Authorities do not just raise money. While

of course the ways in which the money is allocated is important, the statistical analysis of recent years leaves out policies which do not necessitate expenditure. Further, it does not attempt to see if the expenditures on the policies analysed are reaching the people for whom it is intended. If an examination of expenditure is carried out, then the examination may reveal those who benefitted, but those who do not claim or obtain the benefit may be discounted. For instance Child Benefit Allowance/Family Income Supplement is not claimed in Britain by all those who according to research carried out by the Child Poverty Action Group are eligible to claim. Neither does the statistical analysis show any indications as to whether, say, in education expenditure it is the children of rich parents who benefit most or the children of poor parents. Does such expenditure carry even further inequalities through maldistribution of resources? One cannot answer such questions merely by looking at expenditure figures. Further one might ask, does a larger expenditure level in one city than another mean that:-

- a) the first city provides a shelter service for its inhabitants?
- b) that the second city is more efficient and not so wasteful?

In any case

- c) what does an expenditure level indicate? How useful is the analysis of expenditure? Does it reflect a greater need in one city than another?

Expenditure figures represent what has gone, therefore they are historical. What about the future policy outcomes? Are they to be ignored? Are steps being taken to eradicate any former faults?

Does the statistical analysis help the planners at all? Are new and changing needs being met at the present time? Answers to such questions cannot be gathered from expenditure figures alone. The research therefore does not appear to identify needs not being met because it is concerned with expenditure, nor does it reveal if the "right" people are benefitting. Of course the reply of the analyst may be that they are merely statisticians and that it is not up to them to determine who is not being covered by the figures they produce. Some economists such as C.D. Foster and M.E. Beasley (1963) claim that such methodological problems can be overcome by using cost benefit analysis techniques. Others such as P. Self (1970) challenge this view, believing that it probably creates as many problems as it solves - for instance has social cost a monetary value?

v) An Assessment of the Time Dimension

Policy Analyses which do not take account of the time dimension have been criticised by B. Guy Peters (1972). Peters drew upon the work of John Harasangi (1960) who similarly Peters cites as an example the work of Flanigan and Fogelmann (1969) who found different relationships between urbanisation and agricultural populations with the dependent variable of democratic government affected by the time period selected. Similar findings in a particular time period will tend to be affected by the levels of policy in preceeding time periods. Hence the relationship found at any one point in time is in part a function of a developmental relationship across time.

Peters attempts to show that the relationship between socio-economic and political indicators and the dependent variable of social expenditure is a developmental relationship. Peters further attempts to show that the relationship between socio-economic variables, political variables and public expenditures are curvilinear where analysed across time. He divides the projection into three developmental stages - traditional, transitional and modern. In the traditional stage of policy formation, the levels of expenditure and policy are influenced largely by the ideas of the political decision-makers, and relatively little by socio-economic or political conditions of the society. The transitional period corresponds to the take-off in economic development theory. It is the period during which the policy area goes into sustained growth. During this period, the population becomes mobilised with respect to the policy in question, and presses demands on the political system for certain benefits. It is, claims Peters, in this period that the political system variables are of greatest importance. As the major lines of policy for the political system are established during the take-off period, the modern stage is largely one of reaction to environmental conditions of resource availability or necessity. Thus, after the major lines of policy are established incremental changes will result from either the need for additional benefits or the availability of more resources.

Peters says therefore that each policy has its own cycles of transition. Although the system as a whole may appear modern, even in its public policies, some policy areas may be traditional or

transitional. Peters cites as examples environmental control in the social democracies of Western Europe and Health Care in the United States. He shows that socio-economic indicators are hypothesised to have some influence during the take-off period. This is largely a function of the necessity of adequate resources for the implementation of any government programme. Hence, although this will be a period of significant political system influence, socio-economic conditions are also of importance. The take-off period is expected to be a period of relatively large changes in the dependent variable. During the take-off, there are significant changes in policy outputs of the system as it responds to the new demands. After this period, however, the system will reach something of an equilibrium with mainly incremental and small changes during the modern period. During the modern period the influence of socio-economic conditions would be expected to continue to be significant while the influence of the political variables declines. The relationship of the political system and the environment have been established with respect to the policy area before this period, and thus change in expenditures will be a function of changes in the availability of resources says Peters.

The data which Peters used covers the period from 1850 to 1965 in the United Kingdom and from 1865 to 1965 in Sweden. The data is based on a five-year sample rather than a year-by-year sample. These periods cover the most significant changes in social expenditures for the two countries as well as significant changes in the socio-economic and political systems.

The dependent variable is the total per capita expenditures for social purposes by the Central Government, converted to constant monetary units - and Peters decided to use a conglomerate of expenditures on health, education, welfare, pensions and unemployment benefit in order to reduce possible confusion or have large tables with a number of dependent variables. The major statistical device used was correlation analysis.

The results obtained provided one interpretation of the consistent finding of the lack of relationship between the political climate and public policy outcomes. Especially in the context of the American states, it can be said that many of the significant decisions regarding policy outputs were made prior to the times at which cross-sectional analyses were carried out. In those policy areas, the states had already passed into the "modern" period during which policy decisions are primarily incremental and based on the availability of resources. Examination of the same policy areas in different time periods might produce quite different results to those described above.

Any effective analysis of Housing Policy must include the time dimension. The main focus of this thesis is on the policy process in two housing authorities over a period of thirty years.

vi) An Assessment of Policy Styles

J.J. Richardson (1979) believes that the style of policy making today has blurred the distinction between central administration and bodies outside that perimeter, including local authorities. He believes that the influence of such agencies on the policy process has reduced the power wielded solely by the centre. He also believes that account must be taken of the "government contract sector" and the influence companies specialising in supplying the public sector can have indirectly upon policy-making. He believes that such organisations in fact form a policy community. Evidence to substantiate his findings will be discussed in this thesis, notably with regard to the adoption of system building promoted by certain building companies specialising in public sector housing contracts. Richardson states that while there is still something recognisable as the centre of government - the main departments with ministerial representation in the Cabinet, other policy styles have evolved. In 1981 he undertook a study of such policy styles. He believes that there are two primary features of policy making systems in devising a typology of policy styles and defines policy style as the interaction between:-

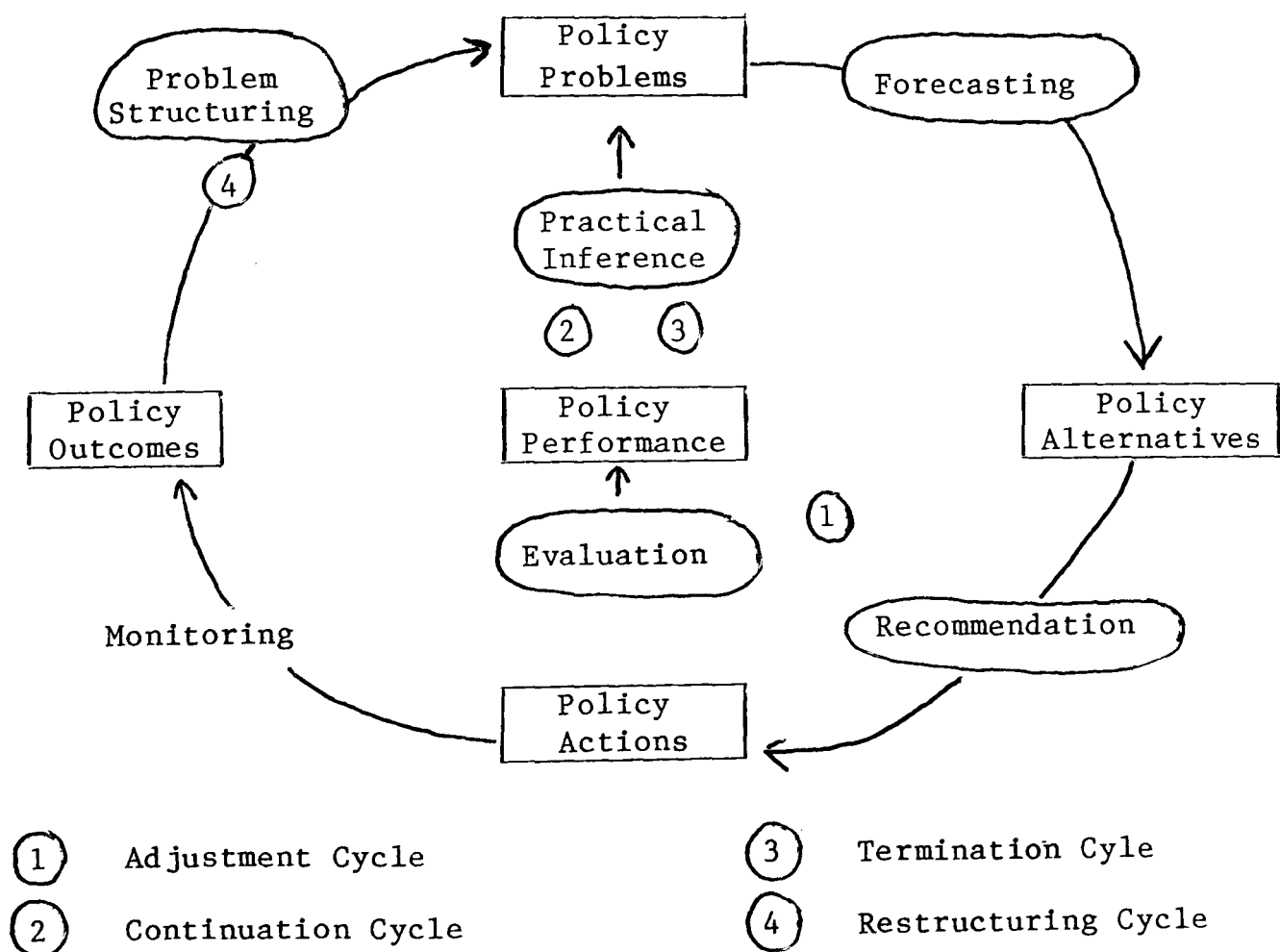
- a) the government's approach to problem solving
- b) the relationship between government and other actors in the policy process.

From this definition, Richardson suggests, it is possible to categorise societies into four basic 'policy styles'. Some societies are located in a category which emphasises consensus and a reactive



attitude to problem solving. Others appear to be located in a category also stressing consensus but with a set of normative values which emphasise an anticipatory or active approach to problem solving. Others, he believes are less concerned with consensus, but see the role of the state as being rather active and being willing to impose policy change in the face of opposition from organised interests, whilst the fourth category, to which he believes most post-industrial societies are moving, is where governments are increasingly reactive rather than anticipatory in their approach to problem solving, yet, if any policy change is to be achieved, it has to be enforced against the resistance of at least some organised groups.

## J. Richardson's Four Cycles in the Process of Policy Analysis



After J. Richardson (1981).

vii) The Dunleavy Thesis

Perhaps the most significant work on housing policy in the last decade has been that of Patrick Dunleavy, in particular his work "The Politics of Mass Housing in Britain 1945-1975".

Dunleavy's research is confined to high rise developments and does not address the whole gamit of housing provision. The aim of Dunleavy was to analyse the political process involved in the changing character of public housing construction policy up to the 1970's and to understand why public authorities produced forms of housing which were apparently at odds with majority preferences. He claims that the "public housing apparatus" at a national level exerts a considerable influence over the setting of housing construction policy. He believes that the two main production interests, the design professions and the construction industry operate in close contact with each other and Central Government in shaping production policy on public housing. Thus according to him public housing clients have had little or no direct say in the decision concerning their rehousing during the post-war period.

Dunleavy states that in 1946 the basic framework of the expensive-sites subsidy was left unchanged although subsidy scales were increased and a significant increment per flat was added for flats in blocks of at least 4 storeys with lifts. In 1956 there was a major policy reorientation. The old expensive site subsidy paid per dwelling was replaced by a much smaller one paid per acre and the primary encouragement to redevelop inner city areas shifted onto a new progressive storey-height subsidy. Under this flats of 4, 5 and

6 storeys qualified for very large increments to the basic house subsidy, wherever they were built. Above six storeys the subsidy rose by a fixed increment for each additional storey in the block. A flat in a 6 storey block received 2.3 times the basic subsidy paid on a house, and this ratio rose to 3.0 at 15 storeys and 3.4 at 20 storeys. Dunleavy argues that this encouragement to high building was justified primarily by reference to the running costs of high-rise construction associated with the need to include lifts and shift from brick construction to more expensive building materials.

Dunleavy believes that the Labour government's 1965 subsidy change lead to a major change in the high-flat subsidy since the higher costs of high-rise were now reflected in the variable basic subsidy. The increments to the progressive storey-height subsidy above 6 storeys were abolished but a substantial flat-rate addition at the 1956 rate was retained. The new subsidy created a strong central-government incentive to keep public housing costs down and led to a radical reappraisal of the methods of control previously used. Since high-rise was a particularly expensive building form the introduction of mandatory housing cost-yard sticks in 1967 bore especially heavily on high flats. Over and above this, Dunleavy believes that the government had clearly decided to discard high-rise building. New, restrictive density ceilings for public housing schemes were imposed and the yardsticks were calculated on the assumption that the most economical mix of building forms would be used at each density level, a mix which implied minimal high-rise use even at the density ceiling. Dunleavy asserts that these changes in Central Government subsidies and cost control methods had a direct impact on the housing

construction policies of local authorities. He believes that the period of high-rise building in Britain during the 1950's and 1960's bears the characteristic hallmarks of a "boom", a swiftly accelerating increase, followed by a dramatic downturn. The existence of strong national trends brings out the potential importance of an analysis of national policy-making on the issue, and the prima facie evidence of direct influence from central government subsidy changes was found to be impressive by Dunleavy. He says that the claims made for high-rise and industrial high-rise in particular in terms of technological or industrial progress strongly suggests that many of the supposed benefits were based upon arguments for industrial concentration. If the construction of public housing could be regularised and improved in the hands of a smaller number of larger firms then a variety of technological industrial benefits would follow, it was believed. Dunleavy says that it was widely argued that public authorities had an incentive to build high in order to create these benefits; it was very seldom argued that these benefits were already available. Dunleavy correctly asserts that once high-rise building had got underway the initial influences were supplemented by powerful feedback processes flowed from the output of high-rise by local authorities to the construction industry, producing an increased commitment to high building by firms which in turn resulted in increased pressure for high-flat contracts on local authorities and central government. Dunleavy believes that there are relatively few influences involved in national level policy formation and debate which affected local authorities directly. He believes that apart from industrial pressures and feedback via the national government system all other

influences were mediated to local authorities via the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. He believes the complexity of the processes influencing the Ministry and indeed operating within the Ministry itself made its influences on local authorities "odd". He further believes that the "filtering" process had a most significant affect on explaining how it was that the architectural profession had less influence on local authorities than the construction industry. He believes that the non-involvement of the professional associations in direct contact with local authorities meant that their influence was bound up in the evolution of central government policy although the profession did have some impact on the national local government system.

In the concluding chapter of this thesis I will compare Dunleavy's findings with those of my own, and apply his findings to the evidence I have obtained in Derby and Portsmouth.

viii) An assessment of variables

Political scientists have expended great efforts in recent years trying to specify common variables which help one to analyse the ways by which different issues are raised, disputed, coped with and sometimes "solved".

T. Lowi (1964) put forward a typology for discriminating among public policies. Lowi describes three major patterns of political conflict which he says are to be associated with three different types of public policies - distributive, regulative and redistributive.

Distributive policies, which parcel out public benefits to interested parties, provoke a stable alliance of diverse groups that seek portions of the "pork barrel". Regulative policies, which constrain the relations between and among competing groups and persons provide incentives for shifting conditions, pluralistic competition and the standard forms of compromise. Redistributive policies, which re-allocate benefits and burdens among broad socio-economic population groupings, foster polarised and enduring conflict in which large national pressure groups play central roles. Lowi characterised three patterns of conflict, but identified them by their cause - the type of policy. It is clear that actual policies are never that distinct. All public programmes redistribute resources, but most are not primarily attempts to do so. Likewise, government programmes depend upon the ultimate capacity to regulate the conduct of citizens, but most do not make such regulation their prime objective. Most government programmes involve the unequal distribution of goods and services, though the question of which town or which county

should receive them is not equally salient. Whatever the cause of conflict, one can assess which pattern individual policy conflicts illustrate.

T. Marmor (1964) in his study applied Lowi's classifications to the implementation of Medicare in the United States. Marmor asserts that the conflict over Medicare identifies Lowi's redistributive policies. "The themes of that conflict - the threat of "big" government, the interests of the have-nots versus the haves - illustrate the cluster of issues that arise when a policy question involves the issue of whether broad categories of persons are to be better or worse off" (Lowi).

Marmor says that the debate over Medicare, was in fact cast in terms of class conflict, of socialised medicine versus the voluntary American way, of private enterprise and local control against the arms of the federal government. He says that Medicare politics differed from discrete, localised pursuit of pork barrel benefits or the shifting coalitions and compromise of regulatory politics.

Many battles for social policy are fought in public but settled in private. The national pressure groups concerned make enormous and costly efforts to define disputes in acceptable ways to their members. Within the bureaucracy, there are continuing efforts to articulate within and balance these rival claims in the legislation which is proposed to government. Major compromises are built in social legislation - such as Medicare in the United States and the

1946 National Health Service Act in the United Kingdom. One may deduce therefore that one role of government in such policy areas as health is to ratify the agreement that arises out of the bureaucracy and the class agents represented there.

Graham Allison (1968), distinguished three conceptual models found in policy studies:-

The Rational Actor

The Organisational Process

The Bureaucratic Politics Model

The Rational Actor model involves thinking about a government as if it were a single rational actor. This is perhaps the most common analytic orientation of political scientists. According to the rational actor model, the happenings of national politics are the "choices of domestic actors". Policy is understood as the action of the rational decision maker. The choices and actions of the nations are thus 'viewed as means calculated to achieve national goals and purposes'.

According to the Organisational Process model, what the national policy analyst calls choices and acts are in fact outputs of organisations functioning according to standard patterns of behaviour. To explain a particular occurrence, one 'identifies the relevant organisation' (or organisations) and displays the pattern of procedures and conventions out of which the action emerged. The



basic unit of analysis is the organisation, and the focal concepts include routine behaviour, standard operating procedures, biased information, incremental change and organisational perspective. A central assumption is that organisations change slowly, that behaviour in time  $t+1$  will resemble that of time  $t$ . Predictions thus project from the 'structure, programmes, and past behaviour of relevant organisations'.

The Bureaucratic Politics model considers domestic policy to consist of "outcomes", of a series of overlapping bargaining games. Two fundamental assumptions are involved, that governments are made up of desperate, decentralised organisations headed by leaders with unequal power and that such leaders, in the course of policy making, engage in bargaining. These players, operating with different perspectives and with different priorities, struggle for preferred outcomes with the power at their disposal. Explanations in this third model, proceed from descriptions of the position and power of the principle players. What matters, in any event, is not simply the reasons which support a course of action, nor the routines of organisations which enact an alternative, but the power and skill of proponents and opponents, of the action, nor the routines of organisations which enact on alternative, but the power and skill of the action in question. Allison is concerned with the differences between organisations and organisational style. An extension to this line is the work of J.M. Lee (1974) whose concern is with the style of individuals and their influence on policy outcomes and their influence on the organisational structure. Lee studied the county

government of Cheshire, following the appointment of a new clerk to the Cheshire County Council. He observed the fact that the new clerk made a large number of changes in the internal structuring of the council and in approaches to policy. Lee concluded that there may be differences in policy outputs by councils of the same party due to the influence of chief officer's attitudes and opinions.

Jeffrey L. Pressman and Aaron B. Wilsdovsky (1973) focussed their attention upon the formulation of policy, and looked at the complex communication linkages involved in implementing public policies, and they found it necessary to sub title their work 'How great expectations in Washington are dashed in Oakland'. Their work deals with the planning and building of Oakland Airport, to serve as a second airport to San Francisco. They contrast the roles seen by the Federal Government, the Federal Aviation Agency, the Oakland City Council and World Airways (a major charter airline in the United States who were seeking an operating base).

In both Britain and the United States there is a well-developed body of literature on the relative policy impact of "party", "needs" and "resources", following in the mould of Key. This follows the predilection for consultation and the strong desire to avoid action that might challenge well-entrenched interests. Much of the literature is posing the question - what are the determinants of policy? Indeed this is the basic question behind this thesis.

It is wise when making cross national comparisons to take account of the differing national cultures and political systems since these will affect the policy making process. The relationship between Central and Local and/or State Government, the form and style of Central Government are going to affect how policy decisions are made and implemented. In the United States, individual states jealously guard their right to determine the level of welfare policies. American research tends to indicate that it is competition between political parties which determines the level of welfare policy provided, rather than ideology.

In Britain, the research has tended to follow the American pattern, some years in its wake. The indications are that party ideologies at both the Central and Local levels are the dominant factors; welfare policies being pursued in furtherance of political belief rather than as part of the competition between Conservative and Labour for office. This has been so with aspects of education policy and the introduction of comprehensive education and with the level of building and the sale of council houses. In the case study within this thesis, note will be taken of party, competition and need, and each will be related to the other. We shall see that in the immediate post war period, need was the determining factor, in both cities, but that as the housing programmes gathered momentum, so party ideology became more important. However, as we shall see in the case study, political ideologies such as selling council houses were evident in Portsmouth in 1948, when need was arguably at its greatest.

Organisation behaviour and organisational style will also be examined, since these factors can have a great bearing on policy outcomes. Organisations, such as local authorities, can as Richardson has pointed out, act as pressure groups to the extent that they can influence the policy process and reduce the level of power at the centre. Likewise, professionalism can also deflect policy making, since professional groups tend to want to protect their own interest and safeguard the standing of their profession, and their own standing within the profession.

One of the greatest difficulties faced by researchers analysing public policy is in trying to identify a predominant style. This is usually presented in the form of sectorisation of policy making, but policy making does not occur in water-tight compartments. There is interaction between the interested parties in a formal and informal sense; interest groups are formed by the consumers of the service and by the providers of the service; central and local politicians are involved. The water-tight compartment approach is invalid. It is therefore necessary to study a policy "network" and an examination of the "housing policy network" will be embodied into this work.

Political Scientists usually adopt a case study method of evaluation; case studies inevitably mix the peculiar and the typical. By focussing on one decision, one set of governmental actions or one policy issue, the case analyst cannot "pursue" generalisations. He can however comment upon generalisations about politics in at least three useful ways:-

- 1) Case studies can be evaluated as instances of particular analytic methods.
- 2) Case studies can illustrate some of the problems and prospects of procedural generalisations about political behaviour.
- 3) Case studies can offer important instances of "who gets what" within a political system.

Case studies, in order to further their credibility, need to take account of "policy failures" and indeed one could contend that the study of policy failure would in itself make an interesting area for research.

By using conceptual frameworks - such as the ones put forward by Lowi and Allison - it is possible to structure the complex political universe for the analyst and in that sense they may be likened to glasses, since they are instruments which shape the field of vision, determine the level of detail, clear the objects viewed, and limit the range of consideration.

Part of the purpose of this thesis is to cast light on the differing policy styles between local housing authorities. The divergence between intention and actuality is also a theme followed in this thesis.

In this thesis I take account of the themes explored in this chapter. The thesis is not a traditional piece of local government writing. It focuses specifically on the policy process and the policy outcomes. Reference will be made to some of the literature covered and the models assessed in this introduction.

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## CHAPTER TWO THE GUIDING HAND

- i) Traditional Models of Central/Local Relations
- ii) Doubts about Traditional Models
- iii) New Approaches
- iv) Local Government Autonomy or Discretion or Inter-  
Personal Skills?
- v) The Financial Influence of Central Government
- vi) Paying the Price
- vii) Does the Piper's Paymaster Call the Tune?

## CHAPTER TWO      THE GUIDING HAND

In Britain of course there is a Unitary Constitution and Parliamentary Sovereignty. Nevertheless, there is also a strong tradition of local self government. This tradition flourished in particular in the second half of the 19th Century when the democratically elected councils were given enhanced power and status to develop numerous municipal initiatives. However, central restraint and regulation also became significant in the 19th Century and became even more dominant in the 20th Century. The tension between local discretion and central regulation is one of the most notable features of local/central relations in the last 50 years. The tension has been particularly acute since 1945.

### i) Traditional Models of Central/Local Relations

Much of the current literature and knowledge of central/local relations is based on two models:-

- i) the Principal/Agent Model
- ii) the Partnership Model (see Hartley 1969)

Using these two models, much recent literature (eg. King 1975) indicates that Local Government is moving from the situation described in the partnership model to that of the agent model, although Regan (1983) sees this claim as oversimplified.

The centralising trend is attributed largely to the increasing dependence of Local Government upon Central Government finance, although on top of this, Central Government has acquired more powers of detailed control. R.A.W. Rhodes (1979) states that there is now a "conventional critique" of the literature and says that although it is accepted that local authorities have received an increasing proportion of their total income from Central Government it is argued that the consequences of this trend are not entirely those predicted. There is still considerable variation between local authorities in their patterns of expenditure as is excellently illustrated by N. Boaden's work (1971) discussed in Chapter One. R.T. Alford (1969) suggests that there is limited standardisation within local authority budgets of the proportion of resources allocated to the various services. R.A.W. Rhodes, like Dearlove (1972), suggests that local authorities are more accurately viewed as political systems in their own right. They do not simply follow central direction. To a considerable extent they make their own decisions about their level and pattern of expenditure. He further suggests that central controls do not have the predicted consequences. Central Government does have many controls at its disposal but they constitute only a potential for control. Rhodes questions the extent to which Central Governments' use their powers and asks how the controls work in practice. Certainly central departments vary in their willingness to exercise control. J.A.G. Griffith (1966) in his classic study shows that government departments adopted laissez-faire, regulatory or promotional roles in their dealings with Local Government. Moreover, local authorities vary in their willingness to accept control. Well

known examples of unwillingness include comprehensive education (Buckinghamshire Education Committee's refusal in 1978/79 to implement comprehensive education proposals), the sale of council houses (Norwich City Council's refusal in 1981/2 to implement a policy for the sale of council houses) and the charging of "economic" or "fair" rents (Clay Cross Council's refusal to implement such a policy in 1972). Even when a local authority flouts central control to the extent of law breaking, as in the case of Clay Cross (1972), Central Government can have difficulty remedying the situation.

ii) Doubts About Traditional Models

In discussing models of central-local relations, there is a need to consider not just academic work, but also government reports such as the Layfield Report (1976). This report, on Local Government finance, suggests that a major problem in central-local relations is ambiguity and confusion in the allocation of financial responsibilities. The Committee's proposals emphasise the need for greater political accountability clarified through concentrating revenue raising and expenditure decisions at either the central or local level.

The approach to central-local relations suggested by the Layfield Report is extended further by the report of the Central Policy Review Staff (1977). This report looks at the many channels of communication and the variety of institutions involved in the relationship. Rhodes suggests that it adds complexity to the Layfield Report's themes of ambiguity and confusion and Rhodes

suggests that this is a picture of central-local relations which is more realistic than the views represented either by the "conventional wisdom" or by the "conventional critique".

R.A.W. Rhodes says that there is a need for a theory. However theorising about concepts such as "local discretion" and "local autonomy" is fraught with difficulty since data may be elusive and/or emotive. He further suggests that even if the narrower term "local discretion" is used, there remain inadequacies in the literature. Certainly, as we saw in Chapter One, much has been written on the importance of financial resources for explaining variations in the degree of Local Government discretion (N. Boaden, B. Davies et al). The literature does note a number of other factors which can influence local discretion including administrative, political, constitutional and professional factors. Rhodes suggests that what is not defined with any degree of precision or discussed at any length is the relative importance of the various influences on local discretion and he cites as an example political influences and their ability to compensate for financial dependence. Clearly, as Rhodes suggests, there is a need to explore the range of factors which affect "local discretion" - that is the legal realm of policy possibilities as distinct from local autonomy - the real realm of policy possibilities.

R.A.W. Rhodes says that the term "central-local relations" is frequently limited to the links between central departments and local authorities; he suggests however, that there are fine problems of defining the appropriate unit of analysis, but he says that for many purposes the sections of a given department will be more appropriate

and as D. Regan (1978) suggests, there can be marked differences in the attitudes and behaviour of different sections of the same central department towards local authorities. Further, many other public sector organisations besides Central Government departments interact with local authorities, in particular the regional offices of the central departments, and we shall see in subsequent chapters the influence that they and in particular the Regional Directors have, and their interaction with chief officers upon policy outcomes. Rhodes also suggests that there is a problem in describing the pattern of links between Central Government departments and local authorities, looking at the corporate element in the links, and the problem of measuring the alleged complexity of the relationships. He poses the question as to whether policies are not implemented because they require the agreement and cooperation of too great a number of public sector organisations.

J.K. Friend et al (1974) studied the decision making process leading up to the expansion of Droitwich, Worcestershire. They looked at the influence of agencies upon Central Government and the necessity to bargain with Public Sector Organisations. They showed that whilst it was Central Government policy to combat inner urban slums with the creation of "overspill" towns such as Droitwich for Birmingham, largely through the provision of publicly rented housing, such migrations of population from inner cities to areas of planned overspill carried implications for the distribution of social and economic opportunities within regions. Migrant families became able to enjoy higher standards of housing and other physical amenities. These benefits were accompanied by widespread dislocation of

established patterns of social relationships, the effects of which are much more difficult to evaluate. The trend towards dispersal from the conurbations has continued, accompanied by a general drift of the population to the South East. Some gradual, yet significant changes have taken place since the 1950's and 1960's in the nature of the controls available to government to exert influence over these trends. Most significantly as far as this thesis is concerned, there has been a gradual shift of emphasis from public towards private sector housing. This has left the government with less direct power to channel the movement of population. Additionally, the increase of car ownership has increased the mobility of a large sector of the working population, making it more difficult to integrate government controls over housing, employment, transportation and other services. J.K. Friend believes, therefore, that Central Government is no longer necessarily the dominant actor within the planning process, since the factors outlined above now have to be reckoned with. He further believes that changes in Local Government structure in 1974 allowed a trend to commence towards innovation and experiment at both the regional and local levels of their inter-agency planning. Therefore the interaction in Droitwich was a reciprocal bargaining relationship.

Owen Hartley (1969) in his thesis on Housing Policy in Four Lincolnshire Towns, attempted to deal with the twin problems of the relationship between Central and Local Government and who decides policy at the local level. He carried out his research through the medium of a study of a major local authority service, housing, as

provided in four Lincolnshire towns, Cleethorpes, Grimsby, Lincoln and Scunthorpe between 1919 and 1959. Hartley examined the traditional models of central-local relations of agent and partnership. He suggests that the formal system of Councils, Committees, Chairmen and Parties should be supplemented by considering other factors like outside pressures, the role of the individual councillor and of the official, which are often as significant or more significant in policy. In terms of who controlled local housing policy, Hartley concluded that in Cleethorpes, it was broadly the Committee, in Grimsby the Chairmen and Parties, in Lincoln and Scunthorpe a general consensus between Councils, Committees and Parties.

In re-examining the problem of central-local relations in his conclusion to his study, he suggests that the method employed by Central Government in controlling local authorities played a critical part in reducing the visibility of conflict on policy matters, even when conflict was vigorous. Hartley suggests that control of policy is not achieved by the use of major weapons, like the power to act in default of a local authority (although this was used at Clay Cross), but by indirect approaches, threats and the use of powers to sanction particular projects. This avoids public conflict and obscures the battle in a fog of disrupted detail. Hartley suggests that such methods have their disadvantages. They are biased towards curtailing rather than stimulating a local authority even though the latter is what national policy may require. It is a control of detail in order to control policy, which means that National



Government is naturally overstretched and local authorities are resentful, whilst failing to alter local attitudes in any way over a long period of time. Hartley recommends a housing inspectorate to overcome these disadvantages of the present system of control. However, such an inspectorate would be likely to sour relations between local housing authorities and Central Government. Hartley suggests that there are two models in the relationship of local authorities to Central Government. Firstly, an interdependence of local authorities on Central Government and vice versa, and secondly the relationship of agent and principal.

J. Dearlove (1973) points out that the most frequently cited explanation for the subservience of local authorities is their growing reliance upon central finance. Another possible factor he suggests is the desire to ensure nationwide uniformity of provision in the welfare state, so that people receive equal standards of service no matter where they live. Dearlove points out that there has been little attempt, for example, to relate the degree of effective control over local authorities to the extent of dependence on central finance.

In their relations with local authorities, government departments may use differing combinations of advice, exhortation, promotion and inspection with a greater or lesser degree of effectiveness. The limitations to which some of these strategies are subject are explored by Dearlove in his case study of Kensington and Chelsea. He examined the reaction of the local authority to Ministerial advice

and direction on such issues as the appointment of an architect at chief officer level, the introduction of parking meters, the imposition of council house rent increases and the acquisition of land for public open space. His finding was that the actions of the borough in going contrary to Ministerial wishes on these issues showed that it was prepared to stand out against the advice and direction contained in government white papers, circulars,, private meetings with Ministers and personal letters. He concluded from these cases that the impact of Central Government upon the day to day decisions of local authorities often depends on local responsiveness and the preparedness of local authorities to accept advice or guidance which in law the Central Government has no strict authority to give and no legal power to enforce.

Just as Dearlove reveals the inadequacy of the principal/agent model, for describing the relationship between Kensington and Chelsea and Central Government, so J. Gyford (1976) cast doubt on the importance of national party linkages. What is apparent is that in both the Labour and Conservative parties there are neither constitutional mechanisms, nor the resources, nor the inclination to permit the effective control of councillors by their parties. The main thrust of central party involvement in Local Government, suggests Gyford, is in the fields of discussion and consultation on present and projected studies, in the provision of information and advice through study groups, publications and conferences, and in serving the party groups on the three national local authority associations which are increasingly recognised as important links between the local and

national party politicians. There is no attempt to lay down any single party line to be obeyed by party councillors everywhere regardless of local circumstances.

If Boaden's studies are examined, as in Chapter One of this work, it becomes apparent that the actual performance of local authorities is by no means subject to rigid constraint and certainly lends little credence to the notion that Local Government is used effectively to secure a uniform provision of services nationwide. Various writers have pointed out for example the wide difference in expenditure per head on such services as education, social services, health, housing, libraries and fire and police protection. Similar conclusions have been drawn for individual services. For instance, the Seebohm Committee concluded that Local Authority personal social services were not fully meeting needs for which by statute, they were responsible. Comparative statistics indicate considerable differences in the quality of services provided in different areas. "Such unevenness does not bear any systematic relationship to differences in local need" (Seebohm Report Para 74).

Radcliffe-Maud and Wood (1974) suggest that there seems to be in practice considerable scope for a local authority to make its own interpretation of the duties and opportunities bequeathed it by Central Government. They state that "Between the minimum of services which must be provided and the maximum which a council may not exceed, there is a wide area of discretion". The provision of services certainly should not be seen merely in terms of spending

more or less on prescribed services. This would be to minimise the ability of local councils to make innovations in the range and format of services they offer. C. Cossey (1974) points out that local authorities have made individual innovations in such fields as establishing advice centres, free travel for pensioners, tenant management in housing and neighbourhood councils. As a last resort for the authority determined to go its own way there is always the possibility of simple (even if unlawful) evasion of Central Government requirements - ie. Clay Cross 1972, Norwich 1981.

Clearly, politics exist at the local as well as the national level. A local council may well be an authoritative centre of decision making in those matters, remitted to its charge by Parliament. On other matters, there will be equally authoritative local decisions emanating from such sources as the local offices of Central Government departments, statutory undertakings and nationalised industries.

Given the fact that parties operate in Local Government and that there is every likelihood of their continuing to do so, Gyford suggests that it is of some importance to establish the impact which they make on the work of Local Authorities. In particular the question arises as to how far the parties justify their local existence by pursuing distinctive policies when in control of a council. Boaden found that in terms of provision of particular services, Labour controlled authorities were likely to spend more on education than were other parties whatever the context of need,

were more likely to submit plans for secondary school reorganisation along comprehensive lines, and showed a distinct tendency to build more council houses and to pay higher rate subsidies on housing. Similarly, Davies (1972) identified a clear relationship between the extent of Labour representation and certain variables in the levels of welfare provision. Thus in terms of children's services, Davies comments on the link between Labour representation and a 'protective' attitude to children in care.

Gyford suggests that divisions between the parties, when they occur, which he says is not all the time, relates to some fundamental issue which cannot be brushed aside; issues of basic Local Government policy and also of the defence of the different interests for which parties stand out when they are sustained. Political parties represent genuine divergences of view, they give coherence to the work of local authorities, they function as a means of political recruitment and on electing organisation and they represent the demands and interests of differing social groups both organised and unorganised.

From the above resumé of literature, it is apparent that the traditional models of central/local relations are unsatisfactory. Rhodes suggests that even if the narrower term of "local discretion" is used, there remain inadequacies in the literature. As we have seen, the literature has moved away from the traditional theories towards new frameworks of analysis.

### iii) New Approaches

Rhodes believes that the existing models are not useful tools of analysis. Moreover, it is only possible to develop a framework for analysis and to relate the study of central-local relations to broader issues by exploring a far wider range of literature than is normally associated with the subject.

Rhodes suggests instead a power-dependence model drawn from organisational sociology. He explains that the frameworks for the analysis of variations in central-local relations contain five propositions. Firstly he believes that any organisation occupies a complex environment which has manifold repercussions upon it because this environment is composed of other organisations which are sources of needed resources. Secondly, in order to achieve their goals, the organisations in this network of relationships have to exchange resources. He says thirdly that although decision-making within an organisation is constrained by other organisations the dominant coalition retains some discretion. The appreciative system of the dominant coalition influences which relationships are seen as a problem and which resources will be sought. The dominant coalition fourthly employs strategies within known rules of the game to regulate the process of exchange. Variations in the degree of discretion are a product of the goals and the relative power of potential of interacting organisations. Finally, this relative power potential is a product of the resources of each organisation of the rules of the game and the process of exchange between environments.

Rhodes has subsequently extended his 1979 S.S.R.C. work and in 1981 published a full account, drawing heavily on the power-dependence model of J.D. Thompson (1967), an organisational sociologist. Later in this study, details will be presented of organisational interaction in the context of the power-dependence model.

Apart from the Rhodes approach, another new model is to trace the impact at the local level of ideology. J. Gyford (1976) suggested that much of the literature relating to Local Government in England lacks political dimensions. He suggests that the question "who gets what?" can be asked of Local as well as Central Government, and he rejects the common belief that politics at the local level is improper. This too is explained later in this thesis.

iv) Local Government Autonomy or Discretion or Inter-Personal Skills?

The pertinent question to pose at this stage is whether or not English Local Government enjoys either Local Autonomy or Discretion.

T.N. Clarke (1974) suggests that local autonomy is a product of a range of factors (eg. national factors, natural physical resources, social and economic resources, institutions supporting localism and loyal local elites). He further suggests that intergovernmental links are only one of a number of factors influencing the degree of local autonomy. He says that too frequently the term "local autonomy" is used loosely with little recognition of these problems. "Local discretion" should be reserved for the analysis of the extent to which the scope for Local Government discretion is limited by other sections of government.

Most observers of Local Government would concede that central decisions are sometimes based on personal or partisan factors, and that partisan, system and patronage politics do occur. Before J. Gyford and Mari Jones, little research had been carried out into political channels of influence between Central and Local Government. Such channels do exist particularly between local and national political hierarchies. There also exist other links such as delegations to ministers, joint committees, social contacts and conversations at conferences. What influence can such links have upon the implementation of policy? This is an aspect to be examined in subsequent chapters of this thesis. Added to this, there is a need to focus similar attention upon the attitudes of officers. Many opportunities exist for officers to exert influence on Central Government on behalf of their employing authority, the local authority associations and their professional associations. The chief officer will have contacts with his counterpart in Central Government and where appropriate, with the regional officers of the central department, and if necessary he can lobby such individuals. Since they are likely to be either policy formulators, or at least influential, such lobbying can be beneficial to an authority in favour with such individuals. Therefore, both the political and the professional channels of influence may provide the means for preserving or extending the discretion of local authorities.

The influence of professionalism has been studied by R. Pahl (1970), who believes that professionalism has reduced Central Government powers, since he thinks that all experts and professionals are bound



by their ideologies. The apparent conflict between the planners and the planned may be nothing in comparison with the conflicts between experts or, indeed, between those for whom experts plan. He believes that when we begin to doubt the expert and ask 'whose wisdom?', we begin to realise that making the choice between alternative futures is perhaps too daunting for most people. Clear goals cannot always be set because that would imply a political consensus. Basic conflicts over the scarce resources of power, wealth and prestige are reflected in political struggles. Planning which is inevitably concerned with the allocation of scarce resources must be political.

The subsequent chapters of this thesis take account of the comments of Rhodes, Clarke, Boaden, Dunleavy, Gyford, and Pahl. In the research which has been undertaken in Portsmouth and Derby account has been taken of the complex interactions which occur at both the political level and the executive level, between central and local authorities in both a formal and informal sense. The component parts clearly include the officials at both central and local levels, the councillors, members of parliament and the electorate. In terms of political practice, however, experience shows that the list must be extended to include political parties, pressure groups and the media, all of which at times seek some influence over Local Government and its working. It may be suggested, that if anything, Rhodes tends to underestimate the power of informal links in the governmental process.

v) The Financial Influence of Central Government

Obviously finance is a crucial factor in Central/Local relations in Britain. It is particularly affected by the income over which Local Authorities have control themselves. In Britain, this is rates, fees and charges. Given the difficulty of raising fees and charges or levying them at all, rate income is the only significant local source. The relationship is also effected by the size and form of grant in aid and by borrowing controls.

Specific grants tend to be a more effective form of control. They tend to be on a percentage or unit basis. Naturally a grant paid for a particular service or part service may be withheld by Central Government with potent effect. General grants are a much less effective means of control. These are paid to subsidise broad areas of policy and often allow wide discretion in usage.

During the period covered by the thesis, the system was switched from a specific to a predominantly general basis in 1957. It was made even more general in 1966 with the introduction of the Rate Support Grant (R.S.G.).

The White Paper which foreshadowed the changes brought about by the Local Government Act, 1929, suggests that a proper system of grants should:-

- i) recognise that a fair contribution should be made from the Exchequer towards the cost of local services;

- ii) ensure that local authorities have complete financial interest in their administration;
- iii) be adapted in its working to the needs of the areas;
- iv) permit the greatest freedom of local administration and initiative;
- v) provide for sufficient general control and advice from the central department to ensure a reasonable standard of performance.

The Institute of Municipal Treasurers and Accountants in 1954 commissioned a research study to review the system of Exchequer grants in England and Wales. This study suggested that the ideal grant would have the following characteristics: it would be simple, intelligible and equitable, it would encourage local economy in the use of public funds, it would leave a wide area of local autonomy in the administration of local finances; and it would enable central departments to control, in at least a general way, the standards of the services for which they are ultimately responsible. These characteristics follow very closely those set out in the 1929 White Paper.

Almost all grants to aid particular services in the period covered by this research were percentage grants. That is, they were grants distributed as a specific proportion of a local authority's approved expenditure on the whole or part of a service. The percentage grant has the advantage of being simple and intelligible, but its degree of equity is questionable. It is equitable in terms of time, since

it takes account of price increases and the expansion of a service automatically. It is not equitable however, between authorities since a poor authority does not have sufficient resources to spend as much - so percentage grants accrue to the richer authorities. (The resources element of the Rate Support Grant was designed to "even out" such deficiencies). Neither did percentage grants take account of the needs of the various local authorities. They also enabled and encouraged the more progressive local authorities to improve standards of service without undue imposition on local rates; however, they tend to attract detailed control of expenditure and this detracts from local responsibility.

In comparison, a general grant may be simple or complex - it depends on the formula and whether it is intelligible depends upon the way in which the general grant system is intended to operate. Different areas have different costs for a variety of reasons. For a general grant to take into account all these variations it would need to be extremely complex. The more diverse the variations and the more complex and obscure the reasons for the variations, the less simple and intelligible the grant becomes. It could also be argued that if it does not take all these factors into account then it becomes less equitable. If appropriate formulae can be devised then the general type of grant meets many, though not all, of the concepts of the ideal grant. It encourages economy in the use of public funds; it leaves a wide area of local autonomy in the administration of local finances. It is more questionable whether it enables the Central Government to control the standards for which they were ultimately responsible; but in fact such control may be easily

exercised outside the grant system, eg. by use of inspectors as in the education service.

The 1954 I.M.T.A. study considered as an important limitation of general grants their impotence in starting a new service or new development within a service. During this period most housing grant in aid was in the form of unit grants. The reason is that in these circumstances, it is unlikely that the costs could be estimated or forecast with any degree of accuracy and the cost per unit of service performed or demanded is likely to vary very widely between authorities. The study also considered that, as long as local authorities are allowed discretion by central departments in a variety of ways the scope for the operation of unit grants will be small for there can be no uniformity of costs where there is no uniformity of method. N.P. Hepworth (1970) believes that the main weakness of unit grants is not that the concept itself is fundamentally wrong (in fact he believes the reverse to be the case) but rather that it is very often difficult, if not impossible, to find the right weights for the units, or even decide on the units themselves.

The Rate Support Grant was introduced in 1966 and comprises three elements, a needs element, a resources element and a domestic element. The amount local authorities receive through this grant can have a major influence on their expenditure. In the financial year 1977-78, the percentage of planned Local Government expenditure to be financed by the grants was reduced from 65 per cent to 61 per cent. The 1979-83 government during its term of office reduced the

level of grant financing from 61% to 51.9% for 1984/85. The Department of Environment circular 120/76 stated that the government believed that a grant rate of 61% should be a strong influence in ensuring that expenditure is kept in line with the government's expenditure plans while avoiding widespread excessive rises in rates. This contrasts sharply with the present Government's policy of reducing the rate support grant and exhorting local authorities not to increase their rating levels beyond the level of inflation, and indeed of capping the disobedient. The exhortations of Mr Jenkin or Mr Heseltine are not unlike those expressed in circular 120/76 quoted above, the sentiments of a Labour administration.

Central Government now consults with representatives of Local Government in the Consultative Council on Local Government Finance. The council was formed in 1975 and it can give the local authorities the government's views on Local Government expenditure and take account of the comments of local authority representatives. After consultation the government can give "guidance" on the general level of expenditure and in the present economic climate that "guidance" is respected by most local authorities. John Taylor (1979) suggested that one reason for the creation of the Consultative Council on Local Government Finance was "the search for greater control of public expenditure in the mid 1970's". Improved consultation rather than a more "directive" alternative was preferred by Central Government. The Local Authority Associations were unanimous in defending the "independence" of Local Government, manifested in the block grant

and their members' taxation powers, against increased central control. Improved consultation for the local associations could therefore enable them to defend the freedom of their members. Consultation also offered the prospect of inducing a more cohesive and co-ordinated set of central policies and programmes in respect of Local Government, in place of the contradictions at the centre with which local authorities had hitherto been faced.

Taylor concludes that the Local Authority Associations clearly value the Rate Support Grant in its block form as a manifestation of freedom. Similarly, he says, on the capital expenditure side, the block allocation for the 'locally determined sector' is equally valued. He says that since the C.C.L.G.F. was formed in 1975, there has been a tendency for the Rate Support Grant to become a series of specific grants.

The main problem in grant distribution is to measure the needs of an authority and the cost of meeting these needs. The calculations used to be made by using a "weighted multiple regression analysis" to identify a limited number of factors that together produce a formula which approximates to the expenditure of most authorities, even though it did not actually give the expenditure of any one of them.

The factors calculated by use of this statistical technique are rather different from the factors used in the rate support grant before the reorganisation of Local Government. As a result there

were major variations in the distribution of grant aid and when the 1974/5 formula was announced adjustments were made to the statistically calculated formula to reduce changes from the previous year. The term "damping" was used to describe such adjustments.

Attempts were made each year to improve the formula. These attempts have led in recent years to a relative switch of resources from the shire counties to the metropolitan areas - although within this general tendency there are significant exceptions. The effect on particular authorities has been very severe, leaving them with hard choices between a cut in services or a rate increase well above the national average, and this pattern will continue in the foreseeable future. This means that the increase in rates imposed by a particular authority may have more to do with changes in grants than with any change in expenditure by the local authority.

Some local authorities and interest groups wish to see certain services removed from the rate support grant and a return to specific grants based on separate negotiations with Central Government departments. Others feel that this would be a retrograde step. The method of determining and distributing total grant resources did provide freedom for local authorities to establish priorities and develop policies related to the needs of their areas within the national framework established by the government. The then Environment Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine announced proposals in mid-November 1980 to reform the Rate Support Grant system from 1982 onwards and replace it with a "unitary grant" tailored to the needs



of each authority. A clear purpose of the new Unitary Grant was to give the government a way of identifying those councils (whether out of political dogma, extravagance or other factors) who spend too much and of penalising them by providing less money the following year. The introduction of Unitary Grants has therefore led the Secretary for the Environment into even more severe controls, for instance over the ability of local councils to levy increased rates.

In August 1983 the re-elected Conservative Government decided to seek new powers to curb rate increases, despite strong opposition from their own back-benchers and some Conservative controlled local authorities. This legislation was eventually enacted as the Rates Act 1984 and gave the Secretary of State for the Environment specific legal power to limit the rates individual authorities can levy. This has been aimed at the twelve or so "big spenders" who will be subject to Whitehall instruction on what rates they can set. If they try to collect more, ratepayers will be entitled to refuse to pay - and the councillors will be liable for heavy personal fines. In addition, a general reserve power will be gained, to set a spending limit for each local authority, and then to ban each one from raising more in rates than is needed to pay for expenditure. The same penalties would fall on any council that sought to defy the government's instructions.

The effect of these measures the local authority associations have claimed will be to turn English Local Government into an executive arm of Whitehall, and local politicians into no more than pressure

group activists. "The Economist" on November 24th 1979 suggested that "sooner or later, the increasing fusion of central and local policy-making and systems of financial control must be reflected in a reform of local political institutions". The influence of Central Government on Local Government finance may be illustrated by the practice of cash limits being set on government grants. The government has each year, placed an overall cash limit on the amount of grant payable to local authorities. The cash limit for additional grant is determined in advance on the Government's view of the estimated cost of future pay and price increases as they affect expenditure in the year - for 1984/85 3%. The cash limit will only be reviewed where changes in government policy lead to increased levels of local authority expenditure and where pay and price increases are substantially higher than those included when calculating the cash limit for the year.

The view expressed in "The Economist" had earlier been expressed within the Layfield Report (1976). The Layfield Committee reported that there was a growing dependence of local authorities on Central Government. Over the period they were reviewing, they concluded that the system had only been made to work by removing the burden of Local Government expenditure from one tax clearly borne by the local electors, the domestic rate, and placing it on the national taxpayer. The committee argued that gradually local councils had come to look to government grant to meet the problems of local expenditure. There had been a decline in local accountability. The Committee posed a choice between a clear move towards central control or a reassertion

of local accountability. They proposed a local income tax as a new source of Local Government revenue which would, in addition to rates, remove the dependence on grants.

The Labour Government in the subsequent Green Paper, whilst accepting many of Layfield's detailed recommendations rejected the main conclusion that a choice was required. They asserted their belief in a middle way based on partnership between Local Government and Central Government ie. the existing system in effect. The Layfield Committee regarded a partnership in which the role of neither partner was defined as shared irresponsibility and concluded that this would do nothing to arrest the drift toward central control (or at least financing). The Green Paper did not produce anything to modify that conclusion.

Both the Layfield Report and the Green Paper recommended a change in the basis of valuation for domestic property from rental value to capital value. There is no longer sufficient evidence on rental values to carry out a reliable valuation process. If rating is to continue, a change to capital valuation is required, where there is evidence on sale prices and where as a result the basis of valuation is easily understood and easily checked. Such a change will affect the relative value of different types of property. While no final conclusions can be drawn short of an actual valuation, the evidence before Layfield suggests that more expensive houses would be likely to have relatively higher assessments than at present.

One other proposal given support in the Green Paper was a proposal to replace the grant system by a new unitary grant - as discussed above, this was implemented.

It may be suggested that at times of economic stress the confusion of central-local relations stands exposed. It may be that Layfield was correct in clarifying the choice and that the system is moving towards greater central control; this is a view held by many commentators. Only a clear decision to move to the other alternative of local accountability could prevent this, and that decision has been avoided. Indeed, if the Jenkins Bill is enacted it will lead to Central control.

During the period under review within this thesis the general grant system prevailed. This system was much less complicated and restrictive. The general grants were not withheld and its distribution was based on a weighted regression formula.

After the period covered by this thesis, developments took place which severely affected the independence of Local Government with the introduction of the new block grant form of Rate Support Grant in 1982. This was introduced by the Local Government Finance Act 1980 - coming into effect in 1981. Under these arrangements, pushed through by a Conservative Government, dedicated to a strict control of public expenditure to assist their monetarist approach to macro-economic policy. A calculation is made of the appropriate expenditure level for each local authority. Exceeding the targets set can lead to grant penalties.

Many commentators see these developments as the most profound threat to local autonomy for many centuries. Tony Travers and Tyrell Burgess (1980) believe that the activities of successive governments have served to undermine the independent responsibilities of local authorities. They believe that the process has been gradual, but that it has now reached a critical point of balance, and that the Local Government Planning and Land Act has tipped the balance, since it marks the beginning of the wholly centralised state.

vi) Paying the Price

The role of the Local Government in the Housing Provision of this country as we will see in Chapter Three has gradually evolved, and local authorities have been required to accept increasing functions in housing provision. Their current role is possibly best illustrated by enumerating their main functions at the present time (1985):-

1. loans for the purchase of dwellings
2. loans for the improvement and/or repair of dwellings
3. loans to housing associations
4. improvement grants to private occupiers
5. slum clearance
6. general improvement areas and housing action areas
7. default works powers
8. receivership powers
9. rent allowances to private tenants
10. provision of housing advice centres
11. financial support to housing associations

12. purchase of individual owner/occupied dwellings
13. purchase of rented accommodation from the private sector
14. purchase of new private housing developments
15. sale of council dwelling - and special arrangements with  
builders including building for sale schemes
16. erection of new council properties
17. management of existing estates
18. rent rebates to council tenants
19. improvement of council properties
20. provision of temporary accommodation for homeless families

The above outline has within it policies and schemes which different local authorities have implemented in different ways - one of the themes of this thesis! The divergences arise through divergent political ideologies and also because of different resources in terms of existing housing stock, financial and manpower resources, and also because of differing needs. The housing needs of an area with an ageing population are likely to be very different from the housing need of a "spillover" or new town. Compare for instance the age profiles and consequent needs of say, Stevenage with Ilfracombe.

Only items 3 and 16 of the above analysis result in the provision of additional permanent accommodation. The remainder may result in an increase in the stock, or alternatively may present an actual loss of accommodation. Even the erection of new dwellings may result in some loss of dwellings where the new buildings are erected on redevelopment sites.

N.P. Hepworth (1978) suggests that in recent years a system of housing finance has evolved which has led to there being three different ways of financing housing activity:-

- a) Items 1-3 lending to the private sector, including housing associations - each local authority keeps a separate account recording its lending activities because it has to ensure that such activities are self-financing. In other words no subsidy from the rate is permitted on the actual loans.
- b) Items 4 to 11 and 20 - financial aid to the private sector, including housing associations. All of these activities are financed through the rate fund of local authorities, with any deficit falling upon the fund. Subsidies are received by local authorities from Central Government towards some of these activities.
- c) Items 12-19 - activities involving the extension or management of the authority's own housing stock. All of these activities are financed through what is known as the housing revenue account. The expenses associated with these activities are charged to that account, to which are credited rental income from charges for services, government subsidies, rate fund subsidies, and receipts from the sale of council dwellings.

From 1923 onwards, basic subsidies were paid as an annual sum for a specified number of years, with payment starting when the building was completed ie. a specific, unit grant. There were numerous changes in successive Acts. But in all instances the changes in amounts payable applied only to houses completed after

the change had come into force; subsidies already in payment under earlier Acts continued unaltered, apart from being terminated if the house was sold. Supplementary subsidies for building on expensive sites and for high rise building were first provided in 1930, and were changed from time to time, as were other special subsidies (ie. in the inter-war years for houses built in rural parishes, and in the post-war years for building for elderly people). In all instances the basic subsidy rate did not vary between authorities either with respect to costs of providing houses, or with respect to the capacity of tenants to pay or rate resources. The supplementary subsidies dealt in part with high costs of provision.

The 1961 Act broke new ground in seeking to relate the basic subsidy to local resources, both rent and rates; subsidy was provided in the form of a fixed sum per dwelling, payable for 60 years, after completion. The subsidy was provided in two parts: a basic amount within a range of £8 to £40 per dwelling; and supplementary amounts provided where costs were exceptionally high for special reasons.

The first step in calculating the basic amount was to compare total housing revenue account (H.R.A.) costs with a notional H.R.A. rent income, which was defined as twice the rateable value of the dwelling stock (irrespective of the actual rents charged). If total notional rent income exceeded that expenditure, then a basic subsidy of £8 per dwelling completion was paid. If total expenditure exceeded total notional rent income, then the basic subsidy was increased to £24.



For authorities with a notional H.R.A. deficit, the fixed sum of £24 was increased if the rate levy per £ of rateable value was higher than the average for England and Wales. Depending on the rate increase required to eliminate the notional H.R.A. deficit, the basic subsidy was increased to £28, £34 or £40 - the maximum provided.

In addition to the basic amount, supplementary subsidies were provided:

- i) for expensive sites, based on land costs per acre;
- ii) for high rise development, based on the number of storeys in a block of flats;
- iii) for special development, including overspill building; building on poor substrata (ie. in old mining areas where subsidence occurred) and the use of expensive materials to preserve the local character of the area.

Averaged over all dwelling completions, these supplementary subsidies were together worth about £10-£12 per dwelling, but they applied to less than half of the total building programme and were heavily concentrated in urban areas with land costs and a large proportion of high rise developments.

The system had a number of anomalies. Rateable values are only a rough guide to notional rent resources, and no provision was made for annual adjustments. The 1963 revaluation increased rateable values and therefore raised notional rent income, but no adjustment was made to the subsidy system. So some authorities found their

basic subsidy reduced. On the other hand, as notional income was fixed between rating revaluations, while costs were rising, there was an offsetting trend towards higher notional H.R.A. deficits and therefore higher subsidy levels. It was also theoretically possible for increases in management and maintenance expenditure to raise total H.R.A. costs sufficiently to put an authority into a higher basic subsidy bracket, but there is no evidence of this happening on any significant scale. The extra basic subsidy payable to authorities with high rate levies per £ of rateable value assisted those authorities with low rate resources. But areas of pressing housing need could receive low basic subsidies if they had high rateable values, although in urban areas they would be helped by the additional expensive site and high rise subsidies.

The 1961 Act subsidies were all fixed in money terms per dwelling, with only the expensive site subsidy related to cost changes (in the price of land). By 1967, the real value of the fixed sums had fallen by over 20 per cent. Although construction costs were rising slightly faster than retail prices, the period was still one of relative stability in both prices and interest rates. Had the same subsidy system remained in operation, even the maximum fixed sum of £40 per dwelling, together with the maximum supplementary subsidies, would have covered only a fraction of the increase in construction costs and interest rates that drove annual loan charges per average new dwelling up to £1,700 or more by 1975/76. The 1961 subsidy system lasted only six years, however, and was replaced by a new system in 1967.

The 1967 Act introduced an entirely new basic subsidy, the difference between a loan charge at 4 per cent and that at the representative rate for local authorities' new borrowing. By this means, the subsidy was related both to the capital cost of providing new houses and to interest rates and would change automatically with them.

The representative rate was determined by the Minister of Housing and Local Government (subsequently by the Secretary of State for the Environment) and the rate of subsidy as calculated applied one year in arrear eg. the rate of subsidy payable on dwellings completed in 1970/71 was the difference between the 1969/70 representative rate and 4 per cent.

Since the subsidy payable was proportionate to capital cost, a limit had to be placed on capital costs, otherwise the subsidy would have been open-ended. At the time the 1967 Act became law, the number of tender acceptances was controlled centrally. To prevent the subsidy per dwelling being open-ended, the amount eligible for subsidy was limited by reference to the housing cost yardstick. Land costs had to be within the District Valuer's Valuation, and the cost of site works was also subject to approval. In addition to the basic subsidy, the expensive site, high rise, and special development subsidies were retained, with only minor modifications. The immediate effect of the new system was to raise average basic subsidy from about £24 to about £67 per dwelling completed, with a further threefold increase to £187 per dwelling by 1971, as both construction costs and (up to 1970) interest rates rose. Neither the expensive site subsidy nor the high rise subsidy made any

provision for rises in construction costs (as opposed to land prices) or interest rates, and high rise supplement declined in importance as design trends moved away from high rise blocks of flats. Even in London, where expensive site and high rise subsidies were greatest, these supplementary subsidies became progressively less significant in relation to the steeply rising basic subsidy.

Like all previous subsidies back to 1923, the 1967 Act subsidies were new building subsidies that in general became payable on completion of the house, in amounts that, once determined, remained unaltered in money terms. The loan charges generated by the holding of land and by payments for work done on houses under construction attracted no subsidy, nor did increases in loan charges caused by the application of rising pool rates to debt on houses already built. Local authorities' capital expenditure on the improvement of their houses received subsidy under arrangements totally separate from the new building subsidy (known as standard or improvement contributions). Exchequer subsidy was payable as an annual sum for 20 years equal to three-eighths of the loan charges on costs up to a specified limit.

The subsidy system provided under the 1972 Act was wholly different. Its central feature was the provision for determining the rents to be charged by local authorities for their houses by reference to the 'fair rents' concept provided for in the private sector by the 1965 Rent Act, modified to the minimum extent necessary to apply it to the special circumstances of the local authority sector - in

particular, the assumption that 'no person seeking to become such a tenant can expect any special preference'. The duty of drawing up provisional fair rents was placed on local authorities: but the actual determination of fair rents was the responsibility of Rent Scrutiny Boards, drawn from the Rent Assessment Panels from which were drawn the Rent Assessment Committees that adjudicated appeals against rents registered by Rent Officers for private unfurnished lettings. In the event, only a very small number of fair rents were determined by Rent Scrutiny Boards before their work was brought to a stop in March 1974, following the election of a Labour Government. The rent increases brought about by the Act were therefore in practice the consequence of the provisions governing the progression to fair rents, not of the fair rent levels themselves.

The provisions relating to the progression to fair rents required an increase of £26 in gross rent income per dwelling in 1972/73 compared with 1971/72, with £26 more in each subsequent year until 'fair rent' levels were reached. Much of the complexity rose from the fact that the Act did not become law until after the beginning of 1972/73. The principal exception applied when the general progression rules would have produced increases that would have brought rents of 2 per cent or more dwellings above the 'fair rent' level, in which case the Secretary of State was empowered to authorise a lower increase.

With rents determined in this way, a radically different subsidy system was needed. Although complex, its essential feature was that any difference between 'reckonable' housing revenue account expenditure and rent income should be funded by the Exchequer and Rate Fund contributions in prescribed proportions. At the time of the passage of the Act, the expectation was that the progression of rents prescribed would be sufficient, relative to the rise in costs, to bring rents up to equality with expenditure before long in many authorities, other than those with high costs and low rents, and those with large capital expenditure programmes. All subsidies payable under earlier Acts were terminated, and replaced by the new provisions - of which one, the residual subsidy, was in effect a tapering out of the subsidies payable under earlier Acts. As rent income rose relative to reckonable expenditure, the subsidies would be withdrawn, and when rent income exceeded expenditure by enough to have a surplus over and above a working balance not exceeding £30 per dwelling, the surplus would be paid to the Secretary of State. Where the amount so paid exceeded the rent allowance subsidy paid to the authority, the Secretary of State was to repay one half of the excess to the authority for the benefit of the general rate fund.

With specified exceptions, all H.R.A. expenditure was regarded as reckonable for subsidy, including all loan charges on land (at market value), new building, and acquisition of houses; one-half of loan charges on improvement work; higher interest charges on old debt, and current expenditure on management and maintenance. The exceptions

were: new building costs in excess of the housing cost yardstick limits; improvement and acquisition costs in excess of the scheme limits approved by Central Government; and repair and maintenance expenditure in excess of the limits set by Central Government in 1974/75. As rent levels were predetermined by the fair rent principle, any 'non-reckonable' expenditure fell on the rate fund. In practice, the housing cost yardstick limited reckonable loan charges, but the limits on reckonable management and maintenance expenditure were not severe. All expenditure on supervision and management was accepted for subsidy; and the only control on subsidisable repairs and maintenance expenditure was designed to contain it to a decelerating rate of increase in real terms compared with earlier years.

Under the earlier Acts, subsidy was paid only after a dwelling had been completed. The 1972 Act changed this rule: costs incurred before dwelling completion - for example interest charges on land acquired but not developed or on building work in progress - also become eligible for subsidy.

A new 'rising costs subsidy' applied to all new (reckonable) expenditure. Rising costs subsidy quickly became the dominant element. It was funded to the extent of 90% by the Exchequer and 10% by mandatory rate fund contributions in the first year (1972/73), with the proportion met from the Rate Fund set to increase annually until it reached 25% (with 75% from the Exchequer) in the fourth year. As Rate Fund contributions were obligatory, however, they

were made relevant for Rate Support Grant; and so the proportion of the total subsidy effectively met by the Exchequer was greater.

When the 1972 Act was introduced, it was envisaged that, as rents rose by stages to 'fair' rent levels, subsidy would be progressively withdrawn from authorities whose rent income was rising faster than their costs. This would leave the remaining general subsidy concentrated on high cost areas where rent income, even at fair rent levels, would fall below notional levels of cost a subsidy system. A basic element, consolidating all the subsidies was paid to each local authorities Housing Revenue Account and a new capital costs element on all new investment - in land, new building improvement and acquisition - paid at the rate of 66% of reckonable loan; loan charges comprising both interest charges and a supplementary financing element to cover any increase in loan charges.

The 1972 subsidy system was certainly flexible enough to deal with the unexpected in a period of rapid inflation. It enabled the real level of investment in housing to be raised at a time when land prices, construction costs and interest rates were rising in combination, at an unprecedented rate. It effectively channelled an increasing proportion of Government support to the high cost areas, where housing needs were most pressing. Although high cost areas received more subsidy, they also had to make greater contributions from their own local resources; in terms of the net costs to be met locally, the divergence between areas, lessened by the earlier subsidy systems, became more marked. The public



expenditure burden of insulating local housing authorities from most of the adverse effects of inflation was very heavy. The burden of mandatory increases in Rate Fund contributions was lessened by allowing them to count for Rate Support Grant, but the net effect on the resources of some high cost authorities was still substantial. Had the 1972 system remained in operation in 1975/76 with rent increases still held down as a counter-inflationary measure, it would not have stopped subsidies from rising further - despite the down-turn in land prices and the slackening in the rate of increase in construction costs. The other aspect of the 1972 Act - the effect of a deficit subsidy system in withdrawing subsidy deficits was falling - was never tested in practice before the relevant parts of the Act was repealed. The rent rebate scheme, which became mandatory, provided for a personal income tested subsidy to help individual tenants. This feature of the Act though, as we shall see in Chapter Six of this thesis proved very unpopular with Derby Housing Committee who in fact refused to implement the Act until pressured by the Minister.

Although beyond the terms of reference of the case study of this thesis, it is perhaps wise to briefly review more recent Central Government involvement in housing policy.

With the return of the Labour Government in 1974, a change of policy again came about in the form of the 1975 Housing Rents and Subsidies Act. Its primary purpose was to discard the "fair rent" principle in the determination of local authority rents (although retaining

it in the private rented sector) and to restore to local authorities their earlier freedom to set "reasonable" rents and make rate fund contributions at their own discretion. At the same time, the Act made another major change in the subsidy system and provided the same proportionate assistance to all forms of housing investment. The 1975 Act provided no specific subsidy for management or maintenance but consolidated the "basic element".

With the change of government in 1979, again a different approach was taken to local authority finance and to local authority housing policy. Subsidies for housing were reduced dramatically and Housing Revenue Accounts had to become "self balancing". Economic Rents became the order of the day and grants became available only for specific purposes ie. new housing for urban renewal and for the elderly being the more obvious purposes. The sale of council houses became actively encouraged at a time when local authority building programmes came to almost a standstill - 1981/82.

Grants for housing have become much more specific, the finance of housing has changed with the political tides of Whitehall and this has made a coherent policy much more difficult to implement. Grants have also been used in order to further the aims of Central Government politicians and officials, as we shall see in the case study, to influence the post war housing patterns, to encourage "overspill" development of high rise dwellings and the use of non-traditional building techniques - with some social consequences, economic consequences and some consequences possibly yet to come to light.

vii) Does the Piper's Paymaster Call the Tune?

Hartley explains the difference in housing policies in his four chosen Lincolnshire towns as being "largely a matter of facts and politics". As the work of Rhodes has indicated, the difference in policy outputs is more complex than Hartley appears to suggest and it is this matter to which I wish to turn the emphasis of this thesis.

Central-local relationships are important for government and the public. The Layfield Report on Local Government Finance identified confusion and ambiguity as the defects in the relationship between Central and Local Government and recommended that the prerequisite for establishing sound financial arrangements for local authorities was a clarification of the respective main responsibilities of Central and Local Government.

Does the piper's paymaster call the tune? Clearly Central Government financial arrangements must have some bearing on policy outcomes, but it is simplistic to assume that, finance alone determines policy outcomes. It obviously played a part in the desire to build high rise flats in the 1950's and 1960's (Dunleavy 1980), since schemes incorporating such developments, particularly those adopting "approved" system building techniques appear to have recieved more speedy consideration than those using traditional methods of construction. Likewise, until recently timber framed developments of low rise dwellings have received favourable consideration. In these areas, Central Government officials have been able on the one hand to satisfy their political masters' goals

and yet further their own professional goals. Some may have a desire to see a "pet" scheme pushed through such as high rise developments. The influence of Regional Officers, a sector often ignored, and yet as the case study following, illustrates, is a very important stage in the policy implementation process.

Further, one has to consider the influence of local politicians and their negotiating skills, and the influence of Local Government chief officers. Pahl, as we saw earlier, believes that the professionalism of officials has weakened the influence of Central Government. There are competing and yet complementary interests which combine to form the process by which housing policy has been determined and implemented. Each has exerted its own type of influence in order to pursue its own goals.

It is this arena into which I will turn the case study, tracing housing policy in Portsmouth and Derby between 1945 and 1974 as a means of illustrating the interaction of policy making at its many levels within the two authorities and in its many facets.

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## CHAPTER THREE BACKGROUND OF PUBLIC HOUSING POLICY IN BRITAIN

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## CHAPTER THREE BACKGROUND OF PUBLIC HOUSING POLICY IN BRITAIN

1) The Legacy of the Nineteenth Century

The consequences of the increases in population in 19th century Britain and the effects of laissez-faire attitudes led in some areas to squalid conditions, poverty and ill health. There was at first a reluctance on the part of the authorities to undertake planning or housing. The evidence of this era is still to be witnessed in many towns and cities in Britain, although slum clearance programmes have removed the worst examples.

The impetus to Housing Policy in the 19th Century was from morality; after godliness, of course, comes cleanliness, and so it was the health and sanitary problems that attracted attention. The working class was held to be "demoralised" by the poor housing and insanitary conditions, and the remedy for this was seen to lie in legislation to prevent dangers to health.

In the 1840's Liverpool led other local authorities in obtaining powers to prevent insanitary conditions and from then onward national legislation followed and made powers generally available for dealing with problems. The Public Health Act 1848 instituted local boards of health to secure the supply of clean water and to improve sanitation. This legislation was largely due to the appalling housing and sanitation conditions reported by Edwin Chadwick's

Report of the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population of Great Britain published in 1842. In 1868, the Artisans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act was passed which, although still primarily concerned with the health aspects, was the first measure to enable intervention in the housing situation. Under this Act, houses could be declared unfit for human habitation by the medical officer of health for the authority and their owners required to make improvements or to demolish at their own expense. The Cross Acts 1875-82 dealt with whole insanitary areas by improvement schemes. Rehousing was allowed to displaced inhabitants. The Public Health Act 1875 created health codes under which action could also be undertaken.

When the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor 1884-1885 considered the situation, its recommendations were mainly with sanitary matters, though other policies were mentioned. These were the helping of Housing Societies and the encouraging of owner-occupation of houses. There was also support for proposals to halt the drift from the land by allowing the rural authorities to provide houses and allotments. The idea of local authorities providing accommodation was not new - Shaftsbury's Labouring Classes' Lodging Houses Act 1851 allowed parishes to create a committee to provide accommodation. The Royal Commission sought to have this simplified and the Act given a chance to show its possibilities.

The Housing of the Working Classes Act 1890 was mainly a codifying Act. Part three of the Act allowed urban authorities to build for the needs of the working classes. The Act was permissive only; local authorities were not compelled to buy land and raise loans for housing the working classes who were the subject of the Act.

- a) Apart from the efforts of progressive authorities like Birmingham and Liverpool, progress was slow.
- b) The local authorities were reluctant to undertake building projects themselves, and were inclined to sell cleared sites to speculative builders.
- c) The local authorities provided only 5% of the working class houses built between 1890 and 1914.

The 1909 Housing and Town Planning Act simplified the procedures for this, but was, especially in its town planning sections, envisaged as being a health measure. Building for letting was mainly restricted to activities of Liverpool and Birmingham City Councils and London County Council before 1914. The Government was very reluctant to encourage local authorities to build. The prevailing view was that of the responsible department, the L.G.B. Report for 1912-13 which was repeated in the next 2 reports word for word that "private enterprise has always been, and, so far as can be foreseen, will continue to be the main source of the provision of houses for the working classes and only when this failed should an authority act itself". The board added that it could "readily" understand fears that public building would kill private enterprise from the fact that local authorities had provided 15,000 of a housing stock of 5,528,000.

Some modification of the position was allowed. The problems of the Irish rural poor led to the Irish Labourers' Cottage Acts, especially the 1906 act, and the granting of national and local subsidy for the provision of new cottages. The plight of the rural English received sympathy from committees in 1906 and 1913, but when the Conservatives in 1912-1913 took up housing as a political theme, Hartley suggests the Liberals were provoked into a proposal for 120,000 rural houses for small holders, teachers, police and roadmen.

Some beginnings in town planning by private enterprise emerged at the end of the 19th Century in the establishing of "garden cities" at Bournville (1879), Port Sunlight (1888) and Letchworth Garden City (1903). The Town Planning Act of 1909 had given local authorities powers to plan new and undeveloped areas - but it was not until 1932 that they were given powers to plan built up areas. The 1875 Artisans' Dwellings Act had given powers to the local authorities to acquire and clear slum areas, but the problems of compensation and rehousing had deterred many authorities from proceeding with this work.

The national policy before 1914 expected local authorities to concentrate on sanitary tasks; it was more a health than a housing policy. Private enterprise was seen as managing very well in building for letting and owner occupation and national policy was that it should not be offered the discouragement of local authority intervention.

ii) The Early Twentieth Century

The war of 1914-1918 stopped the building of houses and by the end of the war J.B. Cullingworth (1966) believes that the housing shortage had become acute. Already in 1911, the census had shown that one-tenth of the population was living in overcrowded conditions ie. more than two to a room, and in some industrial towns conditions fell far below this standard.

The Tudor Walters Committee Report (1918) recommended that working class houses should be built not more than twelve to an acre, each house with its own garden, in well-planned estates. However, the "land fit for heroes to live in" was far from being an actuality. Marian Bowley (1945) states that by 1919 there was a deficiency of 600,000 houses.

It was not until 1919 that treasury grants became available. Rent control had been instituted in 1915, rents being controlled at the level reached at the outbreak of war, the increases in prices of building materials and building costs generally in a dislocated industry were such that conditions after the war were unfavourable to investors in property. The ordinary working class people were not house buyers; before the war of 1914-1918 there was little house purchase by instalment buying through building societies; and low wages, unemployment and industrial unrest were to characterise the post-war period. It was against this background that the subsequent developments should be viewed.

In 1919, the Housing and Town Planning Act (more commonly known as 'The Addison Act', after the President of the Local Government Board, Christopher Addison); the duty was imposed on local authorities of surveying the needs of their districts for houses and making and carrying out plans to satisfy this need, subject to approval of the plans by the Ministry of Health. The permissive powers given in the 1890 Act were made obligatory. There was now a broad State-directed housing policy, as distinguished from a slum-clearance policy only. Moreover a treasury subsidy was to be paid to cover losses to local authorities in excess of a penny rat , government aid was however linked to the maintenance of minimum of standards of housing provision. The rents the local authorities could charge for the houses they built were to be of the level, generally, of the controlled rents of working class houses. J.B. Cullingworth (1966) believes that the high building costs however, showed that a boom period was not the time to engage in a housing campaign on these lines. Under the Act, about 214,000 houses were built by 1923, 170,000 by local authorities, 39,000 by private enterprise, and about 4,500 by public utility societies or associations, all as a result of the act. The treasury subsidy reached  12 million by 1921, and imposed an annual charge of  7 million. By the time the houses were actually built, a period of declining prices and wages was beginning, so that the contracts did not reflect current prices, and wages were getting out of relation to the rents charged.

### iii) The Nineteen-Twenties

In 1922 a Conservative Government took office and passed the Housing Act 1923. The previous housing scheme was abandoned on the grounds, generally, that it had proved too expensive in relation to the results. A new (but temporary) subsidy was to be given by the treasury at a maximum of £6 per house for twenty years to local authorities and to private enterprise. There was to be no charge on the rates, and it was announced that the houses could be sold at any price or let at any rent, and encouragement was to be given to owner occupiers. Local authorities had to prove to the Minister of Health that they were better able to provide houses than private enterprise in terms of costs and specification. Thus the 1923 Housing Act stated plainly the Conservative ideology which was to become a familiar pattern in Post World War Two politics.

In 1924 the first Labour Government took office and they passed onto the statute book The Housing (Financial Provisions) Act 1924 (Wheatley Act). Under this Act local authorities were given back their housing powers without having to prove that houses could be provided by them better than by private enterprise; this became a permanent feature of the role of local authorities in housing: they could now provide working class houses, and in fact the Housing Act of 1925 passed by the Conservatives confirmed the situation. A long period housing programme was introduced, subsidies increased and rate aid for building restored. Under the "Wheatley Act", up to 1939, in excess of 500,000 houses were built by local authorities, half of these built in total by local authorities from 1918 to 1939.

The 1922 and 1924 Acts reflect the ideologies and the intentions of the Conservative and Labour politicians respectively and it is interesting to note that these respective ideologies have continued through to the present day with only minor modifications.

iv) Slum Clearance and Rebuilding

Up to 1930, about 11,000 slum houses had been demolished and replaced. The clearing of the slums became an issue in the General Election of 1929. A Labour Government took office; it stayed until 1931, when the Second National Government was formed, to last till 1935. The Housing Act of 1930 introduced by Arthur Greenwood, provided for a subsidy to be paid by the treasury to the local authorities for slum clearance. This subsidy was not merely for slum clearance but also for re-housing the displaced persons. The size of the subsidy was in proportion to the size of the family rehoused. There was therefore a combination of the Wheatley subsidy for ordinary working class houses, and the Greenwood subsidy for slum clearance. However, as the result of an economy campaign the Wheatley subsidy was repealed by the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act 1933, and the Greenwood scheme also suffered. The policy stated in the Report of the Departmental Committee on Housing, 1933, was a swing back to private enterprise in housing provision and a laying of the emphasis on slum clearance:

"to concentrate public effort and money on the clearance and improvement of slum conditions, and to rely in the main on competitive private enterprise to provide a new supply of accommodation for the working classes - the provision by private enterprise to be supplemented where necessary by means of unsubsidised building by the Local Authorities".



The plan to clear the slum houses in five years was not entirely successful; by March 1939, the original 250,000 was revised to 472,000 and the actual houses closed or demolished to March 1939, was 272,836.

The General Election of 1935 gave the Conservatives a majority but the National Government was formed which lasted until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 and the formation of a Coalition Government. In 1935, the new government passed the Housing Act 1935, with the main object of abolishing overcrowding. It placed upon local authorities the responsibility to survey the state of overcrowding in their districts and to prepare schemes for providing sufficient accommodation. The Act made overcrowding a legal offence for both landlord and tenant. A census taken by the local authorities in 1936 showed that 4% of the total, nearly 341,000 houses, were to be condemned; however the problems of inadequate housing accommodation in quality and numbers, must always be related to the living conditions of those living inside them. By 1939 only half the declared slums had been cleared. The efforts of local authorities varied considerably; what clearance was done, had been done by the more energetic authorities. However, by March 1937, the local authorities had built about one million houses. In the years 1934-39, the total output of houses exceeded 300,000 a year; over 30% of the population living in new houses which had been built since 1919. Unsubsidised private builders had built about two million houses, and subsidised private builders a further 400,000 houses. There continued the existence of slum property, older houses

lacking amenities and overcrowded houses. This meant that there was still a housing problem, intensified by the destruction and decay inevitable in war-time.

v) Background to Housing Policy in Britain 1945-1951

D.V. Donnison (1967) believes that Britain emerged from World War II with approximately 200,000 houses destroyed and a further 250,000 so badly damaged that they could not be lived in. The war had thus upset what had been a rough balance between the numbers of houses and families in 1939 - although as mentioned previously, the actual standard of such dwellings left much to be desired in many cities. The Labour Government returned in 1945 was determined to control not only the production of houses, but also their allocation. The great majority of houses were to be built for letting at a reasonable rent to families in the most urgent need. Thus as J.B. Cullingworth points out the criterion set was to be urgency of need, not ability to pay, and the majority of houses were to be provided by local authorities. Private development was to be strictly controlled and play a subordinate role.

The first priority was given to the repair of war damaged houses, and at first only emergency repairs could be undertaken. Attempts were made to utilise to the fullest extent all existing accommodation and householders with spare rooms were encouraged to let them. Powers given to local authorities to requisition empty houses as part of the war-time evacuation scheme were extended to meet the

needs of inadequately housed families. Service camps and war-time hostels were adapted for temporary housing and in London huts were erected as 'emergency accommodation' as they were in Derby and Portsmouth, as we shall see later in this thesis. Whilst most visible signs of these early post war measures have gone, many of the 'temporary houses' (as opposed to "huts") still remain - of the "prefabs", approximately 200 remain in Derby today (1985), even though they were initially intended to be in use for a maximum of ten years. One hundred and twenty four thousand of these factor built houses had been provided by December 1948 when the programme was brought to an end - basically because the "prefabs" were costing twice the amount budgeted per dwelling. The "prefab" programme allowed widespread use of industrial building methods to be demonstrated as a means of speed housing provision and the methods used were to have an impact in the 1960's - when the high rise programmes became the vogue.

By the end of 1946 approximately a third of a million units of accommodation had been provided in one form or another - 80,000 in prefabs, 45,000 in conversions and adaptations, 107,000 in repaired unoccupied war-damaged houses; 3,000 in temporary huts, 9,000 in service camps; 25,000 in requisitioned houses; and 52,000 in new permanent houses, the majority of the provision being in the public sector.

The 'permanent housing' programme, during the period of adjustment from the situation of a 'war-economy' to one which could operate

more effectively in peacetime, tended to take a subordinate role to the repairs and temporary building programme. However, during 1946 steps were taken to begin a permanent housing programme. Housing subsidies were increased and were made available for a range of special needs. Also at this time it was decided to increase the size of a standard three bedroomed council house to 900 square feet plus 50 square feet for outbuildings - the pre-war standard having been 750 square feet. Viewed overall the provisions were bold and expensive by pre-war standards. The rush to start rebuilding was such that Britain emerged well ahead of many other countries, starting her building programme with a target of 240,000 dwellings. However this target overloaded the building industry, which was already running short of building materials, and this was further complicated by a severe winter in 1947. Thus in England and Wales, 127,541 houses were completed in 1947 and 206,559 in 1948. During the following three years house completions averaged around 170,000 per annum.

From this immediate post-war 'Housing Drive' emerged two issues which were to have a more than short-term effect - both these issues were embodied in the Housing Act of 1949, which among other things

- i) expanded the powers of local authorities to provide for all social classes, and
- ii) introduced a policy for the improvement of older houses.

As J.B. Cullingworth points out, until that time, local authorities had legally been restricted to providing housing for the "working classes". The Housing Act 1949 did little to ease the problem of repairing privately owned rented accommodation, for whilst

the costs of repairs and maintenance had soared; the rent for such accommodation was held at the 1939 level. Private rented property began to fall into disrepair, and indeed a survey carried out by the Association of County Sanitary Officers in 1950 reported that of a million houses inspected in rural areas, only 31% were completely "fit", 27% required minor repairs, 30% needed major works of reconstruction and 12% were unfit. Many houses had rentals of less than 30p per week and 'a great number' were less than 15p per week.

Under the 1949 Act powers were introduced to enable local authorities to give improvement grants to private owners wishing to improve or convert their property. Critics of the Act however, have suggested that such provisions were merely a form of 'public assistance for landlords' necessitated by the Government's refusal to amend the Rent Restriction Acts. Proposals put forward by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (1951), suggested 'an increase related to the higher cost of repairs' with the safeguard of an appeal to the local authority if repairs were not in fact carried out. P.E.P. (1949) suggested that 'increases of varying sizes, designed to eliminate the worst anomalies between houses of similar type' should be allowed through. However, all such proposals were ignored, for the housing policy was directed solely towards the provision of new houses. The Labour Government considered their task to be one of organising resources to meet a limited house building programme, and consequently private enterprise building was allowed only on a very limited scale. There was a clash of interest between the

local authorities, who were, irrespective of party affiliation, seeking to build as many houses as possible and the Central Government, which appeared to be restricting the level of the building to one agreeable to those concerned with the economy. The higher standards of the early post-war years were reduced, as building costs continued to rise. The minimum standard of 900 square feet for a three-bedroom five person household was similarly cut - on the grounds that architects had shown that it was "possible to maintain room standards within a smaller superficial area", a Government Report (1953) on standard stated. Thus local authorities were expected to cut down on the "trimmings" such as outhouses, halls, balconies, the size of landings and the number of cupboards fitted in each dwelling. During the last months of the post-war Labour Government the decision as to whether or not to reduce the standard of amenities to the new levels was left to the discretion of the local authorities.

vi) A Change of Party - A Change of Emphasis

With the change to a Conservative Government in October 1951, it was stressed that if the size of dwellings were reduced, then it would be possible to build more units of accommodation. Thus, whilst the Conservatives were not totally opposed to local authority housing, they were more concerned with "roofs over heads", than higher living standards being introduced into this sector, a philosophy of quantity not quality, therefore a reduction in unit sizes helped enable them to pursue their election manifesto goal of 300,000 completions per annum in a more realistic context. The

Conservatives continued the policy of relaxing building controls, a policy initiated by the Labour government. Private builders were given greater freedom, the result of which was to allow an increase in the number of private development completions from 21,000 houses in 1951 to 88,000 in 1954. However, the most significant expansion came in the local authority sector. The administrative control of local authority building programmes by a system of allocation was replaced by an expansionist policy of "targets". Instead of a maximum programme, local authorities were given a target representing their minimum responsibility, which was an estimate based on local capacity, and which the authorities were expected to exceed if possible. The need for new housing was of course urgent; council waiting lists just seemed to lengthen and little was being done to remove the slums of the industrial cities. The task of achieving the housing targets was given to Harold Macmillan by Mr Churchill, the then Prime Minister, and indeed the 300,000 houses promised in the election manifesto in 1951, was more than exceeded in 1953 when some 308,000 houses were completed in Britain, and the following year, 1954 when 357,000 houses were completed.

vii) Let's Get Repairing Again

With the expansion of the house-building programme however, a campaign was being waged by the professional and property owners associations to try to bring about measures which would prevent the further deterioration of existing houses; weight was added to this argument by the publication, of the Girdwood Report (1953) on 'The

Cost of House Maintenance'. The report indicated that the cost of maintaining a house in good repair had increased by 216% between 1939 and 1953. The major political parties began to become more aware of the situation and the Labour Party stated that 'the tenant himself would benefit from some form of revision of the rent to be spent on the improvement and maintenance of the dwelling'.

Proposals were made from 'the left' with regard to the municipalisation of privately-rented properties, notably in the Fabian pamphlet by D.L. Munby (1952). As the pressure for action grew Mr Harold MacMillan announced a "full enquiry" and it was not until November 1953 that the long awaited reorientation of official housing policy was announced. It was felt that since the house building programme had been expanded by 50% since 1951, and since the completion rate was not in excess of 300,000 houses per annum, then attention could be turned to the problem of maintenance and improvement and to the resumption of a slum clearance programme.

The White Paper, "Houses - The Next Step" (1953) gave a broader outline of the many aspects of the national housing problem and outlined the Government's "comprehensive plan" for dealing with them. At the same time there were some 13½ dwellings in Great Britain. Of these 6½m were owned either by their occupiers or by public authorities, the remaining 9½m being privately rented. Most of the privately rented accommodation was very old with some 2½m being over 65 years old. It is clear from these figures that the housing stock in the private rented sector was old and that a policy which concentrated



almost solely on building additional houses should not be pursued longer than necessary. The old properties were in varying states of repair, ranging from those which were in perfect order to those which required to be demolished. What was required then was a comprehensive plan of repair and maintenance, with the tenant responsible for the payment of the rates. The Institute's proposal was that the statutory deduction should be used as a basis for the arranging of rent increases. The cost of repairs had risen by 216% since 1939 (the date at which the statutory repairs deduction enabled landlords to repair and maintain houses to the standard they had adopted in 1939). The scheme was considered to be politically attractive for it gave landlords an increase only for that part of their rent income which was intended to cover repairs and maintenance; however the problem was to ensure that the increases were applied to maintain the property in a good state of repair. In an attempt to overcome this problem the Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954 laid down a set of criteria for determining whether a house was 'unfit for human habitation'. If the house was 'fit' and in a good state of repair, then the conditions for justifying a rent increase had been fulfilled. The landlord was then required 'as a test of good faith' to show that repairs of an appropriate value had been undertaken, and once this procedure had been followed, the rent increase was allowed, and became permanent, unless the tenant could prove that the house was no longer in a good state of repair.

At the other extreme from the essentially sound houses were the hundreds of thousands which were unfit for human habitation and which

could not be brought to a fit condition at a 'reasonable' expense. Thus, it was decided to launch a slum clearance campaign immediately. However, the slums were not distributed evenly throughout the country; some areas had very few, whilst in other areas there were so many that it would take years to clear them. In such instances, a planned programme was to be introduced to cover a 20 year period, with the worst being removed within the first five years, and then those not quite so dilapidated within ten years, with the better properties being patch repaired to extend their life to the second decade of the programme. Technically such properties were unfit for human habitation, but they could be made fit at a reasonable cost.

A final category of house was the one which could give many years of useful services if improved, and included in this category were the large mid 19th Century villas which were now considered to be too large and could be given a new life by conversion into flats. Grants were already available, but J.B. Cullingworth (1966) believes the scheme had proved to be ineffective: between 1949 and 1953 grants had been given for only 5,463 improvements and 624 conversions. He believes that this was due to a lack of publicity and lack of materials. Very little information was collected by the Government as to the effect of the 1954 Act on repairs and there are no figures as to the number of cases in which repairs were carried out. The general opinion, however, was that the provisions of the Act were too restrictive. Landlords had not taken advantage of the Act since there was little return to be gained for a large outlay of capital. By the end of 1956, 7,328 conversions and 82,593

improvements had been grant-aided, but few of these improvements were undertaken in privately-owned rented property, the majority had gone to owner-occupiers. Either the conditions were still too restrictive or renting houses was becoming an unviable proposition.

viii) Private Instead of Public

Another important measure at this time resulted from the desire to expand the private provision of housing; licensing control over private enterprise building was abolished in November 1954 and the number of private houses increased from 60,000 in 1953 to 110,000 in 1955 representing 38% of those built in 1955. If the total house building programme was to be kept at 300,000 (which was the target of the Conservative Government when it came to power in 1951 and was achieved in 1953 and 1954) then clearly in order to allow the private sector to expand, the public sector would need to be restrained and this was done by a system of allocations. The intention was to persuade local authorities to restrict their programme to the number of houses required for slum clearance purposes, except where it was clear that private enterprise was unable or unwilling to meet 'general needs'. Such a policy was not easy to implement without some means of persuasion; and this was found in the recosting of housing subsidies in October 1955.

ix) Cut Subsidies

The expansion of local authority housing programmes in the early 1950's under the Conservative Government led to the fact that by the end of 1955 local authorities owned some 2½m houses and were receiving nearly £47m a year in Exchequer subsidies. The Government

felt that in general, council house rents were being subsidised to a greater extent than the financial circumstances of the individual tenants required. Further, they felt that the amount of subsidy which the Exchequer was paying out in respect of existing houses was unnecessarily large, and provided a margin which could properly be used for financing some part of the future house-building programme. The Government also considered it necessary for a greater effort to be made towards slum clearance, and whilst direct controls are contrary to Conservative Party ideology, an alternative route was found by providing financial incentives. The general needs subsidy was abolished - although it was retained for one-bedroom dwellings, this exception being made in order to try and encourage local authorities to provide more dwellings for elderly and single people. J.B. Cullingworth (1966) points out that

'The 1956 Act constituted part of a general policy of substituting financial measures for administrative controls'.

Under this Act the system of allocations was abolished and local authorities were now free to determine the size and scope of their own housing programmes, but they would only receive Exchequer subsidies for the special categories of need defined in the Act.

The loan financing arrangements were altered so much that local authorities had in future to attempt to raise the money on the money market before approaching the Public Works Loan Board for finance. If they borrowed from the P.W.L.B. they would be required to pay the same rate of interest as if the loan had been raised on the open

market. This resulted in a sharp rise in interest rates on local authority loans. These new policies had the effect of precipitating a rapid decline in house building by local authorities and by the end of 1956 local authority housing completions had fallen by about a third from the 1954 level and these trends continued for the remainder of the 1950's. During this period also, the slum clearance programmes of local authorities gathered momentum. The total number of houses demolished rose from under 20,000 in 1954 to 47,000 in 1957 and 62,000 in 1961. Although these figures show a marked improvement, they are somewhat below the targets set by the local authorities themselves in the slum clearance programmes that they were required to submit to the Ministry in the autumn of 1955.

x)

#### Remove Rent Controls

At the Conservative Party's annual conference in October 1956 the Minister of Housing (Mr Sandys) announced that the time had come to begin a progressive abolition of rent control. The Government's proposals were for the automatic decontrol of all dwellings with a rateable value of over £40 in London and over £30 elsewhere in England and Wales. It was estimated that there were 750,000 such dwellings, and it was also proposed that any dwelling below the 'control limits' would become decontrolled when let to a new tenant. For the 4½m dwellings remaining under control a system of rent limits based on gross values was introduced, rents which were below these limits could be increased subject to the right of the tenant to challenge them on the grounds of disrepair. These proposals were incorporated in the 1957 Rent Act, which was undoubtedly one of the most controversial pieces of legislation of the 1950's. The

legislation was not preceded by an investigation of the problems it was designed to solve. The Government believed that increased freedom in rent determination would restore the market situation, and that also, the condition of rented property (caused by artificially low rents) would be released on to the housing market to be relet. The Government believed that since it would become profitable to let property, that the supply of privately-rented accommodation would increase, since it would become profitable to let property again. However, as many houses became vacant, the landlords decided to sell the property to owner-occupiers and thus the supply of privately rented accommodation contracted further. Those who could not enter property within the expanding sectors of the market were compelled to compete for a dwindling supply of poor quality houses - which led to the ripe conditions in a few areas for *Rachmanism* from 1960 onwards. The Rent Act of 1957 had done little therefore to ease the situation. D.V. Donnison (1967) believes that the economic opportunity conferred on landlords by the 1957 Act was largely illusory; and that the full effects were postponed by an Amending Act in 1958. This Act, together with other measures, strengthened the trend towards owner occupation in the very property which was intended for renting by decontrolling many tenancies. Donnison says that no other country in Western Europe had so consistently discouraged private investment in rented property. No other country had abandoned its rent controls in a manner that neither distinguished between the extent of the shortage in particular areas, nor offered allowances or subsidies to the families least capable of paying increased rents.

Little had been done by either the local authorities housing programmes or by the private building companies to cater for many of those for whom the private landlords had catered - the old, the single, the young and the poorer households in general. The housing programmes have concentrated on the provision of accommodation for families. As a result of the private rented accommodation diminishing, the problem of "homelessness" began to grow from the last quarter of 1957 onwards, until in the early 1960's scandals became rife and the Sunday newspapers had a field day. A Committee of Inquiry was set up in August 1963 chaired by Milner-Holland.

xi) An Alternative Strategy

It became clear that council housing and owner occupation could not between them provide new housing for all those in need of it, and clearly the private landlords would no longer build accommodation for the average person, but only cater for the luxury flat market in the large cities. In order to find a solution to this problem an attempt was made in 1961 to promote housing associations of a new kind, with the aid of Local Government loans. In 1964 the National Housing Corporation was established to provide technical advice for them, aided by an Exchequer loan of £50m, which was later increased after the change of government from Conservative to Labour to £100m. It was becoming increasingly recognised that many of the hardships in private rented housing were due to incorrect subdivision and poor management of such property. The 1961 Act therefore gave local authorities greater powers of compulsion in dealing with such problems, and the 1964 Act extended these powers further enabling

local authorities to compel owners in designated areas to improve their housing, to offer more generous improvement grants, and to take over the property of recalcitrant landlords under 'control orders' for a period of up to five years, paying nominal compensation to the owner and recouping from him the costs of necessary improvements that were not even covered by rents.

Meantime, the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works was centralising a number of government building responsibilities outside the housing field and embarking on a systematic programme of architectural research and development work, one by-product of which was the creation of the National Building Agency whose task it was to promote more efficient industrialised building methods throughout the country, particularly in the housing sphere. Encouraged by the leadership given, local authorities in many parts of the country were beginning to organise themselves into "consortia" and other groupings, some of them employing the same development and design teams, building methods and contractors, in an attempt to maximise the effects of the economies of large scale production. Comparisons were frequently made with the success achieved by similar methods previously in improving the design and reducing the cost of schools. But the revolution in the school building programmes began at a point when costs were high, and existing designs were often wasteful. The attempt to reorganise the house building industry began after a sustained period of continuous economies and falling standards when more generous dimensions and equipment were urgently needed.



xii) A Better Quality Product

In 1959, the Parker-Morris Commission was appointed. Their report in "Houses for Today and Tomorrow" (1961) contained recommendations for the improvement of both the public and private housing sectors. The committee believed that the time was right for a general improvement in housing construction standards and in particular in the basic equipment installed. Kitchens should be large enough to dine in for some meals; there should be more storage space for domestic appliances, more power points, adequate heating equipment such as central heating. Even today, houses are built without central heating as a standard amenity, and in fact today some of the "cheaper" houses built in the private sector are of a lower quality and standard, than those in the public sector, but possibly with high mortgage interest rates people are not willing to pay the extra cost for such amenities.

xiii) Back to Labour

During the General Election in 1964, much of the debate centred on housing, rents, the rights of tenants, the rising price of land, the building of offices - many of them still standing empty - the needs of the homeless, and the decaying and depressed areas. It was believed by some that the outcome of the election - the return of a Labour Government - reflected the public's disquiet about issues. Whether this was so or not, government became more deeply involved in housing again. Much information had been gathered with regard to the immediate problems in the late 1950's and the early 1960's from Regional Studies, from the Milner-Holland Report (on housing in Greater London), the Buchanan Report (on traffic in towns)

and the Banwell Report (on the placing and management of contracts for Building and Civil Engineering Works). The most urgent priorities were considered to be the prevention of evictions and abuse in private property, the control of office building, the provision of additional help for housing associations and the establishments of a system of rent regulation. Much of the legislation required was enacted in the Rent Act 1965, which applied to every tenancy of a dwelling where the rent did not exceed £400 per annum in Greater London, and £200 per annum elsewhere. Amendments to the transfer of tenancy upon the death of the tenant were made, as were the conditions for the recovery of possession of an owner-occupied house which had been let. The owner-occupier could apply to the court for possession only if he had occupied the house himself at sometime, and had not let the house after the coming into force of the Act. Provision was made for the registration of rents, and Rent Officers were to be appointed and paid for by local authorities throughout England and Wales. A 'Registered Rents Register' was to be introduced in which was recorded, in addition to the rent payable under a regulated tenancy, the "prescribed" particulars with regard to the tenancy, and a specification of the dwelling house. The Act laid out the terms for defining a "Fair Rent", and stated that in determining for the purposes of the Act what is or would be a fair rent under a regulated tenancy, "regard shall be had to all the circumstances (other than personal circumstances) and in particular to the age, character and locality of the dwelling and to its state of repair". This clearly ignores demand, and was a measure to control the price of housing in the private sector. Further,

measures were taken for the protection of tenants against harassment and eviction without due process of the law. Some less desirable property companies had acquired the habit of moving out tenants from properties in London (which when vacant, could either be sold for a huge price, or remodelled and let out on unregulated tenancies for high rent) by putting in either very noisy tenants or a tenant who kept alsation dogs as pets; such behaviour became an indictable offence. Likewise the demanding of money by tenants, in order to free such properties - which was also occurring - became an offence. These were therefore attempts to deal with Rachmanism in its more extreme form. Section 2 of the Landlord and Tenant Act (1949) - which allowed for the payment of a premium upon the letting of accommodation was abolished. The purpose of this was to bring to an end the payment of "Key Money" but it only partially worked, for if agencies let flats now, then the agency charges for the piece of paper on which the address is written. In London, the shortage of accommodation was becoming so acute that it became common practice for people to pay quite high prices just for information about forthcoming flat vacancies. People were being paid to move, either in cash or kind, and others still demanded money to vacate accommodation - even though making such demands was an offence. In 1968 a further Rent Act was introduced basically to consolidate previous legislation, but also to deal with the problem, mentioned above. An interesting anomaly of the tenancy legislation, was that no protection was granted to a tenant of Crown Property.

xiv) Grants for Conversions and Twilight Areas

The Housing Act 1969 made a further provision for grants by local authorities and contributions out of money provided by Parliament towards the cost of providing dwellings by conversion (large houses to be divided into flats to be allowed up to £1,200 per dwelling provided). Further, the goal of improving the existing housing stock was set and the system of grants for standard amenities was improved and extended. To qualify for the grant aid, all the standard amenities had to be installed for the exclusive use of its occupants - the standard amenities being - a fixed bath, hot and cold water supply to the bath, washbasin and sink, and an indoor toilet. In conjunction with these provisions, the Act encouraged the creation of 'General Improvement Areas' - the aim being to improve both the amenities of the houses in specific areas and the general environment, thus trying to prevent the areas from becoming the slums or "blighted properties" as they are euphemistically called, of ten years hence. This legislation therefore led to "beautification" programmes in twilight areas.

In order to encourage landlords of private tenancies to participate in improvement schemes a system of "qualification certificates" was introduced, the possession of which would be taken into account when assessing the rent of a property. However, if a house did not possess the basic amenities, then the work to install them could not be carried out unless the tenant agreed to such work in writing.

xv) Return of the Conservatives - Moves Towards Fair Rents

With the return of the Conservatives to Government in 1970, concern was shown for the mounting exchequer housing subsidies, which in the year 1970/71 amounted to over £157m, and in addition local authorities paid a housing subsidy from the rates of about £65m. The new government claimed that 90% of these subsidies were used to reduce the general level of rent regardless of the need of the tenant and only 10% was used to grant rebates to poorer tenants, and as a result many in need received little or no help. The aim of the new legislation which they intended to introduce was to subsidise people and not property, and this was the underlying ideology of the "Fair Rents" legislation.

In the private sector rent control was introduced to protect the tenant, but by 1970 most of the controlled rents were barely covering the cost of proper maintenance and insurance; tenants were therefore being subsidised by their landlords. The rent of private tenants subject to rent control had not changed since 1957 and was on average about 85 pence per week in the provinces and £1.50p per week in London (only controlled tenancies). Such low rent affected the condition of the housing stock of this sector of the housing market. If returns are low, then the standard of maintenance will be at a minimum. It was claimed therefore that if the then existing system continued, then the effort being devoted to the removal of the slums would be neutralised by the drift into slums of controlled dwellings. Tenants subject to rent regulation may have had their rents increased, but outside Birmingham, there was no help for those in

need if they were in full-time employment. In Birmingham the Conservative controlled council under Sir Frank Griffin introduced a scheme to subsidise private tenants. Clearly as long as there is a shortage of buildings to let, tenants will need to be protected by rent control and given security of tenure, yet both measures make landlords less willing to let property. The Rent Act of 1965 had, as briefly outlined above, attempted to create a system of "Fair Rents" for private rented accommodation, and the aim of the Conservative Government was to introduce the principle of fair rents to local authority tenants. In consequence the two main sectors of the market for rented accommodation would for the first time be governed by one common principle - fair rents for all.

Many council tenants did not consider the principle very 'fair' at all, and in places such as Derby, Clay Cross and Greenock opposition was mounted against the implementation of the 1972 Housing Finance Act. The principle adopted within the Housing Finance Act was one by which the rent of a council dwelling reflected its value by reference to its character, location, amenities and state of repair, but disregarding the value due to local shortage of similar accommodation. The idea was that council tenants would no longer be liable to increases resulting from the state of their authorities Housing Revenue Account (which was never supposed to show a debit balance; if it did, it had to be cleared from monies taken from the General Rate Fund). Of course the implementation of these proposals led to fierce debate in the local town halls and upset somewhat the council tenants most effected by the subsequent increases.

In the national context, the emphasis has moved in post-war years from building houses mainly by local authorities - something like 90% of houses built in 1949 were built by or for local authorities - to one where in 1973 something like 35% of houses were built by or for local authorities. With Local Government reorganisation housing became the responsibility of the district councils and the natural "cut off" for this research appears to be with local government reorganisation.

xvi) Broader Horizons

In this chapter we have traced the emergence of public housing policy from its origins to Local Government reorganisation in 1974.

National policy was originally concerned with environmental health problems, housing initially being an offshoot of sanitation and health policy. Private enterprise was seen as managing very well in building for letting and owner occupation. National policy was that private enterprise should not be offered the discouragement of local authority intervention.

During the First World War, house building and house repairs were at a standstill. At this point, the great majority of houses were rented from private landlords. Few municipal dwellings were available: a proportion of houses were multi-occupied and sharing between parents and their married children was common.

At the end of the war the Coalition Government realised that changes had to be made and more local authority houses were built. Although the association between housing and public health remained, in that both were the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and would remain so until after the Second World War, housing was established as a need in its own right for which the government would take responsibility. During the inter-war years, the periodic increase and decrease in house construction partly reflected the ability and will of successive governments to provide support to house construction in the 1930's to private homebuilding, by offering subsidies to private house builders to build low cost houses for sale. A variation on this idea was pursued between 1968 and 1972 in Derby, when the Conservative Controlled Council, in conjunction with a local contractor, constructed houses for sale at cost price. The days of low-cost materials and labour which allowed a good return to the property investor, had passed with the First World War. There was a short period when these conditions reappeared briefly in the late 1930's.

The end of the Second World War, like the end of the First, saw problems of housing need compounded by years in which no domestic building had taken place. By 1945, this had been aggravated by the loss of many houses through enemy action. Slum clearance once again, became a luxury which had to be postponed while all efforts were given to providing additional accommodation. During the immediate post-war years, a considerable amount of legislation affected all aspects of housing provision and environmental control and the



foundations were laid for many new developments in the ensuing years.

Housing has become a major priority in its own right - the move from an environmental health issue to being a policy in its own right occurred in the inter-war years. During the period under review the demise of the private rented sector took place, and the emergence of the Local Government sector occurred. Local authorities subsequently became major providers of housing - providing approximately 32% of all dwellings by 1974. In the post war period they replaced the private landlord, much of whose property was cleared away in local authority sponsored slum clearance programmes. Thus, a relationship still exists between sanitary conditions, health and housing provision. This is possibly best illustrated today, through the policies relating to Housing Action Areas (H.A.A.'s) and General Improvement Areas (G.I.A.'s). These policies concern themselves with the rehabilitation and improvement of older properties. Recent concern has been shown over the use of resources and the debate has centred on slum clearance - new building or rehabilitation of existing properties. Inter-related to these policies are the problems of inner city decline and new developments on the periphery of cities leading to "urban sprawl". In an attempt to partially alleviate this problem, a new towns policy was adopted which became one of the main themes of Central Government housing policy in the 1950's and 1960's. Throughout the period there were changes in standards and levels of specification both for rehabilitation and for new housing, and also in the forms of assistance offered.

From the 1950's onwards the importance of the private owner occupation sector started to emerge. A number of factors encouraged this development including the abolition of schedule A taxation and the expansion of the building society movement thus increasing the availability of relatively low cost loans. Local authorities also made funds available for mortgages to house buyers, usually to those who either did not qualify for a building society loan either on account of personal circumstances or because of the type of property they were considering buying. The emphasis has moved between public and private sector as governments have changed, but the Labour party has come to accept owner occupation of homes as a policy which it is politically expedient to follow. Changes in housing tenure have resulted in owner occupation being the style of tenure occupied today by 56% of households, local authority housing by 32% with the remaining 12%, being catered for by the private rented sector and housing associations.

### CHAPTER THREE BACKGROUND OF PUBLIC HOUSING POLICY IN BRITAIN

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## CHAPTER FOUR    PICKING UP THE PIECES 1945-1951

- i)    Background
- ii)   Problems to Solve- Different Approaches
- iii) No Easy Solutions
- iv)   A Change of Government - New Targets Set
- v)    Cut the Costs
- vi)   Preparing for a Sale
- vii) Gaining Momentum

## CHAPTER FOUR      PICKING UP THE PIECES 1945-1951

i)      Background

In this, and the following chapters, I wish to turn the emphasis from a national or "macro" context to the local or "micro" context, and examine the housing policies of two individual councils, namely Derby and Portsmouth, against the background of overall housing policy in Britain. Such a comparison is likely to be particularly enlightening since Derby has been predominantly Labour controlled in post-war years, whilst Portsmouth has been predominantly Conservative controlled. Their policies have as one might expect, diverged considerably over the years, and yet the two authorities were reacting to similar constraints and policy proposals from Central Government. By analysing the policies pursued by the two authorities I will attempt to assess the impact of both local political influences and also the emergence of local personalities upon policy outcomes. Both cities had been of strategic importance during World War II - Derby because of its Rolls Royce engine factories and aircraft assembly lines and Portsmouth because of its large naval dockyards. Both cities suffered from action by the enemy during the war and entered the post war years with acute housing problems. In addition, in Portsmouth, its geographical location served to put severe pressure on the available land - Portsmouth was still an island - Portsea Island - and clearly development would be limited to the island, unless land was made available on the mainland, beyond the council's domain. Portsmouth also faced a problem where men recruited by the Naval Authorities in other parts of Britain had married local girls and wished to remain in the city.

The cities are of similar populations today, as they were in 1945. (Derby 221,000, Portsmouth 230,000 after Local Government reorganisation 1974).

ii) Problems to Solve - Different Approaches

At the end of World War Two Derby Town Council was controlled by the Labour Group and Portsmouth City Council by the Conservative Group. Both authorities faced acute housing problems, much of it as a result of aerial bombardment. Many of the houses were completely destroyed, and others severely damaged, leaving open spaces in built up areas. On 1st January 1945 there were 6,839 council houses in Derby and a waiting list of 2,814 applicants. (D.H.C. January 1945). In Portsmouth on the same date in excess of 7,000 houses had been destroyed by enemy action, there were 3,309 council houses and flats and in excess of 11,000 families on the council's housing list. (P.H.C. October 1945).

In both authorities the respective housing committees were chaired by senior members of their parties. In Portsmouth the chairman of the Housing Committee was Councillor Clifton who was a builder by trade. He had been chairman during the war years when of course the committee had a less active role and he was to play an important role in post-war Local Government in Portsmouth. In Derby, Alderman Flint, who was a leading solicitor in the town was chairman of the Housing Committee. Indeed he held this position until 1968, when the ruling Labour group was defeated in the elections for a new town council, following the extension of the town's boundaries. Alderman Flint was therefore to play a highly significant role in the determination of post-war housing policy in Derby.

Both authorities recognised the need for comprehensive rehousing and house building programmes to cope with their acute problems. Initially their approaches were similar, namely the provision of temporary accommodation in requisitioned properties - usually large houses - and "hutments". This policy was the cause of much concern in later years, since both local authorities were slow to rehouse tenants in such accommodation, when permanent accommodation became more readily available. Fairly quickly, however, the two cities diverged. Derby Town Council gave priority to the housing of families in permanent accommodation as soon as possible, and plans were devised in the immediate post-war years for the building of large estates of traditional three bedroomed semis on the periphery of the town for rent to families. In Portsmouth, on the other hand, as early as March 1948, the councillors were suggesting that houses should be built to a standard capable of being sold off. (P.H.C. March 1948). Here we see early signs of Conservative philosophy coming to the fore. Despite the acute housing problems in Portsmouth and the severe overcrowding being experienced by some families, some of the councillors were even then planning for the sale of houses. This might be considered either foresight or dogma depending upon the political stance taken. It was certainly not within the intentions of the Labour Central Government of the day. Further evidence of divergencies at this time can be cited. Whereas in Derby, the town council planned to build all the new dwellings with its own direct labour, the Portsmouth Planning and Reconstruction Committee had discussed the allocation of a portion of the Paulsgrove Estate for development by private enterprise. (P.C.C. June 1945). A



resolution was passed after a suggestion by the City Planning Officer, that provision should be made for the building of approximately 850 dwellings by private enterprise and approximately 1,100 by the council, and that the shops on the estate should also be erected by private enterprise and not by the council. The council resolved that there was a need to move away from the "council house image" (P.C.C. June 1945). It is therefore possible to contrast the standpoints of the two authorities even in the early post-war years. In Derby, the council adopted an almost paternalistic standpoint of "providing" accommodation and planning the provision of accommodation. In Portsmouth, the council made a more limited provision, and placed a greater emphasis on the role of the private sector.

A further objective identified by Portsmouth City Council in the early post-war years, was to strengthen the industrial base of the local economy, and to reduce the locality's dependence upon the Naval Dockyards for employment. Derby, on the other hand, has always had a relatively wide industrial base, although, in a similar way to Portsmouth, it had dominant employers - namely Rolls Royce Limited, London, Midland and Scottish Railways - later British Railways, British Celanese - later Couteaulds P.L.C. and a whole range of engineering and textile companies. Much of the local industry had benefitted from the "war effort"; aircraft were for instance manufactured in the railway workshops, literally across the road from the main Rolls Royce aero-engine factory. The local economy was

very buoyant, and so unlike Portsmouth, the town council did not see the need to broaden the employment base. Despite the shortage of land in Portsmouth, the city council allocated 1900 units of land for industrial use and 400 units for business premises. The city council was attempting to provide more than houses within the redevelopment programme, and indeed as we shall see later, incorporated a scheme for housing key workers in new industries. The key workers scheme became very unpopular with those on the housing waiting list since they saw outsiders "queue jumping", and because tenants housed under the scheme had to pay the "economic rent" irrespective of income. Thus the policy of Portsmouth City Council towards new industry could be seen as adding to the housing problems in the city by taking up scarce land, and by housing people who were moving into the area, whilst failing to re-house those already in the city living in overcrowded conditions.

The problems of overcrowding and homelessness was very much to the fore in the minds of the national politicians when in 1948, the Government issued circular 171/48. This circular required local authorities to re-calculate and revise their housing waiting lists. In Derby the number of applicants had risen to 6,553 and the housing committee approved the recommendations that those whose names were also listed with other housing authorities should have their names removed. (D.H.C. January 1949). In Portsmouth the housing committee required all applicants to re-register. A total of 15,119 forms were sent out, of which 9630 were not returned, 1,060 applications were withdrawn, 125 returned "gone away" and 271 represented aged

persons on a separate list. Ultimately the new housing list was reduced to 5,964. (P.H.C. March 1948).

By December 31st 1950 there were 6,977 applicants on the housing list in Derby and 9,274 dwellings were occupied (P.H.C. January 1951). In Portsmouth, the housing situation was still acute and on the 19th October 1949 the City Treasurer reported that there were 1,717 families registered on the housing list with 20 points or more. He pointed out to the committee that there were "thousands of families" with less than 20 points who warranted re-housing and the committee "would not be justified in thinking that there were less than 2,000 deserving cases". (P.H.C. October 1949). The shortage of suitable land for housing use was becoming a serious problem, and land allocated for use as allotments on the Paulsgrove Estate was returned to the Housing Committee for development use as was land reserved for open spaces at Paulsgrove.

Recognition of the housing problem in Portsmouth by the newly elected Conservative Government is indicated by the fact that the Ministry of Housing and Local Government authorised not only the development of Leigh Park, but also an additional 450 homes. (P.H.C. November 1951). Further recognition of Portsmouth's problem was made when Mr Harold MacMillan visited the city on 11th January 1952.

Mr MacMillan said that blitzed cities had problems and that he considered housing to be a joint enterprise between Central and Local Government. He said that the problem was not one of money, but a shortage of materials; steel had to be "allocated"; demand far

exceeded supply. The shortage of building materials emerged as a new problem in Portsmouth to hinder the house building programme, just as the land was becoming available. Similar problems faced most local authorities, although in varying degrees. Derby, with its more traditional building styles was not affected by the steel shortage, but by a shortage of timber; pre-cast concrete floors were used to overcome this problem and minimise delay.

The major problem facing all local authorities in 1945 was the one of knowing where and how to restart their authorities' house building and repair programmes, with an ever increasing housing waiting list. Portsmouth appears at first glance to have been better prepared than Derby, since it had established in 1940 a Reconstruction and Redevelopment Committee which had the task of devising a master plan when peace arrived. Derby Town Council did not have this foresight.

### iii) No Easy Solutions

In February 1945 Derby Town Council discussed the erection of temporary housing and in October 1945 an investigation was carried out into the use of "Trusteel" houses, which was one of many types of prefabricated buildings becoming available; 148 dwellings were ordered and erected the following May (D.H.C. October 1945). Derby were never, however, strong supporters of prefabs.

In Portsmouth, at this time temporary houses were also being discussed and sites were allocated at Alexandra Park, Bransbury Park, and Milton Park. Portsmouth moreover, drew up ambitious plans for

the use of prefabrication, deciding that 1900 houses on the Paulsgrove Estate should be of prefabricated construction, and that throughout the city:-

460 units should be constructed in 1946 by prefabrication  
 1,440 units should be constructed in 1947 by prefabrication  
 2,700 units should be constructed in 1948 by prefabrication.

Temporary housing was seen as a stop gap solution by both authorities. However, the political stances of the two authorities came through even at this time of great need. As was stressed in Derby, the concern was with the long term housing of families in traditional semis; in Portsmouth it was with the maximisation of the use of land for both housing and commerce.

The priorities for the allocation of accommodation in Portsmouth were determined after discussing a confidential report at the Housing Committee Meeting held on 19th June 1945. At this meeting the committee decided that the priorities for the allocation of accommodation should be:-

- 1) Bombed out families.
- 2) Overcrowding; medical cases; including discharged unfit servicemen - 5/20 points.
- 3) Requisitioned houses (owners returning)
- 4) Evacuated families.
- 5) Servicemen and newly married couples - those married since 1939.
- 6) Aged couples.
- 7) General - no priority.

The immediate object of the list was to decide on the allocation of temporary houses when completed, but it clearly indicates the councils' priorities in housing those on its waiting list.

Overcrowding was particularly acute in Portsmouth. When the council asked the owners of furniture - which they were storing since the owners had been affected by the war - to take it back, many replied saying they did not have accommodation in which to put the furniture (P.C.C. June 1945). In September 1945 the Minister of Health stated that Portsmouth City Council could not use parks for temporary housing, although the city council had plans for 1400 temporary units of accommodation and was faced with an acute shortage of suitable sites.

A private report was compiled for Portsmouth City Council by the Town Clerk, City Treasurer, City Engineer, City Architect, and City Planning Officer as a result of circular 182/45 which outlined views of the Minister of Health in relation to the provision of permanent prefabricated houses ie. early forms of system building (P.C.C. November 1945). The officers recommended that permanent house supplies could be expanded by the use of prefabrication since less on site labour was required. Portsmouth City Council also decided that in order to maximise the use of land available, private houses should be erected on sites from which bombed houses had been removed. (P.H.C. November 1945). This again reflects the council's political perspective since the decision was taken despite the council's shortage of building sites.

Derby's response to circular 182/45 resulted in a proposal being put forward by the Chief Architect that permanent prefabricated houses be constructed. But the proposal failed on the grounds that they were too expensive compared with houses being built using conventional methods of construction. (D.H.C. September 1946).

On 17th December 1945, the City Treasurer - who was responsible for Housing Administration in Portsmouth presented a report to the Housing Committee reviewing the "Points" scheme in association with housing applications. The report indicated that in Portsmouth the residence qualification was applied more keenly than the Minister of Health wished. This had the effect reducing the waiting list to 8,329 applicants. However, additionally there were 1,511 families accommodated in requisitioned properties constituting a further potential demand for houses in the future. The City Treasurer stated the greatest demand was for 2 bedroomed properties (P.H.C. December 1945) although this was contrary to the desires of Central Government who urged local authorities to construct 3 bedroomed family accommodation. The government's concern for this is reflected by the fact that a proposal to erect old peoples' bungalows on a new housing estate (Chaddesden Hall) on the outskirts of Derby, then in course of erection, was refused, whilst a plan to build 105 "prefabs" was approved. The ambitious plans of both authorities were in fact curtailed by the national shortage of building material. This shortage is reflected in the fact that both Housing Committees received an "instruction" from the Ministry of Health stating that in future "solid floors" should be used in the construction of all ground floors.

An assessment of the respective speeds of development in the two cities can be made if a comparison is made of the dates on which the 1,000th unit of accommodation was completed. In Portsmouth this date was 21st March 1947 (P.H.C. March 1947) in Derby it was 15th January 1948 (D.H.C. January 1948), in both cities though accommodation consisting of houses, prefabs, and temporary accommodation. In Derby plans were well advanced for large housing estates to be constructed on the outskirts of the town at Chaddesden Hall (North East of Derby) and at Mackworth (North West of Derby). These two projects were to become the two major housing schemes in the 1950's in the public sector, and the area north of Derby was destined to become the largest single housing project in the public sector in the area.

Portsmouth's housing programme was certainly gathering momentum by 11th November 1947. The approved programme was for 3,684 new housing units comprising the 1,400 temporary bungalows, 92 converted camp dwellings and 2,192 permanent dwellings. By 8th November 1947, 1,970 new home units had been completed for occupation and 1,641 were under construction. The rate of construction can be seen in the following table.

July - December 1945	98 houses	Average 3 per week
January - December 1946	740 houses	Average 20 per week
January - November 1947	<u>1,132</u> houses	Average 25 per week
	<u>1,970</u>	



During August, September and October of 1947, houses were completed at the rate of 8 per day or nearly 50 per week. Portsmouth had completed more new dwellings than any other town in the six counties of the Southern Region. (P.H.C. November 1949). Out of the 1,469 housing authorities in England and Wales, Portsmouth's construction rate made it eighth.

Like Derby, Portsmouth had opted to develop virgin sites, namely Paulsgrove and Leigh Park, both sites being north of the city. The Leigh Park site was really an overspill of Portsmouth into the neighbouring urban district of Havant, and as we shall see in the next chapter, its completion led to a souring of the relationship between Havant, U.D.C., Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth City Council. However, Portsmouth Council was quite desperate for development land like Derby, had little alternative at that time - but to develop in areas negotiated with other local authorities, and designated by Hampshire County Council. In the 1950's and 1960's the only other alternative solution was to build high rise flats, but these presented their own problems.

Within two years of taking over the Paulsgrove site of 358 acres, the roads and sewers were laid throughout the estate, 560 houses were completed and 1,244 were in various stages of construction. The problems of such rapid development are highlighted by the fact that in January 1948 it was reported that difficulties were being experienced in the educating of primary children moving to the Paulsgrove Estate, 175 junior pupils were being transported to

schools in other parts of the city and it was suggested that the number would increase over the following months. The education committee proposed to erect 10 temporary classrooms on land allocated for a community centre, since finance was not available for the community centre, and this proposal was agreed. (P.H.C. January 1948).

To meet the growing demand for houses, in Derby, the Mackworth Estate was started in May 1950. The construction was initially carried out by private contractors - notably George Wimpey & Company, in contrast to Derby's earlier practice of using direct labour. This would appear to be a little surprising for a Labour controlled authority, but the council had experienced difficulty in recruiting skilled labour to its direct labour force. The rate of development was quite rapid, for some 532 units were projected to be completed by the end of 1951. (D.H.C. September 1950). In March and April 1951, additional contracts were awarded to Wimpeys to further the development. The gestation period for the Mackworth Estate had been quite lengthy, some three years, but the estate was destined to become one of the largest local authority housing schemes in the Midlands, housing some 20,000 people. During the planning stages, the complete road layout had been completed. Provision had been made for adequate infrastructure, shops, churches, schools, public houses, and for public transport network to be developed at the same time as the estate rather than after the estate. Clearly the Ministry of Health had been considerate to Derby in allowing such a large scheme to go ahead, but there were a number of reasons for

this. There was for instance a plentiful supply of land which could easily be developed. The workforce of Derby was in the main engaged in what were then classified as strategic industries - aero engines, railways, and munitions. Perhaps most important of all the chairman of the Housing Committee for the town was a highly articulate lawyer, a man who could argue a good case for his town. Possibly too the Central Government was sympathetic to a Labour controlled authority.

In Portsmouth in June 1949 the City Architect reported to Portsmouth Housing Committee that he anticipated completions on the five main sites in the following manner:-

1949	711
1950	389
1951	456
1952	380

The City Architect concluded that the housing programme so far as the local authority was concerned was rapidly declining and that the years 1950, 1951 and 1952 would reflect the absence of new sites for development.

In March 1950, the City Architect reported that 1,000 homes would be contracted for during 1950, but that the difficulty lay in the future programme especially with regard to the provision of suitable sites. It was pointed out that the problem would remain until the City's boundaries were extended, and that until then, the council

would have to rely upon the neighbouring urban district councils of Fareham and Havant for the provision of sites. For instance, it was decided to acquire 40 dwellings from Pitassi and Son (32 houses and 8 bungalows) at Waterlooville - outside the city boundary (P.H.C. March 1950). The council a few weeks later negotiated to purchase a further 252 homes from the same builder - the houses having been built as a speculative development. (P.H.C. May 1951). The council started to make use of the powers granted to them under circular 92/46 which allowed them to contract local builders to construct properties for sale to the local housing authority at a price inclusive of land and drainage provision. The intention of the circular was to allow local housing authorities to buy small numbers of dwellings to let to families on their housing list. Portsmouth however made extensive use of the powers and in September 1950 agreed to the development of an estate of 400 houses under the terms of circular 92/46 by H.E. Collins Ltd. Despite the acute shortage of land in the city, the housing committee decided to proceed with the construction of 34 houses for Higher Income Groups - 18 - 4 bedroomed houses and 16 - 3 bedroomed houses on the Paulsgrove Estate. (P.H.C. July 1950). The council was also allocating a number of houses to key workers - ie. employees of companies operating locally, with skills which could not be recruited locally, or key workers in companies new to the area. The city council, as stressed earlier, used housing as a "bait" to new employers. Thus it can be seen that there were significant tensions in the housing policy pursued in Portsmouth. On the one hand there was a pressing need for housing accommodation; on the other a pursuit of a policy

granting houses to key workers in industry and building larger houses for higher income groups. The attraction of new industries and new employers to Portsmouth had considerable success. Today - electronics and computers have been added to its industrial base to offset the reduction of employment in the Dockyards. Thus such a policy can be justified with hindsight, but at the time of implementation the authority was taking a calculated risk. The building of high income group properties is more difficult to defend, except that it should allow for a greater social mix and a breaking down of the "ghettoes" syndrome. One might however suggest that families in the higher income groups are likely to want to buy their own home and certainly they are likely to be in a position to be able to do so. In Portsmouth, in short, there was a move away from the Labour Government's overwhelming priority of housing families adequately.

iv) A Change of Government - New Targets Set

During 1951 a general election took place which resulted in the return of a Conservative Government. One of the principle election promises made by the Conservatives at the time of the general election campaign was that a minimum of 300,000 houses would be constructed per annum. It was mainly by a major effort by the public sector that this figure was achieved in 1953 when a total of 238,883 were built by local authorities nationally. Of this total 858 were built in Derby and 1,113 in Portsmouth. (Housing Statistics for 1953 I.M.T.A.). The peak construction year for public authority building in Derby was a year behind the national peak, coming in 1954, when

234,973 houses were built by all local authorities, and 934 were built in Derby, with 1,680 being built in Portsmouth. (Housing Statistics 1954 I.M.T.A.).

During the period 1951-1954 a rapid acceleration took place in the housing programme of Portsmouth City Council. Councillor Miles, a dairy farmer was guiding the housing policy, (as chairman of the housing committee). The housing committee continued to rely on private building contractors for the construction of their properties rather than the use of a direct labour force. The council was showing increasing interest in the development of accommodation units in flats - even for old aged pensioners - for instance 36 flats for O.A.P.s in Lancaster Street/ Duke Street development to be built by Jones & Co Ltd for £46,172 (P.H.C. July 1951). At this time 444 units of accommodation were under construction. Further development of the Leigh Park estate was proposed and meetings took place with representatives of Hampshire County Council to discuss the Portsmouth overspill problem. Several Ministry of Local Government officials also attended the meeting including Dame Evelyn Sharp who chaired it (P.H.C. July 1951). Since it was becoming apparent to the City Architect that large areas of land were likely to become available for development in the near future, the City Architect made a comparison of the costs of traditional houses with the non-traditional system built houses. He reported that the average cost of a traditional house was £1,508 (29s/£1.45 per square foot) and non-traditional £1,586 (30/3<sup>d</sup> [£1.51p] per square foot) (P.H.C. September 1951). The committee was being prepared for a large

increase in the rate of development. At the same meeting it was agreed to construct a further 96 flats at Leigh Park for a total cost of £130,430 to be built by Faulkners Ltd (P.H.C. September 1951). The shortage of suitable land for development was now so acute that the Housing Committee decided to purchase a planned development of 252 houses at Bedhampton, eight miles north east of Portsmouth. The city were able to do this under circular 92/46 even though the builder - Pitassi and Son was not willing to provide securities in connection with the contract. The company had however already completed satisfactorily two other contracts without securities. (P.H.C. September 1951). The City Planning Officer reported that there existed approximately 800 building plots in the city suitable for private development. (P.H.C. September 1951). In November 1951 the City Housing Committee agreed to allocate sufficient land to the "Portsmouth and Southsea Self-Build Housing Society Ltd" for the erection of 34 council house type dwellings to be occupied by 34 members. (P.H.C. November 1951). The authority still had tenants housed in temporary accommodation in various parts of the city, including Bedhampton Camp, which was a collection of former army huts. The tenants at Bedhampton Camp were extremely dissatisfied with their living conditions and the City Treasurer in a report on the camp, indicated difficulties in letting such accommodation. However, the Housing Committee instructed the City Treasurer that the huts should be let as early as possible, although rehousing of tenants from Bedhampton should be stepped up from one family per week to two per week; huts which the City Architect felt unfit for further habitation should be pulled down although he was authorised to spend

money on the maintenance of those with further useful life. The City Treasurer was instructed to notify the committee of any "undesirable family" which had reached the point when they were due for rehousing, the facts to be placed before the committee prior to any allocation of accommodation. (P.H.C. November 1951).

Recognition of the housing problem in Portsmouth by the Government is indicated by the fact that the Ministry of Housing and Local Government authorised not only the development of Leigh Park, but also an additional 450 houses. (P.H.C. November 1951).

On January 11th 1952, Mr Harold MacMillan, the then Minister of Housing, visited Portsmouth as part of his programme of visits to assess housing redevelopment progress. The implications and impact of this visit are discussed later in this chapter. Following Mr MacMillan's visit, he wrote to the Housing Committee on 30th January 1952 urging the authority to speed up their house building programme, expediting those under construction and tender and asking for the programme to be expanded over the next 2/3 years and to make the necessary plans. The letter was received without any formal reply being made. (P.H.C. January 1952).

Two weeks later the allocation of houses was increased to 1,000 houses for 1952 from 450, with a promise of further increases depending upon progress made. The Housing Committee merely noted these facts. (P.H.C. February 1952). It can be seen therefore that



considerable pressure was being placed upon the Housing Committee by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, to improve the rate of rehousing of people in Portsmouth. Such pressure met with little initial response, since the Committee members felt that they were progressing as quickly as circumstances permitted.

In April 1952 though, the Principal Regional Officer, Major-General Coxwell-Rogers, addressed the Housing Committee and stated that there was a need to ensure continuity of work for contractors, since this would aid the speeding up of housing projects. The Regional Officer stated that there were a number of designs not known to the committee including 2, 3, and 4 bedroomed houses and there was at least one contractor prepared to take on schemes comprising a proportion of non-traditional and a proportion of traditional properties. This comment was for the benefit of the City Architect who was against the development of whole areas of non-traditional housing, and given the choice, preferred to have developments of traditional housing. Members of the Housing Committee made reference to the difficulty of supplies of building materials - particularly of cast iron pipes for public utilities. The Principal Regional Officer stated that he would contact the Regional Officer concerned and they would short circuit the problems. The Regional Architect also attended the meeting and he stated that he did not object to the principle of negotiated contracts, (another of the City Architects policies) as long as there was a satisfactory basis on which to judge the price. He said he would prefer to see the council employ one large contractor who could bring in outside labour and ensure continuity of

production. As a result of the discussions with the Principal Regional Officer and the Regional Architect, which took place during their visit on 17th April 1952, the Housing Committee decided to:

1. draw up draft plans for the whole of Leigh Park
2. invite tenders for the construction of non-traditional houses, including the installation of all services.

In May 1952, a Special Sub-Committee was formed for non-traditional housing. Land was allocated at Barncroft Farm for 450 houses.

(P.H.C. May 1952). In November 1952 George Wimpey & Co Ltd successfully tendered for the contract to develop the estate, to comprise 420 "No Fines" houses for £536,702 plus £91,165 for the roads. (P.H.C. November 1952).

In April 1952 the City Architect for Portsmouth presented a housing plan to the Housing Committee for the years 1953-1973 - see appendix

1. The report outlined the critical shortage of housing, indicated by a waiting list in excess of 12,500 families, by an anticipated natural increase in population, by the need for housing clearance and by the need for the replacing of temporary accommodation. The City Architect reported that a total of 18,000 units of accommodation would be required between 1953 and 1973.

A target was set for the period 1953-1958:-

1st April 1953	500
1st April 1954	800
1st April 1955	1,100
1st April 1956	1,500
1st April 1957	1,500
1st April 1958	<u>1,500</u>

6,900

For the subsequent 15 year period the City Architect suggested an average development rate of 740 per annum ie. 11,100 dwellings for 15 years - thus a shortfall of 400 units. (P.H.C. April 1953).

In Derby, the Housing Committee were more willing to use methods of system building ie. non-traditional methods as a way of meeting their housing needs. The Chief Architect wrote a very favourable report on non-traditional housing methods of construction. (D.H.C. January 1949). As early as January 1950 the housing committee agreed to the building of 150 "No Fines" houses from George Wimpey and Company of a type similar to those adopted by Portsmouth some two years later. ("No Fines" construction used prefabricated sections as the external cladding, and did not require sand/cement mortar or "fines" - hence the term "No Fines".) Further contracts were placed with Wimpey's for such dwellings and large estates were developed at Chaddesden - North East of Derby, and Mackworth, North West of Derby, of Wimpey "No Fines" dwellings and by 31st December 1951 532 "No Fires" dwellings had been completed on the two estates

(D.H.C. December 1951). In March 1952 a further 200 houses were contracted for the Mackworth Estate, although 100 of them were to be built by Wimpey, 100 were contracted from a rival company - Wates at £10 per house more, costing £128,000 compared with £127,000 contract from Wimpeys, although Wimpeys reduced their price by £12,000 because of pressure put on them by Derby Town Council (D.H.C. March 1952). In November 1952 a further 100 "No Fines" houses were contracted from Wimpey's, as part of the additional development of 1,200 houses on the Mackworth Estate; 300 of the remainder, were it was decided, to be built by direct labour, (D.H.C. November 1952) a type of development not undertaken in Portsmouth, and reflecting a difference in political ideals. The move to direct labour was followed with a further allocation of 200 houses to the authority's building department, again to be built on the Mackworth Estate, alongside 140 houses contracted to Vic Hallam Limited. (D.H.C. May 1953). Thus it can be seen that the momentum in Derby's housing programme was gained by concentrating on the development of two large estates, estates so large, that they were ultimately to become suburbs of the town in their own right. The council in Derby refused to build houses to rent out to higher income groups. They had in Portsmouth from 1948, only to find such properties difficult to let. Again unlike Portsmouth Derby would not pursue a policy of levying economic rents, rather the reverse: the rents charged were relatively modest for the period and were subsidised on average by £7.35p per dwelling from the rates. (D.H.C. May 1953). These factors again reflect differences in political beliefs. Derby was fortunate compared with Portsmouth in having a sizeable "land bank"

which it could use for development relatively easily, for in addition to the Mackworth and Chaddesden estates, in June 1952 the council sought compulsory purchase orders for the purchase of land for far more schemes:-

1. 204 acres between Breadsall and Chaddesden.
2. 56 acres between Alvaston and Bolton.
3. 54 acres at Sunny Hill - Oaklands Avenue.
4. 61 acres at Wilson Road, Littlover.

Ministry approval was given for schemes 1 and 2, but refused for scheme 4 and deferred for scheme 3. (D.H.C. June 1953). Despite the approval of the first two schemes, in June 1953 the Ministry of Housing and Local Government refused to approve tenders for a further 200 houses at Alvaston because of the need to keep a balance in the supply of materials likely to be available both nationally and regionally. (D.H.C. June 1953). This contrasts sharply with the attitude being adopted towards Portsmouth City Council, who were being cajoled into building more houses. During the period 1st January 1953-30th June 1953, 455 houses were completed by the authority (D.H.C. June 1953), and 858 during the whole year - so clearly the effect of the Ministry's decision was to slow down the building programme in Derby, since there would normally have been more completions in the second half of the year than the first half, peaking around September. The committee started to concern itself with the infra-structure of the two large estates at Mackworth and Chaddesden, in order to ensure that adequate shopping, medical and social facilities were developed. The receipt of notification from

the Ministry of Housing and Local Government that as from 20th December 1953 controls would be removed from the selling of council houses was received with markedly less enthusiasm than it was in Portsmouth, to the extent that nothing was done about it. (D.H.C. December 1958).

v) Cut the Costs

The approved costs of new buildings in 1946 for Derby varied between £951 for a two bedroomed dwelling to £1,207 for a four bedroomed dwelling, compared with a negotiated price of £1,200 for three bedroomed dwellings. (D.H.C. December 1946). This price was re-negotiated at the insistance of the Ministry of Health and reduced to a nationally agreed price with the contractor of £1,054 (D.H.C. December 1946).

Contracts were let by Portsmouth City Council for 1,000 units of prefabricated permanent dwellings at £1,740 per unit - well above the Ministry of Health cost yardstick, and also well above the yardstick for traditionally built houses at costs ranging between £1,214 and £1,592. These contract figures were well in excess of the national guideline figures and could to a certain extent be accounted for by the acute local shortage of building operatives. Contractors had to bring in skilled workers and pay for their lodging expenses, a factor which did not arise in Derby on the same scale.

In March 1949, at the suggestion of the Ministry of Health consideration was given to the construction of two bedroomed houses. Ministry officials visited the town and suggested that the most

economical way of providing two bedroomed accommodation was by the erection of small flatted types - four in a block, somewhat similar to pre-war maisonettes. They claimed that such units could be erected for less than £1,000 per unit, compared with the £1,200 plus cost of the two bedroomed houses being built in Derby. The Ministry of Health was clearly becoming alarmed at the rising costs of houses as is shown by the correspondence between the officials at central and local levels. In addition, amendments were being made to proposals for developments before loan sanction was approved. The rising costs necessitated increased rents, but possibly there was more to the problem than the Ministry's concern - that of the Treasury also. No significant demand however had been identified for this particular type of accommodation, and indeed, as we shall see in subsequent chapters, there was considerable resistance to such accommodation from those on the waiting list. The local authority held the view that housing provision, when made should be of an acceptable standard.

In Portsmouth, the demand for two bedroomed houses, had been identified, and was in fact increasing, although in the main, the provision was still being made via three bedroomed accommodation. In March 1948 Portsmouth City Council gave consideration to three bedroomed houses serving the needs of two families because the immediate need in the city was for two bedroomed accommodation and not the three bedroomed houses being constructed. The City Architect was not in favour of such conversions and stated that the properties were not suitable for such modifications. (P.H.C. March 1948).

It is clear that the cost of future schemes, and the outcomes of such schemes were beginning to be more carefully scrutinised by Central Government, and that this scrutiny was affecting the implementation of proposals. At a special meeting of the Portsmouth Housing Committee with the Regional Housing Officer, the Regional Officer told the members that housing costs could and should be reduced. The Regional Officer made a comparison between housing costs in Portsmouth and Havant (neighbouring authorities). The figures produced showed that it was approximately £300 per dwelling more expensive to make provision in Portsmouth than Havant. (P.C.C. October 1948). Mr Dye of the Federation of Masterbuilders claimed that delay was the main reason for higher costs, whilst the City Architect stated that interior fittings, inclusion of porches and reinforced concrete foundations were the cause, and he said that if costs were reduced, size would also have to be reduced. Councillor Schofield said that it was a question of how far specification could be reduced without reducing standards of habitable living space. Interestingly, he stated that they had to consider a house which would be able to be placed on the market should they desire to sell and which would produce the market value of houses at that particular time. (P.C.C. October 1948). His statement was quite interesting at a time of acute housing need, but reflects an underlying ideology.

Portsmouth City Council was indeed reluctant to reduce the standards of the fittings in their properties and did not feel able to compromise themselves. One may question whether this was because of their desire to provide first class accommodation for their



tenants, or whether it was so as to pursue political ideals at some later stage - or possibly it was a combination of the two.

The city council was again reminded of the need to be cost conscious in March 1949. (P.C.C. March 1949). The City Architect again repeated that "a reduction in standards is the key to reduced costs so long as present building costs are maintained". (P.C.C. March 1949). The City Architect stated that non-traditional houses set a high standard of interior design and greatly influenced the design of traditional house types. This in turn led to increased costs. He stated that the council gained nothing from negotiated contracts, and was in fact very critical of the standard of work and practices of such schemes. In his general observations he said - Traditionally constructed brick houses are being dispersed in groups on the site in order to obtain some measure of variety amid a preponderance of standardisation. (P.C.C. March 1949).

It is clear therefore, that before the Minister of Health took formal powers under circular 102/49 to require local authorities to cut costs, means of persuasion were used by the Ministry through the officials' working relationship with chief officers of local authorities. Circular 102/49 stated that the housing programme should be reduced nationally by £35 million. The letter stated that the government would:-

'see that the reduction in the number of new authorities is made in accordance with a proper regard to priorities. By reducing the number of licences issued for the erection of houses by private persons, we shall secure that the local authority programme for the building of houses to let can proceed without any marked reduction'.

(Circular 102/49. Ministry of Health, December 1949)

The Labour Government of the day were therefore restricting the private sector of the housing industry to allow room for local authority housing programmes, however this assumption is questionable since in Portsmouth only 12 dwellings were constructed for private sale in 1949 and only 6 dwellings in Derby. However, 67 private dwellings had been granted final licenses in Derby, and in June 1949 application had been made to the Ministry of Health for an additional 300 private building licenses by Portsmouth City Council. (P.C.C. June 1949). It is interesting to note that both authorities no doubt partly because of consultations with the Ministry of Health, considered the erection of two bedroomed properties as a way of reducing development costs. The demand at the time was for such accommodation, but clearly as many couples started families, such accommodation would become inadequate, and since local authority properties are invariably incapable of extension, such a policy can be questioned. Likewise, the policy of all three bedroomed properties can be questioned. What was required was a proportional mix of properties, something which Portsmouth appears to have attempted, certainly until cost cutting was required, building 1 bedroomed accommodation, 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed accommodation as well. In Derby, the local authority, followed much closer the policy of Central Government, providing "family accommodation" ie. 3 bedroomed semis. They decided to reduce costs by building 3 bedroomed accommodation in terraces instead of as semis.

vi      Preparing for a Sale

At the Portsmouth Housing Committee meeting held on 23rd April 1952 - the one at which the City Architect presented his Report on Housing 1953-1973 discussed above - an application was considered from a Mr R. Stray who wished to purchase his council house. The Chief Estates Officer submitted his observations that the value with vacant possession would be £1,200; if sold with a tenant in possession £600, and he suggested that it be offered the tenant for £750. It was decided to defer consideration until after the promised instructions from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government on the sale of local authority houses had been received. (P.H.C. April 1952).

On 15th September 1952 a special sub-committee was formed to deal with the sale of council houses. The sub-committee resolved:-

1. that in order not to restrict the number of homes for letting, sales would be made only to tenants or businesses of requisitioned property.
2. that repayments should be based upon an annuity at the rate of interest appropriate to similar advances under the Small Dwellings Aquisitions Acts (at  $\frac{1}{4}\%$  above the rate at which the council could borrow from the Public Works Loan Board).
3. the period of repayment to be a maximum of 30 years for homes completed before 8th May 1945 and 40 years for homes completed after 8th May 1945.
4. no deposit to be required but purchaser to pay their own legal fees and stamp duty.
5. Power to grant 99 year leases to be exercised.

6. Power in 1952 Act to dispose of houses to be delegated to the sub-committee. (P.H.C. September 1952).

The proposal to sell houses proved to be extremely popular with the authorities' tenants, for 15 months later, 2,601 enquiries had been received, 551 valuations given and 286 sales made. However, during this time the City Treasurer proposed quite large rent increases for tenants of 10/= (50 pence) per week,

"for all those tenants whose financial circumstances are such that a subsidised rent is not justified and who were housed prior to June 1948".

(P.H.C. December 1953)

Undoubtedly such a measure concentrated the tenants' minds in the direction of purchase. Portsmouth, had as previously mentioned, a relatively high rents policy and believed in charging economic rents and the council did not make up any deficiencies in rents from the rate fund. In such circumstances the decision to purchase would be likely to be made on economic rather than political grounds on the part of the tenant, although it could be suggested that it was both on the part of the council. It is not a policy a Labour controlled authority with a relatively long waiting list for accommodation is likely to have followed. The shortage of accommodation in Portsmouth was according to Admiral Coupt causing a shortage of skilled labour in Naval Dockyards. Clearly the policy of housing key workers was coming under increasing criticism, such that in August 1953, the Housing Committee found it necessary to hold a special meeting to review the position. (P.H.C. August 1953). The policy was defended on two counts:-

1. It encouraged new industries to come to the city.
2. It encouraged those key workers already employed in the city to remain, and thus provided additional employment.

The committee decided that they would continue to give favourable consideration to the housing of key workers if they were satisfied that such action would ensure fuller employment for unskilled workers.

It can be seen from the above that the Housing Policy in Portsmouth in the early 1950's followed Conservative philosophy. Possibly the best example of this was the attitude to rents charged and to the sale of local authority properties to tenants whilst there was still an acute shortage of housing accommodation within the city. In 1948 the Portsmouth city council decided that tenants paying an economic rent should be allowed to sub-let accommodation during the period of housing shortage. The city council had introduced a system of differential rents including rent rebates as well as the more familiar pooled rents - as adopted in Derby.

The City Treasurer was given considerable powers by the council members in his terms of reference for assisting in determining the council rent policy. The policy was based upon a report he had written. It must be remembered that housing in Portsmouth at the time was still very much a function of the City Treasurer's Department, and not a separate department in its own right. The City Treasurer's report gave guidance on the implementation of the

rent rebate scheme and the economic rent principles. The Treasurer was authorised to deal with appeals against rents levied, and to decide whether a tenant should pay the pooled or economic rent. (P.H.C. June 1948). Within three weeks 453 tenants had appealed against their new rent and some were offered a deal whereby they would pay the pooled rent on condition that they moved to cheaper accommodation as and when available.

By contrast, in Derby all tenants continued to pay pooled rents. In respect of both council house sales and rent policy, Portsmouth can be said to have been many years ahead of other local authorities and indeed Central Government thinking. The Economic Rent principle was very much the work of the City Treasurer, although his work no doubt reflected the views of the Conservative majority group. The issue of the sale of houses was very much the view of the majority group, and Councillor Schofield in particular, and this policy was opposed by the City Treasurer, his opposition earning him considerable disfavour amongst the majority group. The influence of the City Treasurer on rent policy should not, however, be underestimated.

vii) Gaining Momentum

In the immediate post-war years Britain had a newly elected Labour Government, Derby had a Labour controlled council and Portsmouth a Conservative controlled council. The Labour Government was anxious to make a rapid start on the building of new houses to replace the 200,000 houses destroyed and 250,000 badly damaged. (D.V. Donnison, 1967). The new government intended to provide the houses by allowing

local authorities to implement large housing programmes, but some authorities were to benefit more than others.

Portsmouth's housing programmes had, as mentioned previously a much quicker start than Derby's. Portsmouth failed to maintain the initial momentum, partly because the initial units of accommodation were "temporary" in converted premises and former military bases, and partly because of the City Architect's wish to continue building traditional properties rather than the system built properties being erected by the large public works contractors. Portsmouth, admittedly, suffered from a lack of available land within its own boundaries and had to rely on the good offices of neighbouring authorities in order to secure sites suitable for large scale system building methods. Land was also a problem in Derby, since much of the Chaddesden development was located in a neighbouring authority's area, but Derby was fortunate in having a highly articulate chairman of its Housing Committee and so had a decided advantage over Portsmouth in terms of human resources. Derby had a unified team of local politicians and officers, whereas Portsmouth suffered from the lack of a Director of Housing - his function being performed by the City Treasurer, who as will be illustrated in a subsequent chapter, relied upon his Chief Administrative Assistant who was ultimately dismissed for not carrying out his duties correctly - and a Chief Architect who was initially not keen on new methods of construction - with, again as will be illustrated later, some justification.

The policy of the post-war Labour Government was to patch repair properties so as to make them tolerable and allow local authorities in areas of specific need to build family sized accommodation for rental - which is indeed what both Derby and Portsmouth did. Very few properties built in the early post-war years were in the private sector. In order to make use of all the available resources, slum clearance schemes were halted in both cities, so that neither deviated from the national policy in this respect. This policy meant that many families were housed in totally inadequate conditions in both cities. The scarce national resources were allocated by Central Government to those areas of greatest need ie. those towns which had suffered most during the war, hence Portsmouth for a short time was one of the leading housing authorities in England; however the momentum was not sustained. The aspirations of the Labour Government were dashed by the onset of an economic crisis in 1948 and a shortage of building materials, and it was not until Harold MacMillian's housing drive of the early 1950's that local authorities were allowed or encouraged to push ahead with housing schemes. The local authority in Derby had been drawing up the detailed plans for two large housing estates utilising system methods of building, and when the time was opportune was in the ideal position to commence building. In Portsmouth however, the authority had not been so far sighted. When the time came to push ahead with new contracts, they were not in a position to be able to do so, to the extent that Mr Harold MacMillan felt it necessary to address the Housing Committee and have his visit followed up with visits from Regional Officers of his Ministry.



Mr MacMillan said that blitzed cities had problems and that he considered housing was a joint central-local enterprise. Local authorities on whom the whole or main burden had been placed could only function if they had confidence in the Government and the Government was helpless unless they commanded the confidence and goodwill of local authorities. He said that the essence of success was for the Ministry and the Local Authority to work in partnership and that it was his job to re-organise the business of the production of building materials to produce a steady flow that would allow as rapid and efficient production as possible and that this could not be achieved without a good order book.

In this chapter I have attempted to examine some of the problems of the early post war years faced by two local authorities. We have seen that faced by similar problems, they initially took similar paths, and then as their programmes gathered momentum, they diverged. Their policies were influenced by both external and internal factors.

Externally however they have been influenced by Central Government policy, by Central Government Officials, by the views of Regional Housing Officers and also by the national economy. Internally they have been influenced by the views of local politicians and chief officers, and also affected by local circumstances - financial resources, land and local need. They all combine to determine and form what is frequently referred to as "Housing Policy" - but as we have seen "Housing Policy" is a composite of many factors.

## CHAPTER FIVE      TARGETS ARE SET

- i) Background
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## CHAPTER FIVE      TARGETS ARE SET

i)      Background

In this chapter I intend to look at the influences on housing policy processes in both Derby and Portsmouth during the period 1954 to 1964. This period was a very important one in post-war housing policy since it was during this period that the Central Government achieved its 1951 election promise of completing 300,000 houses per annum and indeed this target was exceeded in the years 1954-1959. The target was to a great extent met by encouraging local authorities to set ambitious housing targets. Local authorities, irrespective of political colour were in the main, only too willing to strive to achieve the targets set by the Ministry of Housing, since housing deficiencies were present in many areas of the country. As we have already seen in the previous chapter, the housing problems of both Derby and Portsmouth in the immediate post-war years were acute and both authorities had by 1954 prepared ambitious plans for the development of large new estates on greenfield sites beyond their respective county borough boundaries, with quite optimistic plans for infra-structure on the new estates. Such policies represent the high point in post war local authority housing, and also reflect the view that improved housing presented a "social cure all". Both local authorities during the latter part of the period under review responded to the national slum clearance drives.

The period then is of great significance since it is a period of intense activity and of political stability. Throughout the entire

period under review in this chapter, the Central Government was controlled by the Conservative Party, as was Portsmouth City Council., Derby Town Council was controlled by the Labour Party.

ii) Keep on Building

In June 1952 officials of Derby Town Council had estimated that a further 3,520 houses would be required to be constructed to complete the housing programme, including provision for the housing of those affected by slum clearance and for projected future registrations (D.H.C. June 1952). Some 204 acres were purchased at Chaddesden, 56 acres at Alvaston (South of Derby) and 54 acres at Sunny Hill (also South of Derby). (D.H.C. June 1952). In 1953 it was decided to build 15 shops at Chaddesden Hall, and this was the first attempt at providing any infra-structure for the developments. Whilst another 340 houses were contracted for on the Mackworth Estate, bringing the total built to over 1,000 dwellings, no attempt had been made to provide the infra-structure required by such a community although space had been provided. In June 1954, plans were announced for a grandiose shopping complex on the Mackworth Estate, to consist of 26 shops, a supermarket, a health centre, a cinema and a public house. The cinema, health centre and public house were destined to be "failed proposals" and the land upon which they should have been situated was subsequently redesignated for housing. The proposals represented the ambition of the Housing Committee chairman and the plans were subject to a considerable number of amendments. The Derby Co-operative Society "assisted" in the planning of the Mackworth Estate Centre - as they were to the Sinfen Centre in the

late 1970's - thus reflecting the close links between the council membership and the local co-op board in the form of membership of both the council and the co-op board ie. W. Raynes and J. Dilks.

The reason for the failure of these proposals was that housing people was regarded as a higher priority than providing amenities no matter how desirable. Further, neither of the large cinema companies (The Rank Organisation and Associated British Cinemas) were interested in taking the tenancy of the proposed cinema, and indeed at that time the town had seventeen cinemas, and the A.B.C. cinema group already had a very large cinema very close to the Mackworth Estate. Likewise, Derby has never been "deprived" of public houses. Today, there are three public houses on the Mackworth Estate, each built by one of the large breweries on land leased from the council, thus relieving the council of the cost of construction. A Health Centre has also subsequently been provided. Given these considerations the amenity proposals had insufficient priority to warrant implementation. Their failure was not due to party politics. The proposals originally made, were gradiose and represented the satisfying of individual ambition on the part of Alderman Flint the Housing Chairman and civic pride on the part of the Town Council. The objective of providing infra-structure was a noble one, even if it also satisfied the ego of individuals. Even when the shops and supermarket were developed in 1954/55 there was difficulty experienced in attracting suitable tenants to the shops, and it was realised that an over-provision of shops had been made. This

experience soured the idea of building large shopping and amenity centres on the other large housing estates in the town.

In later years, small groups of two or three shops selling perishable goods have been constructed throughout the estates. This has been found to be more convenient for the tenants of the estates. On the Mackworth Estate some people may live 30 minutes walk away from the shops, and so since the estate is well served by buses, many housewives prefer to catch a bus into the town centre, for not only are there obviously more shops, but it is also quicker for those living some distance from the shopping centre of the estate. A comprehensive public transport system was developed on the Mackworth Estate, using mainly trolley buses, which linked the estate to the town centre in less than 10 minutes. The trolley buses were fast and quiet, but the system was abandoned in September 1967, when a new traffic management scheme was introduced in the town centre. The trolley buses were replaced by motor buses running at a lower frequency.

In Portsmouth a large shopping complex including a supermarket was developed on the Paulsgrove estate. The shopping centre however was by no means as ambitious as the original intentions of the Mackworth scheme in Derby. Schemes subsequent to the Paulsgrove estate, such as the huge development at Leigh Park were designed to be serviced by small groups of community shops - 2 or 3 shops servicing a district within the estate, with one large estate shopping centre in addition. The city council's policy was to let

shops to local traders wherever possible, although the City Treasurer appears to have had more than a guiding hand in the housing policy and letting policy during this period, since he was not only City Treasurer, but Chief Housing Officer. Many of the recommendations he made were on financial rather than social grounds. In Portsmouth the shops were built after the houses, instead of alongside the houses. This led to severe criticism from the tenants, and to the formation of what were to become two extremely vocal tenants associations - one on the Paulsgrove estate, the other on Leigh Park. The development of the Leigh Park estate took place throughout the whole period reviewed in this chapter. Considerable difficulty was experienced by the authority in letting houses on the Leigh Park estate because of its remoteness from Portsmouth and its lack of infra-structure (shops, health facilities, education facilities and public transport). In many respects the Portsmouth policy appears to have been more in tune with the Central Government policy, since the Conservative Government measured success by the number of dwellings constructed, rather than by the quality of dwelling or the quality of the environment being created. This of course is understandable, since most major cities had severe housing problems, those cities which had solved the problems of overcrowding, still had the postponed problems of slum clearance to face.

iii) Carrying On With Targets To Meet

Both the local authorities and the Central Government had a common aim of improving the standard of living accommodation for their citizens. The councils worked within a framework set out by Central Government. The needs of the two cities are reflected by the lengthening of waiting lists for accommodation, and what is more, the waiting lists did not reflect the true "needs" of the cities, since they did not include all those housed in properties soon to be declared slums.

During this period, however, a shortage of suitable building land for future housing programmes was developing. In Portsmouth the problem was exaggerated by the local geography - Portsmouth originally being built on Portsea Island. In order to build new estates, it would be necessary to build well beyond the city limits in the areas administered by neighbouring authorities, notably Havant and Waterloo Urban District Council. This policy led to fraught relations between the two authorities. Ultimately tensions led to arbitration by the Minister of Housing and Local Government. This aspect will be discussed more fully in the next chapter. In addition, in order to optimise the use of land cleared under slum clearance orders, the building of high rise tower blocks of flats was carried out. This policy was advocated in particular by the City Architect Mr J. Mellor, who put some adventurous proposals to the City Housing Committee particularly in the later part of the period under review in this chapter. There was considerable resistance to the high rise dwellings, particularly from the tenants, especially



the elderly ones. Constructional problems were encountered, and water problems were common in the high rise dwellings. Ten of the tower blocks constructed were erected on the same principles as the Rowan Point blocks at Newham, and this necessitated additional city council expenditure in August 1968. (P.H.C. September 1968).

In Derby, similarly, a shortage of suitable land for housing development began to arise from 1955 onwards. The council decided to take over land which had previously been used for allotments, many of them having become disused. Whilst only an allocation of 700 houses had been given for the year, 766 were constructed, which still represented a sharp fall on the 1934 constructed for the authority the previous year, although it followed the national trend of falling production in the public sector of housing. A sub-committee was appointed to consider the use of open spaces on the new council estates, but many of them were to be built on a few years later because of the shortage of building land in the Derby area. With the major post war housing projects nearing completion, the Town Council decided in March 1957, to commence a further estate, this time, because of the acute shortage of building land within the town, over the county borough boundary at Breadsall, to the North East of the town. The relations between Derby Town Council and South East Derbyshire District Council were far more amicable over such a development, than was the case in Portsmouth, even though Derby was Labour controlled and South East Derbyshire Conservative. A possible explanation for this might be that South East Derbyshire

Rural District was to a great extent dependent upon Derby as a source of employment and provider of major services and facilities whereas in the relationship between Havant and Waterloo Urban District and Portsmouth City Council, the ties were far less apparent. The land being developed was also more distant from Portsmouth - Leigh Park being ten miles from The Guildhall, Portsmouth and Paulsgrove approximately six miles - as opposed to Breadsall being only two and a half miles from Derby town centre. Havant and Waterloo were both distinct commercial centres generating their own employment. This was not the case in South East Derbyshire, where the largest settlements were Melbourne and Chellaston. The initial contracts for development at Breadsall were let to George Wimpey Ltd for the construction of 650 dwellings in June 1957. (D.H.C. June 1957). It was decided by the housing committee to include only twenty one bedroomed dwellings in the new project, because of the abolition of subsidies for such dwellings by the Housing Subsidies Act 1956.

When the Bank Rate was lowered in July 1958, the Ministers of Housing and Local Government in a letter dated 18th July 1958, advised Derby Town Council that it would then be possible to build more houses, and it was agreed to build a further 50 houses at Breadsall Priory in order to complete the estate. This was in marked contrast to circular 57/58 which had been issued in November 1958 by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and which had urged cuts to be made in housing expenditure. (Ministry of Housing and Local Government Circular 57/58). Thus we can see reflected through the housing

policy at the local level, the "stop-go" policy of Central Government, a familiar feature of economic policy in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

The Conservative Government's ideology with regard to who should construct public housing is reflected in a letter from the Minister of Housing and Local Government in which it was stated that

'whilst no objection is raised to the erection of houses built by direct labour, in the future the works department should compete with competitive tenders from private companies'

(Letter from Minister of Housing and Local Government to Derby Town Council dated 11th February 1958)

In Portsmouth such external pressure was not necessary since the council's programmes were all constructed by contracting companies, mainly on a negotiated tender basis, rather than on the basis of competitive tender. The negotiated contract was a method favoured in particular by the Regional Director.

On 8th January 1958 Portsmouth City Council held a special meeting of the Health and Housing Committee. It was reported to the committee that the housing waiting list comprised 3,749 applicants of whom about 1,000 had indicated their willingness to be accommodated at Leigh Park. In addition there were approximately 1,100 applicants for accommodation suitable for aged persons, the majority of whom were seeking accommodation in the city. (P.C.C. September 1958). The City Treasurer - who was a considerable influence of Portsmouth Housing Policy at this time - stated that if the requirements of the waiting list and the aged persons were

excluded, the likely demand for accommodation in the two years 1958 and 1959 would be likely to be as follows:-

- a) Within the city - approximately 750 dwellings in respect of slum clearance, pre-fab displacements etc.
- b) At Leigh Park - approximately 350 dwellings in respect of housing for key workers and natural increase in population (P.C.C. September 1958).

He suggested that if the housing programme was maintained and proceeded without modification and the level of properties becoming vacant remained at the level experienced during 1957, he anticipated that 1,463 properties would become vacant within the city. They would comprise of 663 new dwellings, of which 501 were already contracted, including 150 one bedroomed - and bedsitter units. He also anticipated that 2,578 properties would be available for letting at Leigh Park; 1,678 of which would be new dwellings; 1,342 already contracted. The City Treasurer stated in his report that it would be likely that accommodation could be provided in the city within the current programme for all those disturbed by slum clearance, whilst also rehousing about 700 applicants from the waiting lists. In addition, he estimated that accommodation would be available at Leigh Park for a minimum of 2,242 applicants and possibly 2,578 applicants if the programme was proceeded with and he stated that there were only 1,450 prospective tenants. (P.C.C. September 1958). As a result of the City Treasurer's report, the housing committee decided to postpone for three months the invitation for tenders at Leigh Park, whilst at the same time accelerating the

building programme within the city. (P.C.C. September 1958). The building programme within the city had become increasingly dependent upon the construction of high rise flats (see later in this chapter).

An indication of the slow down in Portsmouth's housing programme comes from the fact that the contractors for the Parkhouse Farm No. 9 site were requested to agree to a reduction in pace of development so that the contract period would be spread over four financial years rather than 98 weeks. (P.H.C. February 1958). The Ministry of Housing and Local Government allocated Portsmouth 625 dwellings within the national programme for 1959/60, which satisfied the City Treasurer.

In November 1958 a review of the housing programme for Derby took place, following guidance from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government that the Chancellor of the Exchequer desired to see a higher level of public expenditure, and that any capital projects which could be submitted within three months and be completed before the end of 1959 would be "considered favourably". The Ministry agreed to the construction of a further 250 houses provided that a start was made within three or four months. It will be remembered that 1959 was an election year, a year in which the Conservatives were returned to power with an increased majority. It was also the year of Mr MacMillan's famous phrase:

'You've never had it so good'.

Portsmouth City Council Housing Committee were not so receptive to the idea of expansion of their housing programme in response to the easing of restrictions on Capital Expenditure. The City Treasurer expressed the view that very careful consideration should be given before resuming house building at Leigh Park as under the then current conditions, lettings on the estate were not always based on real housing need. The City Architect expressed the view that nothing could be done to speed up the programme, since the tenders then being sought would automatically receive loan sanction from 1st January 1959. The change in government policy provoked an interesting reaction within the two local authorities. Derby, a Labour controlled authority welcomed with enthusiasm the opportunity to build further houses; Portsmouth, a Conservative controlled authority was not interested in the opportunity. The housing committee, and it would appear the senior officers also, believed that adequate provision was already being made. Their view may have been tempered more by the reluctance of people to move to Leigh Park, than by political considerations.

The housing programme for Derby in 1961 was approved at 500. (D.H.C. September 1960). However, at that stage no sites were available for development in 1962; and a policy of transferring tenants to accommodation "more suitable for their needs" was introduced to try and maximise the usage of the housing stock. (D.H.C. June 1961). This resulted in single persons whose parents had died being moved from family houses to single person accommodation, and couples whose families had grown up being moved to smaller accommodation. This

policy was heavily criticised at the time of its introduction and was not abandoned until 1968 after the extension of the county borough boundary and after the subsequent change of political ruling groups on the council.

iv) Let's Go Up: The Advent of High Rise

Regional officials of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government suggested at a meeting in November 1961, that a solution to the problem of the shortage of building land would be the erection of high rise flats, and plans were made in 1962 for the first tower block to be built in Derby at the side of the River Derwent. This proved to be an unfortunate choice since the river tends to flood at this point, and the basement and groundfloor of the building completed in 1965, is sometimes flooded. In recent years considerable flood precautions have however been taken, including the reinforcing of the river banks both adjacent to the flats, and also down stream of them. Because of the history of flooding, living in these flats (appropriately named "Rivermead House") is not very popular and difficulty has been experienced in finding sufficient tenants to allocate all of the flats to despite generally long council waiting lists. As a result of the difficulties experienced within these flats, it was decided not to build any more such dwellings. Rivermead House was completed in May 1965, although its planning and construction took place during the latter part of the period covered by this chapter. (D.H.C. February 1965). Derby had in essence responded to a Central Government initiative - albeit not enthusiastically. The local authority planning committee, and

indeed the Planning Director have a reputation for having an aversion to high rise developments whether residential or commercial.

Portsmouth's experience with high rise flats was initially far more satisfactory, although as we shall see in Chapter Six, Portsmouth also encountered problems with high rise dwellings towards the end of the period studied in this thesis. The problems have increased since 1974. Portsmouth City Housing Committee had always favoured high density development. Circumstances ie. the lack of suitable land had dictated such a policy. Portsmouth's high rise policy was ahead of and pre-empted the Central Government's initiatives of the early 1960's. Additionally the City Architect (Mr Mellor) had become an enthusiastic supporter of high rise developments.

The council had previously developed a number of schemes involving low-rise flats and maisonettes. They had been incorporated in housing schemes such as Paulsgrove - for instance in March 1954, 51 flats were contracted for at Paulsgrove (P.H.C. March 1954). At the same committee meeting 40 maisonettes were contracted for at Hanover Street on land which had been cleared of unfit housing. In October 1955, the city housing committee asked the City Development Officer to investigate the demand for one bedroom and bedsitting room flats. (P.A.C. October 1955). He recommended that in addition to the 133 one bedroom flats and 30 bedsitting room flats under construction, and the 143 one bedroom flats and 66 bedsitting room flats scheduled for 1956, further sites should be allocated for such developments because of the demand for such accommodation. (P.H.C. October



1955). In September 1956 the Ministry of Housing and Local Government expressed the view that the construction cost of 15 flats at Hornbrook Street was a "little high" and asked for a reduction in the level of specification; the committee agreed to this with the exception of a reduction in cupboard space in the kitchens. (P.H.C. September 1956).

In January 1958 the Portsmouth City Architect reported to the housing committee on the Nelson Road development. (P.H.C. January 1958). He stated that the remainder of the land had been planned for a further 184 units in 6 blocks of multi-storey flats of similar heights to the existing development and stated that sketch plans of 122 units in 4 blocks had been submitted to the Ministry, each block having 4 flats per floor. He said that the Ministry were investigating the high cost of flats and that a number of important factors had emerged. Ministry officials (in particular the Regional Director) now considered 8/9 storey flats uneconomic when serviced by lifts and stairs if there were only four flats per floor. The Ministry officials suggested that such accommodation could be built with 8 flats per floor serviced by 2 stair cases and 2 lifts and being constructed to a height of 11/12 storeys, giving a saving of at least £166 per flat when compared with the original proposal. The City Architect recommended that in view of the Ministry's attitude, two 12 storey blocks, each with 8 flats per floor should be constructed, thus maximising the economies available, and also making room for the addition of some 4 storey maisonettes. The Ministry had stated that since large savings appeared to be possible, Portsmouth's

original proposal could not be considered until other schemes offering greater economy had been fully investigated. Here we can see direct influence by Ministry Officials over the local officials , who in turn influenced the housing committee. Portsmouth had started high rise developments early but were encouraged still further by this pressure. The Ministry, in their role of controlling the funding of schemes, were able to bring about a complete redesign of the Nelson Street development, although as we shall see later, the City Architect was an admirer of high rise developments in any case.

In June 1961 a report on the maintenance of post war flats was produced by the Housing Director. Criticism of the design of flats was made, particularly concerning dampness and condensation. Such problems had previously been fully investigated and remedial measures had successfully been taken after consultation with the Public Analyst and the Building Research Station. (P.H.C. June 1961). In June 1962 a contract was made with George Wimpey & Co. Ltd. for the construction of a 20 storey block of 76 flats to be constructed on an inner city site which had been cleared of unfit housing in Butcher Street. (P.H.C. June 1962). This decision was followed by a decision to build 272 flats in Church Street in an 18 storey development. (P.H.C. June 1962). At the same meeting consideration was also given to the development of a large site on Portsdown Hill, a project which became a focus of considerable attention in the late 1960's and with which I will deal in more detail in the next chapter. (P.H.C. June 1962). On 6th November, 1962 the Housing Committee Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Chief Officers accompanied a Mr Salter,

an architect of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, and Mr Lightfoot of the Housing Division of the Ministry, to the site which it was proposed to develop for municipal housing on Portsdown Hill. Mr Lightfoot subsequently stated that if the corporation were to develop the site then the Ministry would prefer to ensure that housing was erected which was attractive in design and reasonable in cost. It was essential that a reasonable high density was achieved at a cost which would not bear too heavily on the Housing Revenue Account, and at the same time the dwellings provided should be within the financial reach of prospective tenants. The economics of development should, in the first instance be dictated by the Ministry - it should be a question for the city council to decide in the light of the rent income that can be obtained. (P.H.C. December 1962). Mr Salter added that in his opinion it would be desirable to achieve a density of approximately 100 persons per acre, and that in order to avoid wasting the existing capital assets, wherever practicable the development should be designed to accord with the existing road pattern. (P.H.C. December 1962). The Committee Chairman commented that the dwellings provided by the corporation would have to be available for occupation by tenants who were earning £10 to £12 per week. It was the committee's duty to provide accommodation for persons displaced from clearance areas, and, generally speaking, multi-storey blocks provided one or two bedroomed accommodation which was not suitable for young families. In his view the development of part of the site should be carried out with the intention of redressing the balance of dwellings in the city so that accommodation could

be provided for those tenants for whom the existing accommodation in the centre was unsuitable. The requirements of those with growing families should not be overlooked when considering the provision of accommodation on the site (P.H.C. December 1962). Here again we can see the influence of Central Government officials over Local Government officials who in turn advise the local politicians. The Ministry officials were unwilling to suggest architects for such a scheme, but reminded the officials that Westminster City Council had the previous year successfully promoted a design competition, the cost of which was incorporated into the Central Government loans. This, as we shall see in the next chapter, was the method chosen, with amazing consequences for the city council. This advice though, is an excellent example of a Central Government department acting as a disseminator of information, and of informal control by Central Government, over local authority policy making. Indeed the whole pursuit of high rise accommodation in Portsmouth reflects largely the ideals of the Ministry officials. High rise flats came to reflect the policy of the time; a way of using inner city sites to their maximum, little thought being given to the social consequences of such accommodation. Portsmouth would have built high anyway, without the pressures from Central Government, but they were encouraged so to do by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, and the pressures had the effect of encouraging them to build higher still. The particular schemes were heavily influenced by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, rather than the philosophy.

When compared with Derby, Portsmouth's high rise policy appears far more enthusiastic. Derby Town Council had difficulty in letting its first tower block, and this difficulty combined with a desire not to create a skyline of high rise buildings prevented Derby from taking the same path. Derby did however have adjacent to it, land in a neighbouring authority's area, which that authority - South East Derbyshire Rural District Council - was happy to see developed. The working relationship between the two councils was considerably more harmonious than that between Portsmouth City Council and Waterloo and Harvant Urban District Council. Circumstances ie. lack of suitable building land, to a certain extent required the intensified use of available land, although we should not underestimate the influence on high rise policies of the City Architect or the Ministry Officials.

v) Urban Renewal Starts Here

Under the terms of the Housing Repairs and Rent Act 1954, the Medical Officers of Health of all local authorities were required to complete a survey of houses unfit for human habitation and in need of demolition, but because of a shortage of Housing Inspectors, delay was experienced by many authorities including Derby and Portsmouth.

In April 1954 a modest start was made to the slum clearance programme in Portsmouth when the housing committee decided not to reinstate houses in Arthur Street, since it was decided that the whole area was likely to be cleared. (P.H.C. April 1954). The City Development Officer produced a report on slum clearance in November 1954 stating that the city's housing list had in excess of 15,000 applicants. Of this figure he estimated 1/3rd could be thought to be in real

need of housing, and that if it was desired to deal with this need over five years, then 1,000 houses a year just for this purpose would be required, leaving very little margin for rehousing families from slum areas. (P.H.C. November 1954). The City Architect estimated 1,800 completions in 1954, 1,500 in 1955 and 1,200 per annum thereafter. He stated, that in addition to properties affected by slum clearance, there were still 159 hutments at Bedhampton, West Leigh and Southsea Common to be taken into account. (P.H.C. November 1954). The City Development Officer stated that it would not be possible to embark upon a large scale slum clearance programme at that time unless the number of dwellings allocated to applicants was reduced. He suggested a demolition rate of 100 during 1956, 200 in 1957, 300 in 1958 and thereafter 400 a year, giving a target of 7,000 to be demolished by 1974. (P.H.C. November 1954).

In Derby, a less ambitious target was set. In September 1955 the Medical Officer of Health for Derby (as opposed to the City Development Officer in Portsmouth) produced a slum clearance report. This report indicated that 1,500 houses were unfit for human habitation. (Report on Slum Clearance, Medical Officer of Health, D.H.C. September 1955). Under Section 9 of the 1954 Act, 150 dwellings could be patch repaired, and retained for five years and 750 were in areas still to be declared clearance areas. (D.H.C. September 1955). It was decided that 600 houses should be demolished over the next five years and the report was submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government together with an application to

extend the housing programme for the year. In 1956 the Ministry requested that the slum clearance period should be reduced to five years in view of the ending of the system of housing allocations the previous November and this request was agreed by the housing committee. Derby Town Council in fact pre-empted the new legislation on slum clearance, by requesting the Medical Officer of Health to prepare a preliminary report, prior to the new legislation being enacted. To a certain extent this accounts for the faster implementation of the legislation in the case of Derby. However, lack of qualified staff and a much larger number of properties to be surveyed in Portsmouth, also accounted for the delay in implementation in that city. Subsequently, Portsmouth Housing Committee were advised by the Town Clerk that the 7,000 properties were "only an estimate which may have to be amended". (P.H.C. February 1956). He stated that the objects behind the publication were twofold:-

1. To comply with the Minister's report for an estimate of all unfit dwellings in the city.
2. To give the public the fullest possible information at the earliest possible date for their own protection.

The report, however, resulted in a public outcry for two main reasons:-

1. The wish of residents not to be turned out of a house which appeared to be suitable.
2. Dissatisfaction with the compensation.

The committee decided that the development plan and the slum clearance plan should be integrated, and that the programme should

be amended by the deletion of 2,477 houses considered to be fit for habitation within the terms of the 1954 Housing Repairs and Rent Act. Possibly either the committee or the officers had underestimated public reaction to areas of houses being declared slums, and the housing committee and the chief officers were subjected to pressure for a review of this policy. Portsmouth City Council experienced difficulty in synchronising its slum clearance programme with its rebuilding and rehousing programme. In October 1958, the housing committee asserted that it would not be possible to reserve specific houses for re-housing residents affected by slum clearance. The authority was suffering from an acute shortage of suitable sites for development. So acute was the problem, that the removal of prefabs was halted, unless the tenants had already been notified in writing. (P.H.C. October 1958).

In January 1960, the Town Clerk reported to the housing committee that the Ministry of Housing and Local Government were prepared to revise their policy set out in the Housing Act 1957 regarding the acquisition of substandard properties and the carrying out of first-aid repairs to make them temporarily habitable. He said that the Ministry would be prepared to consider carrying out such repairs to a limited number of houses in the city providing the number was in reasonable proportion to the number of persons who were to be displaced. The acquisition of properties which the council intended to be the subject of first aid repairs would involve the adoption of a special form of Compulsory Purchase Order; the purpose of this was to ensure that the owners knew in advance that the council



intended to acquire their properties and retain them after acquisition for housing purposes. It was pointed out that the Minister had experienced the making of such orders by other local authorities and in practice it had been discovered that once the existing occupants knew of the local authority's intention to retain houses and carry out first aid repairs, they were extremely reluctant to leave and in consequence what in theory appeared to be excellent proposals had in practice, in some instances, been difficult to operate.

However, the Ministry were sympathetic towards Portsmouth in this matter and had asked that a statement be furnished containing the number of persons which it was anticipated would be displaced during the remainder of the council's slum clearance programme, the number of properties which it was thought would be required in respect of such persons, and in particular how long such premises would be used before they themselves were demolished. (Report of Town Clerk, P.H.C. January 1960).

Complaints were received from people who were rehoused in Portsmouth, since they felt that they should have similar accommodation to that vacated, irrespective of need. The newly appointed Housing Director (see below) Mr J.D. Dant, said that need should be the determinant of all allocations. Complaints were also made regarding houses standing empty, at a time when the accommodation waiting list was lengthening. (Report of Housing Director: A Rehousing Policy, P.H.C. April 1960).

Concern was expressed regarding the disparity of information placed before the Acquisition of Housing sub-committee as to the estimated cost of repairs, prepared in some cases by the City Architect and the actual cost of the work put in hand by the Director of Housing before re-letting. The City Architect commented that the estimates he had given to the committee were for the minimum repairs with a view to re-letting as soon as possible and he did envisage bringing the houses up to a higher standard than those of similar houses in private ownership. He stated that at the time it had been the policy of the committee to recognise a limit of £300 expenditure per dwelling above which authority would not have been given to purchase.

The committee were informed by the Director of Housing that it had been necessary to do the work in the interests of getting properties re-let and maintaining the high standard expected of the council as landlords. It had sometimes been found on a thorough examination of a property following its acquisition, that considerable sums of money were required to be spent to remedy underlying defects not apparent when the superficial survey was made at the time of purchase.

The report showed that the acquisition of many of the houses was not a sound business proposition but that the action taken might be justified in the interests of ensuring that the best use was made of the available accommodation in the city, and the principle of improving older-type houses as encouraged by the Minister and the council was being observed. The committee therefore decided:-

1. Tenders to be invited on the basis of specifications prepared by the Director of Housing for all future work of this description.
2. That the City Development Officer should report on the possibility of including more obsolescent houses in areas of comprehensive development on the line suggested in the report of the Director of Housing.
3. That the appropriate officials should report on the possibility of dealing with "Improvement Areas" in the city similar to those in Leeds to which a favourable reference had been made by the Minister of Housing and Local Government. (Report on Repair and Improvement of Acquired Properties P.H.C. October 1961).

From the point of view of this research, the above three points are important in two respects. Firstly they highlight a difference of professional opinion between the City Architect and the new Housing Director, as to what the level of modernisation and repair work should be. In the ensuing debate, the Housing Director's advice was followed, whereas it is more "normal" to consider the Architects advice as overriding. Secondly, here we see the start of a Housing Action Area (H.A.A.) by a Conservative controlled authority some nine years before such areas were officially designated in the Housing Act 1969 by a Labour Government. This is an example of an embryo policy being formulated locally with the guidance of officials of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. It is possible to see here the interaction between Local Government officials and Central Government officials and the formulation of a policy which

ultimately became the national policy of the Labour Party, at a time when the Conservative Government under Mr MacMillan was still in office.

In September 1962, the housing committee decided that those rehoused from slum clearance should whenever possible be rehoused within the city, whilst persons whose needs for accommodation arose for reasons other than slum clearance, except for medical and Rent Act cases for rehousing, should be rehoused at Leigh Park. (P.H.C. September 1962).

In April 1963, a report on the Redevelopment of Clearance Areas was presented to Portsmouth City Housing Committee (P.H.C. April 1963). Originally, the number for clearance had been 7,000, but this was reduced to 3,041 to be cleared at a rate of 450 per annum. From 1959 onwards progress was boosted to recover "lost ground" - by extending areas as more comprehensive redevelopment became practical and it was anticipated in the report that the total number would eventually be increased to between 3,500-4,000 dwellings. The report stated that in 1963 1,004 houses would be removed, and that the sites vacated would be used for the construction of flats. It was a shortage of suitable land for building which was slowing down progress, since it made rehousing difficult.

Meanwhile in Derby, in January 1962, a further slum clearance plan was developed in accordance with the Housing Act 1957. (D.H.C. January 1962). This report showed that the number of houses considered unfit for human habitation was 2,900 and that it would take

10 years to clear them all. It was proposed that over the following five years 1,350 houses in declared slum clearance areas would be removed and that a further 150 dwellings outside the designated clearance areas required clearing since they were not worth "patch repairing" in order to prolong their life. (D.H.C. January 1962). Since only 300 houses were allowed to be built by the local authority in Derby in 1962, it would indicate that although the council was still Labour controlled, it was implementing the Conservative Government's policy of only building local authority houses to replace those cleared under slum clearance programmes.

It is interesting to contrast the two approaches to slum clearance targets. In Portsmouth an over optimistic estimate was made of 7,000 which was later reduced in stages to 3,041 and then revised again to 3,500 to 4,000. In Derby a more realistic target was set of 2,900 and achieved. However in Portsmouth the twilight properties were improved and given an extension to their life at the expense of Central Government grants some nine years ahead of the statutory legislation - so was it such a mistake? - or were the City Architect and the City Development Officer for Portsmouth a little more farsighted than at first it might appear?

vi) Some Wait - Others Do Not

Throughout the period under review the waiting list for accommodation in Derby averaged approximately 4,800, peaking at 5,800 in 1958. (D.H.C. June 1958). Periodic reviews of the waiting list occurred so as to remove the names of those people who since registering had

found suitable alternative accommodation and who had used the housing register as an insurance policy. Applicants on the waiting list for accommodation were periodically required to re-register. In Portsmouth the re-registration policy was practiced more rigidly; re-registration being required every two years. Certainly the policy with regard to applicants for the waiting list and towards re-registration appears to have been more authoritarian in Portsmouth. In Portsmouth, during the 1950's the waiting list rarely fell below 5,000 applicants, and indeed prior to the December 1956 revision of the waiting list over 17,000 applicants were listed as in need of accommodation. (P.H.C.). The City Treasurer believed the figure to be inflated, and not to represent a true estimate of need. He stated that the figure was not of much consequence when continuous house building was occurring and satisfaction of demand was unlikely. He said that owing to the shortage of land, statistics on requirements needed to be updated. He believed that the number on the waiting list was likely to be affected by Improvement Grants, easier mortgages and private building. He proposed that all applicants should be required to re-register from an agreed date and that the applicant would be required to signify annually whether they wished to remain on the list. He recommended that the waiting period be increased from 6 months to 12 months and that applicants would not be granted a tenancy unless:-

1. They had lived/worked in Portsmouth for a minimum of 2 years.
2. Were being rehoused under a slum clearance programme.

The City Treasurer also recommended that the points scheme should be reviewed, and that where applicants refuse accommodation at Leigh Park, they should have their case reviewed by the Housing Manager. (P.H.C. December 1956). Portsmouth City Council specifically excluded from their waiting list service personnel who had not lived in Portsmouth for at least 12 months prior to enlistment. This particular exclusion caused a good deal of hardship to service personnel upon leaving the services, and also ill feeling between the Admiralty and the City Council.

As will be recalled, in 1948, at a time of acute housing shortage, Portsmouth embarked on an ambitious programme to attract new industries to the city, and thus reduce the city's dependence upon naval establishments for employment. A feature of this campaign, was that modern council houses were made available to "key workers" employed by companies attracted to the area by the scheme. Such personnel were usually skilled workers, capable of training a locally recruited unskilled workforce in semi-skilled trades. Usually the tenancies were offered for two years, at the full economic rent, the employer being required to guarantee rent payments for the first six months. If the key worker left his employer then he was usually required to vacate his house. The properties offered were usually brand new houses on the Leigh Park estate. The "key worker" policy created resentment among applicants on the waiting list, who saw the policy as one which allowed queue jumping by individuals, who because they were skilled, were in an economic position to be able to buy a place of their own on the open market. A somewhat different

view was taken in a letter from the Chamber of Commerce asking for the committee to continue to give support in the housing of key personnel. (Letter dated 9th March 1955 to P.H.C. from Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce). The Town Clerk was instructed to reply that in "suitable cases" support would be given to the housing of key personnel. (P.H.C. March 1955). In December 1956 the housing committee decided that each key worker application should be considered on its merits. (P.H.C. December 1956). In February 1957 the City Treasurer reported to the Housing Committee that he felt that the key worker policy was being abused and he said he believed that not all key workers nominated were in fact key workers. (Report of City Treasurer on Key Workers to P.H.C. dated 6th February 1957). The council decided that in future applicants circumstances would be investigated by Councillor Day in his capacity of chairman of the Development and Estates (Industrial Development) Sub-Committee (P.H.C. February 1957). Councillor Day was also a member of the Housing Committee.

In April 1957, Portsmouth City Council held a special meeting to discuss key worker policy. Councillor Day defined a key worker as "an employee who was necessary to establish an industry, who would stay with the firm for a number of years, and was in receipt of a reasonable salary". (P.C.C. April 1957). Just prior to the meeting, tenants classified as key workers had complained about the level of rents being charged to them. As a result of their lobbying, it was decided at the meeting their rents would not be increased apart from an increase in rates. The City Treasurer stated that letters



had been sent to all key workers who could not afford the standard rent. In such cases he said the rent would be reassessed having regard to income, and in certain cases a rebate would be granted. The following policy decisions were also taken at the meeting:-

1. Employers should notify the council of any key worker leaving their employment, together with reasons.
2. Employers should consider making up any deficiency in the rent of employees absent through sickness.
3. Employers should consider paying the rent on accommodation let to key workers for a period of 2 years, after which they would be classified as ordinary tenants (P.C.C. April 1957).

In January 1958 a further review of key worker policy took place. At this meeting it was decided that employers should be asked to guarantee rents for six months and then the tenancy "should be treated as a normal one". (P.H.C. January 1958). This relaxation of policy, from that determined in April 1957 reflects the reluctance of employers to effectively stand as guarantor for their employees for two years. It was also decided though, that key worker accommodation should once again be offered at the maximum possible rent, and that the tenant be informed of this prior to taking up his tenancy. (P.H.C. January 1958). This policy was re-affirmed in April 1960 when it was again decided that key workers should pay the economic rent, and such tenants should be excluded from the rent rebate scheme. Additionally it was confirmed that it would still be a requirement for employers to guarantee rents for six months. (P.H.C. April 1960).

The key worker policy was again reviewed by the Director of Housing in January 1961. In his report, he stated that 770 employees of 30 firms had been housed as key workers since the inception of the scheme. During 1960, 260 applicants were housed under the scheme and the outstanding allocations at 1st January 1961 were 287, the majority of the allocations being at Leigh Park. (Report on Key Workers by Director of Housing for Portsmouth, dated 18 January 1961). Mr Dant said that key workers tended to pay higher rents, "because they were higher income earners" (Housing Director's Report January 1961). This appears to be at variance with the protests made by key worker tenants but in tune with the thinking of the committee members. He said that the policy had been successful in attracting new industries to the city and that such a policy is encouraged by the government in development areas - Portsmouth of course was not and is not in a development area. The government gave local authorities in development areas £24p.a. to relieve the financial burden of key workers policies for which Portsmouth did not qualify. The Director also reiterated the benefits of key workers to the prosperity of the local economy and the need for new industries. The committee decided that in future accommodation should be allocated only to those companies willing to train apprentices. (P.H.C. January 1961). Mr Dant commented that many local residents were upset by the key worker policy, particularly those who but for the fact they live in the area already, are key workers. However Mr Dant added, that key workers went to Leigh Park when it was unpopular, but with the lengthening of the waiting list, Leigh Park had become less unpopular, and the key workers were he felt being used as "scapegoats". (Housing Directors Report January 1961).

In October 1962 the Plessey Company wrote asking the committee to speed up the housing of key workers, since key workers had taken up appointments with the company and were now separated from their families. The company were informed that the whole of the key worker policy was once again under review. (P.H.C. October 1962). At the same meeting a letter from the A.U.E.W. was considered which stated that in their opinion the term key worker was inaccurate and that such people should be more properly regarded as skilled workers whose remuneration was no more than the basic trade union rates. (P.H.C. October 1962). They stated quite clearly their opposition to the concept of key-workers. From 1st January 1963 the policy of making block allocations to companies of houses for key workers was discontinued, partly because of pressures from the A.U.E.W. and partly because such a policy was felt to be no longer necessary to attract new industry. Housing units were from then on allocated key workers as a result of individual applications by firms on the recommendation of the Sub-Development and Estates (Industrial Development) Committee, the period of occupancy being restricted to two years. (P.H.C. November 1962).

Derby Town Council did not pursue a policy of key worker housing. Possibly the local employment market was a little more stable, there being five main employers in a broader spread of industries ie. Rolls Royce (aero-engineering), British Rail (engineering), British Celanese, now Courtaulds - Chemicals and Textiles, Burmid Qualcast (engineering, motor components), International Combustion (generating equipment). The new technology industries had established themselves

in Derby in the inter-war years. In Portsmouth, the council decided to attract them to remove the dependence upon the naval dockyards. The key workers housing programme was part of the campaign. It was a purely local policy with no Ministry of Housing and Local Government pressure either way. The council's campaign was successful in attracting electronics and computer companies such as I.B.M. Ltd., G.E.C. Ltd., Marconi Ltd., and Plessey Ltd., all attracted by the naval presence and nearness to a major customer. Many other companies were also attracted though, such as John Wyeth & Co., (U.S. drugs company) and the Bell Punch Co., (manufacturer of ticket systems).

vii) It Has To Be Paid For

Throughout the period under review in this chapter Derby Town Council did not adopt any revised scheme for calculating the rents until it was obliged to implement the Housing Finance Act 1972, and then, as we shall see later, it was not until after a fierce political storm in the Council Chamber. In Derby the council have always believed in levying a low rent for their property, one which reflected the cost of construction and not the cost of replacement or the current market value. Consequently, there has always been a large discrepancy between the rentals of older dwellings and those of new dwellings. The Derby Town Council's aim of levying the lowest possible rents reflects in reality an ideal of the Labour Party and since the Labour Party remained in control of Derby Town Council throughout this period, it is hardly surprising to find such a policy being pursued. The policy was in marked contrast to the one being pursued in Portsmouth during the same period. In Portsmouth, the

Conservatives were in control throughout the period, and there the aim was to follow the Conservative ideal of charging economic rents wherever possible. As we have seen above this was the rent policy with key workers, but it was also the theme of successive rent reviews throughout the period. Additionally Portsmouth City Council has a policy of building houses for "higher income groups". These properties were larger, built to a better specification, and let at the full commercial rent. The City Council maintained a separate waiting list for such properties. The properties were built in small groups on the periphery of the large estates at Paulsgrove and Leigh Park and proved to be quite popular with professional people moving to the area, and in many respects could be viewed upon as an extension to the key worker housing policy, although they were not allocated exclusively for such use.

In December 1956, the Portsmouth City Treasurer produced a report which recommended that rents should be fixed according to income. (P.H.C. December 1957). During September 1957 a special meeting was held in Portsmouth to consider the objections to the rental scheme suggested by the City Treasurer. (P.H.C. September 1957). General criticisms were made to the City Treasurer by tenants regarding the style of the income form. The City Treasurer said that the aim was to give a subsidy to those who needed it and not those who do not indiscriminately; he believed hardship could be avoided by using different rents. Criticism was also made of the way in which earnings were calculated, and the period used. Rents were based on past earnings, tenants being required to notify the

City Treasurer of any change, where it could be proved that a tenant's income had been reduced because of unemployment, cessation of overtime or any other cause, the tenant's rent would be reduced. The inclusion of overtime in the calculation was a major source of criticism; however the City Treasurer said that if a person was applying for a subsidy, then all income should be included irrespective of source. He added that the concept of disregarding part of a wife's earnings was equitable, since additional expenses would be incurred in earning such income. The tenants were critical of the fact that the rents ignored any lack of modern conveniences. The City Treasurer's reply was that rent was based on rateable value, determined by the Inland Revenue. He believed that in the past many houses had been under-assessed, and that amenities were ignored because rent was based purely on income and the number of persons accommodated. The income scale was designed so that the tenant who was paying more than the minimum and less than the maximum would only have a slight increase. The City Treasurer believed many tenants had been required to pay sufficient rent in the past. Many tenants believed the scheme to be too complicated to understand. The City Treasurer took an almost unbelievably arrogant stance on this particular issue. He stated that any scheme which tries to introduce equity is likely to be complex. As far as the administration of the scheme was concerned, the complexities of the formula were avoided by the use of a ready reckoner, which gives exclusive rents for all ranges of income. He said that not all tenants would understand the formula even if it were disclosed to them, but this was largely a question of mental ability rather than complexity; some tenants

would have the greatest difficulty in understanding the most simple scheme. The formula was kept secret in order to avoid evasion. This, was because children's earnings were not verified, and if tenants were told that only 1/3 of the children's earnings were taken into account, many of them would deliberately understate the earnings. The City Treasurer believed that if the differential rents scheme was abandoned and fixed rents related to gross or rateable value introduced instead, this would mean that those tenants on low incomes, who could least afford an increase in rent, would have their rent increased, and those with higher incomes would receive a reduction in rent. (P.H.C. September 1957). The City Treasurer's advice was ignored, for on 27th September 1957, under a scheme decided upon at a further special meeting, the Housing Committee decided that there would be no rent rebates. The rents would in future be all-inclusive taking into account current economic trends. It was pointed out that rents would still be below the private rented sector, even with no rate fund subsidy. The committee hoped that council tenants occupying accommodation too large or expensive for their needs would be encouraged to move to smaller premises. It was felt that sufficient smaller type premises were being built to facilitate this movement; alternatively, tenants should be allowed to sublet with council permission. (Special meeting of P.H.C. September 1957). Here we can see the committee clearly overriding the advice of one of its chief officers ie. The City Treasurer. In fact this decision marked a water-shed in his influence over housing policy. As evidence of the changed attitude to him, he was asked to prepare a report on Housing Administration. This report was requested as a result of pressure on the council relating to housing administration

and the treatment of tenants. As a result of the report, a Housing Director was appointed from 1st January 1959 and much of the City Treasurer's influence on housing policy diminished. A separate Department of Housing was created from the Housing Division of the City Treasurers. (Special Meeting of P.H.C. Sub-Committee 26 March 1958). Such problems did not arise in Derby, since there had always been a separate Housing Department, headed initially by a Housing Manager, and from 1959 onwards a Director of Housing.

It was not until July 1961 that Mr J. Dant, the person appointed to the position as Housing Director for Portsmouth produced a report on Rent Structure and Income. (Director of Housing's Report on Rent Structure and Income in Portsmouth). He suggested that there was a need for a general increase in rents. The reason for the large increases was the high cost of multi-storey flats. Also in his report he advocated the introduction of a 24 payment year for rents, as a way of economising on rent collection. The reduction in the number of payments became a favourite hobby horse of Mr Dant, as we shall see later in this research. (Director of Housing's Report 5th July 1961). Mr Dant said that rents should remain linked to rateable values and that since rents in the private sector are determined by supply and demand, because city properties were more popular than properties at Leigh Park, the city properties should take the brunt of the increases. (Director of Housing's Report 5th July 1961). It is interesting to note, that in the previous three years, rents had been charged on a "pool" basis and that no support had been



necessary from the rates. Mr Dant advocated that rent rebates should be reduced and the onus to be placed upon the tenants to claim benefit from the National Assistance Board (now D.H.S.S.) where eligible. (Director of Housing's Report 6th July 1961). The committee were clearly pursuing a high rents policy as opposed to a low rents policy followed in Derby, where annual deficits were made up from the Rate Fund.

During the period under review we see in comparison between the two cities sharp contrasts in rents policy. In Derby, a steady policy of low rents and stable administration; in Portsmouth a policy which was quite "hard line" at times, of high rents and of no rate support to the Housing Revenue Account.

viii) Shall We Sell Some?

Throughout the period under review in this chapter it was the policy of Derby Town Council not to sell any local authority properties. This decision of course was completely in line with national Labour Party policy, but was against the policy of the Conservative Central Government.

A somewhat different approach was taken in Portsmouth where despite lengthening waiting lists the council decided in 1953 to commence the sale of council houses. (P.H.C. June 1953). It will be recalled from Chapter 4 that as early as 1948, members of the city council has asked the housing committee to ensure that council house designs were such that they would be capable of being sold at some future date. (P.H.C. March 1948).

The basis of valuation for sales made by the City Estates Officer was that the minimum sale price was twenty times the 1952 Rent. (Housing Act 1952). In June 1957 the City Estates Officer requested the committee to reconsider the valuation process, but the committee voted 12 to nil to leave the valuations as they were. (P.H.C. June 1957). The issue had been brought to a head since a number of applications had been received from tenants of houses completed before 8th May 1945 to purchase. Proposals under the new rents structure would have in many cases had the effect of increasing the rent above the weekly repayment figures at which tenants would be able to buy. (P.H.C. June 1957). In February 1959, Mr Dant the Director of Housing produced a report on the sale of council houses. He stated that tenants were still able to buy at twenty times the 1952 rent - 14/8d per week on average (73 pence) and he stated that the average 1959 rental was 34/= (£1.70p). If the tenant was to purchase on mortgage, the repayments would be 21/3d (£1.06p) or 12/9d (64p) less per week. (Report of Housing Director 18th February 1958). The report made two recommendations:-

1. That sales should be restricted to post war properties and tenants in pre-war properties should transfer to post war properties if they wish to buy a council property.
2. A deposit of £30 should be required.

He commented that pre-war houses were being sold at the rate of 2 or 3 per week. The committee decided to fix the desposit at £10 and to restrict sales to houses built since 8th May 1945. (P.H.C. February 1958).

A reversal in policy came in June 1961 when the housing committee decided to halt the sale of council houses from 7th June 1961. A total of 643 houses had been disposed of. (P.H.C. June 1961). The Housing Director produced a report indicating that he was opposed to further sales of houses, since interest in purchase had waned and only the best houses were being sold. This is a very interesting decision since political control had not changed in Portsmouth and the Conservative controlled Central Government had become even more favourably inclined towards the sale of council houses.

ix) Carrying On

The period 1954-1964 did not witness any significant change in the political complexions of the administration of either city. Derby remained controlled by the Labour group; Portsmouth the Conservative group, whilst the Central Government was a Conservative one until October 1964. However, all three had the common aim of improving the standard of living accommodation for their citizens, and so the councils worked within the framework set out by Central Government. Derby Town Council appears to have been more ready to increase public expenditure in the mid 1950's and despite differences of political complexion, all the local politicians appear to have been more than willing to take advantage of increases in available funds. In Portsmouth by contrast they were far more reticent on such matters.

The needs of the cities is reflected by the lengthening waiting lists for accommodation, and what is more, the waiting lists did not reflect the true "needs" of the cities, since they did not include

all those housed in properties soon to be declared slums. During the mid 1950's Central Government started to turn its head to tackling the slums of the large cities. The Second World War had delayed the clearing of squalid houses by upwards of 20 years, and this was the major problem to be tackled. People living in the areas needed to be re-housed. In Portsmouth the City Architect favoured the redevelopment of the sites with high rise blocks of flats and his forceful personality allowed such schemes to go ahead. In Derby, the experience of high rise blocks was a short and bitter one, and the cleared sites were used for commercial purposes and those displaced rehoused on greenfield sites on the periphery of the town.

During the period under review, a shortage of building land developed in both cities and the solution to this contrasts markedly between the two authorities. Portsmouth went in for high rise blocks, Derby preferred greenfield sites in a neighbouring authority's area and extending estates already constructed. Also during this period the basic infra-structure was super-imposed upon the early post war housing estates in an attempt to provide new localities with the basic facilities of education, health and shops. Again divergence in policy between the two cities - at least initially - may be observed; Derby initially favoured large out of town shopping centres; one large shopping centre for each estate, but later favoured the scheme in Portsmouth from the outset, that of having small groups of shops dispersed throughout each estate.

When from 1957 the Central Government was encouraging a decline in the number of houses built by the public sector, it was encouraging the creation of a greater need by requiring slum clearance programmes, to be implemented. Derby Town Council appears to have responded in an almost apolitical way, with the exception of not selling any council houses and maintaining a low rental policy - not minor exceptions. Portsmouth in the main followed Conservative mainstream thought for the time, and had an excellent rapport with the Ministry of Housing and Local Government officials and a City Architect who welded this relationship to the advantage of Portsmouth or at least what appeared to be to the advantage of Portsmouth. Mr Mellor, the City Architect was a great believer in high rise flats and his enthusiasm seems to have been the driving force behind their construction. During this period the City Treasurer of Portsmouth's influence over housing matters was somewhat eclipsed by the appointment of a Housing Director, which came about after many complaints relating to housing administration. Derby Town Council does not appear to have been subject to such pressures from the public. As we shall see in the next chapter, the impact on policy and personnel in Portsmouth of pressure groups became increasingly important.

CHAPTER SIX      LET'S BUILD UP - THE SKY IS THE LIMIT

- i)    Background
- ii)   Keep on Building - Delays and Clashes
- iii) Help Yourself
- iv)   Key Workers Become Essential Workers
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## CHAPTER SIX LET'S BUILD UP - THE SKY IS THE LIMIT

i) Background

In this chapter I shall examine the influences on housing policy processes in both Derby and Portsmouth during the period 1964 to 1974. This period was an important one in post war housing policy since it was during this period that the Central Government turned its attention to the retention and improvement of the late 19th Century properties and away from mass clearance programmes. It was the period which witnessed the introduction of Housing Action Areas (H.A.A.'s) and General Improvement Areas (G.I.A.'s). It was also a time which witnessed the full impact of high rise developments; a time when the skylines of many of our cities were changed beyond recognition; a time when for instance the skyline of Portsmouth was dramatically altered through high rise development, whilst in Derby more traditional methods of rehousing were still being employed. The housing problems of both Derby and Portsmouth in the immediate post war years had been acute and both authorities had by 1954 prepared ambitious plans for the development of large new estates on greenfield sites beyond their respective county borough boundaries, with quite optimistic plans for infra-structure on the new estates. These policies represent the high point in post war local authority housing, and also represent the view that improved housing presented a "social cure all". In the second half of the period reviewed in this chapter, a certain amount of disillusionment had set in with regard to housing being a "social cure all" and there was a slow realisation emerging that improved housing conditions

alone would not cure social problems. Concern was also shown at the social effects of high rise developments from the late 1960's onwards and this was possibly concentrated by the events

at Ronan Point in Newham in June 1968, when a gas explosion led to the partial collapse of a block of system built flats. This single event possibly had more impact on rehousing policy and implementation than any other, either political or economic, since it caused local authorities - including as we shall see in this chapter - Portsmouth - to re-examine their housing programmes.

In a political sense, the period 1964-1974 was one of change, since in October 1964 a General Election saw the return of Mr Harold Wilson as the Prime Minister of a Labour Government after 13 years of Conservative Government. The Labour Party remained in Government, until 1970 after winning the general election in 1966. In June 1970, Mr Edward Heath formed a Conservative Government until February 1974, when once again Mr Wilson was returned to power.

At the local level, the politics of the two authorities were a little more stable. The Conservatives retained control of Portsmouth throughout the period and gained control in Derby in 1968 for the first time in 42 years. They retained power until 1972 when again the local Labour Party took control. The Conservative victory in 1968 followed the alteration in the boundaries of the County Borough and the inclusion of some suburbs within the borough for the first time.



In an organisational sense, the period 1964-74 was also one of change, since in the latter part of the period local government reorganisation was an issue very much to the fore. Additionally, internal reorganisation within the local authorities was also set in train as a result of the Bains Report in 1972.

The period then is one of great significance since it is a period of consolidation of programmes, and of political and organisational change.

ii) Keep On Building - Delays and Clashes

In January 1964, Portsmouth City Council's housing department took possession of their 15,000th property since the end of the Second World War. (P.H.C. January 1964).

In Derby, it was not until May 1965, that a major landmark was reached in post war local authority housing development when the 10,000th dwelling to be constructed for the council was completed, and this "happened" to be one of the flats in the Rivermead tower block referred to in Chapter 5. (D.H.C. February 1965). The ensuing publicity was used to announce a policy change in allocation of the flats. It was decided that the allocation should be:-

a) One bedroomed flats:

- i) for single persons occupying one of the authorities' houses following the death of their parents,
- ii) tenants of pre- and post-war houses which are considered to be underoccupied - childless couples, couples with grown up families etc.

b) Normal applicants for accommodation. (D.H.C. February 1965).

Clearly those housed in flats under (a) above would release housing for the maximisation of its use, but the policy was criticised at the time as being inhuman. A 'policy gap' in the Derby Housing programme had been the failure to provide one bedroomed accommodation for single persons and for middle-aged couples whose families had grown up. The one bedroomed flats in Rivermead House were an attempt to remedy this failure, which had been precipitated by the policy of Central Government not to pay a housing subsidy for one bedroomed accommodation. Government policy was to make provision for the accommodation of families. Also Derby Housing Committee under Alderman Flint had always followed a policy of "Grant Maximisation" as well as "House Usage Maximisation".

Meanwhile, Portsmouth City Council maintained a modest flow of new traditional houses. For instance in July 1964, 559 traditional houses were contracted for, making a total of 1,842 dwellings of all kinds contracted for. (P.H.C. January 1964). The major problem facing Portsmouth City Housing Department in the summer of 1964 was a shortage of skilled building workers. The shortage of suitable land for development was being overcome to a certain extent by development sites cleared of slums. Following a policy of "urban renewal", flats and maisonettes were built on such sites. (P.H.C. September 1964).

The problems of rehousing problem families was raised in the 'Portsmouth Evening News'. The Housing Authority was accused of following a ghetto policy. (Portsmouth Evening News dated

16th September 1964). The council denied this. The waiting list in Portsmouth had been reduced to less than 2,000 names on each of the 'A' and 'B' waiting lists, and the average period of waiting had been reduced to 6 months. The city council felt that this was a significant improvement and an indication of their vigorous housing policy. However, the waiting list had been carefully screened prior to the publication of the figures. Elderly people for instance were registered on a separate list, the figures for which were not published and it was here that the greatest potential need lay. Portsmouth like much of the rest of Britain had an ageing population, the housing needs for which were to become more pressing. (P.H.C. February 1965). Concern was expressed at the costs of housing provision in Portsmouth and a special report was prepared looking at a comparison of house building costs with neighbouring local authorities, particularly Southampton, a city of similar size and geological structure. (P.H.C. February 1965). Mr Mellor, the City Architect said that the increased costs were due to Parker-Morris standards being adhered to strictly. He believed nevertheless that if standards were reduced to save a few hundred pounds, it would be "at the expense of tomorrow". Several members of the committee though, rather pointedly asked the question as to whether or not the tenants could afford the properties being built. (P.H.C. February 1965). In Southampton a 3 bedroomed semi-detached house of 965 square feet cost £2,410, whereas in Portsmouth a similar property of 1,154 square feet cost £3,088. The Portsmouth property however had larger rooms and was better equipped. It should be borne in mind though that the Parker-Morris Report recommended such properties

should have a minimum of 800 square feet (Parker-Morris Report 1961) and that many properties built in the private sector still do not comply with its recommendations. The City Architect however persuaded the council that high standards should be maintained. (P.H.C. February 1965). There was, however no reason for complacency. The Tenants Association's annual report for 1965 claimed that only 1200 dwellings out of over 8,000 dwellings on the Leigh Park Estate had been built to Parker-Morris standards, and that the proportion on the Paulsgrove estate and within the city was similar. Of course many of these dwellings were constructed before the Parker-Morris Committee reported in 1961. Further they said that the council should build properties which could be afforded by the tenants. They claimed that their rents were based on the Parker-Morris standards, whereas the majority of dwellings were below that standard. (Report of Portsmouth Tenants Association, 15th September 1965). There appears to be considerable variance between the views of the City Architect and that of the Tenants Association, and as we shall see later in this chapter, the Tenants Association in the late 1960's and during the 1970's under the chairmanship of the Reverend Todd, became a considerable pressure group in Portsmouth and a force to be reckoned with by the Portsmouth City Housing Committee.

In both cities during 1966 contracts were let for the building of dwellings using industrialised methods of construction. In Derby it was decided to build 340 three bedroomed maisonettes to 'Parker-Morris' standards, complete with warm air central heating. (D.H.C.

February 1966). In Portsmouth a negotiated contract was agreed with George Wimpey & Co. for the construction of 136 flats (also to Parker-Morris standards) and a 2 deck car park. The flats were to be one and two bedroomed dwellings. Comments were made as to the high cost of the flats, but the City Architect stated that they were within the Government's cost yardstick. The high costs were due to:-

1. Lifts stopping at each floor.
2. Use of double glazing.
3. Use of gas warm-air central heating.
4. High proportion of one bedroomed flats within the block.

These two contracts bring out the difference in approach to satisfying housing needs in the two cities in the mid 1960's. In Derby the trend was for traditional 3 bed two storey houses, or 3 bed two storey maisonettes, in Portsmouth the trend was towards high-rise flats of one or two bedrooms built on a negotiated contract basis as opposed to the open tender method of contracting used in Derby. The tendering procedure in Portsmouth was revised in April 1966 for the Portsdown Hill project, which the City Housing Committee seemed to believe at that time, would be the envy of the South Coast. The site of the Portsdown development was at the foot of the South Down escarpment and overlooked the Solent and the Isle of Wight. But, as we shall see later, the geology of the area gave rise to many problems.

The City Housing Committee decided to use selective tendering for this ambitious project, with either a fixed price for the whole contract, or a fixed price for the first two years (P.H.C. April 1966).

As a means of assessing the housing needs of Portsmouth, the Housing Director suggested that the City's Housing Register should be redrawn. He made the following recommendations:-

1. Applicants over the age of 60 years should re-register annually.
2. Applications from engaged couples should be accepted for a reserve list for one year.
3. Applications should not be accepted from applicants who have adequate self-contained accommodation, except from those over 60 years and those recommended for rehousing by the Medical Officer of Health. (P.H.C. February 1967).

The house building programme on sites 4, 5 and 6 at Leigh Park was extended to include 459 dwellings instead of the originally planned 417 dwellings. (P.H.C. March 1967). It was reported, however, that 181 dwellings on site 1 at Leigh Park would not qualify for a subsidy since the proposals did not comply with Ministerial policy in terms of size. (P.H.C. March 1967). The authority decided to proceed with the development without financial aid from Central Government. The Town Clerk stated that there was still a need to provide more small units of accommodation and he suggested that the proposed housing developments at Crookhorn House and Wecock Farm should be:-

1 bedroomed units	50%
2 bedroomed units	15%
3 bedroomed units	27%
5 bedroomed units	8%

A further proposition was made that on the proposed Buckland Redevelopment scheme, no 1 bedroomed accommodation should be provided and that 60% of the total accommodation should be 2 bedroomed units. (P.H.C. June 1967).

In his report to the housing committee, the Town Clerk stated that between 1951 and 1961 the population of Portsmouth fell by some 18,500 people, and that in the same period the number under 45, decreased by 23,500, and the number under 15 fell by 6,000. A fall in Education needs had adversely effected the needs element of the Rate Support Grant. Although there had been an increase in the level of employment within the city, many people worked in the city but lived beyond the city boundaries. The needs of the elderly have to be catered for; out of 2,250 applications for accommodation, 900 were from Old Age Pensioners. The Town Clerk emphasised that circular 21/65 stated the need to develop houses generally and not just special categories. By re-housing retired people, larger units would become available for younger people. (P.C.C. June 1967).

Thus we can see that Portsmouth City Housing Committee was being advised to follow a similar policy ie. rehousing ageing people so as to release larger units of accommodation, rather than continuing to build larger units. The city council was faced with the problems

of housing a declining, ageing population. This rehousing policy had already been adopted in Derby as we have seen above. It is also interesting to note here the increasing influence of the Town Clerk on the determining of housing policy in Portsmouth together with the City Architect, at the expense of the Housing Director and more particularly the City Treasurer. The shortfall in housing provision in the late 1960's can be seen in the following figures for Portsmouth:-

<u>Year</u>	<u>Estimated Need</u>	<u>Anticipated Construction</u>
1968	1654	927
1969	2008	1019
1970	2407	1000
1971	2167	1000
1972	1974	1000
1973	1988	1000

The above figures include a provision for 100 Essential Workers houses in 1971.

Source: Report to Portsmouth City Housing Committee dated  
13th December 1967

The collapse of the Ronan Point flats at Newham in June 1968 did not dissuade Portsmouth City Council from continuing to build high rise blocks, some up to 18 storeys, although by the time of Ronan Point, the city council had over 2,000 such units of accommodation. In excess of 1,000 flats were built to the Ronan Point design ie. they were known as "System Built" flats. In these towers blocks it was felt necessary to turn off the gas supplies (a primary cause



of the Ronan Point collapse). This proved difficult since they had gas central heating and gas cooking facilities (P.H.C. September 1968). The contractors for each block were contacted and the plans of each block examined by the City Architect and City Engineer. Other problems were being experienced with the high rise flats, the main ones being water penetration and condensation. These problems gave rise for serious concern and it was felt advisable that an independent architect should be appointed to seek a solution to the problem. (P.H.C. September 1968).

Drainage problems were also being encountered with the development of Crookhorn Farm which was situated within the Havant Urban District Council's jurisdiction. These problems were holding up the provision of traditional houses for letting. In November 1965 a local inquiry was held into the city council's application to develop 95 acres of land east and west of Crookhorn Lane for housing and other purposes. The inquiry was held because Havant U.D.C. objected, claiming that the development would be a major departure from the development plan for the area. Havant U.D.C. also claimed that there were drainage problems associated with the site. Portsmouth City Council disputed this but they were subsequently proved wrong. The Minister of Housing and Local Government agreed to the site being developed on three conditions:-

1. That the Local Authority - Havant U.D.C. - should agree to the siting, design and external appearance, or in default of agreement, the Minister should determine these features.

2. That the site should be landscaped as required by the Local Authority.
3. That the space to be provided for the parking of vehicles should be agreed with the Local Authority.

The Havant Engineer however stated that the site could not be developed due to the absence of suitable run-off for surface water; this would cause flooding if surface water was heavy. Havant U.D.C. stated that this would mean there would be a delay of at least 2 years in the development of the site. The Town Clerk of Portsmouth advised the Housing Committee that they could successfully sue Havant U.D.C. for negligence and he advised the council to take counsel's opinion as to the success of such action. The Town Clerk said that the delay at Crookhorn would "upset" the housing programme for 1969 and 1970 - 850 houses had been planned. He suggested that there were in fact very few alternatives open to the council and the following course of action was decided upon:-

1. Not to build an impounding lake because of the risk of flooding.
2. The Town Clerk to obtain counsel's opinion on the question of liability for costs.
3. The City Architect should make minor modification to layout plans in consultation with the Havant U.D.C. planners.
4. That none of the land reserved for private development should be re-allocated for municipal housing. (Report of Town Clerk on Crookhorn Lane Development dated 14th November 1968).

In May 1969 Mr Geoffrey Howe Q.C. (now Sir Geoffrey Howe) suggested that instead of court action, the city council should first consider referring the matter to the Minister, under section 110 of the Housing Act 1957. This enables the Minister to settle differences between two local authorities where one provides houses in the area of the other. This section though was designed primarily to deal with disputes that might arise about strictly practical difficulties but Mr Howe said that he did not regard this as conclusive that the Minister would decline jurisdiction. (P.H.C. 21st May 1969).

The Town Clerk suggested that the first step should be an informal approach to Havant U.D.C. by letter in which he would indicate that Portsmouth City Council had been advised that there was legal liability, emphasising no wish to go to litigation or take any action which would damage the spirit of co-operation that existed between Havant and the city council. The Town Clerk said he believed it was only reasonable to ask Havant to make a contribution of 50%. However, he was overruled by the council which insisted that he sought 100% compensation - £60,800. In the event Havant offered 50% and this was accepted by Portsmouth City Council. (P.H.C. July 1969). When the site was developed, Havant's Engineer was proved correct; the land was subject to flooding. Portsmouth City Council was fortunate in having in its ownership land at Wecock Farm and Hilsea and it was decided to commence development on these sites immediately, despite the fact that the types and sizes of properties were not identical to those planned for Crookhorn Lane. (P.H.C. July 1969). The development of Wecock Farm was not however smooth going, since the requirements of the Ministry of Housing and Local

Government under circular 82/69 - Housing Standards and Costs referred specifically to the provision for the elderly and the design of such accommodation. The Housing Director said that one person flats would have to be built with bed-sitting rooms and he emphasised that this would considerably increase his difficulties in persuading persons to move out to Wecock Farm. It was decided to make representations to the Ministry to ask for an exception to be made. Wecock Farm was situated in Havant and Waterloo Urban District, and the council there felt that Portsmouth wished to build to too high a density and refused to approve the detailed plans without quite major alteration, this included the omission of all 8 person 4 bedroomed dwellings and Part II Old Aged Persons Dwellings (the bed sit flats referred to above). In addition, they asked for land to be used for their own use for aged persons dwellings. (P.H.C. May 1970). again then, there were problems between Portsmouth City Council and Havant and Waterloo U.D.C. with regard to overspill development.

The relationship between the authorities contrasts sharply with the one in Derby, where as we saw in Chapter 5, both South East Derbyshire R.D.C. and Belper R.D.C. positively welcomed Derby's housing into their areas. Derby Town Council's approach was somewhat different in that they asked the authorities if they could identify suitable areas for development, and they also offered to take some tenants of the host council's waiting list. The difference of approach may account for some of the differences - but not all. The pressure for land is far greater in the Solent area than in the

East Midlands. Havant and Waterlooville were at that time independent communities and probably felt threatened by their neighbouring city's plans to build 3,000 plus houses in their area in a short period of time. Derby Town Council's overspill estate were never planned to be in excess of 250 dwellings per development - these are in the process of being extended, but they are within the city boundaries now. Clearly Portsmouth's housing programme suffered severe setbacks in the late 1960's because of their acrimonious relations with Havant U.D.C. They also suffered severe delays to their rehousing programme because of delays on the Portsdown site, a development of 523 dwellings in "mixed rise" units. The problems on the Portsdown site compounded when the contractors Y.S. Lowells (Sussex) Ltd. went into liquidation. (P.H.C. December 1970). The liquidation followed the council's refusal to seek arbitration on the building contract. A scheme which had started out as a prize winning development was rapidly becoming an acute embarrassment. The council decided to have an independent investigation carried out into the whole of the Portsdown contract, and into the affairs of the consultants and the officers concerned.

In December 1971 the Housing Director, in a report indicated that there was an estimated demand for 3,750 units of accommodation. This figure included a need for 1,000 one bedroomed flats on Portsea Island to house old people. Since there was an increase in the numbers approaching the marrying age, the Director's forecast was substantiated by demographic trends. He estimated that the deficiency in housing supply for 1971/72 would be 424 units.

The approach of the two authorities to housing development in the period 1964-1974 is rather akin to the tortoise and the hare. Derby Town Council plodded along with only an average performance, but maintaining good working relationships with its neighbouring authorities, and developing estates with their full co-operation. Portsmouth in contrast bought land and made plans and tried to present the neighbouring authorities with a fait accompli and was faced with strong reaction from its neighbours. Likewise Derby only had a short spell with high rise development. Portsmouth decided to build many tower blocks and indeed proceeded to develop the Portsdown site for high rise use and ran a competition for the design layout of the site. Despite such a glorious start, the City Council had tremendous problems with the local geology and also the contractors. It is of course easy to criticise events in Portsmouth, their schemes were clearly over ambitious. But their need was also pressing and the supply of land they had was limited by the sea and poor relations with Havant. In Derby a more cautious approach was adopted, the need was not so pressing.

### iii) Help Yourself

In order to try and meet the housing needs of sections of the community not being satisfied by local authority programmes, Central Government had in the 1957 Housing Act allowed that assistance should be given to Housing Associations. (Housing Act 1957). As we saw in Chapter Four, as early as 1948, Portsmouth City Council had given assistance to self-help groups forming themselves into Housing Associations. The City Council believed that encouragement should

be given to those wanting self-building groups, where the members of the group actually built their own dwellings. (P.H.C. March 1964). The intention of the 1957 legislation though was for the formation of professionally managed Housing Associations rather than self-build groups, the building work being undertaken by building companies rather than members of the housing association. In more recent years national housing associations have emerged usually with a specific aim ie. The Hanover Housing Association and its aim of housing the elderly in purpose built accommodation. The 1964 Housing Act reinforced the obligation to assist Housing Societies/Associations in the provision of new properties, moreover this Act extended the obligation to assist such Associations in the renovation of existing properties (Housing Act 1964).

In July 1965 Portsmouth City Council allocated land at Leigh Nursery to three self-build housing groups. The majority of the members of each society were in fact building trade workers who were at that time council tenants. (P.H.C. July 1965). It was also resolved that Housing Associations should be charged £1,000 per plot. (P.H.C. July 1965).

It was not until 1966 that Derby started to encourage the development of Housing Associations. The housing committee had tended to look upon Housing Associations as a form of competition with itself rather than as a partner in satisfying the housing needs of their town. In March 1966 the Rotary Club formed a Housing Association and the housing committee agreed to make "a substantial loan" if necessary. (D.H.C. March 1966). It was really with the formation of the

Walbrook Housing Association in January 1967 that Housing Associations started to come into their own in Derby. This Association was formed to purchase existing houses, renovate them and accommodate families living in overcrowded conditions. It was not until 1970 though that the Walbrook Housing Association received substantial support from the local authority. (D.H.C. July 1970). It is significant that the major housing association in the Derby area, the Derwent Housing Association, operates on a co-ownership basis. The association builds new properties for young people, mainly in the South Derbyshire District, beyond the city boundaries. In Derby, in more recent years, housing associations have been joint promoters of ventures with the city council in projects catering for specific needs, particularly schemes for housing the elderly, and the disabled.

It is interesting to contrast the reactions in Portsmouth and Derby to housing associations with that of Bradford. There in November 1968 the City Housing Committee decided not to build any more council houses. (Minutes of Bradford City Housing Committee November 1968). It might be suggested that they were placing political ideology above the "needs" of the many people on the waiting list for accommodation. They firmly believed however that sufficient accommodation could be provided by the re-letting of corporation dwellings as they became vacant, by the letting of corporation dwellings under construction at that time, and by dwellings to be erected by housing associations as private developers. The Bradford Housing Committee claimed that the housing waiting list was misleading since people were often



registered as an "insurance policy". Such people intended to find accommodation elsewhere - ie. buy their own house, but wanted a council house waiting listing "just in case".

Housing Associations were encouraged to develop "small dwellings" (Minute of Bradford Housing Committee December 1969). A scheme, which had been suspended by the city council was taken over by the North British Housing Society. The council also sold a 8.56 acres of land to the society for £20,000 and made a loan to them of £690,000, so that 181 dwellings in two and three storey buildings could be erected. Although the council was becoming dependent on the housing associations for building low cost accommodation, the housing associations in turn were dependent upon the council for the necessary finance to carry out the schemes which they proposed. The Minister of Housing and Local Government Mr R.H.S. Crossman, in a letter to the chairman of the housing committee expressed his concern at the housing policy in Bradford. Arguably to encourage housing associations to take on the role of provider of housing, for rental is too heavy a mantle for such organisations, and one which was never intended for them. It is their traditional purpose to supplement provision rather than be the main provider.

In Derby and Portsmouth this was the principle followed. In Portsmouth there was an underlying aim of releasing council houses and of encouraging self-build groups, but not at the expense of the council's own building programme. In Derby, once the initial suspicion had been overcome, housing associations were found to be

useful in catering for the needs of minority groups such as aged persons, the disabled, and unmarried mothers.

iv) Key Workers Become Essential Workers

In Chapters 4 and 5 reference was made to the key worker policy of Portsmouth City Council, and its obvious absence in Derby. This divergence in housing policy continued throughout the period covered by this chapter despite considerable pressure being put on Portsmouth City Council by both individuals, trade unions - notably the A.E.U. and by the Portsmouth Trades Council. Derby Town Council on the other hand, saw no need to follow such a policy. Throughout the period, local industry prospered and the council felt there was no need to attract new industries. Even after the collapse of Rolls Royce Limited in 1971, the town council still saw no necessity to adopt a key worker housing scheme.

Regular allocations were made of accommodation for essential workers by Portsmouth Housing Committee. In June 1965, for instance, 29 houses were allocated for essential workers. (P.H.C. June 1965). As we saw earlier in this chapter, the housing committee in Portsmouth made a provision of 100 dwellings per annum for essential workers. The majority of the companies availing themselves of the facility were large companies moving to the Portsmouth area and included such companies as Allen and Hanburys Ltd. (surgical instrument manufacturers), Plessey & Company Ltd., John Wyeth Ltd. and The Metal Box Company Ltd. (P.H.C. September 1965). Companies did not always receive the number of dwellings they requested though. For instance, in October 1965 Plessey and Company Ltd were allocated

10 dwellings, although they had requested 15 dwellings and the Metal Box Company were allocated a further 2 dwellings, having requested 4 additional dwellings. (P.H.C. October 1965).

In March 1966 the local branch of the A.E.U. sent a letter to Portsmouth City Housing Committee stating that they would like the committee to meet a deputation to discuss the authority's key worker policy. The A.E.U. had three aspects of policy which they wished to discuss:-

- i) The strong feeling amongst essential workers that they were being discriminated against in that they had no chance, whatever their financial circumstances, of obtaining a rent rebate.
- ii) Many of the essential workers were not earning any more than their fellow workers recruited locally.
- iii) That if additional charges were required that the management of the firms concerned should be required to pay them.

(Letter from the Branch Secretary of the A.E.U. to Portsmouth City Housing Committee, dated 2nd March 1966).

The Director of Housing stated that the third point was not practical and although essential workers were excluded from rebates, special consideration could be given to individual cases. (P.H.C. March 1966).

In January 1968, the Portsmouth policy of including 100 dwellings for allocation to essential workers was reaffirmed and it was also decided to allocate 12 dwellings per annum to small employers.

(P.H.C. January 1968). The policy was again reviewed in April 1970. A report was made by the Director of Housing for Portsmouth (Mr J.D. Dant) on housing policy towards essential workers. The report was submitted to the Portsmouth Housing Committee on 2nd March 1970. It stated that since 1st January 1959, 1,479 houses had been let to essential workers, of whom 528 were still in occupation. Essential workers were informed of the council's mortgage scheme upon taking up their tenancy. The report stated that the annual demand averaged 123 dwellings (provision 100 dwellings). The report had been written, because the city council, in order to attract the new Schedule E Inland Revenue Centre for the Southern Region to Portsmouth, had promised 100 dwellings per annum to the Board of the Inland Revenue. The Board had submitted their first request for 100 dwellings. The new office complex being developed for the Inland Revenue was likely to create a demand for 350 dwellings per annum over the following five years. The Housing Director believed that there was a need for "a more flexible approach to the housing of essential workers". He believed that, because Leigh Park was nearing completion it was becoming easier to let properties on the Leigh Park Estate - the estate on which essential workers were usually offered accommodation. The Housing Director believed that a more "flexible" approach to essential workers' housing should be taken and that individual applications from employers should be carefully monitored. Employers of essential workers, it will be recalled from Chapter Five were required to guarantee the rents of their employees for two years. The Inland Revenue applied for, and was granted, an exemption from this normal condition of allocation of such a tenancy. (P.H.C. June 1970).

It is interesting to note that within two years of an "essential worker" being housed by the city council over 50% of such tenants had in fact proceeded to purchase a house of their own. The essential worker housing programme was and still is an attractive scheme to companies seeking to relocate themselves and it must have been a prime consideration of many of the companies who have moved into the Portsmouth area since 1945. The policy represented a desire by the local authority to widen the industrial and commercial base of employment structure of the city, and so reduce its dependence on the Admiralty as the major employer. In view of current uncertainties about the future of the Portsmouth Naval base, it was a very far-sighted policy, even if as explained previously a criticised one. Should one of the major employers in Derby suffer a severe recession in its industry, then possibly the city council there will wish it had had similar foresight.

v) Fair Rents For All

As will be recalled from Chapters 4 and 5, the policies of the two authorities towards rents were somewhat at variance. In Portsmouth, the general policy was that those tenants able to pay an economic rent - which Portsmouth referred to as the "standard rent" should do so and that assistance should be given only to low income families and/or large families. Since their belief was that the Housing Revenue Account should be self balancing and that no contribution should be made from the General Rates, this policy led to problems with the Tenant's Association on Rents Policy. The tenants housed under the essential worker programme were charged the full rent, irrespective of financial means.

In Derby, the council's policy was to run the Housing Revenue Account at a small deficit; this being cleared by transferring funds from the General Rates.

As we saw in Chapter 4 a Rent Rebate scheme was introduced in Derby in 1955 and this was funded from the General Rates, not from within the Housing Revenue Account as was the case in Portsmouth. In Portsmouth a minimum rent of half the gross value of the rental was charged; in Derby such a scale did not operate within the rebate scheme. (P.H.C. July 1964). The normal rent was fixed at 1.4 times the gross value and was to be paid by a married couple with no children with an income over £15 per week, with one child if income over £17 per week, and over £19 per week if two children are dependent. The rebate scheme in Portsmouth was modified in June 1965 and the rent year was reduced to 50 payments. (P.H.C. June 1965). Local Authorities had been encouraged to increase their rents by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government which in a letter to Local Authorities had stated:-

"In a world of rapid technological change and of rapidly expanding economies, there must be a continuous growth of wages, of prices and of profits, and if we try to freeze rents when the cost of everything else is rising the result is to create more problems than we solve".  
(Letter from Minister of Housing and Local Government to all Local Authorities May 1965).

The 1965 Rent Rises in Portsmouth provoked a strong reaction from the Tenants Association. The rises had averaged 20%. The Tenants Association organised two protest marches through Portsmouth, an estimated 5,000 taking part in the first one, and 20,000 in the

second. (Tenants Association report to P.H.C. June 1965). Here we can see pressure being exerted on the city housing committee by the Tenants Association, although to little avail.

In October 1965, Portsmouth City Council decided that there should be an independent inquiry into the whole operation of the Housing Revenue Account, and that the Organisation and Methods department should investigate the administration of the housing department. As a result of the decision further rent increases were deferred pending the outcome of the investigations. It was anticipated that the Housing Revenue account for 1966/7 would show a deficit and that there would be nothing to carry forward from 1965/6. It was suggested that the deficit could be carried forward. However, this would have been contrary to Section 5 of the 5th Schedule of the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1958 which states:-

"where in any financial year a deficit is shown in the account, the local authority shall carry to the credit of the account for that financial year a contribution of an amount equal to the deficit".

This of course, meant that a contribution would have to be made from the General Rate Fund if rents were not increased. (P.H.C. October 1965).

In November 1965, new maximum and minimum rent levels were fixed for subsidised dwellings and it was agreed that they would be applied from 6th April 1966. The Director of Housing stated that he believed that the rent rebate scheme was not functioning properly since he believed that under the existing scheme the contributions from wives'

earnings were excessive. (P.H.C. November 1965). New scales of rebate were therefore introduced alongside the new charges with the net effect of a 13½% rent increase at the time of a wage freeze. (P.H.C. November 1965). The report on the Housing Revenue Account indicated that if no change had been made, a deficit of £2.93m would have been incurred during 1966/67 instead of the anticipated £246,000. The 13½% increase would arrive at "reasonable" rents - less than the principles of the Rent Act. (P.H.C. November 1965).

In June 1966 the District Auditor issued his report following his investigation into the Portsmouth Housing Department. The District Auditor made a comparison between Portsmouth and 19 other housing authorities in the South East of England. In Portsmouth the average rent charged was £2.58p; elsewhere the average ranged from £1.14p to £2.37p, when the national average was £2.05p (District Auditors Report on Housing in Portsmouth 1966). The rents were therefore high, only exceeded by Greater London according to the C.I.P.F.A. housing statistics for 1966. (C.I.P.F.A. Housing Statistics 1966). The committee, as a justification for their high rents policy stated that they were one of the authorities which had adopted the thorough going rent rebate schemes. The number of rebates granted in 1964/65 was 2,373 - 12% of tenancies, the average rebate being approximately 70p per week. Only 21 other county boroughs had granted a rebate to more than 10% of their tenants. (P.H.C. June 1966). The District Auditor stated that the Housing Account had not shown a deficit since 1957/58, and that the deficit then incurred was met from the general rate fund and later recouped. Apart from that, surpluses had been



carried forward from year to year, and the surplus at March 31st 1965 was £46,356 or £2.40p per dwelling - quite small in comparison to the turnover. (District Auditor's Report June 1966). It is clearly to be inferred that in fixing rents the council, while no doubt having regard to the market level of rents for comparable properties and to the economic circumstances of their tenants, had also an eye to balancing the Housing Revenue Account from year to year. The District Auditor thought such a policy was the correct way of proceeding, since the Rate Fund contribution was and is at the council's discretion.

In Derby, the council exercises such a discretion annually, ensuring that the Housing Revenue Account balances, the deficits being made up from a contribution from the General Rate Fund. The two approaches to the Housing Revenue Account indicate clearly the two ideologies, Conservative versus Labour. The only deviation towards the Portsmouth model came in the period 1968-72 when Derby Town Council was controlled by the Conservative group. In those years, the Housing Revenue Account was not balanced from the General Rate Fund.

The return of the Conservatives to National Government in June 1970 brought with it a reaffirmation of the economic rent principle under the guise of the "Fair Rents" first proposed in the White Paper 'Fair Deal for Housing'. (H.M.S.O. 1970). The White Paper was not enacted until 1972, and in fact formed the basis of the Housing Finance Act 1972.

In May 1972, Labour regained power in Derby, shortly before the Housing Act 1972 was due to be implemented. The new Labour Council, under the leadership of John Dilks had pledged itself at the May elections to a vigorous housing programme, to removing the slums from the inner urban areas of the town, and greatly increasing the number of council houses built. John Dilks was an extremely ambitious local politician. Indeed he subsequently stood as a Parliamentary candidate unsuccessfully on four occasions, including the famous Lincoln by-election of March 1973 which Mr Dick Taverne won. John Dilks is considered to be to "the left" within the Labour Party and is employed by the East Midlands Co-op at their head office in Derby as their Public Relations Manager.

Both Derby Town Council and the Housing Committee were totally opposed to the implementation of the Housing Finance Act. As late as February 1973 the Housing Committee rejected advice from the Town Clerk that the rents of council properties should be raised in accordance with the Fair Rents legislation by 50 pence per dwelling, the proposition being opposed by the Labour group and supported and proposed by the Conservative group. (D.H.C. February 1973). A fierce debate arose over this issue, and at one stage it looked as though Derby Town Council was going to stand firm against the Government policy, as the Council had done at Clay Cross. However, a deputation of councillors went to London to meet Mr Peter Walker, the then Secretary of State for the Environment and he was adamant about his position.

Subsequently on 18th June 1973, 50 pence was added to the rents. Thus the Derby Town Council belatedly implemented the Housing Finance Act 1972.

In Portsmouth, as one might expect, the Conservative controlled authority had implemented the Housing Finance Act 1972 on the correct date for implementation - 1st April 1973. Some debate had taken place on the implications of the act, but very little opposition was put up against its implementation. It is interesting to question why Derby was one of the last authorities to implement the Housing Finance Act - only Greenock and Clay Cross remained to implement the Act after Derby. A possible explanation may be due to the fact that after the overwhelming defeat of the Labour group at the 1968 elections many of the 'old guard' councillors were 'retired' and new, younger men came forward, and it was these men who took control of the council for the Labour Party in 1972. Some of these new councillors had high ambitions of concerns in national politics and they held relatively left wing views compared to the 'old guard' councillors who were archetypal Labour councillors. Thus one could suggest that the ideals of the new Derby councillors were not atypical of Labour councillors in general, and further, they could draw attention to themselves by refusing to implement legislation which the Conservative Government considered to be key legislation.

In making a comparison then between the two cities, it is clear that Portsmouth throughout the period believed in economic rents being charged, and that rebates should be given to tenants, thus fostering

the Conservative ideology of subsidising people not property. In Derby, the belief was in maintaining a low rents policy, balanced from the General Rate Fund, something which was avoided in Portsmouth.

vi) Let's Sell The Council Houses

The sale of council houses in Portsmouth was considered as early as 1948, when, as we saw in Chapter Four of this thesis, councillors were anxious to ensure that properties built for letting should be of a standard capable of being sold at some future date. The sale of council houses in Portsmouth started as early as 1954, but was abandoned in 1961 because it was felt that such sales discriminated against tenants of flats, since only houses were sold. (P.H.C. January 1964). Additionally, the cost of replacement houses for those sold in order to rehouse families from redevelopment areas also served to dissuade Portsmouth City Council from continuing with housing sales. (P.H.C. January 1964).

The Director of Housing, Mr J. Dant in January 1964 published a report advocating the re-introduction of council house sales on the following basis:-

- i) Large estates consisting of tenanted houses only not favoured on social grounds, small groups of owner-occupied dwellings providing a better social mix.
- ii) Owner occupiers being dispersed by redevelopment.
- iii) The lack of sites for private development within the city tended to drive purchasers of new houses outside the city boundaries.

- iv) Owner occupiers were not subsidised directly and therefore sales would relieve pressure on public money.
- v) The sale of houses to applicants would reduce the waiting list and sales to tenants would release other houses for letting.

Mr Dant balanced his report with some of the more familiar objections to sales:-

- i) A large number of applicants were not in a position to purchase a house.
- ii) There is little reason to believe that houses built by the council will be any cheaper than those built by private companies.
- iii) Many people displaced by redevelopment programmes were quite content to become council tenants.
- iv) Sales would widen the choice of those who can afford to buy but limit the opportunities of tenants and they might have to take tenancies outside the city.
- v) Properties available for sale was controlled by the operation of the Rent Act, which at the same time increased the pressure on houses to let. To set aside a proportion of the councils building programme for sale would have accentuate this trend.
- vi) High density of houses would not be attractive to private buyers.

After a long discussion of Mr Dant's report, the city council decided not to restart the sale of council houses to tenants and to those on the waiting list for housing. (P.H.C. January 1964). In February 1965, further consideration was given to the subject of selling council houses to tenants. The council then decided to continue their policy of not selling houses to tenants, but that the officers concerned should be requested to consider the possibility of providing groups of properties in redevelopment areas, either by private development or council development, which could be made available to persons being disturbed by redevelopment proposals or to tenants of existing property. (P.H.C. February 1965). In March 1967, against the advice of Mr Dant the housing committee decided to re-introduce the sale of council houses. Mr Dant opposed the decision stating that it would lead to depletion of housing stocks, a loss of the best sites and affect the rents of flats since there was a gross subsidy to flats. He stated that there was no overwhelming reason to justify the sale of houses, and that such sales were depleting the housing stock. (P.H.C. March 1967). It is clear that Mr Dant had misjudged the political climate of his committee and of the Tenant's Association who were also in favour of such sales on the proviso that the levels of rent were not affected. (P.H.C. April 1967). The sales were to be negotiated on the basis of the open market price with vacant possession as determined by the City Estates Officer. The City Treasurer advised that a substantial deposit should be sought, but his advice was ignored and the Housing Committee decided to offer the houses for sale with the benefit of 100% mortgages and a 25 years repayment period. (P.H.C. April 1967).

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In Derby, on 1st April 1968 the County Borough's boundaries were extended to take in areas previously in the county. The ruling group on the Town Council changed from Labour to Conservative when an entirely new council was elected. Only seven Labour councillors were returned, out of forty-eight seats, the other forty-one going to the Conservatives. The landslide occurred partly because of the strong feeling against the Government of the day (Labour) and also because some very middle class areas had been absorbed into the enlarged borough. The newly elected council in Derby decided to offer for sale council houses to their tenants at sitting tenant prices. In addition the new council also decided to offer for sale newly erected 2 and 3 bedroomed houses to applicants who were on the housing list (a measure which has been furthered by the Labour group more recently) the sale price for the new houses being their current market value. (D.H.C. October 1968). If the purchaser wished to sell his house, then the council retained the right to buy back the dwelling at the sale price, the mortgages being provided by the corporation at 7½% and the deposit being £25. During the first twelve months in which council houses were for sale in Derby, 57 were sold.

The sale of council houses in Derby between 1968 and 1972 is a clear indication of local political ideology determining policy. The local Conservatives had not been in power prior to 1968 for 37 years and they gave priority to certain controversial policies, one of which was the sale of council houses. Their attitudes vary quite sharply from their counterparts, in Portsmouth, who were used to being the

majority party in the council chamber, and who took more time to implement the policy. Quite clearly they appreciated that they had the time, whereas the Derby councillors no doubt realised that time in power for them was limited and change had to be rapid.

vii) Don't Clear Them All Away

In 1964, the accession to power of the Labour Party at Westminster witnessed a notable move in the attitudes towards the Inner Cities, the new policy being embodied within the Housing Act 1964. This Act led to the creation of Improvement Areas in districts where properties had a useful life of at least fifteen years. (Housing Act 1964). In both Derby and Portsmouth the local authorities decided that the new Act should be implemented and administered by their Housing Committees. The problem of implementation of the Act of course arose from the fact that owner-occupiers could not be compelled to carry out the improvement work even though much of the work qualified for grant aid. Many of the owner occupiers were in fact elderly and were not interested in change, or could not afford it. Derby Town Council was relatively slow to implement the new legislation, despite the fact that it had areas which qualified for such aid from Central Government. The Town Council preferred to continue with its clearance programmes in the Inner City Areas rather than their rehabilitation. (D.H.C. February 1965).

In Portsmouth, by way of contrast, an initial survey of two areas was immediately announced. It was decided that one area - Twyford Road - was not suitable since insufficient properties were affected. It



was felt by the Housing Section of the Public Health department that at least 50 properties should be affected in order to make such schemes viable. (P.H.C. February 1965).

A further indication of Central Government policy changes came with the introduction of Housing Circular 11/65 which required local authorities to take a fresh look at their slum clearance programmes over the ten years to 1974. In Portsmouth it was estimated that 5,500 could be classified as unfit, although a total of 14,000 dwellings were over 100 years old. (P.H.C. February 1965). The council decided not to lend on either type of property. In Derby the position was that 3,200 dwellings could be classified as unfit, although a total of 8,600 dwellings were over 100 years old (D.H.C. March 1965).

In Portsmouth, possibly because of the pressure on land, considerable useage was made of areas cleared; redevelopment occurring almost immediately. This contrasted sharply with the policy in Derby of leaving sites derelict and developing greenfield sites on the periphery of the town. This is evidenced by the report dated 28 June 1965 on House Clearing presented to Portsmouth City Council on 14th July 1965, in which it was stated that site redevelopment should occur with "all haste". The policy divergences may of course be due to the relative abundance of suitable land for development in the Derby area when compared with the Portsmouth area.

In January 1966 Portsmouth City Council published a further report on "Future Clearance and Redevelopment". The report recommended that between 1966 and 1972, some 3,500 houses should be cleared at an annual rate of demolition of 600. The new programme included 4,169 houses of the 6,100 in the Green Line area" (1,300 being in the current programme and 2,869 in the proposed programme). At the time of the publication of the report, the remaining 1931 houses in the Green Line area had not been surveyed. The report indicated that some houses were obsolescent rather than unfit. The chairman expressed the view that "every co-ordinative effort should be made to achieve the maximum use of land for the benefit of the city and that a contracting process of forward planning was, therefore, essential. There is a need to improve the machinery of planning." (Report January 1966). The report also indicated that there was a need to strengthen public relations in Portsmouth. (Report January 1966).

In September 1966 a confidential report was circulated amongst council members. This report recommended that the "Green Line area" - the area of 6,000 houses, 2,869 of which had been included in the Medical Officer of Health's proposed clearance programme under Part III of the Housing Act 1957 - should be dealt with as a whole, but in doing so, hardship would be caused. (Confidential Report on Slum Clearance P.H.C. 14th September 1966). At the time the report was compiled, there were some 14,000 dwellings over 100 years old within Portsmouth, and a further 9,000 over 60 years old. There was a general feeling within the committee that the city must continue to

increase the extent to which houses are being improved, but that at the same time, the redevelopment of the obsolescent areas must continue. At the time of the report being written, 30% of Portsmouth's housing stock was without a bathroom, and 37% without exclusive use of hot and cold water supplies. (Confidential Report 14th September 1966).

In October 1966 the Portsmouth Housing Committee agreed to a programme of Improvement Areas being devised. A report presented to the housing committee had recommended that the programme should include 1,100 houses between 1966 and 1971 at 200 houses per annum. Approval was given for a programme of 600 per annum within the provision of the Housing Act 1964 - the programme being subject to review in the light of experience. (P.H.C. October 1966).

Commenting upon the Buckland redevelopment scheme, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government stated that there was a need for higher densities within the central redevelopment areas in order to comply with new cost levels which were about to be introduced. (P.H.C. February 1967). The proposed density was revised in July 1967, so that the 72 acre site would accommodate 10,500 people - a density of 140/150 per acre, compared with an average suburban density of approximately 30 per acre.

In February 1969, Portsmouth City Council agreed to the creation of three areas as General Improvement Areas. It was decided that no further areas would be declared under the Housing Act 1964, but that, instead, informal preliminary action would be taken as soon

as a procedure had been agreed along the lines suggested in the Housing Bill so that the areas would be declared as G.I.A.'s as soon as the Bill became law. (P.H.C. February 1969).

This is an excellent example of a local authority anticipating changes in government policy and delaying further programmes until more advantageous circumstances had been legislated for. The Chief Health Inspector, at the same meeting in February 1969 sensed an opportune climate, and pointed out that the current housing programme expired in 1971 and suggested that in order that the committee could have sufficient information to be able to formulate new policy, a pilot project should be undertaken in order to determine how best to deal with future clearance programmes ie:-

1. Part II and III under 1957 Housing Act - demolition and clearance.
2. Public Health Acts 1936 and 1961 - dwellings unfit for habitation.
3. Housing Act 1964 - declaration of Housing Improvement areas.
4. 1961 Housing Act Part II - Multiple Occupation/Overcrowding.

In November the Medical Officer of Health reported to the Housing Committee on aspects of Housing Clearance. He stated that there should be an adequate supply of houses for all citizens of Portsmouth and that although most of the worst slums had been cleared a shortage of suitable accommodation for the elderly still persisted. He suggested that a fitness for habitation test should be applied to all dwellings in clearance areas and that a programme for the

clearance of unfit houses at the rate of 600 per annum - mainly in the Buckland redevelopment areas - should be maintained. The house building programme should be maintained at the then existing level of approximately 900 dwellings per annum, although an increase in the building rate should be aimed for. Many of those on the waiting list were old people with special needs which should be taken into account.

The most pressing problem, certainly in the view of the Medical Officer, was the need to deal with those in multiple occupation. He estimated that approximately 20,000 houses would be affected by the 1969 Housing Act within the city. (P.H.C. November 1979). This figure was substantiated in June 1972, when the city council published a Home Improvement Report in which it was estimated that 20,000 dwellings in the city lacked one or more of the standard amenities, and that approximately 10,000 were seriously deficient, most of them having no bathroom and only an outside toilet.

In May 1973, the Housing Director prepared a report for the housing committee on the future of General Improvement Areas in Portsmouth, and the implementation of Section 23 of the 1969 Housing Act. Under the provisions of Section 28 of the 1969 Act, 6 areas had been designated as G.I.A.'s involving some 11,000 houses within these areas. This was in addition to the 2,000 already within the authorities' previously declared improvement areas under the provisions of the 1964 Housing Act.

The City Architect felt too much emphasis was being placed upon the G.I.A. programme and believed that some redevelopment should take place. He was supported in his views by the City Development Officer who commented that even though current opinion was in favour of G.I.A.'s such a large programme would be against the interests of Portsmouth, since Portsmouth at that time contained the greatest concentration of sub-standard housing in Hampshire. He felt that there should be changes for the better in general living conditions as well as improvements in environmental and housing standards. The long term effect would be to curtail redevelopment plans for the older housing areas and would lead to the recurrence of enormous rebuilding problems some 30-50 years later. The G.I.A.'s should not be looked at in isolation.

The G.I.A. programmes really brought to the fore a clash of professional interests between the Housing Director who was in favour of large G.I.A. programmes and the City Architect who was basically opposed to them, and preferred to create large clearance schemes, using the land for high rise developments. Between these two views was the City Development Officer. The problems of Improvement Areas and the misuse of government grants were subsequently reported in a feature on Housing in Portsmouth in the "News of the World" in February 1974.

The aim of Portsmouth City Housing Committee in the period 1964 to 1974 was to maximise the grants available and to improve the general

housing stock by taking full advantage of the provisions granted to them under Section 28 of the 1969 Housing Act. Thus the city council created huge General Improvement Areas, each covering approximately 2,000 houses.

The eagerness of Portsmouth contrasts sharply with the slow and lethargic attitude of Derby Town Council, where G.I.A.'s were not created on such a large scale until the creation of St Lukes G.I.A. in 1977. The quality of housing stock in Portsmouth was however worse in terms of lacking basic facilities. In Derby, the council preferred what they considered to be a slower, but more permanent solution of clearing old houses away and rehousing those displaced, in the main in new properties built on greenfield sites. Derby was fortunate in having the land available. Portsmouth was not in such a position. This was a contributory factor in differences in policy, although political belief also played its part.

#### viii) Apply a Little Pressure

As we saw in previous chapters, a Joint Housing Consultative Body was formed in Portsmouth in the 1950's and by 1964 this body had become firmly established. The body acted in much the same way as the consultation committee in Derby, where representatives of the Tenant's Associations would meet members and officials of the housing committee. In Portsmouth, however the tenants' representatives have always been vociferous about the councils' rent policy, whereas in Derby they appear to have been more concerned with housing standards and amenities. This is possibly because of the difference in

attitudes to rent calculation between the two authorities, discussed earlier in this chapter, but possibly also because of the leadership of the Tenants Association by its President the then Vicar of Leigh Park, the Rev. W.C.D. Todd, and the Councillor for Leigh Park on Havant U.D.C. in Mr G. Bell.

In September 1964 at a meeting of the Housing Joint Consultative Body a heated argument developed, and a major disagreement arose over rents. (P.H.C. September 1964). The tenants' representatives questioned the need for the large planned increases in rent and claimed that the 10% increase in rents in April 1964 had cleared deficiencies and indeed would lead to a surplus. Councillor Flagg stated that the two sides were "clearly miles apart" and he was not swayed by their representations. (P.H.C. September 1964). However in February 1965 further representations were made by the tenants representatives at a meeting of the Housing Joint Consultative Body and Councillor Flagg and the other housing committee representatives agreed to a £45,000 rate subsidy being made during the financial year 1965/66. (P.H.C. February 1965). This action however was only taken after two demonstration marches had taken place through the streets of Portsmouth, one of 5,000 people, a second of 20,000 people protesting against the city housing committee's rent policy. The rents had been increased by 20%, the aim being to remove a £160,000 deficit and to create a £70,000 surplus. The Tenants' Association believed that the Housing Director should not compare council housing with Private Sector costs, since there was a profit element in the private sector, and the Local Authority was a social service. The

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Housing Director was however following the policy determined by the council members. The tenants also believed that the council should build above Parker-Morris standards - rather than to Parker-Morris standards. In fact, the council was simultaneously being taken to task by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government for building to too high a standard and being pressed to reduce the level of specification and consequently building costs. The tenants did however point out that other local authorities built to the same standards and charged much lower rents. The tenants claimed that only 1,200 units on Leigh Park out of 8,000 units built were to Parker-Morris standards. The proportionate figure for the city and Paulsgrove, at best, they claimed, would be only equal to the proportion on Leigh Park. They claimed that the rent was based on Parker-Morris standards and yet the dwellings were below that standard. However, as further contradiction, they stated that the council should not build to standards which could not be afforded by the tenants. (Tenants Association Report presented to Joint Consultative Body of P.H.C. 8 September 1965).

The members agreed that there was a need to strengthen the consultation procedure and modifications were included in the new committee structure being determined at that time. Hence the activity amongst the tenants. In October 1966 the housing committee decided to appoint a public relations officer and publish a newsheet in order to help tenants to be informed of policy changes. (P.H.C. October 1966). The disregard given to the Joint Consultative Body by Portsmouth City Housing Committee is indicated by the fact that

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although it should have met every three months, its meetings were not regular and in January 1968 it met after a ten month interval. Many complaints were raised which the Housing Director was unable to deal with. The Housing Director was upset at the criticism leveled at his staff and himself in the local press by the tenants representatives, and stated that it was affecting staff morale. (Meeting of Joint Consultative Committee P.H.C. 31st January 1968). In September 1971 a deputation from the Leigh Park Tenants' Association - the most vociferous of the tenants' organisations attempted to obtain co-opted membership for their representatives on the housing committee. This was rejected by the housing committee members. (P.H.C. September 1971).

Political pressure of an alternative kind was placed upon the Portsmouth City Housing Committee when the Lord Mayor and Mr Frank Judd M.P. visited the Portsea area and inspected the conditions under which the tenants of the local authority were living. Mr Judd had received numerous letters from tenants complaining that repairs were not being carried out, and he was particularly concerned about the continued use of a "totter stores" at the rear of a block of flats. The Lord Mayor and Mr Judd considered that the problems at Portsea were so serious that they should be investigated by a special committee, not necessarily composed of representatives of the Housing Committee, with a view to immediate action being taken to alleviate the conditions and to deal with the numerous complaints. (Report of Director of Housing P.H.C. November 1969). The Housing Director stated that many

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improvements had taken place since 1960 and he could not understand such phrases as "cynical neglect" and "tolerated". He said the environment had changed, but a need of change of attitudes was called for. "Totters" were a nuisance, but were "traditional" in Portsea. Complaints of vermin infestation were attributed by the Housing Director to the tenants' "habits".

A comparison can be made between the problems in Portsea, and problems which arose at Exeter House in Derby. Exeter House was built by the river in the town centre in the mid 1930's. For many years it was neglected by the council, to the extent that all of the tenants had to be rehoused and then the housing committee was faced with the choice of either gutting the building or demolishing it. They chose to gut the building and let the flats only to young married couples without children. The raising of the quality of the accommodation combined with a revised letting policy improved not only the flats themselves but also the vicinity in which they were located.

Pressure of a economic kind was also experienced by Portsmouth Housing Committee and this was reflected in a memorandum sent to Portsmouth City Housing Committee from the Portsmouth Builders' Association which stated that they felt that official pressure was being exerted for high rise flats, and they felt that high rise flats were not the only way to achieve high densities. (Memorandum from Portsmouth Builder's Association to P.H.C. dated 10th January 1966). This pressure was renewed in 1968 when representatives of the

National Federation of Building Trade Employers and Portsmouth Builders' Association formed a deputation and addressed the council campaigning for building contracts to be let to local builders where practical rather than national contractors. In giving contracts to national contractors, the council had been following Ministry guidance, since more competitive prices could be negotiated, the Ministry felt. The council decided to consider tenders therefore from local contractors for the Buckland redevelopment scheme, provided that they were prepared to tender on exactly the same basis as the national contractors. Such economic pressures did not arise in Derby, since the council throughout the period maintained a policy of construction being undertaken by a mixture of direct works (a policy not followed in Portsmouth for actual construction) national contractors and local building companies all competing on a tender basis, rather than the negotiated contract basis undertaken in Portsmouth.

ix) Still Different

The period 1964-1974 is an important one in post-war housing policy in England, because it was during this period that the Central Government turned its attention to the retention and improvement of the late 19th century properties and away from mass clearance programmes. The housing problems of the immediate post-war years had to varying degrees been "solved" and some slum clearance programmes could proceed. The sites when cleared, allowed for the development of high rise buildings in Portsmouth and it was in this period that Central Government via the Regional Officials of the

Ministry of Housing and Local Government actively encouraged local authorities to build upwards. In Portsmouth, despite its creation of large General Improvement Areas rather than clearance areas, the City Architect advocated high rise developments. His advocacy was accepted by the city council. By contrast in Derby, clearance programmes were carried out and it was not until 1977 that the first large General Improvement Area was created (St Lukes) - although smaller pilot schemes had been carried out previously. The new housing was built on greenfield sites, and the cleared areas were left desolate for a number of years. The housing committee in Derby only had one attempt at high rise building - Rivermead House - this proved unpopular with tenants and the housing committee, never very enthusiastic about high rise developments, nor the planning committee even less enthusiastic about high rise development, either residential or commercial, proceeded no further. Derby was however in the fortunate position of having suitable land made available in a neighbouring authorities' area, and did not have the pressure to have to build high. Neither though did it have professional advisers extolling the virtues of high rise development in their reports.

The period witnessed a move away from catering simply for families towards a recognition of the needs of the elderly by building one bedroom dwellings - even if it was brought about by a desire to release the large dwellings for others who could make better use of the accommodation. The role of housing associations was enhanced and recognition given by both authorities in their ability to cater

for special needs, but neither authority followed Bradford's example in relying on housing associations to be the sole provider of low cost housing. In Portsmouth the needs of "key-workers" continued to be recognised and this, as we have seen, resulted in resentment among the local population since they considered it to be an unfair policy. Divergence between Derby and Portsmouth occurred therefore even when both authorities were controlled by the same party, (Conservatives 1968-72) divergence in terms of policy outcomes - slum clearance, general improvement areas, high rise development, key workers and the role of housing associations.

## CHAPTER SEVEN      COMMON GOALS - DIFFERENT OUTPUTS

- i)    Assumptions and Approaches
  
  - ii)   Environmental Factors:-
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## CHAPTER SEVEN      COMMON GOAL - DIFFERENT OUTPUTS

i)      Assumptions and Approaches

The objective of this thesis has been to try to determine the extent to which party political factors, personal factors and professional factors have interacted with "needs" and "resources" to affect housing policy in Britain since 1945. The research problem has been one of attempting to determine whether party political activity and ideology influence the level and character of public housing in British cities - particularly Derby and Portsmouth. Also an attempt has been made to assess the relative impact of the actors involved at both the Central and Local government levels. The question posed is - are the policy outcomes purely the response to needs and resources available?

In the concluding chapter of this thesis we shall be examining whether or not party politics were relevant, whether or not in other words, political factors determined the policy outcomes. Do personal factors influence the policy outcomes through professional ambition or does the desire to establish a political career motivate a local politician in the pursuit of specific goals? Environmental factors such as population trends, land, and finance may likewise effect the policy outcomes. It might be suggested that the policy outcomes are a result of the interaction of the three factors rather than the action of just one.



Local government studies of the policy process and of policy outcomes are still few in number. There are some policy studies such as Hampton's study of Sheffield (1970), Dearlove's study of Kensington and Chelsea (1973) and Newton's study of Birmingham (1976). These studies have tended to concentrate on the policy process, whereas Newton and Sharpe (1984) question whether politics really matter in their study. Studies of policy outcomes have also been undertaken by social administrators such as J B Cullingworth and D V Donnison.

The school of British Local Government writing which has concentrated most on policy outcomes has been the quantitative studies. Such studies are undertaken by political scientists who have accepted the value of expenditure analysis as a method of policy analysis, learning no doubt from American studies such as those reviewed in Chapter One (Key et al) of this thesis.

Studies such as D Easton (1965) employ systems analysis (the model of environment, inputs, throughputs, outputs and feedback). Easton's notion is that aspects of the political process are a consequence of the environment and serve to translate factors of that environment into policy outputs. If, as suggested in Chapter One, Key and Lockard are re-examined then it may be possible to find grounds upon which to re-assess the relevance of political variables. From Key's analysis one would expect that party competition like other political variables would serve as an important explanatory factor for public policy outputs. Whilst this statement may seem trivially true, it leads to an important question "what kinds of

policy would party competition be important for?". The answer depends on what we believe to be politically significant questions - questions of the sort which appear to have been forgotten often in recent literature - who benefits from political organisation or lack of it? who benefits from policy outcomes? or perhaps more to the point who does not benefit? The answers to these questions, or suggested answers, combined with the influence on policy outcomes will form the basis of this chapter. The influences are both external and internal. I will also examine the effect of these influences on determining policy goals.

In a thesis based principally on case studies no universal "answers" are arrived at, but evidence may be gathered to support theories. In this concluding chapter therefore I shall comment on why, despite the differing political complexions of Portsmouth and Derby, their policies had some marked similarities, and yet in other respects marked divergences.

## ii) Environmental Factors

The environmental factors represent the input into the policy making process. They include housing need, the amount of suitable land available for development, the financial resources available to pay for any policy goals set, the employment base of the area, the demographic profile for the area and the relationship between the local authority and central government. These factors combine to give the background from which the actors involved determine the policy goals in what could be described as the conversion process

ie. the internal factors such as party, characteristics and personalities of councillors and the behaviour of pressure groups. The combination of the external and internal factors leads to the setting of policy goals and policy outputs.

a) Population Structure

Both cities have throughout the period had levels of population change, brought about by movements in the population away from the inner city areas to the periphery of their respective cities. Significant changes have occurred throughout the period (see Table 7.1). The movement in population to the peripheral areas has in both instances been brought about by the insufficient supply of suitable land for development within the boundaries of the two cities. Both local authorities through their own housing policies, that of building in neighbouring areas, contributed to the decline of their own populations - although in reality they had little alternative.

Slum clearance programmes also contributed to movements in the populations of the two cities. Derby Town Council waited until slum clearance became a national policy in 1956, before restarting the slum clearance programmes in 1956 which had been left off at the beginning of World War Two. Those displaced by the slum clearance schemes were in the main rehoused in new housing estates on the periphery of the town. In Portsmouth, as we shall see later in this chapter, the city council maximised the use of land vacated by slum clearance programmes and this stemmed to a large extent the "council induced" drift in the population into the neighbouring parts of South Hampshire.

Table 7.1      Populations of Derby and Portsmouth

<u>Year</u>	<u>Derby</u>	<u>Portsmouth</u>
1945	N/A	N/A
1946	132,760	155,860
1947	132,520	179,240
1948	136,480	197,680
1949	140,950	213,430
1950	141,800	216,200
1951	143,520	240,550
1952	143,430	240,020
1953	138,700	242,600
1954	139,000	243,100
1955	139,600	243,600
1956	139,300	238,700
1957	137,500	231,100
1958	135,500	226,900
1959	133,900	222,800
1960	132,500	220,500
1961	131,700	220,400
1962	131,500	220,300
1963	131,910	226,670
1964	131,630	224,900
1965	130,030	221,470
1966	129,190	216,280
1967	128,400	217,800
1968	*216,400	219,100
1969	221,300	218,800
1970	221,200	214,800
1971	219,300	204,300
1972	219,900	207,000
1973	217,900	200,400
1974	217,900	200,400

Source: Office of Census of Population Statistics (HMSO)

Notes: \* Extension of County Borough boundaries occurred on  
1 April 1968

Population figures for 1945 not published

The population "trends" in Portsmouth were disturbed in the early part of the period under review by the number of naval personnel from other parts of Britain meeting and marrying local girls and deciding to settle in Portsmouth thus adding to the pressure for housing. In Derby, a significant number of families moved into the town in order to take up employment with one of the main employers, particularly Rolls Royce Ltd and British Rail. The majority of those moving into the town however were in a position to be able to purchase their own home and superficially at least did not add to the demand for local authority accommodation in the way in which the former naval personnel in Portsmouth did, since they were in higher income brackets. However, there was a feeling in Derby, when British Rail opened their research facilities and moved their research scientists to Derby from Eastleigh and Marylebone in 1967, that house prices escalated as a result of the influx of individuals who were used to the high costs of housing in the Home Counties of Hampshire. The properties they bought tended to be in the middle to upper price ranges, and it was the developers of the then new estates of 4 bedroomed detached houses who met the demand and not the local authority. Indirectly though such an influx of higher income groups would and did have a spillover effect on the whole of the local property market.

Movements in the population have clearly affected the housing policies of the two authorities, albeit in different ways. A further demographic trend which the local authorities have had to take into account is the fact that Britain has an ageing population. The age

structure of the population will, or should at least, help to determine the "mix" of properties being developed and this reflected, as we shall see later in this chapter, and as we have seen in the case study, in policy outcomes, in the move away from building traditional three bedroomed properties to building one bedroomed accommodation for elderly people. The needs of the elderly, as has been highlighted in the case study tended to be ignored; this may have been because of the natural desire to house families first.

b) Land

There has always been a wide disparity in the availability of building land between Derby and Portsmouth. The geography of the two cities has much to do with this. Derby is a town surrounded by open countryside, which is easy to develop, and which the neighbouring local authorities were pleased to see developed. Many large private estates as well as local authority estates such as Breadsall, were developed on the outskirts of Derby (in what until April 1968 was part of the County of Derbyshire) especially from the late 1950's onwards. The price of building land and the cost of new houses was comparatively modest when compared with many of the neighbouring conurbations such as Birmingham, Nottingham and Wolverhampton.

In Portsmouth, development land was in less plentiful supply. The original part of the city and its suburbs were built on Portsea Island. A natural physical constraint therefore existed. The

housing authority had to build up to nine miles from the city centre in order to obtain land. Property prices were much higher, and this placed a greater pressure on the local authority, since fewer people were able to buy their own house. Private estates have been developed inland from Portsmouth in areas such as Horndean and Cowplain, some 6 or 7 miles from the city centre. Local Authority houses were also built at similar distances from Portsmouth City Centre in South Hampshire at Leigh Park and Wecock Farm. The shortage of suitable land for new housing schemes created a pressure on the policy-makers in Portsmouth and as we have seen in the case study, they moved away from traditional housing to high rise accommodation. Portsmouth City Council also adopted a policy which allowed for the maximisation of land use which had become vacant as a result of urban renewal programmes. Even though objectively high rise development does not save land, it was assumed to do so at the time. The policy was undertaken in two ways. Firstly, the land which became vacant was redeveloped as soon as it became vacant, the clearance programmes being part of the total redevelopment and rehousing programme. Secondly, much of the land cleared was used for high density housing schemes, not just tower blocks, but also low and medium rise units of accommodation. The mix of styles of accommodation was very much in line with the desires of Central Government in the late 1950's and the 1960's and can be witnessed in the public sector housing programmes of many authorities in Britain. In this sense, Derby was the diverging authority with its wish to continue providing traditional styles of housing. The environmental factor of land had thus a differential impact between Portsmouth and Derby.

c) Employment Base

Both Derby and Portsmouth have industries which during World War Two were of strategic importance. In Derby, Rolls Royce Ltd were and still are the major employers. They are manufacturers of not just aero engines, but also marine engines and generators. The industrial base of Derby though is widely spread and for this reason the town has never felt the pressures of economic cycles to the extent of say the West Midlands or the North of England. The town is not overdependent upon Rolls Royce Ltd. Derby has become an important railway centre, being the headquarters of the former Midland Railway, a town with significant textile and chemical industries such as Courtaulds PLC; and a town of light engineering companies and foundaries such as Birmid-Qualcart PLC and Leys PLC. The town was transformed between 1840 and 1900 from being a market town to an industrial centre. The slums of Derby were basically the product of this rapid expansion.

The employment base of Portsmouth at the beginning of the period reviewed by this thesis - 1945, was not diversified to the extent that it was in Derby. Portsmouth City Council, and in particular the Reconstruction Sub-Committee set up in 1942 to prepare for the immediate post war years believed that the industrial base was too narrow. The city was heavily dependent upon the Naval Dockyards and allied firms such as ship repairers and electronics companies specialising in navigational aids. The city council therefore decided to introduce a policy which would lead to the broadening of the industrial base of the city. In order to further this aim



the city council decided to introduce a policy of housing keyworkers as a way of inducing employers to move into the area, as well as making land (a very scarce resource in Portsmouth) available for industrial purposes. Thus the environmental factor of employment was different in its impact on the two cities.

d) Housing Needs

It may be contended that the major concern both nationally and at the local level in such towns as Portsmouth and Derby in post war years has been to provide inexpensive accommodation of an acceptable standard for families. With the "baby booms" of 1946-48 the need nationally was for accommodation for families. The question which needs to be put is whether housing need was of the same order to both Derby and Portsmouth? The answer must be fundamentally yes; they both experienced the damage to their existing housing stock during World War Two. Both cities were of strategic importance. Portsmouth being an important naval base facing the English Channel, Derby a centre of aircraft manufacture. Enemy action left both authorities with serious housing problems to face in 1945. Moreover, there was of course a standstill in house construction during the war. In both cities the serious accommodation shortages soon became apparent as citizens applied to have their names entered on the waiting list. There were 11,000 families registered on the list in Portsmouth (PHC December 1945) and 2,814 in Derby (DHC December 1945). It is worth noting that the waiting list increased significantly in Derby, but in Portsmouth, because of a decision taken in June 1946, by the Portsmouth City Council, to exclude from

the housing waiting list naval personnel who had married local girls, and to apply strict conditions regarding residential status, to the extent that living in a naval garrison excluded applicants from the housing register, the waiting list numbers started to decline. It might be suggested that the needs in both cities were similar.

Both authorities saw the basic need as being one of housing families, and this need was met initially by both authorities in a similar manner; that of building traditional three bedroomed accommodation. Further reference to this similarity of policy will be made later in this chapter.

Up to the late 1950's little attention was paid to the needs of the elderly. The building of accommodation suitable for the old can release housing stock which is probably not used to its fullest advantage. Likewise the building of accommodation for single persons has been neglected. Derby, at the end of the period covered by this thesis - March 1974 had 929 persons over the age of 67 registered as in need of single accommodation or one bedroomed accommodation. In addition there were 930 persons under the age of 67 registered as benefitting from such accommodation and of course an unknown number unregistered.

By March 1974, Derby possessed a total of 1,938 single/one bedroom dwellings, which means that there were approximately two applicants for each dwelling. The situation was a little easier in Portsmouth, since many of the high rise developments incorporated bedsit and/or one bedroom flats within their design.

Urban renewal added a further dimension to housing need for the policy makers in both cities. Urban Renewal programmes in post war Britain did not really gather momentum until the mid 1950's when in 1956 a White Paper was published indicating that the Conservative Government was becoming concerned about the removal of slums from provincial towns.

In Derby, the majority of those requiring to be rehoused as a result of the slum clearance programmes, were rehoused on the new estates on the periphery of the town. Derby Town Council as we saw in Chapter 5 of this thesis preempted national policy, restarting the planning and evaluation of the housing stock before slum clearance became a national policy again, having been discontinued at the beginning of World War Two.

The impetus to recommence slum clearance came from Central Government in the form of the White Paper of 1956 mentioned above. By that time, the town council had already identified the fact that Derby had some of the worst slums in the Midlands. A need for slum clearance existed and yet it was not quickly satisfied - plans had to await Central Government approval. Of course a need also existed for houses for people living in overcrowded conditions and the attitude of both the Council and Central Government was that any home was better than none. A pent up housing need existed. In September 1955, the Medical Officer of Health for Derby (as opposed to the City Development Officer in Portsmouth) produced a slum clearance report. This report indicated that 1,500 houses were unfit for human habitation. Under section 9 of the 1954 Act, 150 dwellings could

be patch repaired, and retained for five years and 750 were in areas still to be declared slum clearance areas. Derby Town Council decided that 600 houses should be demolished over the next five years and a report was submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government together with an application to extend the housing programme for the year. In 1956 the Ministry requested that the slum clearance period should be reduced to five years in view of the ending of the system of housing allocations - here we see Central Government influencing a local authority to speed up the implementation of a policy.

In Portsmouth too, many of the slums had been cleared. Isolated areas of slum properties were cleared as early as 1948 as part of the redevelopment programme for Commercial Road. As we shall see later in this chapter, the incorporation of slum clearance and redevelopment in Portsmouth became a major feature of the City Council's policy.

A modest start was made to the slum clearance programme for Portsmouth in April 1954. In November 1954, the City Development Officer produced a report on slum clearance stating that the City's housing list had in excess of 15,000 applicants. Of this figure, he estimated 1/3rd could be thought to be in real need of housing, and that it was desired to deal with this need over five years, then 1,000 houses a year just for this purpose would be required, leaving very little margin for rehousing families from slum areas. The City Architect estimated 1800 completions in 1954, 1500 in 1955 and 1200 per annum thereafter. A further need was generated by the urgency

of rehousing 159 families still in "temporary" accommodation at Bedhampton. These families were living in converted army hutments and their living conditions were described in an internal report in November 1954 as "squalid". The City Development Officer stated that it would not be possible to embark upon a large scale slum clearance programme at that time unless the number of dwellings allocated to applicants was reduced. He suggested a demolition rate of 100 during 1956, 200 in 1957, 300 in 1958 and thereafter 400 a year, giving a target of 7,000 houses to be demolished - a much more ambitious programme than Derby's.

It is difficult to assess whether the full housing need is known, whether it be for single person accommodation or family accommodation. Analysis of the waiting lists for accommodation may give some answers, but invariably it cannot give them all, for not all will have registered. For instance, many of the people registered for accommodation in the immediate post-war years were not ultimately accommodated within the public sector. Today many young couples use the housing authority waiting lists as an insurance policy; that is they register for local authority accommodation until they have purchased their first home. The waiting list figures may also be inaccurate because people have not registered for accommodation and yet live in overcrowded conditions.

Many similarities existed between the housing needs of both Derby and Portsmouth. Both experienced enemy action during World War Two; this brought about damage to the housing stock and this led to

overcrowding in the remaining houses and to the construction of "temporary" accommodation. Both cities had similar sized populations, both cities experienced the "baby bulge" of 1946-48, and the return of servicemen to civilian life in the same period. These similar needs, combined with government policy, brought about a policy of housing families, and building family accommodation by both authorities, since this was the most urgent need identified not only by both authorities, but also nationally. A preoccupation developed with the housing of families at the expense of adequate infra-structure, and also at the expense of other groups - families had been identified as the target group in most need. It was not until the early 1960's that groups such as the elderly and the single were identified as in need also.

<u>Table 7.2      Housing Stock in Derby and Portsmouth</u>		
		<u>Units of Accommodation Completed as at 31 March</u>
<u>Year</u>	<u>Derby</u>	<u>Portsmouth</u>
1945	6,852	3,259
1946	7,340	4,049
1947	7,921	5,181
1948	8,358	6,953
1949	8,771	7,234
1950	9,274	7,581
1951	9,348	7,993
1952	9,976	8,346
1953	10,696	8,916
1954	11,420	10,120
1955	12,489	11,619
1956	12,948	13,347
1957	13,692	14,550
1958	14,397	15,303
1959	14,968	16,338
1960	15,645	16,774
1961	15,901	17,104
1962	16,140	17,420
1963	16,358	17,753
1964	16,558	18,441
1965	16,913	19,367
1966	17,146	20,599
1967	17,230	21,700
1968	17,774	22,586
1969	18,288	23,251
1970	18,469	23,367
1971	18,654	23,570
1972	18,865	23,793
1973	19,139	24,488
1974	19,219	24,738

Source: 1945-1968 Housing Statistics (IMTA)  
1969-1974 Local Housing Statistics (HMSO)

e) Financial Resources

The financing of new housing was discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis. The properties built by both authorities with the approval of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government automatically qualified for loan sanction approval and the repayment of the loan over a period of 60 years. Neither authority in the period under review resorted to other forms of financing developments. Both authorities had policies which could be best described as grant maximisation and designed their housing schemes so as to maximise the grant available. This has been reflected in the policy outcomes of both authorities.

Table 7.3      Gross Rateable Values and Rateable Value per Capita  
for Derby and Portsmouth 1946-1974

	DERBY		PORTSMOUTH	
	RV per	Gross Rateable	RV per	Gross Rateable
	capita	Value	capita	Value
	£	£	£	£
*1946	8.33	1,106,256	10.76	1,679,067
1950	7.13	1,023,536	8.54	1,845,158
1955	7.22	1,083,538	8.07	1,960,523
1960	15.95	2,112,505	19.05	4,191,635
1965	50.96	6,626,156	41.69	9,215,016
1970	46.84	10,352,123	47.57	10,181,719
1974	123.62	26,949,663	118.48	23,792,779

Source: Annual Local Government Rating Returns

\* Data not available for 1945



The specifications of each particular type of property were such as to attract maximum grants. Nevertheless, Derby could have obtained more grant aid by high rise buildings.

f) Central Government

Central Government's initial post war housing policy was for high quality family houses to be built by local authorities. The first cutbacks came however in 1948 because of a shortage of building materials; and from then on, questionably the concern became more for quantity rather than quality. In 1951, the Conservative party in their election manifesto set the policy objective of building 300,000 dwellings a year, and in 1952 this target was achieved by expanding the level of local authority house building. As we have already seen, it was not until 1955 that Central Government gave the initiative for slum clearance to recommence in earnest. This was possibly because of the intense overcrowding which existed in the immediate post war years, and the belief that a roof over one's head of any kind was better than none. In 1957 the private rented sector was decontrolled by the 1957 Rent Act. This had the effect of driving some people who could not afford higher rents from the private sector, and put a greater burden on the local authorities for the provision of rented accommodation. This increased demand was to a great extent met by the development of high rise accommodation in the 1960's, and by the retention of older properties and rehabilitation of inner city areas as Housing Action Areas and General Improvement Areas, rather than by wholesale clearance of such areas. In the 1960's the needs of groups other than families started

to be recognised, and Central Government started to encourage local authorities and housing associations to build purpose built accommodation for the elderly, single parent families and single people.

Both local authorities, like all other authorities were subject to the same overall objectives of Central Government policy. The question may be fairly put though - were both authorities treated the same by Central Government? This is a difficult but important question to answer. From the case-study, it is apparent that initially both authorities were treated in the same way. The Central Government priority was the housing of those in need as quickly as possible. Both authorities built "temporary" accommodation and they were both actively encouraged by Central Government. It is however apparent from the case-study that with the change to a Conservative government in 1951, Conservative controlled Portsmouth was favoured with a disproportionate allocation of housing finance for new units of accommodation in the boost to public sector housing in 1952/54. Likewise, because Portsmouth City Council was willing to build high rise accommodation, it appears again that the authority was treated more favourably than authorities such as Derby which decided not to follow a policy of high rise developments. Possibly the two authorities were treated differently because of the differing availability of land. John Stewart (Local Government: The Conditions of Local Choice 1983) believes that Central Government is a boundary institution, which influences all local authorities; however the influence need not necessarily be in accordance with the

intentions of Central Government. Neither need the relationship between authorities be identical, and this is apparent within the case-study section of this thesis.

### iii) Internal Factors

The internal factors represent the conversion process within a systems model. The internal factors include such issues as the party situation, the nature of the councillors in terms of age and occupational background, their personalities, and that of the officers, the relationship between the councillors and officers and the role of pressure groups. These factors combine to convert the inputs into the outputs - in the case of this research, housing policy.

#### a) Party Situation and Ideology

In the period 1945-74 the political control of both Derby and Portsmouth was remarkably stable. The council in Derby was controlled throughout the period by the Labour group, with the exception of the period May 1968 to May 1972. The Conservative group took control, for these four years after elections had been held for an entirely new council following the extension of the county borough's boundaries resulting from a Boundary Commission report in 1965. In Portsmouth, control of the authority remained with the Conservatives throughout the period covered by this thesis.

At the Central Government level, the Labour party formed the first post war government and remained in office until 1951. From 1951 to 1964 the Conservative party were in power. In 1964 the Labour

party returned to office, remaining until 1970, when the Conservatives regained control until February 1974, and effectively the end of the period covered by this thesis.

The political ideologies of the two authorities were at variance with one another, even in the immediate post-war years. As we have witnessed in the case-study, early as March 1948 Portsmouth Housing Committee had decided to build properties to a standard, such that they could be sold off at some future date. This was at a time of acute shortage of accommodation and building materials. The standards they built to were such that they exceeded the Ministry's housing cost yardstick. Their policy reflects the underlying Conservative ideology of home ownership. At the same time moves were made to commence the keyworker policy and this policy also reflects a differing attitude to housing, since the authority saw new housing as a way of generating economic activity and attracting new industries to the Portsmouth area.

In Derby, the Labour controlled authority saw their remit as being one of providing roofs over heads. The councillors saw housing as an essential service, an extension of their social service provision.

Both authorities followed the Central Government's desire to house families first, and hence the extensive programmes in both cities to build traditional three bedroomed houses. As the housing situation eased in post war Britain, so the ideologies became more apparent.

b) Leading Personalities on the Councils

Naturally the personalities and values of the councillors and senior officers influenced the policy outputs in both Derby and Portsmouth. As early as March 1948 some members of Portsmouth Housing Committee were expressing views that council houses should be built to such a standard that they could be sold. The City Council in Portsmouth has throughout the period under review been dominated by the proprietors of small businesses with the values of such people being reflected in policies like the sale of council houses and economic rents. They also had a strong belief in self help, hence the City Council has always viewed favourably assistance to self build groups and housing associations. The two most influential councillors on Portsmouth's housing policy were Councillors Miles (a dairy farmer) and Day (a builder). They were respectively Chairman and Vice Chairman of the City Housing Committee and formed a "partnership" which spanned the period 1946-1963. They were both amenable to new ideas, and were both keen to see Portsmouth established as a major city on the South Coast. They took particular note of the City Architect's comments (Mr Mellor) and he in turn had a good working relationship with the government's Regional Director. In a recent interview Mr Miles, who is now aged 83, said that he thought he had been too receptive to new ideas and regretted the style of development of the Paulsgrove estate, and the building of Portsdown Hill, but he was of course using hindsight and the pressures at the time for housing were extreme.

In Derby, by contrast, the Town Council was made up primarily of councillors with an industrial or engineering background. The

majority of the Labour councillors were employed by either Rolls Royce Ltd or British Railways as one might expect, since they are the dominant employers in the town. There were a few Labour councillors who had a professional background. As far as housing policy in Derby is concerned, the town was fortunate to have a highly articulate solicitor as Housing Committee chairman, Alderman Flint, now deceased. He could put forward good reasons as to why his town should be allowed to develop rapidly when resources were scarce, and was chairman of the Housing Committee from 1945 to 1968. The Housing Committee pursued a policy of traditional housing, the majority of the councillors do not appear to have been receptive to new housing ideas, but believed in traditional 3 bedroomed semis using traditional methods of construction, rather than for instance system building methods. With hindsight, it would appear that their caution was sensible.

c) Influential Officials

The interpersonal skills of officials should not be underestimated in the policy making process. The relationships between officials and members are of utmost importance, but of equal importance is the relationship between local officials and regional officials. Portsmouth benefitted from the excellent working relationship which existed between the City Architect and the Regional Director for Housing employed by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. This relationship appears to have smoothed the path for some of the more adventurous housing schemes, particularly the development of high rise accommodation in the 1950's and 1960's. The Regional

Director appears to have been keen to promote high rise developments, the City Architect was equally keen to see "his city" at the forefront of what was then considered modern architecture and the Councillors appeared to be keen on "status symbol architecture" to prove themselves as leading a major city on the South Coast. Their rivalry with Southampton may have "jelled" these factors together.

The City Treasurer (A R Thompson) was initially an influential figure on housing in Portsmouth. The Housing Department was in the immediate post war period a sub division of the City Treasurer's department.

The City Treasurer, as one might expect, was in fact more cost conscious than the City Architect and intense rivalry developed between the two officials. This rivalry culminated in the creation of a separate Housing Department in 1957. Even when the Housing Director was appointed, the City Treasurer still exercised considerable influence over the council's rent policy. He was a firm believer in the principle of Economic Rents, and such rents have always been charged by Portsmouth City Council. The City Treasurer was also a firm believer in the sale of council houses, but took a more cautious view than the councillors would have wished when granting mortgages. The Housing Director had less influence on actual policy than his position might have justified. The Housing Director (Mr Dant) appears to have been more keen to introduce fortnightly payments of rents and create distinct housing offices than to have become concerned with the issues of Economic Rent and the sale of council houses.

The working relationship between the City Architect and the Regional Director defused the professional jealousies between the City Architect, the Housing Director, the City Treasurer and the City Development Officer. They tended to defer to his rulings. The City Architect was able to win council support on more occasions than the other three senior officials.

In Derby, the rivalry was between the Borough Architect (Mr Richardson) and the Borough Surveyor (Mr Penny) - the Borough Surveyor being responsible for the road layouts on the Housing Estates rather than the Architect. The Borough Surveyor's powers in Derby seemed to go beyond what one would have expected to encompass suggestions in housing schemes. Much of the layout of the Mackworth Estate was his department's work, rather than the Borough Architect's. In both authorities the Housing Directors appear to have been very much the poor relation of the other chief officers. This however has changed in Derby in recent years, as the present City Secretary, is a former Housing Director. This change has occurred since 1974. Mr Fludd was appointed Housing Director in 1974, and City Secretary in 1980. The other influential officials in Derby both held the position of City Development Officer: Mr W Thompson - who left to set up a thriving estate agency, and Mr J Brass, who is still in post, and had had considerable impact on the towns development. Both however, have always been more concerned with commercial developments than housing, although the designation of land use has always been within the remit of the post of City Development Officer. In Derby, the City Architect has always been of less importance than in Portsmouth.



It would appear that in the immediate post war period the ability and outlook of the chief officers and their respective chairmen and their working relationships were the principal determinants of the local authority housing policies rather than local party political ideology. In this period local authorities were catering for urgent needs which had to be met expeditiously and ideology was often a secondary consideration. The Central Government provided much of the finance and the policy guidelines, the local authorities kept within them, only making adjustments to cater for local needs. The officials gave their advice from their professional standpoint and the councillors tended to accept it. Both cities are examples of the Joint Elite model, that is leading councillors and leading officials joining together to form policy. Wilson and Greenwood (1984) believe that it is necessary to take into account inter and intra department relations, and their effect on the policy making process. In Derby, the relationship between the Architect's department and the Surveyor's department was at times strained. The documentary evidence confirms that the Borough Surveyor was the more influential official. In Portsmouth, the rivalry was, as discussed above between the Architect's department and the Treasurer's department initially. The intra department relationships are much more difficult to determine, since they depend on the personalities of the individuals concerned and their inter personal skills. However, tensions clearly existed on an intra departmental plane, when Housing was a section within the City Treasurer's department and this was one of the reasons for the creation of a separate Housing department in 1957, and for the appointment of a Housing Director.

Wilson and Greenwood pose an interesting view in stating that they feel local politics needs to be seen as a series of shifting alliances, varying over time and from issue to issue. To distinguish too sharply between officers and councillors is frequently to distort reality. There is the belief that senior elected and non-elected personnel might be dominant in some authorities on some issues, but as they state, this is only one possible alliance; second tier officers and party activists might combine effectively in other policy areas - the permutations are infinite.

Laffin and Young (1985) in their paper on the Changing Roles and Responsibilities of Local Authority Chief Officers take the analysis one stage further. They state that structural and organisational changes in local government have also contributed to growing member assertiveness and political polarization. Certainly officers at both junior and senior levels, are finding it increasingly difficult to gain the professional satisfactions for which they originally entered local government. Tensions in the member-officer relationship were eased as long as there was growth. Continuing growth reduced the necessity of facing up to the opportunity costs. This is clearly the case in the period covered by this thesis. However since the onset of economic restraints on local government tensions have developed in a number of local authorities between chief officers, and also between chief officers and members. Changes in the economic climate are not the sole reason for changes in the relationship between member and officers, and between officers. The new generation of elected members are more highly estimated than earlier generations, less differential and likely to be more sceptical of professional

advice. At the same time Laffin and Young suggest, the management aspects of the chief officer's job have changed. Staff have become more difficult to handle, as the new generation of officers joining local government is also better educated and more assertive, like their member counterparts, and as financial restraint has affected their jobs. The educational level of younger officers is now very high following the increased graduate entry into local government and one could go further than Laffin and Young and suggest that managerial style will have to adapt to the frustrations of young professionals feeling frustrated at seeing their career prospect evaporate through economic circumstances, or being thwarted by less qualified, but older and more senior staff, who see the young staff as a threat, and react accordingly. Clearly, a part of this growing discontent among young professional staff, is the increase in trade unionism and the trade unions have become more assertive. They have come to challenge and demand participation in decisions that were formerly the prerogative of management. Laffin and Young suggest that this has raised particular problems for chief officers in those authorities, usually Labour-controlled, where the unions have a close informal relationship with the elected members.

In some local authorities Laffin and Young suggest that junior officers sometimes hold quite prominent positions in a local political party, and they cite the example of a senior housing official in one housing department who was also the secretary of the Constituency Labour Party. This means that some officers can exercise considerable influence behind the scenes, pursuing an internal bureaucratic battle or pushing for a favoured policy: Laffin and

Young believe that such situations are more likely in Labour controlled authorities than Conservative controlled authorities. Little evidence was found in Derby or Portsmouth to substantiate their claims, although if the researched period had covered the onset of the cutbacks in local government programme, supporting evidence may have become apparent.

In recent years there has been a growing trend towards full-time council leaders, this is discussed in this thesis, it is likely to lead to a conflict between the professional official and the chairmen, since the chairmen may overstep the boundaries of their roles as chairmen and become too involved in the administration of the department and gain regular access to members of staff below chief officer level.

Malpass and Murie (1982) make the point that there are opportunities for lower-level officials to assert their views. Clearly, chief officers are dependent upon the flow of information upwards through the department hierarchy. This would be especially true in large authorities such as Derby and Portsmouth where the chief housing officer, was in both instances responsible for in excess of 20,000 dwellings and each had a staff in excess of 400. In both cities, the chief officer would and does have to rely on his subordinates to keep him briefed on the current situation. The development in more recent years of research and policy units by both authorities has institutionalised a policy role for certain officers below the top levels.

This thesis reinforces Malpass's (1979) view that each occupational group has its view of the world, usually based on a fairly coherent

professional value system, and so the lines of conflict and co-operation are quite clearly drawn and known in advance. In order to preserve its ability to cope with everyday problems which it faces and to pursue its longer term objectives each group promotes its preferred versions of the facts.

Recent research has attempted to evaluate not just the role of chief officers but also the influence of junior officers on policy implementation through the information network, through trade unionism, through political contacts and through professionalism.

Networks and alliances vary enormously, but one conclusion is clear: there is far more to local authority decision-making than simply the officer-councillor dimension. The detailed analysis of this thesis I feel illustrates this factor well and confirms the conclusions of Wilson and Greenwood; Laffin and Young; and Malpass and Murie.

d) Pressure Points

Tenant's Associations in both Derby and Portsmouth have proved to be vocal at times over firstly overcrowding and secondly rent policy.

Both Derby and Portsmouth acquired "temporary housing" in the period 1946-47 in order to alleviate their acute housing problems.

Temporary housing was provided in Derby at Markeaton Park and within Markeaton Hall. The accommodation was in former army buildings, and was extremely basic; the dividing partitions between units of accommodation not being constructed to the ceiling. This led to

a lack of privacy, to many complaints from tenants, and to a very active pressure group being founded. The site lacked basic facilities and the tenants petitioned the Council House in Derby regarding the living conditions. The pressure they brought to bear, particularly in the summer of 1951 led to improvements being made to the communal areas and a temporary shop being opened by the Derby Co-operative Society. However further pressure was applied via a public meeting in 1953 and through the local press and the site was abandoned in 1953. Some tenants had been there for six years and felt they had been forgotten. Pressure by the tenants' association embarrassed the City Housing Committee into rehousing the tenants sooner than had been originally planned.

Portsmouth City Housing Committee had a similar experience with their tenants with regard to the Bedhampton Camp. This camp, as we saw in Chapter Four of this thesis, was prone to flooding and the tenants objected to the isolated location of the camp, and the lack of private basic facilities. The Housing Committee, under pressure from the Residents Association made a special visit to the camp to see the conditions for themselves, in March 1954. Some members of the Housing Committee were appalled at the living conditions the tenants had to endure. As a result of the visit some of the temporary dwellings were demolished.

The Tenants' Associations were throughout the period reviewed in this thesis active as far as rent policy was concerned. Certainly the tenants had strong views on the level of rents in both Derby and Portsmouth.

In Derby the rents on similar sized properties were identical ie. 3 bedroomed semis were let out at the same rental irrespective of age or location. This led to bitterness amongst the tenants of pre-war properties who felt they were subsidising the tenants of post war properties. The council changed their rental policy in 1955 to reflect the different levels of specification of houses but not the location.

In Portsmouth the tenants' association became vocal on the issues of economic rents and keyworkers (discussed above). Under the chairmanship of the Rev Todd the tenants association made life difficult for the Portsmouth Housing Committee at times. They complained fiercely about two main issues, firstly the level of economic rents charged, and the procedure for obtaining rebate, and secondly the remoteness of some of the housing estates, particularly Leigh Park, where the Rev. Todd was a Church of England Minister. The Tenant's Association organised protests against the Portsmouth City Council's Housing programme particularly in the late 1960's and the 1970's and indeed up to the present day. The protests relate to the level of rents and the standard of maintenance. A joint consultative committee was set up in order to allow the Tenant's Association to air their views; this should have met at six monthly intervals, but as we saw in Chapter Six, the meeting pattern was not maintained and little regard was paid to the discussions. Certainly, Mr Dant, the Housing Director in the period covered by the case study, had little time for either the Tenant's Association or the Rev. Todd, whom he saw as a troublemaker and meddler.

The Tenants' Associations in both Derby and Portsmouth were at times, forces to be reckoned with. Like all successful pressure groups they knew how to organise the media - in both instances the local evening newspapers. Both publications appear to favour anti-local authority news and gave maximum coverage to issues raised by the Tenants' Association. In October 1970, Portsmouth City Council decided to increase rents by 15%, the Tenants' Associations in Portsmouth organised a series of protest marches, culminating in a march of some 20,000 tenants on 3 February 1971. This march was headed by Councillor Kelly (a Labour councillor on Portsmouth City Council) and Councillor G Bell (Labour leader of Havant UDC, and a tenant of Portsmouth City Council). The Rents rally turned into a party political platform and led to a split within the Tenants' Association, since the Rev. Todd decided to disassociate himself from the rally. The Rev. Todd believed that the way to influence Portsmouth City Council was by lobbying, and arranged a visit to see Mr R Mellish, the then Minister of Housing and Local Government. In a letter to the Portsmouth Evening News dated 9 February 1971, and also during a recent interview with the writer of this thesis, the Rev. Todd stated that he felt that the Tenant Association should have remained outside the political arena, but that only fools seek change outside the political arena, housing policy being determined by those in power. The "own goals" scored by the Tenants' Association weakened their position, although it led to considerable coverage of their views in the Portsmouth Evening News.

The Rev. Todd, when interviewed recently said that he felt that the Tenants Association was initially successful at Leigh Park because



there were many problems to be dealt with on the estate. These ranged from the lack of infra structure to the terminology of leaflets and letters sent out by the Housing Department, which he says were in a bureaucratic style not understood by most tenants. The main interest of most members of the Tenants Association was in keeping rent increases down. When the local authority wished to notify tenants of an increase it was always posted to them to arrive on a Saturday morning together with an eviction notice and a new tenancy agreement for the tenant to sign. The Rev. Todd said that such notifications upset tenants, who in the main were hard working people, who paid their rent when due. The Tenants' Association was formed to counter such bureaucracy. This view was countered by Mr Anthony Quail, a senior housing official, who when interviewed by the writer regarding Tenants' Associations gave a guarded answer stating that whilst the authority recognises them, the initiative to form them rests with the tenants, and that the infrequency of meetings of the joint consultative committee reflects the fact that there was little to discuss. This he believed is indicative that Portsmouth is a good landlord. Certainly Portsmouth has an impressive record in the upgrading of older properties and now (1985) has 25 declared General Improvement Areas within its boundaries. In addition considerable remedial structural work has been carried out on the High Rise developments and Deck Access developments discussed in this thesis. The opportunity has been taken when undertaking the structural work, to remodel and maximise the units of accommodation and also to improve them cosmetically. Considerable criticism has been made of the High Rise developments and the Portsdown development in recent years and Portsmouth Housing

department is clearly sensitive to comment, and has attempted to remedy the problems of the High Rise properties. Certainly local authorities - Derby and Portsmouth being no exception - react to adverse publicity quickly.

Pressure groups such as Trade Associations appear to have had more impact in Portsmouth than Derby, particularly the local Master Builders Federation, which managed to secure small parcels of land for development in the late 1940's when building materials were scarce and also managed to secure contacts for infill sites for the local authority. This contrasts sharply with the policy in Derby, where all such work was directed to the local authorities' own direct works labour force. Trade Union views had little impact on Portsmouth City Council. They totally ignored the AUEW opposition to the keyworker scheme, and the local trades council view that only companies employing apprentices as well as skilled tradesmen should be allowed to tender for building work. In Derby, failure to employ apprentice labour, and offer an apprentice training scheme automatically excluded a company from the list of approved contractors for tender. Whilst the pressure groups were sometimes noisy, they were not usually very influential.

iv) Goals and Outputs of Housing Policy

a) Policy Divergencies

Besides the differences we have noted in Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis relating to high rise, low rise and traditional housing - in other words the obvious physical differences in housing policy, other more subtle differences have occurred in the outputs of the two authorities. In this section I wish to turn our attention to the main areas of policy divergence - namely high rise developments, slum clearance, keyworkers, the sale of council houses and rents policy. Patrick Dunleavy (1980) believes that local policy-making seems to be primarily explicable in terms of quite general local government ideologies, reflecting general organisational interests rather than a process of implicit policy adjustment to the area or community served. He further argues that oligarchic local authority decision-making co-exists with extensive structured links between council leaderships and local interests and elite groups. These assertions of Dunleavy are not entirely borne out by the research within this thesis.

b) High Rise - Low Rise

We have seen in Chapters 5 and 6 the divergence in the policies of the two authorities with regard to high rise and low rise developments. This most obvious divergence in policy outcome between Derby and Portsmouth came with the move in Portsmouth away from a reliance upon traditional housing, for a variety of reasons. The Housing Committee in the mid 1950's was on the one hand faced with

an acute shortage of suitable land for development, and on the other with an acute housing problem. This confirms Dunleavy's assertion that the authorities with the most acute problems of slum clearance, dereliction and housing stress were forced to develop at high densities and to try to tackle their problems in situ. However, as we have seen in the text of this thesis, the relationship between Portsmouth City Council and its neighbouring authorities, particularly Havant and Waterlooville UDC were not all that they might have been, especially if compared with the relationship between Derby Town Council and its neighbouring authorities. Derby was encouraged by its neighbours to develop greenfield sites; Portsmouth was impeded from such developments. Additionally, both the Regional Housing Director and the City Architect for Portsmouth Housing Director and the City Architect for Portsmouth were keen to see high rise developments take place, mainly on land cleared of slums. Arguably, because the City Architect partly saw it as an interesting challenge, and partly because Central Government was keen to see a move away from traditional housing, in order to end what was becoming known as "urban sprawl".

In the 1960's sub-regional planning became the vogue. The sub-regional plans were in a way the forerunners to the county structure plans prepared in the 1970's. The major theme of the sub-regional plans for both the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and the South Hampshire sub-regions was the prevention of urban-sprawl.

Certainly the Central Government planners feared that a new conurbation would be developed if both Portsmouth and Southampton were allowed to develop "spillover" estates in South Hampshire. The resistance of both Hampshire County Council and Havant and Waterlooville UDC is easy to understand; they did not want to be swamped by their large neighbours. It may be suggested therefore that the pressure on land, combined with the advice given by the Regional Director and the City Architect to the city council brought about the instigation of a policy of non-traditional housing. The City Architect's views usually prevailed, and the local authority was encouraged by ready provision of government finance for non-traditional schemes as we have seen in the text. In Derby, the shortage of land was not so acute and it was therefore easier for the local authority to resist the pressures exerted by Central Government, and to keep to a policy of traditional housing. Also the City Engineer was less enthusiastic about non-traditional housing. However, fears of urban growth also existed in the East Midlands in the late 1960's, when it was felt that a large conurbation of Nottingham/Derby/Leicester might ultimately emerge. Certainly, the areas was undergoing rapid change at that time, with the building of the M1 motorway, Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station and the East Midlands Airport; all major projects in their own right, but projects which were all under construction simultaneously. In an attempt to prevent development of a Nottingham/Derby corridor Cowling and Steeley (1973) suggest that the Alfreton/Mansfield development zone was created astride the M1 motorway, to draw both industrial and domestic developments away from the two major centres

of industrial activity. Large industrial estates were created such as Clover Nook and Coates Park, with large private estates of low cost houses built nearby.

The Derby Planning Committee generally resisted proposals for high rise developments whether commercial or residential and, where it was permitted, set a limit of nine storeys on high rise developments. Derby's only experiment with high rise residential developments was the building of the Bath Street flats in 1965. This development was not particularly successful. The choice of site was rather bizarre - on the West Bank of the River Derwent near the town centre. This stretch of the river is prone to flooding, and the land had never been used for residential purposes before. Soon after the first tenants had taken up residence, the River Derwent burst its banks at a point near to the appropriately named Rivermead House, and flooded the ground floor flats. This needless to say led to resistance amongst prospective tenants, and the flats in the development became difficult to let. In 1967, the problem of letting flats in Rivermead House became so acute that the Housing Committee decided that if applicants for housing rejected the offer of accommodation in Rivermead House without just cause, they would be placed at the end of the waiting list. The Housing Committee became so disillusioned with the outcome of this development, that they decided to abandon plans for similar developments in the town, and the council's works department sold off the tower crane which they had used in the construction of the Bath Street flats. There had been as mentioned in Chapter 6 prior to the construction of the flats, vigorous debates between the housing and planning departments.

One might put the question "why was Portsmouth so willing to accept high rise developments?" Mr Quail feels that it was because it was "fashionable". But the research indicates that the reasons are much more complex than this. Pressure for land, as discussed above, must have been an important factor. The divergence however also reflects a differing attitude towards building methods which existed between the two authorities throughout the period reviewed by this thesis. In the immediate post war years Portsmouth willingly used "system built" housing methods and prefabrication methods, whereas in Derby such methods were viewed with suspicion. In the late 1950's Portsmouth was one of the authorities willing to pioneer high rise developments. The City Architect was keen to establish his city at the forefront of public sector housing, and presumably add Kudos to his professional reputation. The councillors in Portsmouth were full of civic pride and keen to see Portsmouth portrayed as a "modern city". They appear to have equated high rise developments with "progressiveness". The Portsdown Hill project reviewed in Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis is possibly the clearest example. As we saw in the text, Portsmouth City Council was keen to build a landmark and develop the full potential of the site. To run a competition for a design may however have been a little risky. Portsmouth City Council at times seemed to be obsessed with its rivalry with its near neighbour - Southampton, and possibly the councillors felt they lived in the shadow of Southampton and needed to make a mark.

Derby lives in the shadow of Nottingham, and rivalry exists. Derby's focus of attention in the late 1950's and 1960's was the East Midlands Airport. Originally Derby envisaged it as an upstaging

of Nottingham but ultimately it was developed on a joint basis with Nottingham City and County authorities, Leicester City and County authorities and Derbyshire County Council. The airport, and not housing was Derby's status project of the era. Derby Town Council was happy to pursue a "roofs over heads policy" and to build along traditional lines. In Derby only one tower block of flats was built - Bath Street (1965). This is probably due to the traditional views held by the councillors and their belief in building three bedroomed semi-detached houses on greenfield sites around the periphery of the town. In addition the Borough Architect was not the most influential official; instead it was the Borough Surveyor, W.G. Penny, a man of traditional ideas. Possibly the need was not so pressing, and so the traditional approach was deemed to be appropriate.

All the tower block developments were financed from central funds. Indeed one of the complaints of the present (1984) Portsmouth City Council is that it is exceeding the government imposed financial targets and therefore one of the eighteen authorities which are going to be "rate capped", because of the interest payments it is having to make on debts incurred in order to build the high rise apartment blocks, which it had been encouraged to build by central government.

c) Urban Renewal

Since the Central Government took the initiative in slum clearance, it could be suggested that local authorities have acted largely as an agent for the Central Government.



In Derby, the majority of those requiring to be rehoused as a result of the slum clearance programmes, were rehoused on the new estates on the periphery of the town - modern open plan estates of traditional housing. One might question whether the best use has been made of the land released by urban renewal. Unlike Portsmouth, where land was usually redeveloped immediately, often with high rise flats, in Derby it was left derelict for many years before an alternative use was made of it.

Derby Town Council waited until slum clearance became a national policy, before restarting the slum clearance programmes halted at the beginning of 1939, although preliminary surveys were undertaken prior to legislative changes. The initiative to recommence came from Central Government. This again is indicative of the "roofs over heads" policy of the Derby authority.

By contrast, Portsmouth's approach to urban renewal was innovative. For instance as early as 1958 the City Council declared areas of the city to be "improvement areas" with the intention of retaining the majority of the existing properties and refurbishing them and only removing the worst properties. This policy was one which indicates the scope of local initiative available to local authorities, and was a policy which was used as one of the models for the 1965 legislation introducing Housing Action Areas and General Improvement Areas. Considerable encouragement was given to Portsmouth in the development of the policy by Central Government. If we relate this to Rhodes's power-dependence model we can see that Portsmouth appears to have had considerable "power" to deploy and the government were "dependent" on . . . . . to advance their policy ideas.

d) Keyworkers

The keyworkers policy followed in Portsmouth in post war years represents a major divergence in policy when compared with the policy of housing individuals and families moving to Derby from other areas. In Derby, newcomers moving to the town had for most of the period covered by this thesis to be resident in the town for twelve months before they even became eligible to be registered on the housing waiting list. This contrasts sharply with the policy in Portsmouth. The Portsmouth City Council in its desire to attract new industry decided in 1948 to offer accommodation to those employees of incoming companies who could be identified as being essential to the starting up of the new enterprise in Portsmouth. The houses were allocated to the companies and not to individuals. The companies had to guarantee that the rental would be paid. If the tenant left the employment of the company, then he was required to relinquish the tenancy. The tenant was required to pay the full economic rent of the property, irrespective of his personal income. This latter aspect led to some cases of severe hardship, even in the early years of the policy, when the general housing situation in Britain was at its most acute, some families moved to Portsmouth in order to be rehoused. The keyworker housing policy also created resentment amongst those residents of Portsmouth who had registered their housing needs on the waiting list. Many of them felt the keyworkers were queue-jumping, and objected to families with no connections with the city being housed, whilst they lived in overcrowded and/or insanitary housing. This situation was further aggravated by the fact that the Housing Director believed that keyworkers should be

allocated the better plots on new developments, and that they should be offered brand new dwellings, since he argued that they paid the full economic rent and should therefore be offered the best accommodation available at the time their requirement needed fulfilling. This attitude prevailed until 1958, when, because of difficulties in letting properties on the more distant Leigh Park estate, houses on that estate were allocated to keyworkers. The Housing Director felt the keyworkers had little option but to accept what was offered. Thus a change in demand for housing allowed a change in policy towards keyworkers. The keyworker policy was a major departure from Central Government housing policy and is indicative of the scope of local discretion which has existed in local authority housing policy. As mentioned earlier, the reason for Portsmouth City Council developing its keyworker housing policy was to broaden and strengthen the industrial base of the city. With the current run down of the naval dockyards (1985) it would appear that the City Council were very far sighted in their innovative policy. The Portsmouth area has become a centre for the "new technology" industries. Companies such as IBM Ltd and Marconi PLC have moved to the area. The majority of the new industries attracted have been related to electronics and pharmaceuticals - both "clean" industries and both growth industries. The policy is not used so much now (1985) and the council prefers to use the National Mobility Scheme.

The Town Council in Derby saw no need to use its housing policy as a "bait" to new industry and indeed until 1971, there was probably

no need. In 1971, however Rolls Royce Ltd went into liquidation, and 4,000 employees were made redundant. Since 1971, Derby Town Council has been more keen to generate employment in the town, by encouraging companies to come to the town and they have, as part of the package of inducements, offered a form of keyworker housing. Prior to 1971, they were complacent.

e) The Sale of Council Houses

Derby and Portsmouth have differed strongly on the sale of council houses. As we saw in Chapter 4 of this thesis, some members of Portsmouth City Council were advocating that council houses being planned and built, should be developed to a standard which would allow them to be sold off at some future date. This was a view being put forward in the council chamber in 1948 - at a time of shortage of building materials. Quite clearly an ideological point was being made in the council chamber. From 1952 onwards council houses became available for purchase by existing tenants, the price being charged to the tenant being the market price less a percentage dependent upon the period of tenancy. In order to encourage sales, the majority of councillors wanted the sales to be financed by 100% mortgages from the City Council, and for a time, this was the policy pursued, against the advice of the City Treasurer. The City Treasurer was against 100% mortgages because he believed - and his belief was substantiated - that purchasers with nothing to lose were more likely to incur bad debts and mortgage arrears, although tenants with a prior history of rent arrears were usually refused mortgage facilities. The City Treasurer believed that purchasers should make

a deposit. Ultimately all Portsmouth's council houses (not flats) became available for sale on payment of an initial deposit of £10 with the application to purchase (non-refundable if an offer of sale made and declined) and a further £15 on sale - £25 in other words. This was lower than the Treasurer wished. The sale of council houses in Portsmouth was initially quite slow, but as the council started to introduce its economic rent policy, 50 sales started to gather momentum, the sales increasing at times of rent reviews and then falling back to an average of 12 dwellings per month.

In contrast, in Derby, it was not until after 1 April 1968, when the County Borough boundaries had been extended and a Conservative Council had been elected that a change in policy occurred. They decided to offer for sale council houses to their tenants at sitting tenant prices. The council in Derby also decided to offer for sale newly erected 2 and 3 bedroomed houses to applicants who were on the housing list. This represents a contrast with most local authorities, and more recently the Labour group has furthered this by building houses specifically for sale. The sale price for the new houses being their current market value. If the purchaser wished to sell his house, then the council retained the right to buy back the dwelling at the sale price, the Mortgages being provided by the Corporation at a fixed interest rate of 7 % and the deposit being £25. During the first twelve months in which council houses were for sale 57 were sold. It is worth noting that despite a change of ruling group back to Labour in 1972, and inspite of Derby Town Council's resistance to the Housing Finance Act 1972 reviewed below,

the council continued to sell council houses to those tenants wishing to purchase. They also continued the policy started by the Conservatives during their brief spell in office, of building some 75 houses for sale to people on the waiting list and providing them with 100% mortgages. It might be suggested that the Conservative group acted as policy initiators, and once the policy had been started, it was easy for Labour to continue it. As mentioned in Chapter 6 and as we shall see in the next section of this chapter, some of the Derby councillors had high ambitions of careers in national politics and they held relatively left wing views compared with the "old guard" councillors who were architypal Labour councillors. After the overwhelming defeat of the Labour group at the 1968 elections many of the "old guard" councillors "retired" and the younger men came forward and it was they who decided to continue the sale of council houses, and as we shall see below, resist the 1972 Housing Finance Act. It could be suggested that the younger councillors were not typical of Labour councillors in general, and further, they could draw attention to themselves by refusing to implement legislation which the Conservative Government considered to be key legislation. They were out to make a political mark for themselves.

f) Rent Policy

Derby and Portsmouth have also differed in their respective rent policies. In Portsmouth, since 1952, the Housing Revenue Account has been required to be self-balancing. The policy has been one of charging tenants an economic rent, providing that they could

afford to pay an economic rent. The methods used for assessing total income were considered by the tenants association too draconian. This may have been with some justification since the income assessment took into account children's earnings. The onus was upon the tenant to make a claim for rebate rather than upon the City Housing Committee to take into account the ability to pay. Both the City Treasurer and the Housing Director took a hard line with those tenants who failed to either claim a rent rebate and then fell into arrears of rent, or those who failed to declare their full income when claiming a rebate, those in the latter category being invariably evicted. Throughout the period covered by this thesis, the policy in Portsmouth towards rents was to charge economic rents to those tenants who could afford to pay them, and to those tenants housed under the keyworker policy.

In marked contrast, in Derby, the Town Council adopted a policy in the post war years of making up the deficit on the Housing Revenue Account from the General Rate Fund. This policy remained in being until 1968. In 1968, after the change in ruling group, furtherance of Conservative ideology became evident in the announcement that preference would be given to those people on the housing list capable of paying the "standard" (economic) rent. This measure was introduced in conjunction with a rent rebate scheme for existing tenants. It might be argued therefore that the Council in Derby adopted a policy of housing in local authority accommodation those who were financially better off than those who were in "need".

In May 1972 the Conservative group on Derby Town Council lost control to the Labour group. The Labour council was bitterly opposed to a policy of high council rents. In October 1972 the Housing Finance Act was passed. The resistance to this act was so marked that as late as February 1973 the Housing Committee in Derby was still rejecting advice from the Town Clerk that rents of council properties should be raised in accordance with the Fair Rents legislation by 50 pence per dwelling. The legislation had been implemented smoothly in Portsmouth. A fierce debate between the parties arose over this issue, and at one stage it looked as though Derby Town Council was going to stand firm against the Government Policy, as had happened with Clay Cross Urban District Council. A deputation of Councillors went to London to meet Mr Peter Walker, the then Secretary of State for the Environment, but he was adamant about his position and so on 18 June 1973, 50 pence was added to the rents. Derby Town Council belatedly implemented the Housing Finance Act 1972.

It is interesting to contrast the reactions of the two authorities. Portsmouth, being Conservative controlled, followed to the letter, without question the Housing Finance Act 1972. However, the Tenants' Association was extremely vocal about the policy. Their protests were set aside in a series of press releases which said it was "government policy". The policy however was the one which the City Council had themselves pursued for a considerable length of time. In Derby, the reason for their stance was more than ideological hostility. Older Labour councillors might have swallowed their hostility but were inhabited by the more doctrinal approach of some younger ones.



## CHAPTER EIGHT      CONCLUSIONS

- i)    Determinators of Policy
  - a)    Output Studies
  - b)    Central - Local Relations Revisited
  - c)    Corporatist Models
  - d)    The Dunleavy Thesis Revisited
- ii)   Explaining Policy Differences
  - a)    External Pressures
  - b)    Local Discretion
  - c)    Local Personalities
  - d)    Local Policy Making
- iii) An Explanatory Model

## CHAPTER EIGHT      CONCLUSIONS

The evidence of research in Derby and Portsmouth set out in earlier chapters produces clear indication of policy differences on high rise buildings, the sale of council houses, rents policy and the housing of key workers. In this concluding chapter I will seek explanations for such differences in policy. The scholars have put forward a host of explanatory models and theories of local government behaviour (as discussed in Chapters One and Two). In what follows the research findings will be related to the more significant of them.

### i) Determinators of Policy

#### a) Output Studies

Policy output studies based on quantitative methodology fall into two main categories. The first undertakes a statistical analysis of the effects of party competition on policy outputs usually measured by expenditure. As was discussed in Chapter One this type includes works by Kay, Dawson, Dye et al. The results are often satisfactory in a statistical sense. Correlation coefficients are sometimes large. The problem with such studies is that they are too narrowly focused. To seek to find explanatory variables only in the field of party competition is too restricted.

The second kind of quantitative output study is that which employs a much wider range of variables in the analysis - for instance needs, resources, national policies as well as party factors. This approach is exemplified by the work of Boaden, Davies, Alt, Stanyer and Ashford.

Although their approach is more satisfactory in terms of understanding the social, economic, and political basis of local government activity, often the results are less satisfying in statistical terms. The correlation coefficients are often low, even though statistically significant, or regression formulae leave a large proportion of the variance unexplained.

In the large part the poor explanatory power of any single independent variable or group of variables, reflects the enormous complexity of performance and expenditure patterns, the possibility of non-linear relationships and the fairly substantial degree of multicollinearity among groups of independent variables. These complications in turn, stem from the fact that output research is dealing with the totality of social, economic and political relationships in whole political systems. The relationship is both complex and closely interwoven. Too often social research is concerned with a narrower range of relationships where both dependent and independent variables are conveniently abstracted from their environment.

Even the broader kind of quantitative output analysis is insufficiently comprehensive. In particular it fails to take account of the influences of personal and of personality brought out in this thesis. Statistically based research provides useful indicators, but falls short of a convincing explanatory model. This thesis is an example of the kind of local policy making study which attempts to be comprehensive. Thus it is more akin to works such as Hampton on Sheffield and Dearlove on Kensington and Chelsea.

b) Central-Local Relations Revisited

In Chapter Two of this thesis the doubts which have developed regarding the traditional models of local-central relationships, central dominance or partnership, were examined. This research reinforces these doubts. It confirms the greater explanatory value of Rhodes's alternative approach of "local discretion" and "interdependence" discussed on page 43 above. The research undertaken in both Derby and Portsmouth reveals evidence to support the theories put forward by Rhodes on all his five counts. However, again one can go further. The research illustrates the importance of personalities for the central-local relationship, and this factor is underplayed, even by the most recent literature.

c) Corporatist Models

As indicated in Chapter One J.J. Richardson and G.Jordan believe that the style of policy making today has blurred the distinction between central administration and bodies outside that perimeter, including local authorities. They believe that account must be taken, for instance, of the "government contract sector" and the influence which companies specialising in supplying the public sector can have upon policy-making. This belief is similar to the view held by Patrick Dunleavy with regard to the influence of the construction industry upon the provision of mass housing.

The ideas of Richardson and Jordan are to a certain extent substantiated by the research in this thesis. The Southern Electricity Board was very successful in promoting underfloor heating to the Portsmouth City Council for use in high rise buildings, and regional

and national builders promoted system building methods for high rise developments. Richardson and Jordan would suggest that they form part of their notion of "policy community". This concept can be applied to local policy making viz a "local policy community". There is some evidence from the findings to support this, but insufficient for a total explanation. As we shall see in the final section of this chapter it was not the "policy community" which necessarily determined the policy.

It will be recalled that in Chapter Two of this thesis I discussed the work of J.K.Friend et al (1974) and his study of the decision making process leading to the expansion of Droitwich. J.K.Friend argues that the gradual shift of emphasis from public towards private sector housing, has left the government with less direct power to channel the movement of population. The increase in car-ownership has increased the mobility of a large sector of the working population, making it more difficult to integrate government controls over housing, employment, transportation and other services. As previously indicated J.K.Friend believes that Central Government is no longer necessarily the dominant actor within the planning process. The approach of J.K. Friend is similar to that of Richardson and Jordan, that is essentially one of corporatism. The evidence obtained in my research does not entirely substantiate J.K.Friend's conclusions with regard to public sector housing, since in the majority of programmes, the capital finance is obtained from central government resources. Clearly in the private sector, people are likely to vote with their cheque books and this will influence

the location of private sector developments, and therefore the detailed planning process. A degree of corporatism does exist within housing policy, but the evidence suggests it is not dominant.

d) The Dunleavy Thesis Revisited

As I indicated in Chapter One Patrick Dunleavy believes that the "public housing apparatus" at a national level exerts a considerable influence over the setting of housing construction policy. He believes that the two main production interests, the design profession and the construction industry operate in close contact with each other and Central Government in shaping production policy on public housing. He believes that mass housing policy is in substantial measure determined by the influence of the construction industry. My research indicates that he has overestimated the influence of the building industry; his model cannot account for the differences between Derby and Portsmouth. He is only concerned with high rise developments, which whilst a major source of public sector housing provision in the 1950's and 1960's were not the sole source of public sector housing provision even during that period. In addition he has paid little regard to overspill policies, which were significant in the 1960's. He argues that "containment" by the middle classes of suburbia and the rural upper class, organised in the Conservative party had succeeded in orientating the planning system towards the containment of cities. My research has produced evidence to show the reverse to be the case in Derby, where both the Belper R.D.C. and the South East Derbyshire R.D.C. offered little or no resistance to Derby Town Council's request for building land in their areas. Dunleavy believes that the financial policy of Central

Government played an important part in the policy making process. My research shows that Derby chose not to build high despite the financial incentives to do so, and that Portsmouth chose types of high rise buildings designed by its own architectural staff, which did not qualify for maximum grant aid. This finding casts further doubt on Dunleavy's assertions, for he states that the architectural profession had less influence on local authorities' policies than the construction industry. On the contrary the evidence from my research in Portsmouth indicates that the City Architect pushed his own ideas in pursuit of professional recognition. The overall thrust of Dunleavy's thesis is twofold: first to suggest that housing policy is essentially nationally determined allowing little real scope for local discretion; second, to suggest that the policy process is essentially corporatist. The evidence of housing policy in Derby and Portsmouth for the period investigated casts doubt on both of Dunleavy's propositions.

## ii) Explaining Policy Differences

Throughout this thesis, the underlying aim has been to try to discover the main factors influencing and answer the question - what determines housing policy? The contrasts between Portsmouth and Derby give some leads.

### a) External Pressures

The policy of high rise development in Portsmouth was not one which was popular with tenants. The tenants appear to have had little say in the discussions concerning their rehousing during the post-war period. Tenants Associations had little or no impact on the actual style or type of housing provided. Clearly, pressure for land must

have had some bearing and, to an extent, Dunleavy's findings on overspill problems are supported by the research undertaken in Portsmouth. Hampshire County Council as we saw in the case study, resisted overspill, but it was over-ruled on appeal by Portsmouth City Council to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government; the land was forthcoming, albeit delayed. Some other factor must therefore have played a part.

My research indicates that in Portsmouth it was the influence of the City Architect and the desire by councillors to make their city the leading city on the South Coast. This "civic pride syndrome" appears to have had more influence on the policy formulation process than central government grants or lobbying by the construction industry.

In Derby there was no vociferous tenants' association but the Housing Committee and the Borough Surveyor were opposed to High Rise Developments. They did not wish to see the skyline of the town penetrated by such developments. On a more practical level, much of the housing being constructed in the public sector in Derby was built by direct labour, although national contractors were also used. The direct labour force would not have had the necessary skills to be able to undertake high rise work. The dependence on direct labour reflects a local as well as party ideology.

The research undertaken in Derby and Portsmouth regarding high rise developments tends to support the Elite model of local power - that is policy formulation by an élite of local politicians and local



professionals. The evidence gathered in Portsmouth relating to the attitudes of the City Architect confirms the belief of Malpass and Murie - that professionals seek peer group acclaim. The City Architect, Mr Mellor became a frequent delegate to professional conferences and delivered a number of papers on planning matters. He saw this as a way of putting Portsmouth to the forefront of town planning in Britain.

In the instances of financial policy relating to housing cited in this thesis, we have seen that local party ideology over-ruled the professional model of local government policy making. Professional advice was sometimes ignored. Moreover, national policies were not easily imposed. For instance, it was not until the senior local politicians in Derby had visited Mr Peter Walker in London in 1982, that they agreed to implement the Housing Finance Act 1972. Thus the only significant external influence on the leading Derby councillors was the intervention of the Minister and his intervention was exceptional. For policies other than rent policy national government pressures were not overwhelming. In Portsmouth the City Treasurer's influence waned as the period researched passed by. Initially the Housing Department was a section within the City Treasury, but with the appointment of a Housing Director (Mr Dant) the Treasurer's influence declined. His policy for financing the sale of council houses, and his advice against 100% mortgages were rejected by the Portsmouth Housing Committee. He feared that mortgage arrears would be incurred. Events were to prove him correct. In both these instances we have examples of local ideology over-ruling the

professional advice of a chief officer. In these instances the Elite Model must be modified to embrace only local politicians.

The Conservative period of control 1968-72 in Derby acted as a focusing point for policy changes which have remained under successive Labour administrations. The electoral defeat of Labour in 1968 also led to changes of councillors whilst the group was in opposition. Most significantly it led to a change of leadership from Alderman Flint to Councillor Dilks. Alderman Flint guided Derby's housing policy from 1945 to 1968 - a considerable period of time. He was a middle class lawyer with traditional socialist values. He saw local authority housing as a social service and believed that those tenants who wished to purchase a house should buy one in the private sector. Derby Town Council had encouraged the development of private estates by national contractors such as Wimpey. Derby is an area of traditionally low cost housing, Portsmouth an area of more expensive housing. This factor may have influenced the attitudes to council house sales, although not enormously.

The research indicates that in both the sale of council houses, and in the implementation of the 1972 Housing Finance Act, local politics made a significant difference to the policy outcomes. It is clear from the research that on both these issues local ideology rode supreme over professional advice.

The research also shows that ideology became more important as the needs for housing became less pressing. This is best illustrated

by reference to the sale of council houses. In Portsmouth sales were discussed in 1948, but the policy was not implemented until 1952.

b) Local Discretion

The research indicates that there are high levels of discretion at the local level within the overall policy boundaries set by central government, and the research goes a considerable way to confirm John Stewart's policy boundaries theories. This level of discretion allows local politicians to add their own ideological interpretation to policy, should they so wish. It is apparent therefore from the research that on policies such as housing, local political change is more significant than national political change. The overall national boundaries are likely to change less than the boundaries of discretion. As previously mentioned, in Bradford, the boundaries of discretion changed to no public sector house building at all after the change of ruling group to the Conservatives in 1968, and the reliance upon housing associations for the provision of low cost housing for rental.

Local party ideology would appear to have become more apparent in recent years, with the filling of such "policy gaps" as the sale of council houses in Derby in 1968. Both authorities appear to have "used" Housing Associations as "dustbin" providers, not exactly the aims of the enabling legislation. In Derby, Housing Associations have been used to provide low cost accommodation for one parent families, the elderly whom the Council cannot provide with suitable accommodation, and families referred to the Housing Committee by the Social

Services departments, families politely known as "problem families". The use of housing associations in these ways reflected decisions taken by local politicians rather than officers.

Housing policy as we have seen in this thesis is used by governments as an economic regulator of the economy. This is again a political act of Central Government to which local politicians have to respond whilst at the same time monitoring local needs and local opinions. Tenant participation had been legally possible since 1936, in the form of tenant management. However, my research indicates that very little tenant participation or management has occurred in either Derby or Portsmouth. It will be recalled that the Rev. Todd led a very vociferous Tenant's Association on the Leigh Park estate in Portsmouth. The evidence and my interview with the Rev. Todd, both indicate that the Tenant's Association rise was due as much as anything to the autocratic style of management adopted by firstly the City Treasurer (Mr Thompson) and then by Mr Dant, the Housing Director. Joint Liaison Committees were formed in both cities, but in both cities they appear to have met infrequently. This form of participation is not available to those in need since they still have to become local authority tenants, and I would contend that it is they who are most likely to air their views with regard to the types of accommodation required. The tenants are likely to be more concerned about infra-structure and day to day administrative affairs - which is possibly why they become apathetic about participation, rather than as Mr Qualye, of Portsmouth City Council implied, because the tenants have nothing to discuss.

c) Local Personalities

A successful political leader in local government does not just lead the local authority, but can bargain with Central Government. Both Alderman Flint and Councillor Miles had negotiating skills which are of paramount importance. Alan Alexander (1982) suggests that there is evidence of the arrival in some authorities of councillors who are full-time, or effectively full-time, in their commitment to local government. This is leading to the development of a kind of de facto political executive and a consequent alteration in the position of the chief executive as the head of the council's paid service. Whilst there is not evidence in either Derby or Portsmouth wholly to support Alexander's ideas, in both cities new council leaders emerged in the early 1970's, who were effectively full-time local politicians. In Derby, John Dilks, who was, and still is employed by the Central Midlands Co-operative Society Ltd took on this role. He was succeeded by Mick Walker, who is employed by Rolls Royce Ltd and who in addition to being Council Leader, is a senior official of the trade union A.S.T.M.S.

In Portsmouth, John Marshall, a manager of a branch of the National Westminster Bank plc emerged as a full-time local politician - he had at one time been a Labour Councillor in Portsmouth, but crossed the party line. The emergence of full-time councillors is as Laffin and Young (1985) suggest likely to change the relationship between professional officers and members.

Portsmouth City Council did not change politically throughout the period covered by this thesis and remained a Conservative controlled

council. This fact, combined with the fact that there were thirteen years of uninterrupted Conservative controlled central government, must have assisted the Portsmouth Council in its consistency in policy making and in its harmonious relationship with Central Government in relation to housing policy. The changes in personnel in Portsmouth were due to the retirements and death, rather than the ballot box. Therefore changes in political ideology did not come to ~~therefore~~ to the same extent as in Derby, although clearly the Conservative ideology dominated throughout the period researched, starting with the suggestions of the sale of council houses in 1948 - at a time of great need. Arguably in Portsmouth the ideology remained the same, but the goals changed as the Second World War receded into the past. The move was from "roofs over heads" to owner occupation - a pattern which seems to accord with public preferences throughout Britain.

Different governments and different policies may have only a marginal effect on the national or "macro" policy outcome, but in the "micro" or local policy outcome then a change of council may have a significant effect, and this factor is borne out by the research in this thesis. However, when there was a pressing job to be done, such as in the immediate post-war years, the local political hatchet appears to have been buried, but once the urgent perceived need had been met, then party ideology came to the fore as we have seen.

#### d) Local Policy Making

Policy making at the local level is a complex process with as I have tried to illustrate many variables - resources, finance, personnel,

local-central relations and the influence of the individual actors involved. One may however put the question - are all the policy goals being achieved? Clearly there are still needs to be catered for, such as the needs of the elderly, the needs of the single and the need for adequate infrastructure. Infrastructure delays were in the main due to cost limitations. William Dunn (1981) formulated criteria for the evaluation of policies. In Dunn's terms a level of "effectiveness" has been achieved but not "adequacy". This is because the policy shortfalls occurred not in the sense that the two towns set out to fulfil their needs and failed, but in the sense that they were not providing adequately for their citizens. In this sense feedback from resident's associations, internal monitoring and through the media would indicate that not all the needs have been tackled.

The differences in the policies of the two authorities from the 1950's onwards are due to a combination of environmental factor and internal factors. The former includes the shortage of land in Portsmouth and the City Council's failure to reach agreement with neighbouring authorities. This resulted in Portsmouth City Council being acutely short of building land. The latter covers the City Architect's desire to further his reputation in his profession, resulting in tower blocks being constructed as the mainstream of housing provision in the public sector in Portsmouth in the 1960's. My research indicates, in contrast to Dunleavy, that it was a combination of internal factors which determined output - the desire of the City Architect to make a name for himself with his profession combined with the desire of the City Councillors to see Portsmouth

as a leading city on the South Coast. It was a combination of personality, personal goals and ideological aims but essentially an Elite Model - with the external factors playing a secondary part.

In Derby, by contrast, a traditional style of housing was constructed, but the environmental factors were conducive to this policy; land was available, and the internal factors, ie. the councillors and chief officers also favoured this approach. Local choice existed within their spheres; much of the housing programmes were constructed using direct labour. This eliminated to a great extent the influence of the construction industry, and therefore again negates Dunleavy's thesis. Local choice existed in both Derby and Portsmouth regarding rent policy; here local politics or internal factors were of prime importance, just as they were regarding key workers in Portsmouth.

From the research for this thesis it is apparent that local authorities are able to exercise a high degree of discretion within the policy boundaries set by Central Government. The policy outcomes are the result of the interaction of factors - both internal and external - rather than the result of a single factor such as is suggested by Dunleavy. However, it would appear that in both authorities it was internal factors which primarily determined the policy outcomes rather than simply needs and resources.

In Portsmouth the single most important factor in determining the policy outcomes was the professionalism of the City Architect and the City Development Officer and their ability to persuade the City



Housing Committee to their standpoint at the expense of the Housing Director and the City Treasurer. In addition the senior members of the Council were sympathetic to housing.

In Derby, it was initially professionalism of the Borough Surveyor and his desire to use traditional layouts for post-war estates, and his ability to eclipse the Borough Architect which influenced the policy outcomes and in later years it became the political ambitions of the younger councillors which had the greatest effect. Neither city fits Dunleavy's model of allowing the influence of national policy and of the construction industry to influence mass housing policy.

In both cities local party ideology provided the backcloth against which policy was determined, and as we saw earlier in this chapter, local politics and local ideology makes a difference to policy outcomes. Policy outcomes have therefore been the result of a compote of internal and environmental factors combined with needs and available resources.

### iii) An Explanatory Model

The model which most effectively resembles this policy process one could term the Insulated Political Elite model - not very different from that put forward by Dearlove.

The research indicates that local politicians essentially decided policy. It was a product of their skills, personalities and beliefs. Sometimes they allied themselves with professionals and used their

advice, sometimes they chose to respond to requests from Central Government, but essentially in this period it was a small group of local politicians that decided housing policy. Further research is required to determine whether such a situation still exists in the two cities. The research clearly indicates that it takes draconian Central measures to change local politicians behaviour. This supports Dearlove's thesis, but he believes that such circumstances only arise in one party councils, yet this research showed it occurring in Derby, which experienced changes of party control, as well as in Portsmouth which did not. Nevertheless in both cities one party was dominant for long periods.

This case study clearly highlights the degree of local discretion available to local authorities, the importance of local politics and local ideology and the importance of personality in determining policies to cater for local needs. We need only to look at the skylines of the two cities to see the difference in policy outcomes.

## APPENDIX 1

In April 1952 the City Architect of Portsmouth presented a Housing Plan to the Housing Committee for the years 1953-1973.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Critical shortage of housing as per waiting list (12,500 families on waiting list).<br>Estimate 2/3rds living in rooms (10,300 x 2/3 = 6,866) of these small proportions find own home say | 6,500   |
| 2. Natural increase in population - 24,000 by 1973 requiring at least 6,000 dwellings - suggest council will have to supply half.   | 3,000   |
| 3. Housing clearance under Housing Acts. In view of housing shortage clearance unlikely before 1960 - M.H.O. say 7,000 would be a reasonable programme.                                       | 7,000   |
| 4. Demolition of occupied dwellings (ie. isolated dwellings to make way for housing schemes etc).   | 1,000   |
| 5. Replacement of Temporary Accommodation.  | <div style="text-align: right;">500</div> <div style="text-align: right;"><u>18,000</u></div> |

## Targets at:

1st April 1953	500
1st April 1954	800
1st April 1955	1,100
1st April 1956	1,500
1st April 1957	1,500
1st April 1958	<u>1,500</u>
	<u>6,900</u>

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