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THE SCOPE FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN URBAN POLICY:

A CASE STUDY OF GEAR

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Submitted as part of the  
requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Philosophy.

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## SYNOPSIS

Public participation has increased in popularity over the last two decades as a result of both philosophical and pragmatic considerations. The belief that within our 'democratic' society each person ought to have the right to be informed about matters which affect them, has been strengthened as a result of the failure of politicians and officials to identify public preferences. This has led to a questioning of plans and decisions that have been taken on behalf of the wider public. The need to accommodate these developments became most evident in the seventies, initially relating to inner city problems. The aim of this research is to examine how far participation has actually been 'accommodated', more explicit objectives follow in the introductory chapter. Whilst it has been suggested (Sewell and Coppock, 1977) that in an era when authority is being questioned more and more, participation will consequently be demanded, it is also apparent that there now appear to be an increasing number of constraints to achieving effective participation. Within urban policy, changing trends have influenced the nature of these constraints and as a result the 'scope' for participation is now being questioned. This research is therefore concerned with providing an insight into participation, highlighting the limitations to its development, which given the present trends in urban policy appear to be restricting the opportunity for participation even further.

### Breakdown of the Research:

The first chapter introduces the main objectives and themes to be carried throughout the research, providing a justification and context against which further questions will be posed.

Chapter two examines the theory of public participation, observing the many definitions and different levels at which it may take place. Its role within a wider-framework of society and government is highlighted, as well as recognizing the extent to which participation is issue specific.

Chapter three looks at the history of public participation in urban policy, observing why participation has developed and not just how. The present trends in policy are referred to, providing a background against which the case-study of the Glasgow Eastern Area Renewal (GEAR) project is compared in subsequent chapters.

Chapter four begins by reflecting national policy and the influences of central government in the development of the GEAR project. By observing a local scale example of urban renewal, perspectives on participation at the local level become evident. Explanations for which are linked to both central and local government influence.

Chapter five focuses on a case-study of housing in GEAR, and examines the limitations to participation. The difference between participating at various levels is made apparent, with the exclusion from policy formulation compared with the opportunity to participate in modernization programmes. The importance of acknowledging individual agency attitudes is recognized, highlighting the different

degrees of commitment, whilst the constraints that emerge seem common to both of the main agencies, thus questioning the actual scope for participation within present government structures.

Chapter six highlights in particular the attitude and influence of the Scottish Development Agency (SDA) towards participation. By focusing on Helenvale Sports Centre, motives for participation become apparent. The link between participation and specific issues emerges once more, with participation in leisure and recreation being encouraged, but in management and in terms of power and control limitations are evident. The interplay of urban management over Helenvale is examined, recognizing the extent to which this seems to have ignored the issue of participation with the SDA's proposal for community management being ignored.

The concluding chapter draws together the main issues highlighted in the research and the implication of these on public participation in present and future urban policy.

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## Chapter One

### WHY EXAMINE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN URBAN POLICY?

The principle aim of this research is to examine the extent of public participation in the formulation of current urban policy. This will be achieved by observing three main aspects. Firstly, the attitude towards participation by the agents of renewal, be it development agencies, local authorities or central government. Secondly, by observing the opportunity for participation within the existing societal structure, and as determined by the ability of people to participate. Finally, to examine the quality of participation. Previous research on this subject has tended to focus on 'how' participation has evolved (through specific legislation for example), and less on 'why'. (Gutch and Thornley, 1980). To this end the research also aims to explore the underlying reasons for participation. This will enable us to assess the contention that public participation may have got lost within the intricacies of present approaches to urban policy, which has led to a tightening of local government and reinforced the existing bureaucracy.

From this objective two important questions emerge:

- (i) What are the present trends in urban policy?
- (ii) How do we expect them to influence the scope for participation?

The answers to these questions form the basis of this chapter, with the aim of providing the foundation of the more in depth analysis to follow, as well as attempting to justify the need for research in this field.

Developments in urban policy have altered significantly over the last two decades. In the late sixties and early seventies, policy became more sensitive to the problems in the inner cities, with a gradual rejection of clearance and redevelopment policy, in favour of rehabilitation and improvement. Meanwhile many piecemeal initiatives developed in this period representing an awareness of the 'social issues' inherently a part of urban life. Social in the sense of being common circumstances that were (and still are) a part of daily life, both felt and shared amongst the inhabitants of inner city areas. The policy that emerged attempted to deal specifically with the following elements; ethnic concentrations, special need groups, poor housing conditions, low income and so on. The development of 'participation' as a concept began in this period, with emphasis increasingly on helping individuals to become self-sufficient and less dependent on the state, which led to increased communication, albeit to varying degrees. The apparent 'social' emphasis of policy at this point did not however necessarily equate participation as a 'social benefit' and as will be seen in subsequent discussion, participation has developed at a very slow pace.

Amidst a plethora of ad hoc planning initiatives in urban policy, participation gained popularity, as is highlighted in chapter three. Research in the early seventies began to cast doubt upon theories of individual poverty, and in many inner city areas working class grass

roots radicalism emerged in support of the new theories, that instead explained urban problems as a result of structural forces. Wider economic explanations for increasing urban deprivation were identified, stemming from the decline of industry in the inner cities, exacerbated by the far reaching effects of total firm closure, as a result of an increasing highly competitive world market.

The emergence of the Scottish Development Agency (SDA) in 1975 typified the increasing emphasis on economic regeneration. Its involvement in inner city regeneration through the Glasgow Eastern Area Renewal (GEAR) project was one of its first programmes of action, and since it has grown to be the principle agent of economic regeneration in Scotland. The developing trend drew attention to the need for major policy initiatives to be brought together:

'A bending of main policies ... to give them an inner city direction'.

(J. Edwards, 1984, p.598)

The formation of the GEAR project was a prime example of the prevailing philosophy, designed to foster a comprehensive approach to inner city problems through partnership arrangements. The aim was to bring together local and central government agencies responsible for action in the inner areas, within an effective framework.

The 1977 White Paper (Policy for the Inner Cities) had acknowledged a need to integrate the private sector into urban renewal policy. An early example of the partnership framework that central government was advocating, GEAR was the first example of comprehensive renewal on such a large scale, with an emphasis favouring the role of

community involvement. However there have appeared numerous constraints to participation within the project as will be discussed in Chapters four to six. Experimental in many ways, the increased emphasis on participation promoted GEAR as a special example of urban renewal at the time. It has since been compared with the inner city partnerships of 1978, whilst the introduction of Development Corporations in 1981 have appeared to develop further the philosophy from which the SDA emerged, that being an emphasis on private sector involvement and a multi-agency approach. To this end the justification for observing GEAR lies in its existence as an example of urban renewal, characterized by the growing recognition of economic explanations of urban problems. In addition, it represents an emphasis on participation, far beyond the extent to which policy now seems to be advocating. In parallel with the present government's apparent increasing dis-interest with participation, the SDA's role in GEAR has since 1979 been seen to become more passive, less 'socially concerned', (J. Wallace, SDA, 1984), and more tightly controlled by central government philosophy. Thus it is important to acknowledge the role of participation in the context of GEAR, to observe its success or failure, from which one hopes there will emerge lessons to be learnt that can be applied to the present urban policy trend, that emphasizes the role of agency partnerships and economic regeneration.

It is against this background of changing explanations of urban problems and subsequent policy initiatives that the scope for public participation is to be examined.

### The Implications for Participation

If the continued references by central government to increase the role of the private sector in urban affairs develops into a 'realistic alternative to public sector finance and administration' (Boyle, 1983), then it is apparent that there will be serious conflict between the commercial criteria applied by the private sector and what Boyle (1983) sees as the 'welfare objectives behind even the recast urban programme'. It can be argued that the public responsibility of local government has already diminished as a result of the inter-agency focus since the late seventies, reducing accountability at the local level, and in the case of GEAR giving ultimate responsibility for participation, to a central government 'economic orientated' body - the SDA. The implication of this being that participation though constantly stressed as important was instead given a subsidiary role in the programme. Whether this was a result of central government influence through the SDA, or local level constraints is examined later in the research; in a bid to determine the validity of McKay and Cox's argument (1979), that limitations to participation are not solely the result of centralized decision making, but are also a result of local scale initiatives. Given that this may be the case it is therefore important to examine participation at the local scale beyond the overall objectives of the GEAR project (chapter four), to examine the extent of central vs local government influence on specific issues, (chapters five and six).

The issues on which participation takes place are important. It may be acceptable in certain, uncontroversial or minor issues (such as house design), but may not be tolerated on more significant issues such as decisions on priorities, decentralization of actual management responsibilities and the like. By observing participation at two specific levels in chapters five and six, the complexities of participation are highlighted. Both issues, housing and leisure and recreation, have become central to the 'comprehensive approach' of urban regeneration and renewal. By examining more specifically each 'issue' the opportunity for participation is highlighted, stressing the different perceptions held which appear to favour participation in housing to a certain degree more than encouraging participation in the management of leisure and recreation. Though as chapter five highlights even within the field of housing participation may be limited to some issues more than others. Whichever, this research hopes to identify these discrepancies, which relate themselves to the wider issue of the inter-play of urban management and the opportunity available for participation. Participation must therefore be related to the role of government, particularly local government and the structure of society in general. Planning is a governmental activity taking place within a particular social formation, and participation is therefore part of a wider structure of power relations. Analysis of participation at a specific level therefore provides some insight into the wider power relations involved. To what extent and for what reasons participation has become a part of the planning process will thus be questioned.

## Methodology

In order to gain an insight into the attitudes to participation by the agencies and bodies involved, a series of interviews were carried out which were structured around several main themes. Initially one interview took place with each representative, two representatives from the Scottish Special Housing Association (SSHA), three from the SDA, three from Glasgow District Council (GDC) and one from Parkhead Housing Association (see Appendix 1). Where possible use was made of internal documents, notably from the SDA, SSHA and GDC, as well as publications from the Regional Council (SRC). In addition, information was also gained from previous research on participation in GEAR, as mentioned in chapter four.

Given the subjective nature of participation and the method of approach adopted here, further discussion took place with individuals during the course of the research. This included contact with an additional two representatives from the SDA and three from the GDC, in order to gain as coherent a perspective as possible from each agent. In addition discussion took place with two District and a Regional Community Development Officer and a small seminar was arranged with eight residents of the Parkhead area, who had been involved in the project through representation on Community Councils, tenants associations and involvement in modernization programmes. Contact was also made with a District Councillor, regarding the subject of the second case study in chapter six. Whilst acquiring a wealth of information that conveyed agency attitudes, ultimately the interpretation of this information required self-judgment. Though

perhaps a weakness of the research, where possible internal documents have been quoted to substantiate attitudes.

The themes around which the interviews focused were, firstly the attitude towards participation, with reference to definitions, opportunity and constraints, and how this attitude may have changed since the GEAR project began. Secondly, the role of the agency in pursuing the GEAR objective of encouraging community involvement and participation, perceived commitment and actual response. Thirdly, the effect of inter-agency conflict within the project, and the extent to which this may have influenced the opportunities available for participation. Fourthly the effect of intra-agency attitudes to participation, with particular reference to the role of bureaucratic structures and traditional ideas of professionalism. Finally, the attitude of each agent towards the District Councillor and Community Councils as a vehicle for participation was obtained.



## Chapter Two

### THEORY AND RATIONALE OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

#### Introduction

'It is always a good time to be exploring new ways of making power responsive. It cannot be but a good thing to have the urban political system opened up to the invigorating breezes of criticism and fresh ideas, from whatever quarter they blow.'

(W. Harvey Cox, 1976, p.183)

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the justification for public participation and the limits within which it is confined. Any insight into the urban system must first be preceded by definitions as the complexities are multiple, therefore section one deals with the initial question of definitions. The second key issue for consideration is the rationale of participation, in order to establish from what standpoint democracy is being perceived in the light of related theories. Section three poses the question, of whom are we speaking? exactly who is it we are asking to participate, at what level and relating to what issues. The intensity of participation is clearly dependent upon the nature of the issue, as well as the individual's ability to participate. The inadequacy of observing public participation in isolation - as a means to an end, is discussed in section four, extending the need to acknowledge participation within the wider structure of government, and society in general. Section five examines the validity of acting in the 'public interest' and whether this is a justifiable substitute for

participation, whilst section six deals with the question of representativeness, be it of elected councillors, tenant associations or whatever. This leads on to the role of the professional within the bureaucratic system (section seven), and the extent to which this has been encouraged or eroded in the planning field; whether in fact it should be the planner's responsibility to encourage public participation. In conclusion the opportunity for participation and its implication for policy is discussed.

## 2.1 Definitions

In Britain urban renewal since the sixties has become a derivative of the classic umbrella term urbanism. The latter has been continually perceived as the root cause of much of the misery that afflicts society. The complexities of what Smith (1980, p.7) sees as density, crowding, the complex division of labour, formal social control, anonymity, heterogeneity and the rapid pace of change. Urban 'renewal' and 'regeneration' have emerged as the processes to overcome the problems of urban areas, the symptoms of the wider structural causes, namely poverty and deprivation, bad housing, dereliction and decay, poor health, low income and so forth. Both are components of an 'urban policy', regeneration implying revival and future growth, renewal relating more to replacement and physical improvement. Within this complex process participation has itself become a catchword, meaning all things to all persons. Thus a more precise definition is now required.

In its most general sense, participation is the act of sharing. When used to refer to participation in the planning process we tend to adopt a definition as near to that as Skeffington's:

'The act of sharing in the formulation of policies and proposals - doing as well as talking.'

(Skeffington, 1969, p.1)

The degree to which participation is politically active or passive varies widely, as will be discussed later. Yet in all cases it exists as the effect of one person or more to preserve or change the allocation of values or resources within society. Beyond these basic principles participation takes on numerous definitions, characterized distinctly by those who wish to define it and by the issues on which participation takes place. Participation may be solely in terms of an individual acquiring self-fulfilment say by using leisure facilities. This can be seen in isolation or a key to wider things, such as the growth of self-awareness and interest, a greater appreciation of society. Such was one of the objectives of the GEAR project, as highlighted in chapter six. In contrast participation may refer to a more direct form of power, for instance the effort made to prevent the implementation of a planning proposal that is viewed as being a dis-benefit to the community, or an attempt to improve something like service delivery through local management of housing provision. A further point is that participation is more acceptable on certain uncontroversial or minor issues, such as internal housing design in a modernization programme, as opposed to the need to select priorities for financial spending in an area like GEAR. (This point is discussed again in chapter five). These distinctions highlight the difference between the desire for

temporary power (basic civil rights), and the need for long term control through permanent involvement.

Beyond these two interpretations there have been acknowledged a variety of levels at which participation can take place, depending upon the degree of power devolved. The most notable contributions to this area of study have come from Arnstein (1969) and Dennis (1972).

Arnstein identifies eight methods of participation, each level distinguishing the degree of control exercised. At the bottom level there is manipulation that represents the distortion of participation into a P.R. vehicle by power holders, in an attempt by power elites to portray an 'image' of involving people. The second level is the therapy method, whereby individuals are brought together through tenant groups and the like, to help them adjust their values and attitudes to those of society. Dennis sees this as the employment of people in programmes such as clean up campaigns and child control projects. Thirdly Arnstein identifies information of rights, responsibilities and options as an important step towards legitimate participation, though recognizing that too frequently emphasis is placed on a one-way flow of information. This is of particular relevance to the question of communication posed in chapter five. Under these conditions, particularly when information is provided at a late stage, people have little opportunity to influence programmes. Meetings can also be turned into vehicles for one-way communication by providing superficial information, discussing questions or giving irrelevant answers. It is also important to notice that where this method is used, participation will be dependent on individual capacity to comprehend information. Consultation is the fourth

level, what Dennis sees as the 'recognition of consumer demands', (1972, p.253). This is achieved through a market research type of approach, based on attitude surveys, public hearings and the like. This can be an important step towards legitimate public participation but needs to be combined with other methods, to ensure citizen's ideas are taken into account. Placation is the fifth method at which citizens begin to have some degree of influence, though as Dennis notes this may be conducted by attracting key notables and placing the least troublesome community members on advisory committees or whatever. The sixth method is partnership, where power is actually redistributed through negotiation between citizen and power holders. Though as Arnstein notes in most cases when power has come to be shared it has been taken by citizens, not given by authority. Delegated power is whereby citizens can achieve dominant decision making authority over a particular plan or programme. Whilst the final level is actual citizen control, by which devolvment of power guarantees that participants can govern a programme. In other words, full decision-making power.

Whilst it is important to acknowledge the variety of levels at which participation may take place, in observing actual examples (as in chapters four to six), divisions at such levels are less obvious. It is therefore necessary to simplify further, in much the same way as Arnstein denoted non-participation from degrees of tokenism and degrees of power. Hence the following table draws upon both Arnstein and Dennis's typologies, whilst concluding (in the final column) three basic types of 'participation' that reflect the veracity of the

activity, whilst allowing a more general comparison with the later findings of the research.

Table 1     A Comparative Model of Participatory Power

ARNSTEIN		DENNIS	SYLLOGISM
(8) Citizen Control		(8) Participation in the decision making process: citizen = policy maker	
(7) Delegated Power	degree of power		GENUINE PARTICIPATION
(6) Partnership			
(5) Placation		(5) Dissolution of organized oppression	
(4) Consultation	degree of tokenism	(4) Participation as attention to consumer demands	PARTICIPATORY SYMBOLISM
(3) Informing		(3) Participating as partaking in benefits: with regard to ones capacity to participate	
(2) Therapy		(2) Participation as employment in programmes	
(1) Manipulation	Non-participation		NON-PARTICIPATION

There are clearly many definitions of participation which as stressed above are also determined by the issue at stake. This is an important point as the question of stakes becomes apparent in chapters five and six, when participation takes on separate meanings with different groups and individuals. In observing participation both in a national context, as in the next chapter and also on a local scale, Arnstein's typologies provide a framework for reducing ambiguity, yet at the same time there is a need for a succinct

definition that distinguishes more clearly between tokenism and real participation. For the purpose of this research therefore the most important distinction is between symbolic and genuine participation.

The next section attempts to go beyond these preliminary definitions, to examine the justification for participation.

## 2.2 A Question of Democracy

'Britain is usually characterized as a pluralist, liberal and democratic society. Planning, as part of that society and its state apparatus, would therefore be expected to reflect those characteristics.'

(J. Simmie, 1984, p.7)

It is important when referring to participation to recognise whether one is aiming for participatory democracy, as advocated by the classical theorists, or representative democracy. The latter exists in Britain today, yet as the following discussion attempts to show, there are several limitations to this view of democracy and many constraints on the way it is implemented. Duncan and Luke (1963, p.158) describe succinctly the principle of classical democracy as:

'A democratic society ... is pre-eminently a society marked by discussion and consultation, so that the whole people know the reasons for political discussions through taking part indirectly or directly in their formulation.'

The long term benefits of participatory democracy are essential for both self-realization and to provide a sense of personal effectiveness on the part of citizens. In addition, participatory democracy is justified through its ability to 'getting something done' and for the 'health of democracy' in general, (Cox, 1976,

p.172). Direct and widespread participation in decision making is therefore desirable not only for the intrinsic worth it lends to the development of personality, but also for its desirable, practical and social consequences, (Dennis, 1972, p.173).

In contrast to this classical theory of democracy is the view (for example Schumpeter 1943), which holds that the only necessary form of participation is the right to vote, leaving the elite free and unhindered to make decisions. Such theorists believe that non-participation is conducive to maintaining the status quo, and hence apathy is necessary for a stable society. These writers clearly support a form of representative democracy, of which there has been much criticism. Pateman (1970) for instance refutes the role of the elected councillor as a community link between the people and the authorities, and argues that the individual needs protection from the arbitrary decision of the elected leaders. It is only through the achievement of this aim that democracy is justified.

Damer and Hague have argued (1971, p.19) that representative democracy has gradually been replaced by participatory democracy, as a result of people becoming more articulate and demanding a greater say in the formulation of policies. This move as a result appears to have stirred both apathy and resignation with many opposed minority groups, be they political, religious, ethnic or whatever, and as a result people have been motivated to ask 'why?' more often, (Damer and Hague, 1971, p.20). However despite this increasing 'awareness', participatory democracy has been suppressed by the inherent constraints of a traditional representative democracy, which as a result has characterized planning.



Throughout the British political system representative democracy has prevailed, despite a growing recognition of its weaknesses and an evident increasing awareness of the more widespread attributes to be gained from participatory democracy. The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) final report of a Working Group on public participation (1982), had the following to say on ideas of representative democracy:

'This view of democracy now firmly installed in our political culture, assumes that members will observe what is happening, will discuss it rationally in the light of their own interests and that of the community and then make the appropriate representations. This ideal process, however, begs a number of questions, notably the availability of information, the potential for public scrutiny of the authorities decision making and the degree of public access to councillors and officers. That is, questions which relate directly to the scope of public participation in decision making.'

(RTPI, 1982)

The RTPI whilst recognizing the limitations of representative democracy, also stress the shortcomings of the practical implementation of participatory democracy, through limited access to both councillors and information. McKay and Cox (1979) convey a similar theme and argue that in speaking of democracy in present society one is talking about a system of competing political parties. Democratic theory is seen to be dependent upon the role of political parties, these being our main vehicle of representation.

Hence in observing participation in the context of present urban policy trends, one is simultaneously observing the state of liberal democracy in Britain at the moment. At the two extremes there may be on the one side the authoritarian bureaucrat acknowledging a most

limited definition of participation perhaps synonymous with 'consultation'. This view postulates the idea that experts are the only right people to formulate policy - policy which can then be passed out to the public for minimum alteration. In contrast others talk of participation as if it were an ultimate power, the key to achieving some utopian end. Both examples highlight the two main philosophies of democracy, that appear to conflict in society today.

It has further been argued (McKay and Cox, 1979), that Britain is one of many industrial societies that has ceased to be a liberal democracy, as policy is no longer determined by citizens transmitting their preferences to policy makers via parties and elections. Instead it is claimed a corporatist state exists, characterized by a polity where the shared interests of parties, bureaucrats and organized economic and professional groups dominate policy. The implication of this for democracy is that participation becomes of little significance and consequently power becomes highly centralized to an elite group, rather than being decentralized. This appears to be the argument surrounding the role of Development Corporations and the increasing emphasis on private sector partnerships in urban policy.

The scope for public participation is clearly dependent upon society's attitude to democracy. It may be argued that representative democracy is biased and merely symbolic of the class structure, whilst participatory democracy would be more productive to a wider society. However the latter appears an unobtainable goal within a structure that has been traditionally a 'representative democracy', albeit representative to varying degrees. The

development of genuine participation within a representative democracy is thus viewed, for the purpose of this research, as extremely limited, and by observing the weaknesses of the present system in the following sections and chapters, the justification for participatory democracy emerges.

### 2.3 Participation for Whom?

For the purpose of clarity concern here is primarily with the participation of citizens in urban regeneration and renewal. It is important at the outset however to recognize the many other 'actors' involved, who in their voluntary, technical or professional capacity can also be seen to participate in the process.

Central government has so far 'participated' to the extent of establishing policy directions, and in specific cases by direct intervention for example the Merseyside Task Force (1981). Similarly there are a variety of 'agencies' both public and private who have been involved in urban regeneration through partnership schemes, (London, Lambeth, Liverpool, 1978); as well as individual projects as carried out by a local authority, or through a multi-agency approach to regeneration like the GEAR project. A further distinction can be made from 'business participation', best highlighted in the form of business elites who either individually or by joining together decide to get involved in urban regeneration, either directly by providing investment, or indirectly as a result of concern for their economic interests or their property. The fourth group of participants are elected representatives, to the extent that

they are duty bound both to implement policy and represent the view of the electorate, acting in a 'liaison' capacity. The final interested parties are those mentioned at the beginning, grouped involvement of residents, such as tenant associations, committee groups on Housing Action Areas (HAAs), (General Improvement Areas in England, GIAs), voluntary associations, and also individual involvement of the general public (highlighted in chapter five, through house modernization procedures). It is on the two latter 'groups' that the focus of the research questions are aimed.

It is important to recognise that levels of participation depend upon the consequence of economic stakes and that those who have more to lose or gain therefore have a greater desire to participate. In GEAR the strive to maintain and further both economic and social stakes is visible. A further issue concerning the intensity of participation relates to the 'ability' to participate, be it of a group or individual. For a long time participation was perceived as a middle-class activity, in that it was only the educated who were articulate enough to organise themselves collectively, with the ability to communicate. However increasing awareness of civil rights has led to a growth in pressure group activity at many levels.

Apart from information barriers to participation, which are resolvable problems, albeit to varying degrees, there also exists that proportion of the population who do not wish to participate, that is those people who:

'Prefer to withdraw within the exact limits of a wholesome egotism, marked out, by four sunk fences and a quick-set hedge.'

(Tocqueville, 1946)

Though this was written in an era of definite non-participation, to a certain extent this is still the case, particularly when one considers participation within the wider concept of true democracy and the need for individuals to be as concerned for their neighbours as for themselves. Clearly problems of self-interest and bias prevail, yet it is now more probable that people 'appear' to be disinterested in participating, on the basis of futile experiences with authorities in the past:

'It's like eating a cotton wool sandwich. You know something is there because it keeps getting in the way, but just what it is, is impossible to find out and eventually you give up because you get tired of chewing air.'

(J.G. Davies, 1972, p.222)

This futile syndrome has become such an inherent characteristic of society, that efforts in the past decade to encourage participation have been treated in many quarters with both cynicism and apprehension.

Having established the identity of the participants and acknowledged the various levels at which participation may take place, it is also essential to recognize that participation cannot be seen in isolation. Participation must be viewed within a wider framework which encompasses societal structures, as only then can one examine whether participation is and should be pursued as a means to an end or as a continuing process. This is the focus of the next section.

#### 2.4 Participation - a means to an end?

Participation can be viewed as a means to an end, depending on what level it is being observed at. The opportunity for individual goal attainment, such as enhancement of lifestyle through participation in leisure and recreation, can equate participation with goal attainment. Likewise the encouragement of participation in the planning process by a political party may secure party re-election and thus is a means to an end in this case. Viewing participation as a means to an end can be accepted if the end result is of benefit to the participants and the wider community. If however the end result favours only those who established the policy, and ulterior motives are evident then viewing participation in this way can be a dis-benefit to society. Participation as an element of participatory democracy should be viewed in broader terms and not just in a narrowly defined context, to ensure full benefit to more than one group. Participation in this context is therefore one element of something much larger, a component of an ongoing process, which is seen as a tool (as distinct from a weapon), that when used correctly can positively enhance and complement the complexity of the planning process, and which should consequently be observed within a wider framework. This 'framework' is the decision making process, the power structure - government.

Britain has its own unique history of community action, an important influence however being the trans-atlantic contribution arising from the Kennedy and Johnson administrations poverty programmes. In particular we have witnessed the introduction of pluralist political ideas under the guise of community control, into the overwhelming

'unitary' framework of British politics. Britain has been viewed (Hambleton, 1978, p.112) as a highly elitist state in comparison with America, power being highly centralized, producing a conservative, 'secretive' and closed system. In America tradition has it that the measure of democracy is the extent to which power is dispersed. If it is not dispersed it is elitist and therefore not democratic, if it is dispersed then it is pluralist and therefore democratic. To this end American government compared with Britain is characterized as being highly fragmented and open, being decentralized to a greater extent. However it is important to recognize the weakness of this view, as dispersed power may be in the form of a quango that has been decentralized, in which case democracy as defined under pluralism, (no one group having power), does not exist. Whilst British government may well be centralized it has a distinguishing feature of being characterized by a 'public responsibility' to its electorate, embodied by the early Trade Union movement and the origins of the working class Labour Party. As a result there is a widely held view in Britain that democracy prevails because so much is subsumed to be within the public interest. However the validity of this argument warrants further discussion.

## 2.5 Participation and the Public Interest

Whilst it is often argued that planning is done in the 'public interest' such claims are often rejected on the grounds that such an approach serves only to buttress the interests of dominant groups, whether these interests are political, economic or ideological. There are numerous constraints that prevent planners defining the

public interest as they have their own set of political views, and whilst they are mainly middle-class, their clients are not exclusively so. The ability of town planners to decide as agents of government whether their legitimate role is to promote the interests of the polity and its members, does not result in the identification of the public interest as a rational goal, but rather a reflection of the ways in which society makes its choices about the distribution of power and resources. Hence there is no such thing as 'the public interest', (Simmie, 1976, p.121), but rather there exist a number of different competing interests.

Intervention in the market by town planners is therefore directed towards multiple ends, to make for a more economic use of resources and so aid the achievement of a higher rate of economic growth. At the same time, with the aim of making life more pleasant for the people who are otherwise at a disadvantage. These ends are often in conflict, economic growth being incompatible with the regulation of the market whilst redistribution to the disadvantaged is occurring, and therefore cannot realistically be seen as taking place in the 'public interest'.

A public interest criteria used as a basis for policy formulation therefore does exist generally, but it takes on a number of different forms and therefore its validity must be continually questioned. The notion of a 'public interest' may therefore evade the underlying need for participatory democracy. As a result it is necessary to examine the interaction between local community groups and the 'apparatus' of urban management, (Pahl, 1975) in order to



observe to what extent the public interest concept is applied and whether this is a suitable substitute for genuine participation, and thereby a means to an end in itself. In examining the GEAR project, chapters four - six go part way in examining this interaction.

The remainder of this chapter focuses on the question of 'representativeness' and issues of bias, pertaining to both elected councillors and voluntary groups themselves. The final section examines the role of the 'professional' within planning and the effect of this on attitudes towards participation.

## 2.6 The Fallacy of Representation

Political participation in Britain, as mentioned previously is based upon a system of representative democracy, which allows each individual a chance to select a leader and on the basis of the choice made, the 'leader' sits in the decision making seat. However as Castells argues (1981) this exercise of democracy is limited to some:

'Isolated, although critical, votes; choosing between a limited number of alternatives, the origin of which has been largely removed from public information.'

(Castells, 1981, p.317)

The problems of trying to evaluate the representativeness of those who participate, be it local councillors or community groups, raises many issues pertaining to creditibility. The problem of political elites influencing decisions and the interests of political representatives becoming synonymous with those of the power elite, can lead to a disengagement of the local councillor from his electorate (Dahl, 1961). It would be ambiguous to suggest that the elected representative could successfully maintain a balance between

the implementation of council policy and pursuing the aims and aspirations of the local population. Yet in recent years, with the growth of pressure group activity, local councillors have been seen to withdraw into the confines of the bureaucratic system, claiming an erosion of responsibility and power, and seemingly unable to strive towards a 'balance' because of the 'threat' from organized 'would-be' participants.

Mercer (1984) poses the question of whether planners should have direct feedback from the public themselves, but this presupposes the representativeness of the community group to be superior to that of the elected councillor. This is by no means correct. The problem of community based representation is just as contentious, in that it is impossible to gain a representative cross-section of a community that acknowledges all individual desires. As a result dominant interests prevail and the most articulate, vociferous and politically active leaders will be heard. This problem emerges once more (in chapter five), in the context of Glasgow's 'community based' housing associations, and in chapter six with regard to community management committees.

In the case of GEAR, whilst the fallacy of representation is acknowledged, the ability to organize into an articulate and expressive organization is seen to supercede the problem of true representation (M. Cullen, 1984). Indirect representation and the creation of a community 'voice' is thus viewed with great importance and therefore it may be argued that participation per se is not necessary in the context of a representative democracy, where

community organizations are created to fill the gaps of broader local government representation. However as chapter four highlights, the question of representation must be treated with caution as the case of Glasgow East Community Council conveys, whereby one community organization was supposed to represent a wide variety of interests.

Clearly there are limits within the present system of representative democracy. The problem of bias in favour of one group as opposed to another is inherent in nature and as long as it continues to be so the case for participatory democracy will exist, as representative democracy continues to reinforce the dominant interests of society within the established system. This issue is further highlighted in chapter four through a comparison of the role of the district councillor with a community councillor.

The final section looks again at the problem of bias in the context of professionalism, which along with representative democracy can be viewed as a constraint in that both militate against participation.

## 2.7 Beyond Professionalism

'The exercise of power precludes discussion. It restricts the parties of the debate to fellow-officials and colleagues, and in so doing immunizes the official or councillor to the clarity of thought and logic'

(J.G. Davies, 1972, p.227)

Although highly critical, this summary of Davies' immediately brings to the fore the dominance of the professional in the decision making process. In observing the role of planners Davies recognized their claim to authority through their possession of a 'systematic body of theory', a 'regulative code of ethics' and a 'professional culture'.

These are used it is argued to demand two other marks of professional status. Firstly an acceptance by the public of professional authority and secondly, the support and sanction of the community. Fully equipped with his skills the aim of the 'would-be' professional is to convert 'consumers' (who are always right) - into 'clients', (who give up their privilege of being right and accept the superior judgment of the professional). As a result, the planner is then able to acquire a 'monopoly of wisdom and proficiency'.

On a local scale, Dennis's study of Sunderland (1972) is perhaps the best known example that questions the legitimacy of the professional. The 'quickness' of decision making discovered in his research, (a three minute house call to label a dwelling fit or unfit), and the fact that the same decisions were made with limited knowledge, raises the question of accountability and the consequent right of the individual to deny the planner the esteem he may claim. As noted later in chapter four, similar reservations of the role of the planner in GEAR have emerged, consistent refusal to allow genuine participation, raising doubts of credibility, particularly surrounding the 'Big Brother' image of the SDA, (J. Anderson, 1984, p.3).

This view on professionalism is perhaps however one sided, as indeed there are numerous theories and perceptions of planning that convey a more favourable image. Marcuse has argued (1976) that planners seek to meet need by a creative interpretation of issues, and that through the application of this creative perspective planning is justified as always having been related to human welfare:

'Planners discussion reflects man's values and culture.'  
(Marcuse, 1976)

However this 'creative interpretation' and application of planner's decisions has been, consciously or unconsciously a reflection of the traditional ideology of planning law. McLauslen, (1980, p.2) identifies three competing ideologies in society, the results of which have discouraged public participation to any meaningful extent:

- (i) The law exists and should be used to protect private property and its institutions. This may be called the 'traditional common law' approach to planning.
- (ii) The law exists and should be used to advance the public interest, (if necessary against the interest of private property). This is the 'orthodox' approach.
- (iii) The law exists and should be used to advance the cause of public participation, against both the orthodox approach to the public interest, and the common law of the overriding importance of private property. This is known as the 'radical' or 'populist' approach.

In terms of democracy and the scope for public participation, one is obviously rejected. Two is perhaps the most common ideology practiced, but must be rejected on the grounds that, as discussed earlier, civil servants cannot define a single public interest and cannot therefore seriously claim to be acting on behalf of the public interest. The last definition is hence the ideology of planning law that equates closest to the ideals of participatory democracy, but

which seems to conflict with the planner's role in the wider government structure.

From the above discussion it is evident that both the role of the professional and the bureaucracy within which they operate are contentious. As the following chapter highlights further, the role of the planner has changed significantly in the last two decades, social awareness being a key element. As a result moves towards area management and decentralization have been accompanied by the view that the planner is now an 'enabler' and not merely a civil servant. Despite traditional thinking that maintains that it should not be the planners job to get behind closed doors and encourage participation, since the mid seventies there have been many attempts to break down the barriers between authority and the public, to equip a greater proportion of the population with an understanding of planning. Examples of this are evident in chapters five and six.

## 2.8 Conclusion

This chapter has been a general review of the issue of public participation in urban planning. From the discussion have emerged several poignant issues pertaining to the role of participation as a form of democracy, and the diversity of participation relating to levels of activity. It has been recognized that there can be more than one definition of participation and that this can convey either participation as a means to an end or as a long term process. Acknowledging basic civil rights and the desire for temporary power, in contrast to the need for long term control highlights the two extremes of scale. By drawing upon the work of Arnstein and Dennis

the infinite quantity of definitions are reduced to three, which whilst allowing a simplified application of terminology to later discussion, does not attempt to negate the intense variety that obviously exists.

Most pertinent to the subsequent chapters are the questions of representation and the need to make power more responsive. In addition, problems of bias and the implications for participation, relating to the role of the professional arise. Perhaps the most crucial point to arise from this chapter, is that participation must not be seen in isolation, and hence when observing it as an element of urban policy (chapter three), or at the local scale, (chapters four - six), it is necessary to recognise the wider structural framework of government and the accompanying internal and external politics.

## Chapter Three

### THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN URBAN POLICY

#### 3.1 Introduction

The objectives of this chapter are to examine how participation has developed over the past two decades and to analyse why this has happened. In observing participation in this context it is easy to become concerned with participation of the urban poor, as opposed to participation per se. Changing social attitudes to participation, of both officials and public, have been increasingly apparent. Dissatisfaction with large scale redevelopment processes in the sixties triggered off grass roots pressure group activity, which as will be discussed later in this chapter, led to an increasing emphasis on involving local people. With an increased focus of attention on deprived inner city areas, public participation was no longer viewed solely as a middle-class activity, as working class people began to organize themselves more effectively (Cockburn, 1978). The mid seventies saw a corresponding acknowledgement by local authorities of the need to increase opportunities for participation with the beginnings of community development.

At the same time as acknowledging these changing social attitudes, it is equally important to recognize the legislative changes that have encouraged or restricted statutory participation in general. The



emergence of the Planning Advisory Group (PAG, 1965) and the Skeffington Report (1969), shortly before the era of the traditional urban programme, signalled a new recognition of the role of participation. Developments in the housing field had a similar effect on influencing current attitudes, whilst local government reorganization and the development of corporate management approaches to service delivery also indirectly affected the scope for participation. Within the overall changing context of urban policy, the mid to late seventies saw a shift of emphasis away from a social perspective and the adoption of an economic priority. By 1979 this had been replaced by an increasing focus on private sector initiatives in a bid to regenerate inner city areas. Despite the Government's support for the European Campaign for Urban Renaissance (1980), with its stress on,

'encouraging the ordinary citizen to play a role in improving his own environment ... and the creation of a climate within which people have as much control as possible over the environment.'

(Report of the Swansea Seminar, 1981, p.34)

present policy directions and the continued withdrawal of public resources appear to conflict with greater public involvement in urban regeneration.

In order to examine the connection between these and other important issues, it is necessary to discuss events within general time periods, which allows a more coherent analysis of the impact of events that occurred. Inevitably some issues such as housing do not easily sit within the time periods chosen, and hence the periods used

should not be viewed as immutable as far as the effects of legislation, ideology and philosophy are concerned.

### 3.2 The Beginnings: 1960-68

In this period public participation was only just emerging, partly as a means to obtaining a more efficient planning system, and also as a result of the changing emphasis of Town Planning in general, away from a physical and technical emphasis to a social orientated perspective. Combined with the growing recognition of poverty and deprivation in the inner city, and the notion of helping individuals to help themselves, a greater emphasis on selective area approaches and liaison developed. Though a seemingly positive move away from the traditional blue-print era of planning, the emerging social welfare aspects fell short of a public interest or participatory ideology, participation being equated only with consultation.

It could be argued that from 1960 until 1968, to varying degrees, both Labour and Conservative urban policies represented indicative planning that pursued private interest ideology rather than public (McKay and Cox, 1979). Conservative housing policy in particular was geared to private sector solutions, with a minimal role for the public sector, although Labour policy in this period also encouraged owner occupation. Both governments reinforced the belief that an effective planning system could harness both public and private resources maximizing economic growth and thereby producing a 'socially just society' (McKay and Cox, 1979, p.43). The 1967 Land Commission, with its aim of allowing intervention in the planning system to enable the private sector to fulfil its development role,

was seen as a direct dismissal by the Labour party of its Manifesto commitment to nationalize all development land. Attention increasingly appeared to be on encouraging effective planning, and both the Maud Report (1965) and the establishment of PAG (1965) attempted to further these aims. The Maud Report looked into ways of improving management efficiency and promoted the idea of a corporate approach, having recognized the inability of existing local government structures to allow a co-ordinated and responsive approach to service delivery. Meanwhile PAG was recommending that local authorities be given autonomy for dealing with local issues in development plans, with only major issues of conflict having to be resolved by the Ministry of Housing, (Damer and Hague, 1971, p.20). Local authorities became obliged to seek public comment, in order to assert their accountability, the provision for which it was hoped would dispel interest in the more crucial major planning issues. This perspective echoes that described by such writers as Cockburn (1977) and Mason (1977), which views public participation as a process in which objections to policies are 'incorporated' and redefined to modify the aims and aspirations of local groups in line with local authority policy. Hence the potential anger and frustration of communities affected by planning is diffused, and concerted action to challenge the existing order of things is directed into 'useful' and 'constructive' discussions with local authorities. Participation thereby representing nothing more than non-participation, Arnstein's bottom level of manipulation.

In some quarters PAG was seen as merely transferring the burden of unwanted public opinion from central to local government, and any

notion of genuine participation was frowned upon in the light of PAG's token approach.

'This is an exercise in P.R. which requires a great deal of careful thought and preparation.'

(PAG, 1965)

PAG was therefore viewed as the means to speeding up the planning process in the interests of efficiency.

The subsequent 1967 Town and Country Planning White Paper however did appear to call for improved communication between planners and the public, stating a major government aim as ensuring greater opportunities be made available for discussion of changes, especially whilst they were still at the formulation stage and could be influenced by the people whose lives the policy would affect. The 1968 Town and Country Planning Act made public participation a statutory requirement in the preparation of development plans, and whilst not revolutionary McKay and Cox (1979, p.54) argue that this represented a definite commitment by Labour to public participation, and an important innovation in the planning field at this time. However in view of continuing emphasis on incorporating public protest its contribution to encouraging participation and representing a government commitment does not seem to hold. As Damer and Hague note,

'Participation was an administrative necessity if the whole British planning system was not to disintegrate.'

(Damer and Hague, p.20)

Meanwhile, in the late sixties poverty had been rediscovered in the major cities, which Coates and Silburn (1970) recognize had in the fifties been accounted for as a 'slight social hangover', affecting

only a small proportion of people as a result of their own incompetence. This had been the only blot on an otherwise uninterrupted period of continued economic growth, but by the end of the sixties there was a growing awareness of the inter-linked problems of deprived areas, as well as the apparent failure of social policies to meet the needs of the poor (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982). In addition there was growing concern regarding the insensitivity of large scale clearance policies, whilst the Ronan Point disaster (1968) brought direct attention to the high rise controversy.

This growing perception led to a number of official enquiries, which were also prompted as a result of an increasing recognition of the 'cycle of poverty' and deprivation theory that characterized the American War on Poverty Programme at this time. The Plowden Report (1967) acknowledged the need for improved nursery and pre-school provision in an attempt to break the 'culture of poverty' that affected certain individuals from infancy through to adult life and into a new generation. The Seeborn Report (1968) stressed the need for a unified community orientated family service that could also help individuals to help themselves. In particular the need for a sensitive approach to those people and areas now lacking a sense of community as a result of clearance programmes, was recognized. The idea of community development was also being explored for the first time, as attention focused on self help, with the long term aim of reducing the dependency of people on local authorities.

Unlike the emerging concept of corporate management, community development seems to have been greeted with apprehension. Cockburn's (1977) account of its reception in Lambeth is probably typical of the

attitude of many councils nationwide. Whilst bureaucracy to a certain extent could abide a tightening up on the inside - through corporate management, the introduction of community development was the reverse of what Dennis had termed 'deliberate civic intrusion' (1972), only in this case it was bureaucratic intrusion on the part of the public wanting a say in local government. Community development was thus viewed with scepticism and in the case of Glasgow, its role within the wider framework of local government was until recently very limited, as will be discussed further in the following chapters.

Further penetration from the American experience was evident relating both directly to ideas on citizen participation and advocacy planning, as well as the notion of positive discrimination. The adoption of the latter through an area approach, was first highlighted in the Educational Priority Areas (1968). Emphasis was on improving service delivery to those deemed most in need.

Policy in this period was hence characterized by three main aspects:

- (i) Management reform, to increase overall efficiency
- (ii) Emphasis on positive discrimination
- (iii) Community development and the notion of participation to help define needs, determine priorities and stimulate self help.

The individual pathology explanations of deprivation were adopted officially, and whilst improved service delivery was pursued with the long term aim of benefiting the individual, emphasis appeared to be on encouraging individuals to help themselves. This emphasis on self

help is important as it has been reiterated in policy ever since, by Labour as well as Conservative governments. The objective of encouraging communities to solve their own problems has been reactivated by the present government, more strongly than in the past, through an increased emphasis on the voluntary sector to compensate for continuing cut-backs in public spending. Further support to this claim is evident in chapters five and six.

### 3.3 Changing Perceptions in Urban Policy: 1969-76

The Skeffington Report (1969) and the 1969 Housing Act were both major recognitions in this period of an increasing social awareness in policy. However as will be discussed shortly, public participation cannot necessarily be seen as a social objective, as there may exist ulterior motives as mentioned previously. This is a recurrent theme that is highlighted again in chapters five and six in the case of GEAR. The early seventies saw further development of policy focusing on communities and people, with the eventual recognition of the significance of economic causes underlying urban problems, and hence the adoption of policy from 1976 onwards with an economic orientation. This section outlines in more detail the key elements that characterized this shift in emphasis.

In the land use planning field, methods of participation which had been raised by PAG, were further discussed in the Skeffington Report (1969). Its emphasis was on talking as well as doing, and the need for increasing public participation in decision making. Skeffington was hailed a positive attribute at the time, though in terms of

genuine participatory democracy it had little to offer. Two limitations were outlined in the Report, that in terms of Arnstein and Dennis's concept of democracy would have equated with participatory symbolism if that. In reality these appear to have been adopted as the basis for participation, rather than the broad statement to which they applied, (McDonald, 1984):

- (i) Responsibility for preparing a plan should remain with the local planning authority
- (ii) The completion of plans must be undertaken by the professional staff of the local authority

Whilst public participation may in general appear to have come a long way since then, being more strongly encouraged in some of the London Boroughs, Walsall and Glasgow, the extent to which these principles in reality have been dropped appears limited. In the case of Glasgow, chapters four and five highlight this more specifically.

In practice Skeffington was seen as an inadequate basis for the development of theories and practices which were to follow in the early seventies, relating to democratic theory and the sensitive allocation of resources. Sociological theorists in this period, (Dennis, 1972, Pahl, 1975) identifying the role of urban gatekeepers and the complex interplay of urban management, highlighted the growing conflict that existed between 'actors'. In this context Skeffington was nothing more than a placebo policy, that implied professional and political decision making as having the genteelness of a Quaker meeting (Donnison and Levin, 1969).



The launching of the 1968 Traditional Urban Programme marked another important change at this point. Though initially focusing on immigration the programme expanded to incorporate urban deprivation in general with the establishment of the Community Development Projects (CDPs) in 1969. The fact that the CDPs were a Home Office initiative, (the ministry responsible for law and order) has been linked (Friend and Metcalf, 1982) to the need to gain the consent of high concentrations of the urban poor. As a result opportunities for such groups to voice their grievances were encouraged and hence an,

'emphasis on public participation crept into many areas of local government activity.'

(Friend and Metcalf, 1982, p.14)

Whilst otherwise attempting to improve service delivery and increase responsiveness to local need, the CDPs met with resistance from some authorities to improve their services. The emphasis of the projects on self-help, participation and improved communication, generated such conflict that three CDPs were terminated before the end of their five year term. This was partly attributed to the increasing recognition of the limitations of pathological explanations of deprivation, and the need as the Coventry CDP final report had highlighted, for political changes in national policies, more public ownership and control of industry and housing and more public sector finance (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, p.134).

The traditional ideology of local government proved a major obstacle to the CDP teams in promoting community involvement, as McKay and Cox note:

'hierarchical local government bureaucracies set in established views and procedures could not accommodate these new demands.'

(McKay and Cox, 1979, p.43)

Shelter's Neighbourhood Action Programme (SNAP, 1969-72) also made an important contribution in this period, recognizing the wider aspects of urban policy. It was the first explicit rejection of the social pathology explanation of urban deprivation, and instead acknowledged the underlying problems of the urban economy within a broader regional context. The relevance of structural changes in housing and employment markets, as a result of selective decentralization of jobs and people, was regarded as crucial to explaining the problems which the project had faced in one of the worst areas of Merseyside. These revelations were later to influence the next generation of urban policies.

Meanwhile specific changes in housing policy were occurring at this point. The transition from comprehensive redevelopment to gradual renewal was epitomized through the 1968 White Paper, *Old Houses into New Homes*, which led to further incorporation of participation. The social implications of clearance programmes became the focus of political debate, and partly as a result the 1969 Housing Act also introduced the idea of General Improvement Areas (GIAs), to England and Wales. Viewed as an 'investment partnership' (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, p.93), they had a two fold effect on encouraging participation. Firstly the emphasis on voluntary improvement meant that owners would have to participate financially, and secondly by declaring GIAs local authorities were committing themselves to an area approach that necessitated negotiation with residents. In

particular concerning environmental improvements. The ensuing legislation encouraged local authorities to gain the confidence of residents and owners, to allow public meetings at important stages of the scheme and to encourage the formation of residents associations.

Inevitably some local authorities attempted to accommodate participation more fully than others. Whilst initial criticism (Roberts, 1976) may have been justified, by the mid seventies most local authorities had moved away from the basic forms of communication, (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982). The projects had highlighted the link between the intensity of participation being issue specific, in that the differential benefits to be gained from improvement policy divided participation amongst owner occupiers and tenants. The former group gained most in this period of increased communication with local authorities, whilst tenants having either no long-term interest in the area or little real prospect of having their houses improved, were understandably less likely to be interested.

The emergence of public participation, in this period has been noted as something of a 'tall order for local authorities' (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, p.93), in that it was still in its infancy in many areas and therefore extensive criticism would not seem justified. However given the rigidity of many local authorities towards the ideas raised through the CDPs, it is unlikely that these authorities would have been willing to greet ideas on participation with open arms. Traditional attitudes to planning meant that artificial boundaries and physical criteria were used to identify GIAs, ignoring the social heterogeneity of communities.

Despite such limitations, the concept of GIAs did signal a change of attitude towards public participation. Community action had had its initial stimulus from GIA proposals (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, p.95), and as a result:

'During the early seventies many residents of inner areas came to understand the working of the local authority, became better organized and able to put forward their views more forcefully, and were no longer to be the docile recipients of renewal policies.'

(Gibson and Langstaff, p.95)

The emphasis on improved management and service delivery in this period up until 1970, and the recognition of participation, was quite significant even though participation per se had never been a direct issue of party controversy. Even so, Labour's response to the growing disenchantment of the redevelopment process of the sixties was apparent.

### 3.4 The Scottish Context

Whilst the experience of public participation in local affairs in the sixties and seventies was slowly developing, in the housing field there had been few similar parallels with England and Wales. With only 25% owner occupation in the sixties and given the nature of the tenemental shock, which posed problems of encouraging block improvement, GIAs never became a feature of Scottish legislation. Few Scottish housing authorities had followed the modest recommendations of the 1967 'Housing Management in Scotland' Report, (Scottish Housing Advisory Sub-Committee Report), which had recommended the encouragement of tenant associations as a form of

community development (TPAS, 1983). Though as the next chapter notes, there were pioneering attempts to establish community based rehabilitation programmes in Glasgow, along with the growth in 'community based' housing associations. It was not however until the late seventies, as will be discussed later (in chapter five), that the increase in public housing to exceed half of Scotland's housing stock (currently 60%), was paralleled with professional and political concern about the management of the housing stock and satisfaction of its customers.

### 3.5 The Balance of Social and Economic Priorities

A second wave of experimental projects in this period saw the beginnings of further changes in policy orientation. With the development of the Urban Deprivation Unit (1972), the following three Inner Area Studies (IAS), in Lambeth, Birmingham and Liverpool (1972) represented a 'total approach' to improving inner city areas, in contrast to the previous selective approach of the CDPs and EPAs. The IAS focussed more on the issue of local authority management than on community involvement, and initially paid little attention to the underlying causes of urban deprivation that were highlighted by SNAP. For the second time policy registered the need to improve service delivery, rather than explicitly recognizing the plight of powerless individuals trapped amongst inner city blight. However, the same happened with the IAS, as had occurred with the CDPs, in that as they developed the significance of wider economic problems was recognized and the previous importance attached to localized social welfare and environmental problems was eroded.

The 1974 Housing Act signalled a re-orientation of housing policy at this point, by introducing the idea of comprehensive strategies, bringing together elements of both clearance and improvement through Housing Action Areas (HAAs). This was the first real acknowledgement of gradual renewal, which stressed the links between physical change being responsive to social need, (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, p.97) and the importance of continual participation by those to be affected. Large scale clearance was finally abandoned as improvement of the existing housing stock became popular. The social benefits gained from retaining communities, combined with the view that rehabilitation was cheaper than redevelopment and new build encouraged the final rejection of clearance policy.

An increasing critique against traditional renewal policy and also comprehensive improvement, highlighted the position of the individuals involved. It was argued that such projects subordinated the immediate problems of existing communities, in the interests of future ideals. Dennis (1972) wrote scathingly of decision making in these schemes as 'lacking objective rationality', whilst Davies (1972) studies in Newcastle and Ryehill focussed on the 'spurious professionalism', strongly conveying the point that an ideology of planning appealing to vague future interests of the general community was regressive;

'It complements and reflects the class structure, giving most to those who already have a lot and least to those who need most.'

(J.G. Davies, 1972, p.229)

Despite such criticisms comprehensive renewal was welcomed, especially by those community groups who looked favourably upon the

opportunity to influence the speed and type of improvement taking place, (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, p.103). At the same time official encouragement of participation in rehabilitation schemes, GIAs, HAAs and the like, provided the opportunity for action groups seeking to promote change at a local level. Community groups began to use the opportunities available to challenge local authorities on wider issues:

'An obvious issue like housing and environmental improvement could assist in promoting an initial focus for discussion.'

(Community Action, 1972, p.25)

Against this background of apparent social awareness, the Conservatives in this period were seeking to further rationalize planning functions. The creation of the Department of the Environment (DOE) in 1970, brought together for the first time housing, transport, local government, environment, land use and regional planning. At the same time local government reorganization was a further attempt at improving the efficiency of local councils. In Scotland until the reform of local government, (1973), individual functions remained very much ad hoc in nature. One of the major benefits of local government reform in both Scotland and England and Wales, was that it finalized planning responsibilities that had been outstanding since the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act. Metropolitan County Councils became responsible for Structure Plans in England and Wales, whilst in Scotland these powers were given to the Regions, with amendments.

The 1972 Town and Country Planning Act (statutory provision) attempted further rationalization of the planning system, though its

inconsistency has been noted, (McKay and Cox, 1979, p.55). The Act gave the public the right to be consulted and involved in the preparation of local plans, as well as at the same time abolishing their right to be heard at enquiries into Structure Plans. On the one hand Government appeared to want a reduction in the state's role, and a return to a regulative system, whilst alternatively through local government reorganization they were updating the administrative framework. This in effect was furthering the interventionist role of the state at the local and central level.

On a different scale a similar contradiction occurred in this period, that had emerged in the late sixties. Corporate management was being introduced into local government in an attempt to exercise tighter control over council finance and the workforce. Meanwhile community development emerged in an attempt to encourage participation, by opening up council doors and offering support to community organizations. The pull of these two in opposite directions inevitably acted as a constraint on the development of participation in local government decision making.

The last of the ad hoc programmes under the Traditional Urban Programme were the Area Management Trials and the Comprehensive Community Programmes, (1974) (CCPs). Area management ideas had been raised in the Liverpool IAS (1973), and this had led to the DOE promoting experimental projects. Area management was seen as a way of adapting local government management to allow a more sensitive response to need. Yet whilst movement was being made in this



direction the effect of the 1973 oil crisis led to 'economic centralisation' (McConaghy, 1984, p.9):

'A form of continuous budgetary control to which all other administrative reforms and planning systems were clearly subservient.'

(McConaghy, 1984, p.10)

The CCPs that followed were launched as experiments to examine the level of resources required to implement large scale programmes, (still on an area basis). These were to encompass a range of economic, social, physical and environmental problems, rather than continuing to support the small scale community and environmental projects of the previous five years (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, p.151). The positive implications of such major programmes, even to the Labour government, included the attraction of both public and private investment. The emphasis on a public/private partnership was an emerging aspect that influenced the development of the GEAR project, launched by Central Government in 1976. The philosophy behind GEAR epitomized the current recognition of the need for vast sums of finance to be channelled into large areas, with a comprehensive approach to tackling urban deprivation. The need for short term results was replaced by a recognition of the need for longer term solutions, as the only positive attack that could be made on such deep rooted problems which characterized inner urban areas.

The significance of the Labour government's redirection of initiatives towards inner city renewal, resulted in a direct departure from post-war decrowding and dispersal principles through New Town policy. In Scotland this was most evident by the proposal for a New Town at Stonehouse being cancelled, financial resources

instead being directed to the GEAR project (T. McInally, 1981). In addition to the growing acceptance of structural explanations for inner city decline, it has also been suggested (McKay and Cox, 1979) that in pursuing an inner city dimension Labour was attempting to regain precious votes that had been lost as a result of population decline from the central areas. In Glasgow in particular the East End's population had been drastically reduced (45% population loss between 1971-78), as people moved out to the New Towns of Cumbernauld and East Kilbride, as well as the outlying peripheral estates. With a loss of twenty seats to a Conservative minority in 1976, the former Labour dominated council may well have had ulterior motives for pursuing inner city regeneration.

### 3.6 Summary

The previous section has attempted to highlight the gradual acknowledgement of participation between 1960-76. The extent of its popularity appears to have been influenced by governmental ideology and the growth of urban policy from a social basis to an economic orientation. Participation has been recognized also as a result of increased community group formulation, of both working class inner city residents (relating to HAA policy), as well as middle-class interests. Though despite this, the opportunity for groups to genuinely participate and influence inner city policy direction has in reality never existed.

The origins of economic and private sector philosophies have been recognised in the latter part of this section. It is within the

development of this latest approach to urban policy that the following discussion examines the scope for participation.

### 3.7 Post 1977: New Directions for Democracy

The 1977 White Paper, Policy for the Inner Cities (Cmd 6845), was the legislative vehicle for the recasting of the existing urban programme to incorporate new dimensions. In real terms the Traditional Urban Programme was merely extended to include economic and environmental projects. The emphasis of new policies was not directed at 'problem families', the 'lack of community' and the need for 'public participation', (Friend and Metcalf, 1982, p.16), but at reversing the flight of industrial and economic decline. Partnership initiatives emphasizing improved co-ordination between central and local government, were set up under the 1978 Inner Urban Areas Act with a programme brief that included industrial, environmental and recreational aspects, as well as social (McKay and Cox, 1979, p.253). However from their inception these initiatives were labouring under the impact of a major contradiction. Whilst resources were being directed towards administering the Inner City Programme, other cuts were being made in social spending (Friend and Metcalf, p.15). Whilst the White Paper had stressed the need for active participation of inner city residents there were growing constraints on the finances available to pursue these aims:

'Public authorities need to draw on the ideas of local residents to discover their priorities and enable them to play a practical part in reviving their areas. Self help is important and so is community effort.'  
(DOE, Policy for the Inner Cities, 1977, paras 34 and 45)

In the Liverpool Inner Area Partnership for example, expenditure by the City Council fell from £56.2 million in 1974/75 to £38.7 million in 1978/79 (Nabarro, 1978, p.171). The implication of this, as with the GDC at present means there are limited resources to encourage participation and decentralization.

Participation in the partnership schemes was envisaged at two levels. Through consultation, there was the opportunity for people to comment on proposals and secondly through voluntary sector projects. However the bulk of Urban Programme finance for such projects went to recognized voluntary groups, excluding neighbourhood organizations at the very local scale (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982).

Furthermore, in terms of encouraging participatory democracy, additional limitations were visible. Though the White Paper had supported representative democracy, by stating that,

'local councillors are vital in maintaining the link between the community and authorities.'

(DOE, Policy for The Inner Cities, 1977, para 37)

in reality the inner area partnerships concentrated power in the hands of a small minority. Partnership committees met in private and inner ward councillors were excluded from the decision making process (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, p.201).

Attention increasingly focussed on the need for state incentives to counterbalance factors that had resulted in firms leaving the inner city, and thus local authorities were encouraged to play a more active role in local economic regeneration. As a result of national attention through the partnership schemes on economic regeneration, there was an evident movement away from any notion of public

participation, as the need for private investment became a top priority.

Although participation and economic goals may not be mutually exclusive, as mentioned in chapter two, conflict generally exists between growth and redistribution to disadvantaged groups. In this period, participation became subsumed by bureaucratic interference in the private market and the need to allow swift decisions between developers and local authorities. This resulted in the first real sign of the negative implications for local democracy and public participation.

When the Conservative government took over office in 1979 they reinforced the commitment to economic regeneration and in doing so highlighted the contradiction between necessary action to rebuild the inner cities and the 'imperative of industrial restructuring and maintaining profitability', (Friend and Metcalf, 1982, p.17). Conservative policy has since encouraged less centrally directed subsidies and more incentives for private industry to invest in the inner city. The 1979 Inner City Policy Statement by the Secretary of State reinforced this commitment by introducing Development Corporations (Merseyside Development Corporation and the London Docklands Development Corporation, 1981), both of which built upon the philosophy from which the SDA had emerged. This being primarily an emphasis on economic development of regional economies, improving industrial infrastructure and safeguarding employment, and generally encouraging investment and better use of land in an attempt to steer economic forces and stimulate local economies. Initiatives which

one may argue have the advantages (to those not in favour of participatory democracy) of 'stripping away elements of local democratic control over the redevelopment process' (Friend and Metcalf, 1982, p.17).

In land-use planning numerous fiscal initiatives have been developed including the industrial building allowance, derelict land grant and Urban Development Grant (UDG), to aid the task of Development Corporations, Agencies and Enterprise Zones in attracting private investment to the inner cities. All have a similar function in reducing commercial risk and helping to ensure private sector profitability. The UDG in particular posing a direct threat to public involvement as negotiations centre on local authorities and private developers, and therefore leave little scope for public interests (Alderton, 1984, p.21).

Such developments have led to amendments of planning procedures, to reduce time delays on development proposals, whilst procedures for appeals by developers against local authorities, have been improved (Howes, 1983, p.161). This attempt to speed up the planning system has also been pursued by reducing consultation periods in local plan preparation.

Central Government now views the role for local government as an 'enabler' not a 'provider', and the role of local authorities in determining the future shape of inner policy as a result appears limited. There are visible signs however of local authority influence over housing policies, for example GDC is attempting to encourage people to take more of a personal stake by participating in

housing management (GDC, 1984). In the light of such activity it may be that local authorities will be able to retain their power to promote or prevent participation. In reality it is more likely that local authority discretion, under present Conservative policy, will continue to be curtailed, and at best will be limited to specific issues such as emphasis on tenant management co-operatives and alternative forms of housing tenure. Clearly these are merely speculations on future developments.

### 3.8 Summary

The post 1977 era has seen a significant shift away from social objectives of urban policy and from participation. With increasing central government control of local government, inner city residents have less chance now than ever before of affecting development strategies produced by Development Corporations and Agencies, whose decisions seem geared primarily to the needs of investors. Whilst participatory democracy in the pre-1977 period was never likely, it would appear that representative democracy in the post-1977 and more so post-1979 era is even more of a fallacy than it has been previously.

### 3.9 Conclusion

The main aim of this chapter was to examine why participation has developed as it has done and how. To this extent it has been necessary to be somewhat descriptive, an overview of urban policy initiatives, that have represented in some shape or form the recognition of participation within planning and decision making.

The fundamental explanations of 'why' are not as infinite as one may expect. What was originally explained as the need for an effective planning system, is now blatantly presented as the desire for a speedy planning process.

Both Conservative and Labour governments have engaged in participation, in a bid to encourage self help and by attempting to improve service delivery. Both have also by presenting participation within bureaucratic constraints used it to govern by 'directionless consensus'. In other words, reinforcing the status quo, and to this end any reference to participation in the previous discussion can be equated with tokenism.

Whilst the area based policies have attempted to involve the public to varying extents, the failure of many authorities to improve their management and pursue decentralization has meant a very slow development of public participation, if at all. As mentioned previously these perspectives have been greatly influenced by ideas on corporate management and the relationship between central and local government, typified through local government reorganization. Yet despite increased public awareness and pressure group activity the scope for public participation in urban policy has been limited.

The changing emphasis of urban policy that was perceived in the mid seventies and officially adopted in the 1977/8 legislation, has had a two-fold effect on the present scope for participation. Firstly it has advocated the need to involve communities in the regeneration of local areas through comment on preferences and priorities of projects, and also in a bid to stimulate any would be entrepreneurs



in the local community; and secondly and relating more to the current emphasis on private sector investment, it has meant limited opportunities for local decision making and control. Recent policy trends are therefore characterized by aspects which are 'not conducive to pluralist participation in planning decisions' (Simmie, 1984, p.8).

Whilst it is important to acknowledge that local authorities do have certain discretion, if only in their ability to bargain with central government, the basic framework within which local policy decisions are taken is determined by national legislation. As Cawson (1979) notes, the existence of a dual system of decision making in Britain, one corporatist, one pluralist, has been increasingly characterized by the 'corporate arena gradually encroaching the pluralist', and as McKay and Cox (1979, p.279) recognize;

'The shared values of politicians, bureaucrats and organized interests look very much like what has been defined as corporatism.'

Public sector cut-backs have led to a greater reliance on the private sector, yet it is in this field, development corporations, private partnerships with agencies like the SDA, and enterprize zones, etc. where local groups are primarily excluded from planning decisions, and as a result there appears to be no commitment to 'pluralism' as the 'new corporatism takes over' (Simmie, 1984, p.8). What McConaghy (1984, p.10) has described as the present 'fiscal drip-fed democracy' - a device for resolving local needs with central control and leading to the hiving off of services to agencies, does appear to be counter productive to the pursuit of a participatory democracy.

A situation which in addition to promoting the private interest ideology, has also imposed budget constraints, leaving local authorities with no resources to pursue effective area management or decentralization programmes in a bid to increase public participation.

The next chapter gives an insight into the effect of national perspectives on the local scale, as well as taking issue with McKay and Cox's argument (1979), that conflict of power may not be solely the result of centralized decision making versus public participation, but that local initiatives are often the cause of much public disillusionment. Whilst the GEAR project was a central government initiative, much of its implementation has been the responsibility of local agencies and as the subsequent chapters show, it is important to recognise their perceptions of participation in addition to the wider constraints and external limitations imposed from Central government.

## Chapter Four

### CHANGES AT THE LOCAL SCALE: GLASGOW'S EAST END

#### Introduction

'GEAR is an expression in Glasgow of a prevailing local and national orthodoxy concerning urban renewal ....An example of conventional fashionability'

(J. Money, 1982, p.16)

The adoption of the GEAR project in 1976 as an example of the prevailing comprehensive approach of urban policy, was as much influenced by the previous social emphasis of the CDPs and IAS as it was by the slow dawning of economic explanations of urban deprivation. The multi-dimensional aspects of social deprivation had been highlighted in both the 1971 Census and the Regional Report of 1976. The latter revealed that social deprivation in Strathclyde compared unfavourably with other areas in Great Britain, 85% of the Region's population lacked educational qualifications, figures being even higher for parts of the East End, (Parkhead, Springfield Road - 100%). Approximately 13,000 acres of the city (30% of the total area) were characterized as 'deprived', (GDC, 1972), with extensive overcrowding, a high proportion of small houses, high unemployment and a developing imbalance in the socio-economic grouping of the population. In the East End specifically, the population had declined from 100,000 in 1951 to 45,000 in 1978, its industrial base was being eroded and by the early to mid seventies had deteriorated substantially. The rate of decline sharply increased between 1971-

1976, with a loss of 12,000 manufacturing jobs in GEAR (25%). The proportion of new openings in the Glasgow conurbation, located in GEAR had fallen to 13% in the period 1971-1976, from a level of 35% (Tym, 1982). Figures available for the Dalmarnock area of GEAR highlight the intensity of the problems in the East End, compared with the rest of the city.

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Dalmarnock</u>	<u>All Glasgow</u>
Unemployment	18.2	10.8
1/2 room households	59.2	29.0
Sharing or lacking hot water	51.5	17.4
Sharing or lacking a fixed bath	61.3	24.1
Sharing or lacking inside w.c.	48.8	11.6
Illegitimate births	18.4	11.1
Births to mothers <20	25.0	13.0
Infant deaths per 000	38.0	23.0

Source: Dalmarnock Action Group Report: 1976

The move away from a selective to a comprehensive approach was to generate the involvement of the main agencies responsible for service delivery, and to examine the contribution of each service to revitalizing the East End. Whilst the main objective was to improve the local economy in terms of employment stimulation, physical improvement of the landscape (both environmentally and regarding the housing stock) was an important priority. Management of services became increasingly questioned by the authorities, with the need for a more localized presence being felt. Housing management has specifically tended to remain one of the main links between the public and authorities in urban programmes, both past and present. With the final objective of GEAR stressing the need for community involvement, housing was in the beginning seen as the main link between the two.

An emphasis on public participation has been stressed in every GEAR brochure, proposals document and review literature since its inception. The people of GEAR were themselves identified as the 'ninth partner' of the partnership agreement, (SDA, 1980, p.2). To this end the aim of this chapter is to use GEAR as an example of local scale renewal; to compare perspectives on participation at the local and national level, and to observe the similarities and differences between GEAR and the developing trends of urban policy nationally. A second objective is to provide background information, particularly drawing upon previous research on the role of participation in GEAR, against which the following two chapters attempt to substantiate the claims made about participation.

The project typifies many aspects of the developing philosophy on urban policy; encouragement of private sector involvement; continual cuts in public expenditure and emphasis on speed and efficiency in the planning process, an increased role for voluntary sector activity (motives for which were examined in chapter three are highlighted again in chapters five and six), and in sum an acceptance of a laissez-faire approach to policy. Thus even at this scale, aspects of what McKay and Cox (1979) term the new 'corporatism' approach are evident.

In many ways the themes developed in the previous chapter are extended here on a micro-level, with the aim of examining the established attitudes to public participation prior to GEAR, and how and why these perspectives changed, (if they did), to accommodate a growing emphasis on community involvement. Hence the first section

of the chapter deals with the initial attitude of the Glasgow Corporation to participation, and the effect of wider national perspectives as conveyed through legislation. The implications of local government reorganisation and the emerging local plan system are also considered, along with the effect of corporate management ideas. The second section focuses on perspectives since GEAR. The effect of the multi-agency approach is considered, particularly given the SDA's purely economic remit since its establishment under the SDA Act 1975, which one can argue may obscure its ability to rationally pursue participation. The extent of inter-agency conflict between the SDA, SRC and GDC is observed as a constraint upon enhancing the comprehensive approach of the project, which in turn has affected the scope for public participation, as will be discussed later. Finally the role of the LPWP and the GEAR Working Groups are examined, particularly in the light of their interpretation of issues, problems and circumstances on behalf of the 'public interest'. This discussion draws once again upon the wider issue of professionalism.

### Section One: Background

#### 4.1 Early Developments

Urban renewal in the East End of Glasgow prior to GEAR was characterized by national clearance policy that had been implemented originally through the 1946 Clyde Valley Plan and subsequent legislation. The 1960 Quinquennial Review proposed 29 Outline Comprehensive Development Areas (OCDAs), in a bid to demolish and redevelop the cities housing stock. Six of these were located in the present GEAR area, (Tollcross, Shettleston, Parkhead, Gallowgate,

Bridgeton and Dalmarnock), (see Appendix 2). The report gave detailed programmes for each area and was approved by the Secretary of State in 1964. By 1970 however only eight OCDAs had been designated, none in GEAR. The social and physical implications of such large scale clearance had been overlooked and there developed a growing awareness that OCDAs were an expensive method for dealing with urban renewal. Since the 1957 Housing Act, Glasgow Corporation had declared more clearance areas than any other city in Britain, (D. MacLennan, 1983). The rejection nationally of clearance policy was echoed at the local level, with the 1969 Housing (Scotland) Act strengthening the role for improvement policy. The Corporation was consequently forced to comply with national policy trends. The Corporation viewed improvement as a physical, economic and tenure orientated response, and by focussing on these aspects social considerations such as the changing nature of the community as a result of original residents being moved out, were largely ignored (D. Robertson, 1984, p.13). In this period the Corporation's view of participation was virtually non-existent (H. McDonald, 1985). As the next chapter discusses further, relating to housing; participation composed of a short letter informing tenants of Compulsory Purchase Orders and proposed improvement areas. Hence whilst authorities in England and Wales were acknowledging participation through GIAs, parallel developments did not occur in Scotland. Events at the local scale were however influenced by a need to encourage participation in rehabilitation through the establishment of the Tenement Improvement Programme (1969) which developed into ASSIST (1972), responsible to the Housing Corporation.

This represented a sociological approach to improvement (D. Robertson, 1984, p.15) in contrast to the insensitive approach of the Glasgow Corporation. However despite ASSIST's activity in this period, the Corporation did not attempt to reinforce the approach and there was limited application of this new initiative.

Meanwhile Glasgow Corporation was recognizing the need to make inner city renewal a top priority. Despite criticism, public policies for housing and the environment had improved many parts of the city (MacLennan, 1983) and in the light of growing problems in the peripheral housing estates many people who had been moved out there in the fifties and sixties were now eager to move back into the city. This combined with the political eagerness to recapture lost votes, reinforced local scale support for inner city renewal. Against this more positive background there emerged a renewed awareness of the true extent of inner city deprivation. In the midst of national initiatives such as the CDPs and IAS, the Corporation produced the 'Areas of Need' Report (1972), which highlighted the extent of increasing unemployment, overcrowding, demands of special need groups and so on. The Report signalled the first recognition in the Glasgow context of the social aspects of urban renewal (McInally, 1981, p.5) and in offering recommendations participation was a first objective; the need to set up local task forces to encourage participation at all levels was recognised. It was thought such an initiative would complement the area management proposals and the role of Community Councils, currently being advocated in the Wheatley Report on Local Government Reform in Scotland. There was also to be more emphasis on modernization and rehabilitation, including environmental



improvement, whilst comprehensive programmes were to be launched for the improvement of derelict land. The Report ultimately recognised the need to gain central government finance, but with local government reform about to take place the impracticability of achieving such objectives was raised.

Within the national context of ideas on multiple deprivation and the move from redevelopment to rehabilitation, Glasgow Corporation did appear to be following suit. Though as mentioned above, local level issues also affected the nature of the development of inner city policy. By 1975 and the completion of reorganization, the follow up to Volume I of the 'Areas of Need' report had not been produced, whilst Volume I had itself been met with 'undisguised hostility from councillors', (Malone, 1977). The social work department at this time were unsympathetic to calls for community development, (before local government reorganization there were no Community Development Officers in the East End). Whilst the growing need for this kind of provision was stressed it was opposed by other departments, as well as being rejected by elected representatives in case it somehow 'undermined representative democracy', (Nelson, 1980, p.78). In addition as was mentioned in the previous chapter, the concern of many councillors nationwide, was the complexity that a shift to rehabilitation and comprehensive renewal would bring. Thus a further resistance to the Report's proposals may have been a result of what Gibson and Langstaff recognized as the:

'Entrenched attitudes of narrow minded bureaucrats and dyed-in-the-wool politicians, whose preoccupation with numbers kept them wedded to the apparent simplicity of a comprehensive approach (to clearance).'

(Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, p.134)

In addition, as Robertson (1984, p.6) notes, many councillors in Glasgow saw improvement as 'second-rate' and instead thought everyone should be entitled to a new council house as of right. However, after reorganization councillors became more perceptive to ideas that could solve Glasgow's housing problems effectively, and participative rehabilitation became popular with certain councillors. Thus, between 1971-75 changes in local politics also influenced the support for a rehabilitative approach to urban renewal.

#### 4.2 The Introduction of Local Planning

Outwith housing, statutory involvement in the preparation of Development Plans was limited, despite PAG's recommendations. It was not until local plans were introduced under the 1972 Town and Country Planning Act that further ideas on participation were considered. By 1974 the Corporation had approved eight local plans city-wide, six of which were identified 'priority areas', four of these being in the East End (Tollcross, Parkhead, Gallowgate and Shettleston). A system of 'working parties' was set up, consisting of representatives from the Corporation, local voluntary groups and any other interested individuals, for the purpose of helping to finalize the plan form. Recent guidance from the 1972 Planning Act was the main influence on the nature of the participation procedure, (Boyle and Brand, 1982, p.8), as relevant circulars and Advice Notes were not issued by the Scottish Development Department (SDD) until after 1976.

The Corporation's first detailed examination of the role of participation was in a report on 'Public Participation: Maryhill

Corridor District Study - Rationale and Procedures, 1971', in which the Corporation's views appeared heavily dependent on the consensus model of society, 'leaning heavily on Skeffington', (McIntosh, 1977). The LPWP was cited in this report as being the best available method for participation, that allowed a corporate response to community problems, as well as providing a forum for public debate. The most significant feature of the system however, appears to be the Corporation's conception that the LPWPs,

'Would allow the Corporation to dictate the pace of the public participation exercise, the formulation of plans, and would maintain overall control in the hands of officials and councillors.'

(Glasgow Corporation, 1972)

Clearly limits on the content of participation were introduced from the beginning and as a result 'participation' equated more with participatory symbolism, the lower levels of Arnstein's ladder. It may be argued however that since the Corporation was at this point under no obligation to prepare local plans, that the process despite limitations, did provide a focus of attention on the East End, and that this could lead to a more in depth analysis including the public more fully (Boyle and Brand, 1982, p.10). In reality it is more probable that the traditional philosophy of bureaucracy prevented genuine participation and therefore the necessity to retain official control prevailed. Deep rooted ideologies and a rigid definition of professionalism were characteristic of the Corporation. Inherent departmentalism as will be discussed later, rejected a corporate approach to policy and to the same end prevented any 'intrusion' from the public. Public participation was seen as an exercise and not a process, and as such it was not viewed as an alternative method of

making power more responsive. The urban managers, in this case the Corporation and Councillors, evidently intended to remain so, and as a result there appeared limited scope for achieving participatory democracy through the LPWP system.

The constraints placed on the role of the LPWP and the way the Corporation viewed this vehicle of communication together appears to have prevented genuine participation. Norman (1974) has argued that the LPWP system was the only effective mechanism available given the nature of the new housing policy:

'This line of attack has been adopted, not because of a liberal philosophy of participation, but as the only realistic line of attack on the complex local issues of area improvement.'

Given the Corporation's need to retain control and dictate participation, their lack of concern for participatory democracy must be noted. The development of participation exercises instead appears to have emerged as a result of the rehabilitative approach to housing, which demanded liaison with tenants, if the reputation attributed to clearance policy was not to be assigned likewise to rehabilitation.

#### 4.3 Local Government Reorganization

Hambleton (1979, p.118) has argued that the debate in the early seventies within the planning profession, which postulated the need to ensure disadvantaged groups had a say in the planning process, was recognized in local government reorganization for Scotland when the government accepted the need for community councils. However despite being established by Statute, the community councils were not

given the status of a third tier of government and no powers were delegated. Judgment as to the efficacy of such organizations are varied, their representativeness being the main line of contention, as well as criticism of them being a mere extension to the local government bureaucracy. They rely on the goodwill of individual local authorities for funding and support, and consequently could be criticized as yet another 'QUANGO'. Initially they were not given full-time professional or secretarial help, though in Glasgow the District Council established a sub-committee of its 'General Purpose Committee' with specific responsibility for community councils. GDC also funds a Community Council Resource Centre, which gives advice and practical help.

Both the LPWPs and the GEAR project as a whole officially adopted the community councils as the main vehicle for public participation, however this immediately generated conflict between elected councillors, particularly district councillors, as to the legitimacy of the community council to represent the public. With the latter viewed as the direct link between the bureaucracy and the community, the role of the district councillor consequently came under threat. As was mentioned in chapter two, the creation of such a group to have direct communication with the planners, presupposes the representativeness of that group to be superior to that of the elected councillor. Whilst this is generally not so, contemporaries have argued that the community council is more representative because of its non-political alignment and relative distance from the bureaucratic power machine. Law (1978, p.6) has highlighted this point in his analogy with industrial democracy:

'The District Councillor occupies a similar position in local government to that of the senior shop steward or convenor in industry. He has special privileges afforded to him because of his position. He receives allowances ostensibly to enable him to perform his function more efficiently; he is in close contact with the bureaucracy, meeting with them almost daily to discuss issues; because of the demands made on him by local government he is not easily accessible to the public he represents'.

To this end representative democracy is seen to impede or conflict rather than foster participatory democracy. Whilst in contrast the community councillor is equated with the Shop Steward on the factory floor, who shares the same interests as the community, lives in the same area, and most important of all is easily accessible to the public.

However the validity of Law's comparison must be questioned. Whilst appearing to be less a part of the management structure of local government, the community council in many ways having been established along the lines of existing representative structures, similarly merely reproduces the features of that structure, rather than seeking participatory democracy. In the case of GEAR, further reservations as to the role of the community council exist. When the project began community councils were still in their infancy, and as such were still trying to define their role within the community. In GEAR there were initially seven community councils, the 'Glasgow East' group representing a vast area which raised questions about its legitimacy. Conflict between areas within GEAR was evident, (T. Lloyd, 1984), dominant interests prevailed and the less articulate individuals who were unable to organize themselves and represent their particular area, were largely ignored. The Glasgow

East community council has since disbanded, and more local area-specific councils have been established. (Tollcross, November 1984, Shettleston, January 1985, Parkhead, February 1985).

For the major part of the GEAR project however, the ability of the community council to encourage public participation was limited, particularly when most members were known community activists, articulate and often vociferous, who unknowingly may prevent less-articulate and quiet members from expressing their opinions. Hence despite community councils providing the opportunity for group formation, problems of representativeness as well as the more fundamental constraint of a lack of real power and decision making, meant the Regional and District Councillors amidst the larger bureaucracy, dominated policy directions.

## Section Two: Perspectives Since the Establishment of GEAR:

### The New Philosophy

#### 4.4 The Multi-Agency Approach

As mentioned earlier the GEAR project was a national response that typified prevailing ideas on the need to rejuvenate local economies, through a comprehensive approach that brought together a consortium of public authorities. Donnison (1985, p.12) has stressed the importance of GEAR as signalling a 'fundamental change of administrative style', that has enabled the agencies involved to develop new approaches to urban renewal. Along with an economic orientation and selective area approach, a 'community-based' response

has been sought which seeks to involve local people more fully, thus strengthening accountability to local demands.

The multi-agency approach has attempted to achieve increased accountability by improving both service delivery and encouraging 'active participation' and consultation with local people, (SDA, 1980, p.2). Effective co-ordination of inter-agency activity was a priority, though initially it appears that the approach instead led to an encroachment of established bureaucracy which resulted in inter-agency conflict. As an additional land-use planning unit within GEAR, where there already existed the SRC and GDC, the role of the SDA was inevitably likely to create conflict. As McNally (1981, p.11) notes:

'The early meetings of the Governing Committee were centred on paper and counter-paper as to the approach to be adopted relative to GEAR where the political pressures which established GEAR and the Urban Renewal Unit dominated.'

Thus in the early stages of the project each agency tentatively developed its role within GEAR.

'The enormous caution and concern about being open on the part of any one agency, for fear of embarrassing and misrepresenting another agency, does nothing to improve the process of involvement for local people.'

(East End Forum, No. 8, 1977)

This was (and still is to a lesser extent) visible, particularly between the SDA and other bodies, notably the GDC, SRC and Greater Glasgow Health Board (GGHB). There existed both apprehension and scepticism of the arrival of a new central government body, especially since the SDA appeared to have far more power and financial resources. In a period when the GDC envisaged further



cut-backs in public expenditure, the SDA was viewed with outright hostility by certain GDC staff. Once the project was established however, the limited power of the SDA to control the other agencies involved became apparent, and this partly reduced inter-agency conflict.

The inability of the SDA to enforce activity on the part of other agencies, has been one of the main criticisms of GEAR. Money (1982, p.17) has argued that the threat of disturbing the power balance between organizations is a strong incentive to leave statutory powers undisturbed. With partnerships consequently based on voluntary group commitment, inherent political and administrative conflicts between agencies are repressed rather than expressed, and as a result Money argues the SDA's role has been to:

'generate a consensus ... organizational persistence a seeming paradox in the face of a lack of power.'  
(Money, 1982, p.18)

This is seen as a prerequisite for reassuring the public that all agencies are committed to the project. In reality it would appear the SDA were merely working within the confines of a set framework, as GEAR had been 'built upon the concept of corporate management', (SDA, 1980) and therefore by its very nature sought a consensus. It may hence be argued that without such an agreement progression of the project would never have occurred, and therefore at least an initial step was being made towards acquiring a management strategy that would benefit the East End. The shortfall of achieving such a consensus is however that traditional bureaucratic structures are retained rather than opened up and examined for possibilities of

making them more responsive. Any attempt therefore to make power more responsive within the present structure of society reinforces the role of the existing bureaucracy and representative democracy.

The multi-agency management framework of GEAR has evidently several limitations which in the beginning prevented a harmonious working relationship, and which in turn offset participation to an unquantifiable degree. Many people were confused by the array of agencies on the scene, particularly when responses to complaints or problems were met with the familiar 'that isn't our responsibility, see Mr(s) X of agency X'. Inter-agency conflict therefore appears to have prevented the new style of administration from developing a specific role for community involvement, accepting representative democracy and thereby dismissing genuine participation.

#### 5.5 Responsibility for Participation

Lacking explicit power and control the SDA's co-ordinating responsibility of GEAR has been described as 'schizophrenic leadership', (Money, 1982, p.14); a management, as implied in the last section, torn between the demands of traditional bureaucracy and the need to introduce new working philosophies, consistent with a changing organizational environment. The SDA's ability to co-ordinate a community based response was perhaps however, constrained as much by its inhibiting ideology, as by traditional bureaucracy. Established a year prior to GEAR, the role of the SDA was for the purpose of 'furthering the development of Scotland's economy and improving its environment', (SDA Act, 1975, ch.69). Its main functions were to further economic development, provide, maintain, or

safeguard employment, promote industrial efficiency and international competitiveness, and further the improvement of the environment. Given such an economic orientation, the ability of the SDA to perceive a need for participation would appear limited. The agencies co-ordinating role in GEAR had to be fulfilled alongside its usual functions of providing factory developments, commercial developments, industrial promotion, small industries, shopping developments, environmental work and derelict land clearance', (Scottish Office, 1976, p.3). In the light of this emphasis on economic regeneration, the implication for participation is one of limited potential. Whilst the two are not mutually exclusive, participation is unlikely to be viewed as of crucial importance. Public participation in public/private projects, as discussed in the last chapter, is seen as a threat, as it may interfere with the private sectors attempts to maximize profit, and would consequently not be welcomed where the private sector are being encouraged, for example by the SDA. However this does not mean that public participation should not be developed within economically orientated policies. The GLC are trying to increase democratic accountability over the local economy and over local economic strategies, by adopting ideas of 'popular planning' - as in the People's Plan for the Royal Docks. In GEAR the SDA did not attempt to develop participation in these directions, emphasis was focussed more so on housing provision and in an overall context based on 'consultation' of the GEAR working group's recommendations.

The lack of central government guidance on public participation for the project, also influenced the extent to which it was acknowledged

formally. Though critics have been eager to highlight this point (Nelson, 1980, p.11), contradiction follows by these same authors who previously criticized Skeffington and subsequent legislation for being initiated from central government, and thereby having limited objectives. If central government had genuinely wished to develop a community based response to urban problems it would have either provided formal guidelines for achieving this objective, or else have made provision for decentralizing power and decision making through the creation of a local level of administration.

As far as GEAR was concerned responsibility for participation lay first with the SDA and secondly with other individual agencies. It is important to note that the SDA was given the responsibility (as co-ordinator), for consultation and participation on the 'overall proposals' and 'programme of action'. Beyond this the responsibility for achieving community regeneration remained with the Regional and District Council, through the co-ordination of services 'in co-operation with the local community' (Scottish Office, 1976, p.3). The question of individual responsibility is examined in more detail in the following chapters.

Inter-agency conflict over public participation per se initially was not a key issue. Of more significance was the conflict mentioned previously, and that arising from the SDA's desire to carry out its own research and analysis in GEAR, despite the GDC's view that full use should be made of planning work already carried out in the area (McInally, 1981, p.7). The result of this diversity was that the GDC carried on with the local plan process for the East End, whilst the

SDA established ten working groups; population, housing, employment, education, shopping, transport, environment, health, community care, and leisure and recreation. The GDC was attempting to provide a framework for action to meet immediate requirements, whilst the SDA was developing an overall statement of objectives for the area. By April 1977 individual agencies were reporting separate programmes of work, whilst the SDA was still seeking approval for a system to monitor the project and to obtain an agreement on public participation proposals.

Frequent time clashes occurred between the LPWP public meetings and the participation exercises carried out by the SDA to discuss the outcome of the GEAR Working Groups, (Boyle and Brand, 1982). At the same time the SSHA was also involved in public participation involving local residents in housing design, which further complicated co-ordination of the project. It was left up to local residents to differentiate between meetings and ask only appropriate questions to that meeting, (SRC, 1979, p.1). The effect of disagreement between the agencies on the method of approach and management procedures hence led to antagonism over public participation. The SRC felt the SDA had provided only 'diluted and nebulous proposals' on public participation in order to avoid conflict (SRC, 1979, p.1).

More direct criticism of the SDA's role in encouraging participation has related to the exclusion of public representation on the GEAR Working Groups. The basis for the overall proposals for the area were identified through the working groups interpretation of need, aided by a sample household survey, undertaken by the SDA in 1978.

The exclusion of the public from the working groups raises the question of the ability of officials involved to identify local need, particularly when on so many occasions, communication with the local population to acknowledge their wishes was stressed. The problem of defining what is in the 'public interest' was made explicit in chapter two, and whilst one may argue that public representation does not guarantee a more egalitarian definition, it can mean that specific issues of local concern are recognized, that may otherwise be omitted.

The SDA's responsibility for consultation on the overall proposals document was further criticized on the time aspects of presentation of the document. The final report 'Overall Proposals' which had developed from the recommendations of the Working Groups was shortened, at the decision of the Consultative Group, to produce the consultative document, 'The Future for GEAR', (August 1978). This was distributed to libraries and public offices throughout GEAR, and in addition a copy was circulated to community councils and community groups (Boyle and Brand, 1982). As the community councils had already been acknowledged as the main forum for public participation, they were invited to hold public meetings for the purpose of being given a detailed exposition of the contents of the document, and to present the public with an opportunity to respond. The East End Housing Association Joint Committee complained to the SDA, as they perceived the period for public assessment of and reaction to the

GEAR proposals as quite inadequate. The public participation exercises went ahead regardless.

The inadequacy of the SDA's encouragement of participation appears to be more a result of the internal ideology with which it was established. In electing the SDA as co-ordinator, without specific government guidelines on participation, the project could not have realistically developed a more sensitive approach to participation, given the continuing conflict with other agencies and the SDA's own interests in economic regeneration. It has already been stated that the working groups were 'discussion groups', to formulate recommendations for the consultative document, and thus it is apparent that the SDA saw themselves as acting in the public interest, with a view to allowing public 'consultation' at specified phases in the project.

The role of the LPWPs in this later period (1976-78) has also been criticized (Boyle and Brand, 1982), as a further constraint to allowing genuine participation. The LPWPs were local level initiatives designed to allow participation, yet even allowing for an existing degree of inherent bureaucratic ideology by traditional staff, the scope for participation appears to have remained limited, influenced in the main by local level constraints. By drawing upon Boyle and Brand's summary of these limitations, further explanation of why these constraints existed is offered.

Firstly, there were misconceptions as to the actual role of the LPWP in GEAR by the people involved. The contribution of political, technical and information analysis functions, meant a variety of

issues were being dealt with, many of which had to be ratified by other departments. Thus official representatives present were unlikely to make policy changes, as policies and proposals were departmentalized and therefore reference back to functional centres was required. The GDC had rejected corporate management proposals in the early/mid seventies and as a result departmentalism prevailed. This in itself acted as a barrier to participation as it reinforced existing bureaucracy rather than opening it up, and left the LPWPs with little or no power.

Secondly, discussion revolved around professional papers, which community groups were given too little time to consider, or often there were inadequate skills to evaluate such papers. Again these barriers were reinforced by prevailing attitudes towards professionalism and given the lack of community development at this stage, there was no real support for encouraging genuine participation. Meetings were held at unsuitable hours when working people could not attend, and in a central city location not in the East End, which excluded less mobile people. Public attendance was hence limited and officials usually outnumbered community representatives. In addition some professionals made it clear they were outrightly against participation and likewise with certain councillors (McIntosh, 1977). Some councillors did not understand fully their role in the LPWP system, (councillor attendance fell off in this period), implying a lack of communication and explanation on the part of the local authority. Finally, the LPWP lasted only one year, which was too short to enable real participation to develop, which is essentially a very slow and ongoing process.



Hence despite the LPWPs being a local scale initiative, it would appear that it was also local constraints that primarily prevented their success in encouraging genuine participation. From an official perspective Nelson (1980) reiterates the view that the meetings were viewed as,

'uninformed people once again using public meetings inappropriately, to rant about matters which were not on the agenda'

(Nelson, 1980, p.55)

In sum it would therefore seem that neither the LPWPs nor the GEAR Working Groups provided a legitimate opportunity for participation. It is debatable whether inter-agency agreement on the project from the start would have altered this, by providing a more effective co-ordinated management structure, that explored more fully the theory behind participatory democracy and the benefits to be gained. As it was practiced, public participation was viewed by both the SDA and GDC as an exercise, that was constrained by a rigid ideology of participation being equal to consultation, which reinforced both the role of the professional and the elected representative. It may be argued, as with Arnstein's theory, that consultation is a step towards achieving a higher level of public control, but in the case of GEAR it is doubtful whether consultation was viewed in this way. Most planners saw the LPWP system as providing an 'educational role' for residents, but to what extent and for what purpose is unclear, as others actually admitted to seeing participation as a 'direct threat to their departments autonomy' (McIntosh, 1977).

Outwith the decision making framework, the SDA's provision for encouraging a community based approach to regeneration was through a

'Community Fund' and 'Information Centres'. The former provided a total of £10,000 for both social and other functional activities, which it was thought would enhance community spirit. The fund however was under used, mainly because of a lack of publicity about it. The SDA's other contribution to encouraging participation was the establishment of the GEAR Centre in Bridgeton (31.8.77) and a second centre in Shettleston in April 1980. There have been several criticisms of the role played by these centres, both by residents and organizations such as the Glasgow Council for Voluntary Services (GCVS). The former group found the Bridgeton centre distant to the central areas of GEAR (expressed through community council meetings), whilst the GCVS stressed the inadequacy of the centre as nothing more than an information bureau, which could achieve little in terms of dealing with complaints and allowing access to decision makers, (J. Anderson, 1984). The SDA however have widely publicized throughout its literature the extensive use made of these centres, yet on closer examination of usage figures it appears the number of enquiries actually resulting from calls to the centres, is well below the SDA's claim. They state that between 1977-80 the Bridgeton GEAR Centre 'handled almost 15,000 enquiries', (SDA,1980, p.34). However my own analysis of these figures reveals that for this period there were infact 14,271 calls, yet only 5,283 actual enquiries. Callers were defined as the actual number of people entering, so for instance four people may have entered, yet only one was making an enquiry. Hence the accuracy of the SDA's statements on usage of such facilities must be treated with caution.

Perhaps inevitably, the SDA has to continue to promote the GEAR project, and whilst acknowledging its limitations to solving urban problems, in a recent lecture (Jan.,1985), John Wallace (SDA official), maintained that participation was still an important element, and implied that the SDA had been successful in encouraging a community based response. Looking back on the last ten years however, it is apparent that there have been many limitations and constraints on developing participation, which the SDA have been unable to solve. The conclusion draws upon some of these examples that have been mentioned in earlier parts of this chapter, as well as providing a summary on their implications for local scale urban regeneration.

### Conclusion

The development of a more socially-orientated urban policy was identified in section one of this chapter, highlighting the shift away from clearance and redevelopment, to improvement and rehabilitation. Parallel movements towards a selective comprehensive approach also occurred as mirrored from the national level to the local scale. Local politics also influenced the development of a more sensitive policy. With emphasis on improved service delivery through local government reorganization, and the new idea of LPWPs, it may appear as if such developments brought planning down to a more local level. However the falseness of this assumption needs to be stressed in order to convey a concluding perspective. The LPWPs were, and community councils still are, part of a wider local government structure that the SDA had no influence over. Along with

the other agencies, the SDA was quick to accept the community council as the main vehicle for public participation, and yet had it looked for an alternative method it may have concerned itself with the underlying philosophy and rationale of participation, recognizing problems of representativeness, conflict with local councillors, and the overall constraint of the local government structure. However it was perhaps for these same reasons that the community councils were adopted as the main link between the authorities and the public. Being a central government creation, and 'acceptable' within the bureaucracy, the community councils were not a liable threat to the existing structure. They thus provided an opportunity for 'participation', but one which was constrained by both central and local government.

The economic priorities of the SDA also restricted the development of a community based approach, with the prevailing national orthodoxy of the late seventies securing the exclusion of the public from the policy formulation arena. In addition, the public interest ideology needs to be questioned as with the role of the working groups and the LPWPs, which represented at best participatory symbolism. Inter agency conflict over management structures precluded a common public interest being identified, leaving little opportunity for the development of genuine participation.

## Chapter Five

### HOUSING IN GEAR: THE LIMITATIONS OF PARTICIPATION

#### Introduction

Previous research as noted in chapter four has highlighted the inadequacies of approaches to participation in GEAR. By reviewing such literature statements about the limitations of community involvement in the planning process, particularly relating to the inefficiency of the LPWPs and the Working Groups, were raised. In addition the inter-agency relations and management structures also emerged as posing further negative implications for participation. The main objective of this chapter is to take these conclusions pertaining to the lack of scope for participation as a hypothesis, and by examining a case-study in detail to assess the generalised conclusions of chapter four. In addition there are two secondary aims of this chapter:

- (i) To show that limitations to participation are not solely the result of centralized decision making, by examining to what extent local initiatives have been the cause of public disillusionment (or satisfaction)
- (ii) To observe the wider constraints to participation, including the implications of central government ideology and action, (notably the current economic emphasis of urban policy and the accompanying cut-backs in public spending).

As was discussed in chapter two, levels of participation are issue specific, housing providing a key arena for viewing the interplay of social and economic stakes through participation. The chapter is split into five sections, which together attempt to evaluate the hypothesis. In section one the objectives outlined for housing in GEAR are examined, highlighting the emphasis on a comprehensive approach and the need for sensitivity. Section two examines the role of the GEAR housing working group in extending these aims, at the same time raising the question of the representativeness of this vehicle of communication. By observing the proposals of the working group the specific objectives for housing become apparent, particularly highlighting those raised from public concern. In the third section, assessment is made of the individual attitude of each agent towards public participation, the extent to which the proposals of the Housing Working Group were adhered to, and the effect this had on the encouragement of participation in housing. Section four attempts to examine the content and quality of participation using the example of house modernization projects. This example raises questions regarding both the ability and desire of individuals to participate, be it on a collective or individual basis. The final section focuses on additional constraints identified in chapter two, namely bureaucratic influences, the issue of professionalism and present central government constraints.

Since the whole of the GEAR project covers a large area attention will be focussed specifically on activity in Parkhead though agency attitudes will inevitably reflect a wider policy perspective. This area was chosen on the basis of access to available information and

also because the focus of the second case-study (chapter six) is in this area. Thus allowing a complementary comparison later in terms of the overall objectives of the GEAR project to participation and community based regeneration. Despite using this limited scale of examination, the 'interplay of urban management'; (Pahl, 1975) as well as a detailed insight into the nature of the agencies involved is provided. These agencies being, Glasgow District Council (GDC) Housing Department, Scottish Special Housing Association (SSHA), and the local housing association, Parkhead.

#### 5.1 Background: Housing and GEAR

Housing was acknowledged as one of the vital components of comprehensive urban renewal, under the auspices of the GEAR project, in an attempt to produce 'real community regeneration' (SSHA - A Mirror of Scottish Housing, p.32). It was and still is a major feature of the five local plans, in an attempt to improve the physical deterioration of a poor housing stock, and to remove the past image of the East End as a 'dumping ground' for many of the most socially deprived families in Glasgow (East End Forum, issue no. 2, 1977).

The housing characteristics of Parkhead were typical of the overall housing requirements in GEAR. As a result of the age and condition of the physical fabric in the area, particularly of residential property, problems of house condition were a top priority. There had been a drastic decline of housing stock and population (highlighted in the Regional Report, 1976), due to clearance in the early seventies. As a result 44% of Parkhead's population was lost

between 1971-78 (GDC, 1980, p.3). One of the major proposals for GEAR as a whole was to limit future house clearance and replace it with a substantial programme of rehabilitation of tenements and modernization of older council housing. At the time it was recognized that besides providing the opportunity to stabilize the population, new management problems would emerge, particularly relating to the upheaval and disturbance of existing communities. To ensure that progress was not hindered unnecessarily, it was agreed at the outset of the project that developments already at an advanced stage would continue (SDD, 1976). Consequently when GEAR was established the GDC already had advanced proposals for 700 new houses and a further 1,800 to be included in modernization and improvement schemes. In addition the SSHA was beginning work on proposals for 1,500 houses, the majority of which were within GEAR. Hence the fact that many decisions had already been made regarding housing proposals, was clearly an initial constraint for public participation.

## 5.2 The GEAR Housing Working Group

This was one of the ten topic working groups set up by the SDA in 1977 mentioned in chapter four, to identify key issues in the East End with the aim of producing an 'overall proposals' report. Representatives from each of the agencies involved were members of the group, along with representatives from the Regional Council. Its remit was to collect information across agency boundaries, to identify needs and obstacles, and to review the opportunities for change in the light of such obstacles.



As discussed in chapter four, concern was raised by the Glasgow Council for Voluntary Services (GCVS), regarding the role of the working group regarding public participation. Early promises of 'full participation' by local people in planning the regeneration of the East End were in essence overlooked (J. Anderson, 1984). Whilst local organizations were aware of the formation of this and other working groups they were refused representation, mainly on the grounds that the working groups were 'discussion' groups only, for the purpose of assembling information for the future report. Only one of the ten working groups had any local representation, (the education working group), despite the fact that resident participation in the 'planning and management' of the project was continually stressed (SDA, 1979). The housing working group initially excluded the local housing associations regardless of the fact that they were being encouraged to play an active part in the renewal programme.

It was eventually agreed that each working group would hold one meeting with elected members at an early period in its existence and another shortly before it reported back, to explain its activities (SDA, 1977). Clearly the elected members were the only channel through which communication with the public was available and the fact that only two opportunities for discussion existed proved a very limited form of access. Given the variety of reasons that prevent communication between councillors and the electorate, be it disinterest or the more acute problem of lack of correspondence as a result of a low educational attainment, then the issue of liberal

democracy appears to fade away as the shared interests of those involved, namely the housing working group, prevailed.

The groups discussion paper did take into account contemporary thinking on issues of community involvement as described in various reports and surveys, including the three Inner Area Studies (IAS, 1973; SDA, 1977). The IAS had highlighted the development of public participation through 'community forums' as well as the decentralization of some local government roles which affected tenants most, relating to house improvement, maintenance, management and environmental care. In addition the GDC had begun to recognize the attributes to be gained from organized tenant associations, encouraged by community development initiatives that were just taking off in other parts of the city. The working group noted these reflections through consideration of GDC Housing Management Reports, whilst an SSHA paper on 'rental housing, housing for sale and housing mix' highlighted the existing commitment of the SSHA to public consultation. Drawing on these sources the housing working group developed nine proposals that highlighted the importance of compromising housing policies required to achieve the GEAR objectives, with current GDC policies. Appendix 3 outlines these proposals, but for the purpose of this study, proposal number 7 is of most significance:

- (7) The involvement of communities in the management and maintenance of their houses and surroundings.

(SDA, Housing Working Group, 1977)

Two obstacles were immediately recognized as constraints to achieving this aim. Firstly bad experiences from the past and growing apathy

and scepticism in the East End, resulting in low attendance at meetings by a small percentage of the more politically active. Secondly, the fact that policy and letting procedures were determined on a District wide basis led to a sense of remoteness of the authority and the removal of involvement (SDA, Housing Working Group, 1977). Both of these obstacles had been recognized in the IAS, whilst the East End Forum aptly summarized part of the problem as years of 'neglect' by the housing department and from other government levels which had led to:

'An almost total lack of confidence which people feel about their own lives - or about the officials who make all the decisions'.

(East End Forum, No. 2, 1977).

Davies' concept of communication with authorities being equated with 'eating thin air', was as common to the East End of Glasgow as it was anywhere. The insensitivity of housing management had been recognized in the Liverpool IAS in particular, and whilst new initiatives were being sought in Glasgow, their effect at this point was little felt. The Liverpool study had recognized the varying commitment between public and private sector tenants (commented upon in chapter three, regarding the benefits of GIAs to encouraging participation). The necessity to overcome this and associated problems, and to break new ground within such an experimental project as GEAR, should have been of paramount importance.

The housing working group acknowledged the need to overcome such obstacles through what they recognized were six opportunities:

- (i) The development of community based housing management policies.

- (ii) The provision of housing advice centres.
- (iii) The involvement of community representatives in the preparation of housing briefs.
- (iv) Involvement of residents in the maintenance of their homes and environment by the setting up of co-operatives.
- (v) Re-allocation of housing management powers to residents associations.
- (vi) The involvement of residents in the selection of priorities for modernization schemes and in detailed design of schemes.

Proposals (ii), (iii) and (vi) can be equated with what was termed in chapter two, 'temporary power', whilst (i), (iv) and (v) could be associated with the desire for long term control through permanent involvement. Again by comparison with the framework of participation described in chapter two, it appears that the former group equates more with participatory symbolism, whilst (i), (iv) and (v) represent a more direct move towards achieving genuine participation. The validity of this claim will be discussed again, later in the chapter.

The following section attempts to examine how far each agent pursued these proposals, in an attempt to achieve the seventh objective of the housing working group. However it is first necessary to acknowledge the additional issues that emerged as a result of the public participation exercises following the groups recommendations. From the public meeting on the Consultative document, 'The Future for GEAR' (August, 1978), referred to in the previous chapter, specific issues of concern emerged, regarding housing these were:

- (i) The lack of involvement of residents in house modernization programmes, and the lack of opportunity to retain 'community cohesiveness'.

- (ii) Relatedly, a lack of understanding by local residents both of policies behind modernization (relating to policy formulation and priorities of action), and the lack of information on time-tables.
- (iii) There was a strong feeling that despite improvements to the physical fabric of houses there was no complementary improvement in the 'sense of community', which had been hoped for.  
(SDA, Housing Working Group, 1977)

All three issues highlight the importance of one's immediate environment. Apart from reference to the policies behind modernization, which touches upon aspects of policy formulation, concern was mainly focussed upon the right of each individual to have a say in the planning of their immediate surroundings. Reinforcing Tocqueville's observation of participation being limited within 'four sunk fences and a quick-set hedge.'

These additional issues along with the housing working groups original recommendations were revamped and provided the basis of the SDA's document 'GEAR Overall Proposals' (April 1979). Whilst it is apparent that the working group had stressed aspects of community involvement, emphasis appeared to be on the future management and maintenance of housing provision, and not on the 'formulation' of policies that would effect the area. As mentioned earlier, plans had been drawn up for the East End long before GEAR had arrived on the scene. Lack of actual public representation may have been compensated for by the ability of the elected councillors to act in the 'public interest'. However given the initial weaknesses of both representative democracy and acting in the public interest, combined with the limited opportunity for comment by councillors in any case,

then the housing working group did not appear to be pursuing participatory democracy, and clearly limited genuine participation.

### 5.3 Intra-agency Attitudes

In the light of proposals for increased community involvement made by the housing working group, subsequent responses were made by the SSHA and the Housing Corporation. The former was of the opinion that it had already established a satisfactory 'client - professional relation', whilst the Housing Corporation emphasized the fact that housing associations in the East End were 'community based' (SDA, Housing Working Group, 1977). Both saw themselves as already contributing to the development of participation but it is necessary to take a closer look at the internal attitude toward public participation, to assess to what level participation is perceived and why; whether it is a result of individual agency attitudes or central government influence. Finally it is necessary to ask in what ways and to what extent do these conclusions affect the scope for participatory democracy. This part of the research, to reiterate from chapter one, has been based upon interviews with staff from the agencies concerned and where possible using internal documents on participation.

#### (i) The Scottish Special Housing Association

In 1976 the SSHA did a review of all forms of tenant participation, not specifically because GEAR was being launched at this point and the idea of community involvement was stressed, but more so as a result of central government legislation, from Skeffington through to

Wheatley and local government reorganization. Prior to this, it is maintained that participation was always seen as an important feature of the association's work, encouraged by both key members of staff and as a result of an evolving societal attitude in general which recognized the potential of participation. The document produced, (Public Participation Procedures, 14.6.77) outlined the fundamental objective of any public participation exercise as being able to:

'Ensure that the end result is totally relevant and acceptable to the users and the suppliers of the services by a meaningful input by the users at all stages'.

(SSHA,1977)

It was thought that to involve tenants and communities would contribute to improved tenant satisfaction, better tenant/landlord relations, and a more cost-effective use of resources. The SSHA set down what they saw as the 'principles' of participation:

- (i) Contact must be made with tenants or individuals and/or communities prior to proposals being drawn up.
- (ii) As much information as possible must be disseminated to enable tenants to make informal decisions.
- (iii) Every effort should be made to establish individual choice and variation to satisfy everyone's requirements, (mainly relating to internal improvements).
- (iv) Continuing contact should be made with tenants both during the implementation of proposals and thereafter.
- (v) The maximum amount of contact should be attempted to ensure that he/she is fully satisfied with the proposals.
- (vi) Flexibility of approach should underlie all contact with tenants. The approach most likely to secure maximum involvement must be carefully selected to suit the particular community. (As chosen from; public meetings, interest group meetings, surveys and interviews, community group meetings, SSHA working party meetings, surgeries and street meetings).

Whilst appearing to acknowledge the need for increased tenant involvement, the principles consisted of many widely defined phrases. As much information 'as possible'; 'maximum amount' of contact; flexibility of approach with 'maximum involvement'. Terminology such as this can clearly denote many definitions, the same problems arising here as with the American Model Cities Programme, 'maximum feasible participation', a controversial definition in itself. The extent of participation will as a result therefore be determined by the interpretation made by the officer in charge.

The principles advocated are organized by the SSHA in a variety of ways according to the degree of power and control devolved. Table 3 allows comparison with the framework derived from chapter two. It is evident that at least two methods advocated by the SSHA equate with genuine participation (or Arnstein's top level of citizen power). In the modernization process the most common form of meeting however is (3), though type (1) meetings are used to generate further communication between tenant representative committees, as will be discussed later. However, whilst seeming to offer a range of methods designed to generate public participation, official decisions still represent the key force in determining participation procedures as will be shown in the next section. Such activities can be said to represent consultation and public discussion, rather than genuine participation. However if one accepts Loew's (1979) argument that total participation may be an 'unobtainable goal', that nobody really wants it, or that it may even be harmful, then the application of SSHA principles may seem a suitable, realistic description of what



Table 3 Comparison of approaches to participation

Framework	SSHA	GDC	Parkhead Housing Assoc.
Genuine Participation	<p>1.Meetings controlled by local groups with officials in attendance eg. TRC Meetings.</p> <p>2.Individual meetings designed to illicit individual response.</p>	<p>For example, meetings with Tenant Liaison</p> <p>-</p>	<p>Second method of contact with public: individual house visit.</p>
Participatory Symbolism	<p>3.Conventional meetings with a more informal interchange of ideas: controlled by middle-rank officials actually involved in the drawing up and implementation of proposals: eg. initial public meeting prior to modernization.</p> <p>4.Communication by post or telephone within the modernization process.</p>	<p>More often the framework for meetings with Tenant Liaison Groups</p> <p>Part of modernization 'package'</p>	<p>Meeting to discuss design principles</p> <p>Initial public contact</p>
Non-Participation	<p>5.Conventional meetings controlled by a platform party, council members and senior officials. eg. initial public meeting prior to modernization.</p>	<p>Initial public meetings prior to modernization</p>	

participation is really about. The importance of providing information was recognized by the SSHA in an attempt to overcome communication barriers. Though as was also the case with the GDC, a wealth of leaflets and the like cannot ensure an effective method of correspondence, as there are often too many or they tend to be too complex for the lay-person. Stringer (1974) has argued that dispersal of information, collection of information and enhancement of citizens using a variety of techniques, is a favourable 'substitute' for participation within the present system. Viewed in this light the approaches used by the SSHA, interviews, Street meetings, surgeries and the like, may well represent a valuable contribution to gaining public consensus. Subsequent reports on the GEAR project have hailed the SSHA as coming closest to anything like real participation, yet whilst it may appear that they have made an effort to encourage public interaction, it is necessary to justify this claim further, as will be seen in section four using actual examples.

The SSHA also recognized the problem of tenant involvement being in an advisory as opposed to an executive capacity. The Association believed there would be areas where participation could only be on the basis of the former, yet by stating that even in these cases,

'an attempt should be made to allow as many opportunities as possible for executive functions to be accepted'.

(SSHA, 1977)

appear to be contradicting themselves:

'In essence tenants must be able to see that an invitation to participate in such matters is not purely a token effort on the part of the association, but a 'genuine desire' to give tenants greater control over

matters of importance to them and be able to influence association policy over other issues.'

(SSHA, 1977)

However by acknowledging constraints that limit participation to an advisory capacity, the SSHA were reinforcing the existing bureaucratic structure, and in terms of participatory democracy therefore participation was merely being equated with tokenism.

The SSHA's genuine desire to encourage participation was embodied through the role of liaison officers who were introduced in 1977. Their remit was originally to liaise with tenant representative committees, though this was expanded to encourage management co-operatives, within the shifting emphasis of GDC housing policy. Three such co-operatives have been set up in GEAR. Fairbridge (1980), Claythorn (1981) and Whiterose (1983). Whilst the SSHA retained ownership, the management, including repairs and maintenance, upkeep of landscaping, transfers and exchanges, and day to day running has all been devolved to the tenants co-operative. In 1981 SSHA community development officers replaced liaison officers, their new remit being to 'actively' pursue the encouragement of management co-operatives. The idea of management co-operatives has been signalled as a great achievement in terms of tenant involvement, both increasing tenant awareness and satisfaction. From an SSHA perspective they represent participation in an executive capacity and not advisory. However given that only three exist in GEAR, there remains a significant proportion of people who are "un-organized", yet are affected by policy outcomes of the SSHA and GDC all the same.

It is to the question of 'individual' power, (as opposed to the collective power of co-operative), that the next section refers to. By observing the procedures involved in modernization programmes the principles laid down by the SSHA are further examined. It is first necessary however, to observe the attitude of the local housing association and the District Housing Department, to provide a comparison and further examination of the extent to which principles and proposals on participation exist.

(ii) Parkhead Housing Association

Between 1974-78 five housing associations were established in GEAR. Parkhead was registered in 1977. It emerged as a typical example of the emphasis at the time on 'community based' housing associations. The Housing Corporation had recognized the need for an enduring local presence, as well as the necessity for residents to have control over modernization programmes through Management Committees. Consequently these associations were based within the local community and allowed full resident involvement through share-holding memberships. The Management Committees are open to all share-holding residents, and in order to be a shareholder one has to reside within or have a commercial interest which would be affected by the modernization programme within the boundaries.

Observed in isolation the role of Parkhead Housing Association 'is not an adequate representation of the Housing Association Movement. However as it is a component of the GEAR project, and renewal of the Parkhead area specifically, its contribution to encouraging participation warrants closer examination. Though the association

differs from the SSHA and GDC because it is run by residents, and major decisions are made at a local level, to accept at the outset that it is accountable at the local scale would be presumptuous. Whilst 'top-heavy' bureaucracy may not be such a constraint, the extent of community involvement and questions of representativeness require further discussion.

The emphasis placed on the 'community' aspect of Glasgow's housing associations has been questioned on several occasions. Assumptions of community identity are often made, but as MacLennan (1983) recognized in observing a selection of housing associations in Glasgow, the traditionally perceived 'community' was not evident. This is certainly the case with Parkhead Housing Association. The view held by the Treasurer was that Parkhead was 'deficient in terms of community spirit', explanations for which are discussed later.

A brief observation of the internal structure of the association gives an indication of the role of management and the extent of participation. The Management Committee comprises fourteen members, (twelve tenants, one owner occupier and one former GDC tenant), plus three representatives of Governing bodies; (the District and Regional Councillors and an MP). With the exception of the last four all live in Parkhead, the remaining group residing within GEAR. This is an important aspect relating to the ability of individuals to represent communities when they live outwith the area and are not familiar with the needs and characteristics of the population. Though with the majority of the Committee residing within GEAR this is less of a problem, yet it is equally important to remember the

limitations of representation and acting in the 'public interest'. Beneath the Management Committee there are six sub-committees, representation on which is not restricted to one committee. These are; finance and general purposes, property and maintenance, development, housing management, staff and social promotions. The sub committees discuss and make decisions pertaining to specific issues and the Management Committee ratifies these decisions as well as taking decisions on issues of general policy for the association.

It has been argued that the role of staff within housing associations has been superfluous in the decision making process and that they merely implement the instructions of the management, which suggests a lack of confidence in staff. However staff/committee relations in the Parkhead association are perceived as good with relatively little conflict, and whilst the Management Committee does have the final say, the contribution of the staff is held with high regard.

One of the main problems perceived by the association according to the Treasurer is the need to educate the public, be they on the Management Committee or not, as without knowledge and an understanding of the system, the success of participation will be limited. There had been problems of lack of training, especially in financial and technical matters, and the association felt the Housing Corporation had let them down on this point, having laid so much emphasis on the 'community based approach'. The developing role of the association within the framework of urban management may as a result have been hindered. However the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations does provide training courses for committee members and staff.

With regard to the lack of 'community spirit' in Parkhead, despite widespread interest at the first public meeting held by the association, general response had diminished since 1977. Reasons for this were partly attributed to the lack of publicity about the role of the association and its activity. The association had at its inception a circulated newsletter, but this had ceased after only a short while. Another major obstacle was seen as the lack of a formal community centre in the area, to provide a sense of 'identity' and a meeting point. Such issues highlight the problems of pursuing participation at various levels, in that both the SSHA and GDC have full-time community development officers to deal with these issues, in addition to having a more permanent promotion campaign. (The GDC can offer a video, explaining their activity, encouraging tenants associations and the like). A further barrier was seen as the high proportion of elderly shareholders, the majority of whom had shown no interest in the running of the association, but were content as long as an effective repairs system was in operation. At the same time however, the younger members of the association also appeared disinterested and it was believed that this was also a result of the lack of publicity and focal point for organization.

On the basis of discussion with a group of tenants, housing association, GDC and SSHA, the view was held that the association did little to involve residents in activities. It was perceived as more of a local government department, rather than a 'community based association', being viewed as 'secretive', and run by key individuals with dominant interests. The problem of 'representation' has been

stressed continually throughout this research, and without a more in depth analysis of the association's work the extent of commitment to participation cannot be fully acknowledged. However it is apparent that in lacking any guidelines on participation, the association is dependent upon individual residents registering a desire to be involved. Limitations to this have been acknowledged in previous chapters and as shown above the lack of publicity and community focal point appears to exacerbate the problem of non-participation.

(iii) Glasgow District Housing Department

Prior to GEAR public participation was equated by the department with consultation. Priority decisions for projects were highly centralized issues, (H. McDonald, 1985). Modernization schemes involved a basic 'informing' process, by means of a letter and a public meeting. This did not allow scope for public involvement, and professionals implemented projects on a purely technical basis, establishing details with minimum public contact. All aspects were decided from 'above' and there was no opportunity for choice or comment. The role of the professional, be it housing planner, physical planner or architect was highly acclaimed internally as traditional bureaucratic ideology prevailed.

When the GEAR project arrived on the scene traditional deep rooted ideologies did not inevitably disappear overnight. Whilst 1975 reorganization had been accompanied by the promotion of a 'corporate' approach to management, the idea never really took off in the GDC. Emphasis instead was on retaining the power of the numerous committees that existed at the time and as a result departmentalism



has continued. Hence despite the claim that GEAR was built upon a corporate management approach, in the housing department departmentalism was evident and the 'them vs us' philosophy has continued to prevail. This has served to reinforce what Ward (1983) describes as the 'syndrome of dependency and resentment'. With regard to housing in GEAR, public participation as opposed to consultation was not viewed feasible in a climate of such extensive urban decline (D. Hepburn, 1985). Dereliction and decay, and the resultant mass of sub-standard dwellings did not leave time for in depth participation as to whether an individual had the right to remain in truly unfit housing conditions. In the meantime promotion of the project by the SDA was building up great momentum, and so at the time the housing department did not feel a responsibility for participation per se.

The inter-relatedness of the housing department within the overall GDC means that the department's attitude toward public participation cannot be divorced from the wider issues of local government decentralization that were emerging. Area Management ideas (stemming from the IAS), were at an embryonic stage in the council, but in the 1976 election when Labour lost a substantial number of votes, area management was adopted on the crest of a wave that brought Labour back to council (D. Hepburn, 1985). Decentralization was seen as the key to improved service delivery and efficient management, and in 1979 the beginnings of a 'comprehensive housing service' for Glasgow were established.

Housing assistants were introduced in 1979/80 as an additional component of the move away from a 'housing management department' to a comprehensive housing service. The housing assistant's task was mainly related to estate management, general repairs and so on, though in an indirect way through their ability to monitor local situations, confidence with local people could be gained. However in an era when from early 1977 the emphasis appeared to be on attempting to encourage community involvement, the remit of the housing assistant could be criticized for being little more than a P.R. exercise (D. Hepburn, 1985). If however one is aiming for an effective 'consultation' process, which seemed to be the case, then this was a sound starting point. In contrast, in terms of encouraging participation in decision making then the role of the housing assistant was limited. On the part of individual staff a more intensive form of communication would have taken place, if they had not been constrained as a result of union pressure with regard to infringing their job description.

In 1980 community development was formally adopted on a city wide basis with a community development officer (CDO) being established in the East End. Community development had first been introduced into the peripheral housing estates in 1974, but until 1980 expansion into other areas had not taken place. Their presence signalled the need for communication at a level beyond that which the housing assistant provided. The introduction of the CDO was a first recognition of community involvement venturing outwith the confines of 'consultation'. The new role for CDOs was to encourage the formation of resident and tenant associations; management co-operatives, to

advise on available funding, and to provide meeting places in which groups could establish themselves. Internally their function was (and still is) to attempt to break down the 'them vs us' concept, by promoting community organizations not as barriers to effective planning, but as a benefit. This is a current problem in that community involvement is still held with contempt by some members of the housing department. This is exacerbated in a period of job uncertainty, when the unleashing of local populations to manage and maintain their own housing, suddenly poses a threat to those who currently undertake these duties. As a result any attempt to develop community involvement was and still is subject to union apprehension.

Whilst it appears that community based housing management policies (as recommended by the GEAR working group), were being striven for, it is important to recognize the generality of speaking about community development ad nauseam. Both the SSHA and GDC employ CDOs, with similar functions, which may imply some overlap. In addition the Regional Council also employs CDOs, whose task is also to foster community involvement. Whilst all are involved with encouraging tenant participation, it is important that community development is not mistaken as a 'substitute' for participation. CDOs should not become the 'voice' of the people, but should rather act and develop catalysts that will enable tenant action from the grass-roots. Over-active CDOs have been known to lead to tenants being discredited, which results in tenant frustration as a result of being ignored. The main drawback of the CDO in the GDC Housing Department is that it has been promoted as part of a social welfare function

rather than being viewed on its own merits, as conveying the District's attitude to participation.

There are presently new moves in the Housing Department to consider additional ways of extending the scope for participation:

'In the past there has been a lot of lip service paid to the notion of tenant participation. It has been 'trendy' and because of that there is an understandable suspicion on the part of some of those who should gain from it'.  
(GDC, 1984)

Increased participation in housing is now a top priority:

'Clients should be fully involved in the organization of services. In times of restraint the argument is reinforced. Not, as the cynics would say, because participation is a 'cop out', but because in our increasingly poor community one must try to unlock and tap the resources of tenants and communities'.  
(GDC, 1984)

The reasons for this encouragement of participation are partly to be found in the need to tap local resources to make up for continuing public sector cut-backs. This has been implied in discussion, in more than one interview with housing department staff. The point is validated further in the following section, but should be kept in mind constantly, given the laissez-faire ideology of present central government.

Finally it is important to note that the Housing Department appears to be aware that tenant participation cannot stop short on issues of modernization, repair and management. In an attempt to allow involvement in policy formulation policies are now 'determined' at a local level. The forum for consultation is through the Area Management Team, which comprises tenant representatives, community councils and members of the various departments, housing, social work

and the like. Determined that is, to the extent that local priorities are discussed and the proposals are then put to the full Council in the form of a 'strategy statement' for the coming year. Due to continuing financial cut backs each district does not handle its own budget. This is centrally determined and highlights a continuing centralization that reinforces McConaghy's claim of a 'fiscal drip-fed democracy' (1984). Hence for example, the 1983/84 budget proposal for £85 m, which in reality came to a sum of £54 m being allotted, produced a downward spiral effect on project expenditure, which as the next section shows can also impose constraints on participation.

Though a brief synopsis it is hoped that the above discussion has provided sufficient insight into the development of participation, so as to ascertain the changing attitude of the housing department and the progress that has been made from the early recognition of participation as consultation, if that. The growth of tenants associations and management co-operatives, is probably the most apparent commitment by the department to expanding tenant involvement and power sharing, and despite the seemingly controversial motive, this is no doubt the most feasible way ahead, given the inflexible position of the existing governmental system.

The following section takes a closer look at the role of participation via house modernization providing an example nearer to reality, which serves to show more explicitly the validity of agency commitment.

#### 5.4 Local Scale Initiatives: Modernization Programmes

Within modernization programmes in GEAR the SSHA has developed consultation on the following principles:

- (i) That the tenant is the client
  - (ii) That the tenant is the person who knows best what their needs are
  - (iii) That the tenant (initially) may not be very good at working out and articulating his/her requirements.
- (SSHA, 1977)

The GDC Housing Department and Parkhead Housing Association have no established 'rules of thumb', but as the previous section has shown the GDC in particular displays an awareness of the need to encourage tenant involvement. When compared together the similarities of the processes of communication are evident (Table 4).

Within the SSHA the main vehicle for communication is a tenants representative committee (TRC) which is set up for each phase of modernization. Its role is to jointly formulate modernization proposals, seek tenants views and suggestions and help co-ordinate neighbour activities. The TRC meets several times to look at the various alternatives that can be carried out (within financial constraints of the scheme). The members deal both with their neighbours who are not on the committee, and with the SSHA team, so that everyone's ideas can be discussed. SSHA staff reflections on the contribution of the committee are that despite requiring many additional man hours, if 'proper and meaningful' public participation is carried out, then the end product will be:

'Much nearer to meeting the needs and aspirations of people concerned and in the case of modernization work the job will run much more smoothly'.

(SSHA, 1977)

Whilst members of the TRC were usually in control of the meetings, the issues raised for concern were all related to the ongoing phase of modernization. Dissatisfaction could be expressed and complaints voiced, but no decisions relating to wider policy could be taken. Policy priorities could not be changed at these meetings and issues were confined solely to questions of individual choice and preference within modernization. To this end critics may argue that the opportunity was non-participatory or merely symbolic.

In the GDC modernization schemes, the role of tenant involvement has altered since 1979, and as mentioned previously prior to this very little public participation took place. Policy was 'imposed' and though occasionally a group would speak out and say the wrong priority had been made, this was uncommon (H. McDonald, 1985). By 1979 modernization programmes had changed, incorporating two phases. Firstly an Improvement Repair Programme (IRP), which was a compulsory element carried out by the GDC to make property wind and water tight. Secondly, a tenants grant scheme which was discretionary. Realistically this new type of programme was adopted not merely to encourage greater tenant involvement, but as a way of adapting to the reduction in capital allocation made by central government in 1979 (H. McDonald, 1985). The aim of the GDC was to reduce the individual unit cost of modernization. Whilst one would expect this to be cheaper through the GDC buying bulk, the tenants grant scheme actually meant that by allowing tenants to choose a contractor,

Table 4      Application of principles and methods used

SSHA Principles	SSHA	GDC	Parkhead Housing Association
'The tenant knows best his needs'	<p>1. Approaches made to TAs if existing, and individual tenants, by housing management staff with architects and building inspectors: to seek tenant opinion as priority and choice</p>	<p>1. Package of information sent to each tenant, incorporating a questionnaire used to obtain a profile from tenants of their needs. In special need cases this is accompanied by liaison with social work departments</p>	<p>1. Letter to each tenant/ owner occupier</p> <p>2. House visit</p>
To act as aids to tenant understanding and perception	<p>2. Where possible exhibition offices or caravans are established, with architects in attendance at set times. Tenants are invited to indicate preferences on a questionnaire</p>	<p>2. GDC meet with community council, TAs or other groups to discuss proposals</p>	<p>3. Meeting to discuss design principles</p> <p>4. Project commences</p>



Table 4      Application of principles and methods used (contd.)

SSHA Principles	SSHA	GDC	Parkhead Housing Association
<p>3. Architect works on proposals which then have to be approved by the modernization committee (official committee)</p> <p>4. An introductory public meeting is held, chaired by a council member. The aim is to inform tenants of the basic proposals reached. TRC is set up</p> <p>5. Individual house visits to ascertain individual choice on variations to be incorporated in the contract documents</p> <p>6. Final proposals submitted to modernization committee</p>	<p>3. GDC meet with the IRP contractor to obtain dates, price to public meeting</p> <p>4. Public meeting to discuss information, slide show: liaison group is set up</p> <p>5. Individual house visit to explain how proposals will affect individual houses</p> <p>6. (As in SSHA)</p>		

competition amongst contractors led to the need to undercut and overall unit costs were reduced. The implication of continued cut-backs is that phase one (IRP) is now being financed at the expense of constraints on expenditure on the tenants grants scheme. The compulsory element of renewal therefore remaining whilst aspects of choice and tenant involvement have been curtailed. Emphasis as a result is now on producing wind and water tight property, and not 'comprehensive renewal'. Hence whilst public involvement was encouraged, limitations on the scope for further development are now apparent.

The main vehicle for communication in GDC programmes is the tenant liaison committee which has a similar role to the SSHA's, tenant representative committee: the success of the liaison committee as a vehicle for communication is viewed by the GDC as dependent upon the ability and articulateness of individuals. As a result committees in the modernization process vary in size and activity, and differences between areas are apparent. In the scheme referred to in Table 5 the liaison committee developed as a sub branch of an existing tenants association, and hence was viewed relatively organized.

Reference is made to two programmes, one an SSHA scheme (Beattock Street/Powfoot Street modernization), which commenced in April 1979, and a GDC scheme (Springfield Road modernization), which began in February 1983. By comparison of the two the similarities and differences of approach are highlighted. Resident meetings in GDC schemes are called every four weeks, whereas in SSHA schemes they are

Table 5 Comparison of Modernization Schemes

Activity	<u>Beattock Street/Powfoot Street</u>		<u>Springfield Road</u>	
	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
Project Proposed		June 1977		Jan. 1983
First Public Meeting		13.12.77	1st Public Meeting Establishment of Tenant	Feb. 1983
Residents Meeting	Beattock St/Powfoot St	10.4.79	Liaison Committee	
Project Began		21.5.79	Regular Meeting every <u>four weeks</u>	
Residents Meeting	Beattock St/Powfoot St	7.8.79		
Public Meeting	Type (5) Meeting Tenant Representative Committee set up	18.9.79		
T.R.C. Meeting	Type (3)	20.11.79		
"	"	13.5.80		
"	"	20.5.80		

Table 5 Comparison of Modernization Schemes

Activity	<u>Beattock Street/Powfoot Street</u>		<u>Springfield Road</u>	
	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
Main Issues noted:  Feedback from meetings to: Completion of project	SSHA		GDC	
	Notification of completion dates; problems with T.V. aerials; notification of repairs; complaints about workmanship; problems of litter/rubbish and vandalism.  Architects and Project Team	May 1981	Similar to issues raised in SSHA scheme  Same as in SSHA scheme	Jan. 1984

called at the discretion of the latter or by request from the TRC. The proportion of officials to public representation varied from meetings to meetings, though in general both SSHA and GDC residents viewed 'participation' as being set on the terms of the authority. There appeared more scope for discussion of wider issues within the SSHA programme, whilst GDC tenants felt strongly that the council set the rules and that despite promises of feedback of complaints and proposals, there was little two way communication. It was also felt that agendas were predetermined and as a result there was limited opportunity to affect decisions.

The GDC and SSHA do appear to have adopted a range of communication techniques, seeking to gain individual choice and preferences, within budget constraints. However it is apparent that these meetings still convey an authoritative image, in that priorities for spending have already been determined and beyond influencing specifications for internal modernization there is no opportunity for influencing the programme of rehabilitation. Genuine participation is thus solely related to individual choice on items such as colour of internal fitments and design layout.

### 5.5 Temporary Constraints

Continuing cut-backs in public expenditure since 1979 have posed severe limitations on local authority spending and hence on project investment. As a result the development of participation, be it as an integral part of the local authority strategy or as an element of a project like GEAR, has likewise been restricted. This was touched upon previously regarding reductions in the tenant grant scheme, in

favour of the IRP element. Furthermore limitations have had in general a twofold effect on participation. Firstly it has meant less money has been available to encourage tenants associations (GDC, 1984) and other organizations, a problem which may also prevent the GDC's latest proposal for developing a new post of 'Participation Officer'. Whilst secondly, choice within individual programmes has been limited, and therefore programmes have been provided instead of offered, which has led to tenant dissatisfaction in some instance with the quality of service.

All agents involved have justified any limited activity in the renewal process as a fault of centrally imposed financial constraints. This has exacerbated communication problems, as local people having been excluded from the policy making arena, perceive constraints as having been imposed by individual agents. If public representation, as in a participatory democracy, was allowed into a wider spectrum of policy decision-making, then there would be a greater awareness of budget constraints and priority systems that put people second instead of first. Whilst it would be unreasonable to suggest that people would therefore learn to live with budget constraints, they would perhaps be able to appreciate the complexities of priorities, which in the past have produced hostility between parts of the GEAR area. A much closer relationship on these matters is hence essential and can help reduce intra-area competition for resources, as has been evident through examples of participation in decision making in Drumchapel (Bob Allen, 1984).

It is unlikely that the aura public participation found from GEAR, as a result of both initiatives and criticism, will be forgotten. A more crucial point for the future is the way the present government is emphasizing the need to harness the skills of the community, through tenants associations, repairs and management co-operatives and the like, which one may argue is using voluntary labour as a substitute for provision which otherwise would have had to come from the public sector. If this is the ploy of government, they seem to have overlooked the position of the unions, which have already shown opposition to such schemes. It seems that whilst people do want more responsibility in decision making, and control of their environment, they in addition recognize the need for resources to do so. The following chapter takes up this argument further with regard to community involvement in leisure and recreation.

## 5.6 Structural Constraints

The issue of professionalism has been a recurrent theme throughout this research so far. In this chapter it has also emerged as a limitation to developing participatory democracy. The SSHA, despite its apparent encouragement of participation had a very high regard for the role of professionalism. This became apparent when in mid 1978, there emerged dissatisfaction by staff with the form public meetings were taking, which had showed the association in a bad light and in an 'unprofessional' image (SSHA, 1978). It was felt there was insufficient planning prior to actual meetings and as a result it was recommended that 'briefing meetings' be held:

'It is important that we know prior to meetings what consultant architects are going to say, and it is only fair to association officials and tenants that meetings are properly organized with agreed agendas. Officials are therefore aware of what is required of them in terms of when they are to speak and what they are to say'.

(SSHA, 1978)

Thus at briefing meetings the following was to be decided:

- (i) What form the meeting was to take
- (ii) Preparation of a proper and full agenda
- (iii) What items each person was to take
- (iv) In outline what each person was going to say
- (v) Arrangements for any display material that might be required.

It was deemed essential that briefing meetings were held at least one week prior to the public meeting, leaving adequate time to deal with 'outstanding problems'.

The role of the professional was considered in detail in chapter two.

Clearly the attitude taken here by the SSHA reinforces the doctrine:

'The quality of tenants meetings can only be improved if the above suggestions are carried out ... so that the association would be able to convey a unified and professional image to tenants'.

(SSHA, 1978)

As Law (1977) comments, the very nature of bureaucracy and professionals taken on to consider problems, means that the community itself, especially one with little technical expertise, is not seen as a problem solving body. Problems are therefore identified and solutions found, outwith genuine participation; the last stage of the process being consultation in the hope of acceptance or compromise.



In contrast it may be argued that in holding briefing meetings the SSHA were acting in the public interest (as far as that may be defined), by attempting to promote themselves in an efficient manner, and thus ensuring effective service delivery, regarding modernization. The GDC also held briefing meetings called 'pre start meetings', which they view are essential for the smooth running of projects, allowing technicalities and breakdown of information to be dealt with. Doubt as to the validity of a public interest concept existing however, emerges when one considers the desire of some SSHA staff to standardize correspondence presentation to tenants, 'pro-forma' (SSHA, 1978). This issue was seen by some staff as a definite impersonal approach, and in an era when the focus seemed to be on personalizing the housing service, it would have been unreasonable to expect tenants to believe the SSHA was encouraging participation if they were too busy to send out a reasonable invitation to 'participate'. The problem of the 'repetitious work' involved in typing out correspondence, was acknowledged by other staff as;

'The cost of such an ambitious urban renewal programme'.  
(SSHA, 1978)

When already additional effort by staff was being provided by attending and speaking at meetings, the issue of rationalizing correspondence appeared trivial. The staff commitment required to obtain effective participation is clearly questionable here, as is the degree to which council representatives were perceived more within the institutional framework, than outwith it:

'Council members would continue to be sent individual letters, as would anyone else deemed to be of sufficient importance'.

This proposal was shelved as it was argued that as there could not be much of a meeting without tenants, they were surely important enough to be given a 'reasonable invite' (SSHA, 1978). This issue clearly reinforces both the prevailing problems of individual commitment and bias, in addition to the way councillors are perceived as internal or external to the bureaucratic structure. Again highlighting the dominant actors in urban management.

Within the GDC, inherent traditional ideology has come a long way in being replaced by supporters of community development and area management. However the latest initiative of the GDC, for the recruitment of a 'Participation Officer', may be regarded as merely another extension to an already vast bureaucracy whose function may overlap with the role of the senior CDO. However acknowledgement must also be made of the extent to which this post will offer the chance to tighten up, and take an overview of existing principles and activity in participation. Thus allowing a review of current procedures and scope for better co-ordination, as well as possible expansion in new directions. It would be unrealistic however to suggest that this would ensure genuine participation, as clearly traditional ideology and the inbred paternalistic role of the council will not vanish completely. The proposal does, despite this, signify a real awareness by the GDC, and as a consequence the scope for participation may be enhanced.

Further moves by the Council have included the idea of local forums between local housing managers, councillors and tenants, along with emphasis on training provision for tenant representatives and the

need for tenant representation on the Council Committee as well as on the Central Housing Policy Committee. More widespread provision of information to tenants is foreseen as well as the necessity to train and prepare staff for a more flexible adaption of genuine participation in decision making (GDC, 1984). Such ideas, if implemented would come under the remit of the Participation Officer.

Whilst in theory the GDC's new proposals would mark a significant penetration of traditional local government decision making structures, there is significant scepticism as to the possibility of such principles being adopted. Many councillors would see such steps as an invasion of their functions, whilst the opportunity for greater access to information would pose a similar threat to the officers in authority, as well as exacerbating what is perceived by many as an already time consuming process (GDC, 1984). Along with traditional believers in representative democracy and professionalism, it is unlikely that the Architecture and Related Services department and Building and Works department, would accept such proposals in their present form (GDC, 1984), whilst the question of tenant representation on Central Committees touches sensitively on the politics of Town Planning.

### Conclusions

It is difficult on whatever issue to ascertain what progress has been made as a result of GEAR, and in observing attitudes to participation this is clearly no exception. It is evident that the SSHA already had established a consultation process that was subsequently reformed in 1976, whilst the GDC were up until the late seventies still coming

to terms with decentralization. As a result community development did not immediately flourish at the start of GEAR, and this may be one drawback concerning the role of the GEAR Housing Working Group. The gradual introduction of community development and area management highlights the slow pace at which participation develops, a result of local politics and departmental attitudes. In examining the working group the lack of community representation prevented any meaningful input from the public, their existence being based fundamentally on their ability to act in the public interest, with communication from elected representatives. Meanwhile participatory democracy, theories of and justification for, were subsumed by the surrounding traditional bureaucratic system. In the case of the local housing association, representativeness of the Management Committee to make decisions on behalf of the public interest has been questioned, whilst the problems of lack of publicity and communication are clearly local orientated problems, affecting the development of participation.

The limitations to participation that have been raised, in sum appear to have been local constraints not national. The role of the working group, the emergence of community development and the scope of the CDO remit have all been influenced by local structures. Inter-agency attitudes have played a significant role in reinforcing traditional ideology with limited scope for corporate management and a continued role for departmentalism and representative democracy. Though perhaps the effect of departmental attitudes is the result of a continual reinforcement of beliefs by central government through the bureaucracy. The most evident central government influence has

been related to budget constraint. Whether unknowingly or not, central government cut-backs have led to the GDC relying more heavily on the voluntary sector, for both finance and service provision. Union opposition to increased participation, particularly in the form of management and repair co-operatives is apparent, and in direct conflict to present government ideals of individuals being clients rather than customers. Talk of tapping the resources of poor communities (GDC, 1984), must either lend itself to social concern or exploitation. The initial view gained from the GDC relates more to the latter, though the focus now appears to be on not so much the reasons why participation has become in vogue, but more the fact that it has and therefore it is now necessary to make sure more positive developments in participation are encouraged.

The GDC and SSHA in particular do appear to have pursued the recommendations of the working group. However outwith management co-operatives, it is through the provision of information and opportunities for 'consultation' that participation is most readily equated. Whilst this may be seen as a crucial step towards obtaining genuine participation (in terms of Arnstein's methods), it offers little scope for any form of participatory democracy. Positive attempts to break down barriers to participation cannot however be denied. This has been strongest in allowing tenant involvement in the modernization process, yet this in itself highlights the link between the extent of participation and specific issues. Participation in the formulation of the housing working groups proposals being severely limited in comparison with the encouragement of individuals to participate in modernization. In individual cases

though, it will be the degree of commitment, drive and interpretation of agency principles by key officials that counts, the problem of bias being inherent, both within bureaucracy and the community itself.

## Chapter Six

### HELENVALE:

#### A FURTHER EXAMPLE OF THE CONSTRAINTS TO PARTICIPATION

##### 6.1 Introduction

As mentioned previously the extent of participation is related to the 'issue' at stake. In contrast to the more common example of housing used in the previous chapter, this case-study focuses on Helenvale Sports Centre, in the Parkhead area of GEAR. There are four main reasons for choosing this in order to highlight the limitations to participation:

- (i) Initially Helenvale was a contentious political issue that generated controversy both within the bureaucracy and amongst local people. The opportunity for local people to alter proposals therefore becomes apparent.
- (ii) It highlights the inter-play of urban management, the conflict and different attitudes of the SDA and GDC, both to Helenvale and to public participation in the management of Helenvale. In addition it conveys the exclusion of the public in the actual formulation of plans for the improvement and upgrading of the centre, which is important given the extent to which objectives are now perceived to have been fulfilled (section six).
- (iii) It provides a clear example of the SDA's attitude to public participation, outwith its overall responsibility for consultation on the overall proposals for the GEAR project; namely relating to their proposal for community management, and the motives behind this apparent 'social' concern (J. Wallace, 1985).

- (iv) The attitude and action taken by both the SDA and GDC can be viewed against a background of increasing disinterest with participation at the national level, highlighting the constraints that prevented the development of participation as a result of internal agency attitudes and also limitations imposed from the wider governmental system.

## 6.2 Background: Helenvale and Urban Policy

At the outset the relevance of leisure and recreation facilities to urban regeneration may not be apparent, but considered alongside problems of poverty, industrial decline, unemployment and multiple deprivation as a whole, then the need to create a new image in an area like GEAR was seen to be dependent upon, amongst other things, the provision of leisure and recreation facilities. The GEAR Overall Proposals document recognized that only by providing real commitment to the people who 'live, work and invest' in GEAR, would the present population be retained:

'Industry revived and the hopes and aspirations of the next generation realized'.

(GEAR Overall Proposals Document, 1979, p.6)

The opportunity for leisure and recreation in such a deprived area was vitally important for all ages, but particularly for the growth and development of young people. Leisure and recreation provision was viewed essential for:

'Harnessing the energies and developing the skills, confidence and enthusiasms of 10-19 year olds'.

(GEAR Overall Proposals Document, Section 3-25)

A major aspect of the GEAR project was consequently the desire to retain the present population, and by directing initiatives at this age group in particular it was hoped a future generation could be



secured for GEAR. The value of community facilities in improving the quality of life for these people was hence stressed. The need to both provide a wide range of facilities and to encourage greater use of available facilities, was seen as providing opportunities that would allow individuals to share interests and concerns, which in addition would have a beneficial effect of reducing community pressures as a result of wide scale unemployment, by providing an 'outlet'. This was the philosophy from which Helenvale Sports Centre emerged.

### 6.3 The Role of the Working Groups

The GEAR working group on leisure and recreation conveyed participation as a means to an end, through the need to increase participation in leisure activity as the key to acquiring self-fulfilment and individual attainment. The wider implication of this was to ensure a stable population in GEAR. Whilst access to the leisure and recreation working group file was not possible the housing working group acknowledged the seven main causes of concern for leisure and recreation in GEAR. These were:

- (i) The need for effective co-ordination amongst the organizations providing and operating facilities in public and private ownership.
- (ii) Lack of finance.
- (iii) The full potential of existing facilities was not being realized because of the low level of public participation in formal leisure and recreational pursuits - the result of a long history of socio-economic deprivation.
- (iv) The need for a better quality, quantity and range of facilities.
- (v) The need to provide up to date information on the services available.

- (vi) Relatedly, the need for a planned publicity campaign.
- (vii) Further study was required of ways by which local people could be encouraged and trained for involvement in the organization and operation of leisure pursuits. With the envisaged development of Helenvale, the opportunity was seen to exist for achieving this aim.

(SDA, 1978)

Objectives one, two and four were acknowledged to varying degrees by the SDA and will be discussed later. Through the remaining objectives the working group recognized the importance of the 'informing' method of participation (Arnstein's third level), emphasized through the need for a publicity campaign, which the SDA later adopted. The final proposal however one can equate more with 'therapy' (level two), which was recognized as getting individuals to accept the goals of the traditional culture.

With regard to participation relating to the actual planning of leisure and recreational provision, the Housing working group stated:

'The public are asked to comment on the adequacy or otherwise of present arrangements for the operation and management of existing facilities, in relation to charges, hours of opening and to suggest improvements'.

(SDA, 1978)

At this point Helenvale had not been re-opened. The opportunity for comment on leisure and recreation proposals was through the public meetings on the GEAR Overall Proposals document and through local plan participation exercises. As mentioned in chapter four, this represented 'consultation' as well as the use of informing techniques, which whilst one can argue that this is an important step towards genuine participation, provided more of a one way flow of information with an over-representation of officials and under-

representation of the public. As reflected by the housing working group, the leisure and recreation group had made no reference to community involvement in the management and maintenance of leisure and recreation provision, but only that the public could comment on the issues mentioned above. It is not clear whether any actual improvements were suggested, though the Overall Proposals document does not appear to have registered any additional areas of concern from those highlighted by the working group. It is unlikely that Helenvale would have been included in the leisure and recreation working group file, as the improvement of the centre took place after the working group had compiled its report.

#### 6.4 Helenvale: An Issue of Contention

Helenvale historically provided recreation facilities for former Glasgow Corporation Transport Department employees and its successors the Greater Glasgow Passenger Transport Executive, (GGPTE). Due to a decreasing number of employees over the years however, usage of the premises declined and in early 1977 the Greater Glasgow Health Board (GGHB) approached the GDC regarding Helenvale, making known their intentions to acquire the site for the development of a new health clinic. They perceived the facility as under used and in a dilapidated condition. The East End Forum (No. 3, 1977), noted that a 'stormy debate on Helenvale Park' developed, during which local objections to the Health Board's proposals seemed to be ignored as the GDC and GGHB continued negotiations. At the fourth meeting of the GEAR Governing Committee (22.9.77), doubts were raised over the proposed use of the site and whilst the need for a new health centre

in Parkhead was recognized, it was recommended that all members should seek to preserve Helenvale as a sports complex for public use. In addition, a paper by the department of Town and Regional Planning (Glasgow University) 'Leisure and Recreation Study Group' (1977), had concluded that contrary to the view of the GGHB, the facilities were well maintained and in good condition.

The degree of local resentment to the proposal was evident in a letter to the Secretary of State:

'The GGHB appears to be unaware of recent trends in planning legislation and practice, and has failed to involve the local population in discussing the issue, until their own plans were at an advanced stage'.  
(East End Forum, No. 4, 1977)

More precise details of their advanced proposals could not be gained from the Health Board, and both themselves and the GDC maintain that the plans did not proceed very far as the issue was picked up by the Parkhead Local Plan Working Party, (LPWP). (I was unable to obtain a copy of the Parkhead LPWP file from either the GDC, SDA or SRC). Public opposition was registered again at a local plan public meeting (24-28th August, 1978), (Boyle and Brand, 1982), which was supported by a petition organized by Parkhead Housing Association. The issue was subsequently passed to the GEAR Governing Committee and discussion began on the future of Helenvale.

#### 6.5 Intra-Agency Attitudes to Acquisition and Improvement

In the written statement on Parkhead Local Plan (May 1979), the intention of the SDA to buy Helenvale for retention as a sports centre was disclosed. With their ability to draw upon a £2 million

budget, solely for leisure and recreation purposes, the SDA overcame the second constraint identified by the working group. However it was suggested in an interview with an SDA official, that Helenvale may have been financed as a land renewal project, and not out of the leisure and recreation budget. This gives some indication of the internal power of the SDA, highlighting the extent of their autonomy. As they are not accountable in the same way as the District Council would be, they can pursue an incrementalist approach within a limited policy framework. This allows them to be very opportunistic, seizing opportunities wherever and whenever they appear, and accordingly being able to accommodate such projects within the most suitable budgeting arrangements.

The communicative ability of the SDA as co-ordinator of GEAR, inevitably also enhanced final negotiations between the GGHB, GDC and SRC over Helenvale. Thus attempting to ensure effective co-ordination at this stage between agencies, as the working group had recommended. The presence of the SDA and its ability to draw upon vast sums of financial resources, has therefore meant the continual provision of a public facility that many people did not want to lose. This appears to be an asset of the multi-agency approach adopted in GEAR, that despite resentment, through the SDA's ability to step in, maintenance and improvement of a facility that was recognized as an important aspect of community regeneration was ensured.

The initial aim was that Helenvale should serve the local population, and second to this a wider area. The study from Glasgow University had envisaged two levels of usage. Firstly retention as a high

quality prestige venue, and secondly for general public use as a multiple sports facility. Given that Celtic Football Club had also attempted to acquire Helenvale, as a venue for leisure matches and as a training ground, there was a danger from the start that Helenvale would more than likely attract the former usage, rather than multiple sports provision. In view of existing facilities, (namely a grandstand, grass football pitch and outmoded ash running track), the Scottish Sports Council (SSC) viewed Helenvale as being geared more towards competitive activities in the future, and of less use as a provider of casual leisure. Officials however from both the SDA and GDC maintain that its first and foremost function was for local provision.

The role of Helenvale was clearly determined by the agencies involved, in the light of existing overall proposals for leisure and recreation in GEAR. The SDA believed that just because the sports centre was in the East End of Glasgow, it did not mean that top class facilities should not be provided. Likewise, the SSC stressed that the concept of local provision was not to mean the 'provision of poor standard facilities' (SSC, 1981), but that good quality facilities should be provided to draw in a wide cross section of the community.

The map in Appendix 4 shows the proposed facilities. The bowling greens and pavilion existed originally and these were upgraded, (Area 1). Area 2 became a floodlit astroturf pitch, replacing the grass pitch. With the retention of the original grandstand (Area 3), it was thought that unique spectating facilities would enable the SDA to capitalize on the existing facilities. Area 4 was a proposed indoor sports and leisure facility, that was to be financed by the GDC

(Helenvale Park Development Brief, May, 1979). It was viewed that such an indoor centre would provide a community focal point, emphasis being on spectatorship and the introduction of less formal recreation. It was envisaged that the internal facility would comprise a sports hall, other activity areas, squash courts and social facilities, such as club rooms, restaurant and bar. Emphasis was however to be placed upon flexibility in order that the facilities could respond readily to particular community needs.

Whilst the SDA agreed to finance the upgrading of the outdoor and bowling facilities, (a total of £1.5 m was invested by the SDA), the GDC funding of the indoor sports centre never took place. Temporarily area 4 was to provide a multi-purpose games court or kick-about area, until such time as the site was required for development, (that being dependent upon available finance). This it was intended would allow casual use by local residents, particularly young people. Area 4 in reality now comprises the management facilities in a portacabin, whilst the indoor sports centre provision is found in an adjacent converted wash house, that provides a small indoor hall and changing/shower facilities. Hence it was evident at this point that without the 'local centre', Helenvale had only limited potential for providing casual recreation.

#### 6.6 A Local Scale Initiative:

##### The SDA's Proposal for Community Management

The role of the voluntary sector, throughout the GEAR project was acknowledged in the light of an increasing need to tap community

resources. The SSC had suggested greater emphasis be put on their contribution, with regard to reducing local authority revenue costs and engendering 'spirit and involvement among the local community' (SSC, 1981). They emphasized the need for local participation in the management of Helenvale, a point which the SDA attempted to take up, recognizing that adequate management of the facilities was vital to its success.

A management paper was produced by two SDA staff promoting the idea of involving local residents and community representatives in the management of Helenvale. This internal document did not however reach the directorate of the SDA hierarchy, let alone get published for examination by the GDC. (I was unable to obtain a copy and therefore the actual definition of the proposals are unknown). The idea of community management was not followed through as it was seen outwith the SDA's remit, (J. Wallace, 1984). Within the SDA there was viewed a limit to which the agency should be concerned with participation and extending ideas of community management. At the same time, in the light of GDC/SDA relations, it was felt by some SDA staff that the GDC would not have appreciated the responsibility of a local management committee, (P. Swinson, 1985). This working relationship seems to have fallen short of the flexibility that was supposed to accompany multi-agency initiatives, allowing a comprehensive approach to urban regeneration through increased community involvement. As it had been agreed from the beginning that the GDC Parks Department would take over the running of the centre, the SDA were unable to affect the management proposals for Helenvale. Though they had advocated a detraction from normal GDC management



procedures in the development brief, there was no sign of a positive response from the council:

'Consideration will be given to the advantages gained by involving local residents and representatives of community and sporting organizations in the management of Helevale Park'.

(SDA, Development Brief, 1979, p.3)

As this did not emerge to be the case the SDA saw an opportunity as having been missed, (P. Swinson, 1985). Whether this is a justifiable opinion will be discussed later.

The SDA's 'commitment' to participation, although limited, did convey something of a social objective in contrast to the agencies normal activities, (mainly economic initiatives and environmental improvement). However as mentioned previously, the need to retain the present population was a very important aspect of the GEAR project as a whole and hence by retaining control of Helenvale, both through usage and management ploys, the SDA was attempting to safeguard its own investment. The majority of people in the East End were not familiar with participating, neither in leisure and recreation nor decision making, and therefore the SDA had to attempt to gain people's confidence in both, to ensure that interest in Helenvale prevailed. Also from a financial point of view, it was crucial that Helenvale was a success, and consequently participation remained a top priority with the SDA. Allowing residents on a management committee would have produced low cost participation, but as will be discussed later, this has negative implications as well as positive. A final motive for pursuing participation was because

the SDA wanted to use Helenvale as a promotion of its activity. The GEAR project had really only taken off in the late seventies, and by 1980 the SDA were eager to prove their credibility. GEAR was a test-bed for the SDA, and Helenvale was no exception. Public participation therefore appears to have been pursued for ulterior motives and not for its own merits in encouraging decentralization of responsibility and control to local people. The philosophy of participatory democracy was as a result never considered.

#### 6.7 GDC Perceptions of Helenvale:

##### Implementation of Management Proposals

The GDC's management proposals for Helenvale were influenced by the SSC who had acknowledged the need for careful management, for 'managing people' (SSC, 1981) and not just facilities. This was because one of the major constraints to participation by the lower occupation groups was found to be in their lack of skills or training in particular sports. The emphasis on the need for special coaching provision reinforced Arnstein's concept of therapy, through the need to educate people for leisure.

The SSC saw the main management objectives for Helenvale as threefold; to encourage use by local residents, to attract attention to the GEAR area by staging prestige events and to provide an outlet for sport for other residents of Glasgow. The second objective was aimed at promoting the GEAR area with the possibility of advantageous spin-offs accruing from holding major events. Based on these principles the GDC established priority for usage as follows:

- (i) local casual use
- (ii) local club use
- (iii) local school use
- (iv) prestige events
- (v) professional F.C. use
- (vi) city wide club use
- (vii) city wide casual use

Within the wider context of leisure and recreation provision in GEAR, Helenvale was envisaged as having a complementary role (stressing its competitive element) to the new development at Crown Point Road. Normally the size of facility envisaged for Helenvale would not have a wide catchment area, unless the programme and type of facility was viewed as unique for sports persons in the city, which supposedly it was. However with the attraction of Crown Point Road it was hoped that the catchment area for Helenvale would also be expanded. For the SDA the need to promote Helenvale as something more than just another recreation centre and attract a wide catchment area was important. The GDC presently appear to be more concerned with the promotion of high quality facilities at Crown Point Road, rather than Helenvale.

In general a population the size of GEAR (35,000) was not regarded by the GDC as large enough to justify such an extensive range of provision. (Helenvale, Crown Point Road and Eastbank Academy being the main facilities). The validity, both in the short and long term, lay in the ability of management to ensure priority to local users as well as accepting the wider role the centre would have outwith the GEAR area. The ability to achieve this balance of

priority has been difficult. At the time of Helenvale opening, the idea of community management in leisure and recreation provision per se did not exist. The GDC had however recognized the potential of user advisory committees (UAC) in determining programmes of activity, which could have a beneficial effect of matching local need more closely with service provision. Despite this, the idea was not adopted as Helenvale was viewed by the GDC primarily as a football pitch, and hence there was seen limited scope for defining alternative usages. However given the adjacent, albeit small, indoor facilities and the possibility of extending wider activity on the astroturf, (management are presently promoting an American sports initiative, a new alternative, though perhaps not attune to the demands of Parkhead), a UAC may have helped to promote Helenvale more favourably within the local community.

The lack of public participation in management was viewed by the GDC as being compensated for by various initiatives adopted in the first few months of opening, to attract a wide range of people both locally and outwith GEAR. This reinforces the point that public participation was not viewed as a method for increasing local control in decision making, but rather as a way of ensuring use of the service provided, which in this case the GDC evidently saw themselves as capable of. The rejection of the GDC's view of participation as a means to an end is justified given the doubts surrounding the extent to which Helenvale is used by members of the local community, as is discussed further in the next section.

Promotion of Helenvale as something more than just another facility began by staging a Hockey International not long after opening, yet whilst attendance overall was high, it was seen as poorly attended by local people. The majority of spectators apparently coming from the outer suburbs, such as Bearsden and Milngavie, (J. Docherty, 1985). The extent by which Helenvale was pushed as having special status by the GDC, has not met entirely with the SDA's expectations. Available figures show that usage of Helenvale from 'within Parkhead', increased steadily since the facility opened (June, 1980), from 36% to a peak of 70% during the summer of 1981. A similar pattern was recorded in 1982, but by which time the usage category had been altered to cover 'local usage', with no apparent definition of local. The highest proportion of local usage occurred in May/June 1982, (76% and 77% respectively). By 1983 this breakdown of usage had ceased.

It is apparent that the GDC saw themselves as capable of ensuring local usage of Helenvale and thus they rejected the idea of a UAC. They attempted to act on behalf of a public interest, yet clearly this 'interest' was different to the one the SDA was pursuing. As a result conflict has emerged between the SDA's desire to promote Helenvale outwith GEAR and the GDC's attempts at encouraging local use.

## 6.8 The Fulfilment of Objectives

There has been both past and recent criticism, raised mainly through Community Council and GEAR public meetings, as to the fact that professional football clubs hire out Helenvale and in so doing exclude the public on these occasions, in terms of both actual usage

and expectation. The GDC had envisaged professional clubs would require use of the facilities and time was allotted to this group during the day. Management at Helenvale however claim the public criticism is not justified, as spectators are allowed in, free of charge and that overall there is very limited use of the facilities by professional clubs. (No record is kept of usage by this group). Given the high unemployment rate in GEAR, one may have expected a constant demand for the facilities from local people throughout the day, which would clash with professional usage. However this is apparently not the case.

Discontent has further been raised by individuals who believe Helenvale was from the beginning developed as a prestigious centre and that high entrance fees exclude many local people. The astroturf and multi-purpose area are the most expensive of the facilities on offer, the former costing £17.85 per hour (for 17 year olds and over). For the 16 and under age group the cost is £8.90 per hour. The multi-purpose area which is suitable for team (bounce) games costs £3.56 per hour for adults, £2.00 for juniors. Considering that the price of hire for the astroturf would be divided amongst team members, this cost does not seem too exorbitant, though it means that a full team would have to use the facility to keep individual costs down. However, resident feeling (as conveyed through discussion with a small group of eight people) is that the costs are too high to allow youths between 10-18 with little or no income, to use the facility. Further discontent has been noted in that Helenvale has failed to become the local centre and focal point that

had been promised, which it is thought would have encouraged more use by younger age groups.

Management at Helenvale argue that numerous free sessions have been provided in an attempt to encourage involvement, with special effort made by staff to organize events such as football matches and training/coaching sessions free of charge. All appear to have been fruitless, in that there was either limited turn-out or they were viewed as one-off situations, and interest consequently did not continue once the free session was over.

Despite the above criticisms both the GDC and SDA maintain that Helenvale is well used. On examination of membership figures from when Helenvale opened, it is evident that whilst adult membership has steadily increased, from 219 (June/September 1980) to a present total of 2,641, junior membership increased by only 51 members between October 1980 and February 1985 (June/September 1980: 314, current junior membership: 365). Usage statistics show that in 1981 junior usage accounted for only 32% (655), whilst in 1982 this had dropped to 15% of total usage, (278). From March 1983 onwards breakdown of usage statistics by age and sex stopped, and only overall totals (for each activity) are now recorded. Football had remained the most popular activity since Helenvale opened, accounting for over 70% of total usage in 1981 and over 50% to date. Female usage in 1981 was 8%. In 1982 this had fallen to 3%.

From these figures it appears that Helenvale has not been entirely successful in attracting young people, and to a greater extent has been even more unsuccessful in harnessing the energies, and skills of

females. This clearly casts doubt on the success of the GEAR objective to foster resident commitment and confidence. With so much emphasis placed on football there is little chance of female activity increasing, especially as there are no creche facilities which would be an encouragement allowing more women to participate.

The lack of youth activity at Helenvale is seen by management as a result of the lack of indoor facilities, (J. Docherty, 1985). The indoor hall provides badminton, table-tennis and women's aerobics though these are not extensively used. Demand for indoor football is constantly recognized, though the hall is not large enough to accommodate this. Parkhead is a renowned 'football area', yet the astroturf pitch available does not appear to meet the requirements of the younger age group who appear to want somewhere to kick around on, preferably indoors. Helenvale cannot provide this facility as it is evident that it was from the beginning intended more for competitive football, and as spectatorship alone does not hold the attention of younger people, there has been under usage of Helenvale by the under 18's. Given the need to attract 10-19 years olds, it may be that the high quality provision of Helenvale was the wrong initiative to develop in Parkhead, an argument substantiated by local residents. However both the GDC and SDA refute this and maintain that Helenvale does serve a purpose. In particular though, its role in reducing community pressures such as the social effects of widescale unemployment, (as highlighted by the working group), needs to be questioned in the light of continuing vandalism at the centre and the need for twenty-four hour security.



## 6.9 The Concept of Community Management:

### Would It Have Changed Anything?

The previous sections have highlighted the importance placed on participation in leisure and recreation, the attitudes of the GDC and SDA in pursuing this objective and the wider implications for doing so. This section examines the concept of community management now being proposed within the Parks Department, and asks whether it could have helped to promote Helenvale to a greater extent, particularly amongst younger age groups. The justification for the GDC's proposal and its potential as a vehicle for public participation are also questioned. The GDC define community management as locally based decision-making, on the use and development of facilities by community representatives. A Management Committee would comprise representatives from various community groups and other interested members of the local community. Committees would be responsible for the daily running of the facility, ensuring that a programme of activities, both educational and leisure is available to all sectors of the community, determining opening hours, initiating fund raising projects, ensuring user groups adhere to the rules and enforcing safety and fire procedures (GDC, 1984).

Given that local people appeared slow to take up (if at all) organized programmes and other initiatives set up at Helenvale in the beginning it is questionable whether any form of responsibility was desired. A football league organized by a community committee lasted only five weeks because people lost interest, seemingly refusing responsibility. In view of such attempts by management the question must be posed - 'what is it that the local population, young and

female groups in particular, want?' In reply only tentative explanations can be put forward. It may be that Helenvale does not cater adequately for the working class interests of the population, prestige events attracting more middle class spectators. Whilst in attempting to maintain a balance between external and local use, the latter has been under publicized. Financial constraints also appear to be a major barrier.

In the light of these limitations, and the apparent apathy and existing perceptions of local people, it is perhaps not surprising that Helenvale is not viewed a possible contender for the recent proposal of community management. Given the evident lack of interest in participation as a means of self-fulfilment, there may appear no case for demanding a participatory machinery, that allows control of facilities, resources and the like. However in contrast it may be the case that if local people were allowed to have a say in determining recreational programmes, then the needs of a wider local population may be met. As it stands, Helenvale is not tapping the resources of 10-19 year olds, nor can it be claimed that it is generating a better image for the area internally. This is not to deny external users and those over 18 the right of access to Helenvale, but serves to show that on closer examination, the triumph of Helenvale as portrayed by the SDA and GDC, as an example of community regeneration in GEAR is ambiguous.

Through community management the GDC initially saw an opportunity to safeguard community facilities which may otherwise have had to be closed. Helenvale, not being in this category does not warrant community management. This immediately highlights one of the motives

behind the GDC's idea, that of maintaining or improving service delivery without incurring additional expenditure. It now appears however, that community management is being considered within a wider principle echoing the objective of the Housing Department.

'To foster a greater level of community identity and promote community stability and self reliance'.  
(GDC, 1984, p.2)

Hence community management is in theory viewed as a component of the Council's overall strategy of decentralization, along with the development of area management and increased emphasis on public participation as mentioned in chapter four. The Parks Department acknowledge four advantages of community management:

- (i) Facilities may remain open
- (ii) Running costs to the council are stabilized or reduced
- (iii) An increase in, and more effective usage of facilities may occur
- (iv) The fostering of community spirit, independent control and responsibility, providing a benefit to the community

(GDC, 1984, p.2)

Apart from (iv) the remainder all equate participation as a means to an end that will result in economic efficiency to the council. The emphasis on allowing facilities to remain open and relatedly stabilizing or reducing costs, implies the equation of community labour with voluntary labour, a point which has caused reservation amongst community groups, (SRC Community Worker, 1985):

'High unemployment, especially in certain localities and among the young, means that many people are in need of productive ways of spending their time'.  
(GDC, 1984, p.2)

The implications for reducing revenue burdens to the council may have an adverse effect on the long term running of facilities, and hence it is important that community management is not adopted by the council as a way of avoiding cut-backs. The Housing Department recognized this as discussed in the previous chapter, regarding participation's image as an 'easy cop out' (GDC, 1984). There is a danger that the rhetoric will become one of, 'we have not got the resources - you take over responsibility', which will inevitably result in closures as voluntary groups struggle to gain finance. This philosophy has already been linked to present government activity as Kirk (1980) acknowledges:

'Substantial economies (have been) made in public spending by the present government, as the maintenance of facilities are transferred to voluntary associations and interested individuals'.

In the light of such motives the desire to regain community spirit may therefore be viewed with scepticism.

The inference that community management means decision making at the local level was dispelled outright by the staff I spoke to, who revealed that community management could never be anything more than in an advisory capacity, 'real community management is too complicated, too expensive and too vast, especially with regard to the size of Helenvale', said one GDC official. The major obstacle to successfully implementing community management at Helenvale appears to be the administrative difficulty that would face management committees in having to present management information to feed into the wider bureaucracy. This obviously increases with the scale of the facility, though could be overcome with suitable training of

committee members. In addition there is also the issue of representation with regard to management committees, and the problem of conflicting interests over access to facilities, leading to possible discrimination in favour of some groups against others.

The major barrier however to developing community management (a structural constraint), is that it conflicts with traditional bureaucratic philosophy and the role of the professional. The opportunity for its adoption appears very limited, as priority is on job security of existing staff, and conflict with unions would occur over any proposal that would infringe or threaten present posts. To this extent the management at Helenvale did not foresee any implementation of community management, neither in full nor through a users advisory committee. Such is the position regarding tenant involvement in housing management, as was highlighted in the previous chapter. Consequently in its present form community management as proposed by the Parks Department is nothing more than participatory symbolism.

#### 6.10 Conclusions

The issue of Helenvale has had a two fold effect in allowing an insight into participation. As an example of recent activity and a component of regeneration in GEAR, its contribution to the 'comprehensive approach' to urban regeneration has been highlighted. Whilst in addition it has also allowed examination of the attitudes of both the GDC and SDA to the role of participation, and in pursuing the objectives of the leisure and recreation proposals for GEAR.

Without the framework of GEAR it may be argued that the Health Board would have acquired Helenvale, and therefore not withstanding criticism, the ability of the SDA both financially and in terms of its internal power, did secure the improvement of recreational provision. The inter-play between the agents of urban renewal consequently becoming apparent. Beyond this and relating specifically to the scope for participation, the benefits narrow. The stress on participation in leisure and recreation was clearly a motive to ensure population retention in GEAR, and by promoting low cost participation (SDA, 1978) through community management, the SDA had hoped to retain control of Helenvale as well as the local population. Participation was therefore seen as a guarantee of SDA investment and hence questions the extent of democracy. Thus whilst the SDA seemed keen on participation it appears to have been for ulterior motives, beyond which there was little if any interest in achieving genuine participation, which was deemed outwith the SDA's remit.

The multi-agency approach as highlighted in chapter four, and as evidenced in this chapter was unable to offer an adequate opportunity for public participation in decision making. The contribution Helenvale was to make to GEAR was determined solely by the agents involved, as there was no opportunity for participation in the formulation of these proposals. In addition the SDA's proposal for community management, having never been put to the GDC did not provide the opportunity for participation. Meanwhile the GDC's current ideas on community management seem little more than symbolic, offering limited scope for decentralization of responsibility and

control, whilst expecting maximum gain in terms of voluntary input. To this end the Park's Department do not view public participation in its own right, as a form of participatory democracy, but rather as a means to an end to fulfil their own economic goals. The apparent unsuitability of Helenvale even to allow a user advisory committee, appears to be more aligned to the traditional ideology of bureaucratic management and professionalism, reinforced by present management and the union. Beyond a perception of agency attitudes towards participation, and the extent of local authority influence in determining the opportunities for participation, this case-study also shows that in attempting reform within the present social structure, one cannot seriously expect real change. The dominance of the SDA and the historical bureaucratic nature of local government have both preserved the status quo, thus limiting genuine participation.

## Chapter Seven

### CONCLUSION

In section one of this chapter it is intended to draw upon seven main themes that have been developed in the course of this research. Together these have conveyed the limited scope for participation within urban policy, particularly within the recent period. Section two looks at the implications of the points raised for future urban policy, assuming that current trends continue.

#### 1. Limitations on participation

The early part of this research focused on initial questions of definitions and the problem that participation has become a catchword in itself. "Participation" encompassed a range of activities from consultation to genuine participation, manipulation and so forth. In observing participation in the context of GEAR, many agencies and individuals have used participation to denote their own intended meanings, which are closely related to the issues at stake. When referring to the role of the working groups and the formulation of policies and proposals for the East End of Glasgow, participation was equated with 'consultation' and 'informing'. In house modernization more genuine forms of participation existed, though with limitations, in contrast to those aspects of housing where participation was



viewed in an advisory capacity only. Chapter six highlighted similar discrepancies with participation in leisure and recreation perceived as a means to acquiring self-fulfilment, but with regard to management of facilities in an advisory capacity only. (User advisory committees).

The inadequacy therefore of speaking about participation 'per se' cannot be overemphasized. It is conceived in many quarters as a single and static issue, when clearly it is multi-faceted. Its slow development as highlighted in chapter three, conveyed the many levels of participation within urban policy, and the need to recognize participation as changing through time. Chapters five and six have presented in more detail this element of diversity. To this end it is important to recognize that participation may go beyond basic issues of individual choice in rehabilitation and house modernization. Rather participation needs to be acknowledged as an integral aspect of the 'comprehensive approach'. Developments in the housing field, despite weaknesses have represented participation at various levels, ranging from the more successful management co-operatives to less extensive involvement in modernization. However there do not appear to have been parallel developments in other aspects of the regeneration programme. The desire to participate is no longer related solely to social stakes confined within Tocqueville's 'four sunk fences and a quick set hedge', (1946). Instead participation is increasingly being acknowledged outwith the close proximity of an individual's home and immediate surroundings. The issues now at stake in urban policy are economic orientated and have far reaching implications for individuals. In terms of

comprehensive regeneration there is thus a need to involve the public within the total approach adopted and not just to confine community involvement to those areas where it suits best, determined by the bureaucracy. It seems to be the case that in those areas where issues are not explicitly quantifiable, such as the difference between house improvement and the formulation of policy, housing and economic regeneration, then participation appears to be limited. The responsibility for economic regeneration in GEAR has lain largely with the SDA and GDC and participation has not been developed in this field. On a national scale however, the 'People's Plan' for the London Docklands has represented the incorporation of participation in this area, highlighting the effect of local level initiatives and not just central. This lack of a co-ordinated approach to participation in all aspects of the GEAR project, reinforces the author's initial hypothesis that participation has got lost within the intricacies of urban policy, being confined mainly to housing and low level issues. As a result, long term policy proposals be it in housing or job creation, have excluded public comment even to the extent that the SDA have been seen to 'impose their planning will on the area' (T. McInally, 1981).

The question of definitions, issues and levels of participation are closely related, tending to highlight 'how' participation has developed (or has not), rather than why. The second theme shows more explicitly 'why' there has been such limited scope.

Democracy and representation have constantly underlined the debate about the role and contribution of public participation. Weaknesses

of a representative democracy and the need to make power more responsive have been stressed. Throughout the research it has been evident that traditional deep rooted ideologies have been slow to change. The interplay of local politics, issues of corporate management versus departmentalism, and the slow development of methods to encourage participation, have been constrained within wider societal structures and governmental philosophies. This in turn has hindered the accommodation of participation. In part this is a result of central government reinforcing the bureaucracy through their influence over local government, the development of additional government quangos, as well as the effect of local level activity and interpretation. Thus whilst participation may seem to have been increasingly accepted in theory, implementation in practice has been limited. This has been due also to problems of representation, in both government and the local community, which have prevented a clear cut recognition of the contribution of participation. As discussed in chapter two, and highlighted in chapters five and six, the public interest concept has been pursued by all the agencies involved, and at a lower level by community organizations. If anything the emphasis in GEAR on participation appears to have tried to make the public interest concept more responsive, with the involvement of the GDC, SSHA and SDA attempting to enhance their credibility, albeit to varying degrees. However the extent to which this is sufficient as a substitute in terms of democracy must be questioned.

Professionalism and bureaucracy together represent a third theme which has constantly been seen to affect the development of participation. Within agency departments it has been observed that

there is a strong tendency to protect the role of the professional, and in the GDC in particular the highly departmentalized structure has not helped to encourage participation to its widest capacity. Attempts to decentralize power and develop participation have therefore had the fundamental flaw of being set within constraints established by bureaucracy, be it with regard to structure, degree of autonomy, financial resources or whatever. As a result, where 'participation' has been visible, such as in house modernization, consultation on the GEAR proposals, user advisory committees in leisure and recreation - the methods used have been laid down by the authority. At the same time professional attitudes have been slow to change, highlighted perhaps succinctly through the GDC's recent proposal for a 'Participation Officer', nine years after the designation of GEAR, with its emphasis on fostering resident commitment and involvement.

The fourth theme that has been considered is the interplay of urban management. Inter agency conflict between the GDC and SDA has highlighted the limitations to a comprehensive approach to urban regeneration, Helenvale in particular conveying the different aims of the two agencies. This may also perhaps have blurred a public interest concept regarding the contribution Helenvale was to make to GEAR. The nature of relations between the actors involved have emerged, with examples in the previous two chapters reinforcing the perceived divisions between authority and the public. The role of elected representatives within the bureaucracy and within a process of 'decentralization' through community councils, was also seen to cast doubt upon the

effectiveness of a representative democracy. In particular chapter five's reference to SSHA attitudes to councillors raises scepticism as to the real commitment to participation. Furthermore, problems of union opposition to community development encouraging management co-operatives, and staff conflict regarding job uncertainty have served to acknowledge the fundamental explanations for what appear to be 'closed' views on participation. When certain staff are of the opinion that public participation cannot succeed because management hierarchy would not allow permeation of the system, the power of urban management is clearly revealed.

In contrast to these dominant themes which are 'top heavy', the fifth theme that has emerged as a constraint is the ability and enthusiasm of individuals to participate. In observing participation in modernization schemes it was evident that there existed those individuals who had no desire to participate beyond achieving their own goal of house improvement. Similarly in the case of involvement in the local housing association via the management committee, interest diminished once immediate aims had been fulfilled. The same was apparent regarding participation in free sessions in leisure and recreation, (chapter six). Hence it must be acknowledged that the main constraints outlined above have not been the sole barrier to achieving effective participation. The inadequacy of communication with officials, elected representatives and also community organizations, was stressed in chapter four. This must be seen against a background in GEAR which has lacked a tradition of participation. As chapter four highlighted, even considering the LPWP system prior to 1976, participation was extremely limited. As a

result it is perhaps not surprising that there remain those people who have no desire to participate, given the traditional representative democracy that has for so long made decisions for them, and in doing so has excluded them from policy making arenas. Hence amidst GEAR's early promises of participation it would seem inevitable that many horizons were limited to accepting 'participation' on low level issues though since the need to gain a more genuine form of participation has been recognized, (SRC, 1981).

Given such constraints the importance of acknowledging participation within a wider framework is crucial. This is a further theme that has been stressed throughout, in order to emphasize the inadequacy of limiting participation to one issue at one point in time. By questioning whether limitations can be viewed as a result of local or central level activity or attitudes, common barriers to genuine participation, such as bureaucracy, professionalism, and questions of democracy, have been highlighted. In addition this has generated discussion on ulterior motives for participation and the broader implications of these for urban policy. A component of comprehensive regeneration, Helenvale raised issues pertaining to the SDA's encouragement of participation, especially through its proposals for community management and the desire for low cost participation, which appeared to be outwith its remit. This again stressed the importance of observing the wider implications of participation.

On a similar note have been the continued references to participation being viewed as a way of avoiding financial cut backs, with regard to management and repair co-operatives in housing, and the GDC's proposal for community management in leisure and recreation. Whilst

in the long term this may have broader implications for providing a self-sufficient population, in context participation has been stated as a way around constrained finances, though not a 'cop out' it has been argued, (GDC, 1984). However it has also been stressed that without financial resources there will be further limitations to the extent to which participation can be encouraged. This was stated with reference to GEAR, at the Urban Renaissance Seminar in Swansea (1981):

'Money is the important thing that starts it all off. If you have money to inject into an area you can perhaps persuade people to communicate and participate, but if there is no money then you are on a loser'.

(M. Wilson, SSHA, Swansea, 1981, p.35)

Presently, as chapters five and six have indicated, amidst continuing financial constraints, the direction for participation appears uncertain.

## 2. Implications

The slow pace at which public participation has developed, and the afore-mentioned constraints summarized above have together prevented participation becoming a major component of the urban planning process in GEAR. Local state administration, both in terms of the GDC and SDA, have been organized so as to guarantee execution of the project within limits which are tolerable to the social structure, that is by reinforcing bureaucracy, professionalism and representative democracy within local government. To a large extent this has also been a result of central government activity, through national urban policy. The 1977 White Paper (Cmd 6845) spoke of the

'touchstone' of success being recognition of the immediate and long-term welfare of inner city residents, and the need for communication with those people living in the inner areas. However, the multi-agency approach used in GEAR casts doubt on the achievement of this objective. It has been argued that this kind of approach, entailing a complex management structure, may have been introduced intentionally to deflect attention from the problems at hand, (McInally, 1981). Whether coincidental or not the multi-agency, partnership and Development Corporation approaches have developed in parallel with drastic public expenditure cuts. With the 1981 policy statement reinforcing an economic direction for urban policy, and increased emphasis on the private sector, ideas of reducing dependency on the public sector (echoed from the sixties and seventies), are becoming dominant. Local economic development, encouraged by agents like the SDA and Development Corporations, through assisting the private sector are ultimately reducing the role of locally elected councils. Despite controversy over representation, it would seem that if policy continues in this direction then there will be further movement away from a public interest ideology towards a private interest ideology. Given that it was argued earlier that a public interest concept is often seen as a substitute for participation there would appear little, if any scope for genuine participation within a trend that is characterized as the 'new corporatism', (McKay and Cox, 1979). Thus in the midst of continued restrictions by central government on local government, reinforced through the proposed addition of the Metropolitan Counties, the scope for genuine participation appears to be increasingly limited, constrained by inherent aspects of a capitalist



representative democracy that serves to protect the interests of the ruling class. By pursuing an urban policy therefore that seeks to convert 'customers' (who are always right) into 'clients' (who relinquish their right to the professional - chapter two), regardless of individual ability to compete for economic and social stakes, the private interest ideology of planning is thereby reinforced. Thus whilst chapter five showed directions that had been made at the local level, and chapter six highlighted more specifically local level constraints to encouraging participation, it may be that local authorities will in the future have even less opportunity to determine the nature of participation. As a result it can be argued that developing urban policy will fail to take into account the experiences surrounding 'participation' in the past ten years, and instead will strive to discard an element of the planning process that is already highly constrained in any case.

To conclude on a more positive note, it must be seen that the broad conclusions raised in this research may under-estimate activity in other cities. In a wider context there appear to have been more genuine sentiments regarding participation, the Greater London Council (GLC), being a prime example. Their concept of 'Popular Planning' represents a commitment to 'democratically accountable economic planning' (GLC, 1982, p.20), as part of a wider democratization process. Greater public control is being stressed in a bid to achieve maximum public involvement in the planning process, particularly with regard to the location of investment and the conditions of work. In contrast to the vague rhetoric of the GEAR proposals, for increased community involvement and

participation/consultation, Popular Planning as advocated by the GLC draws upon local trade unions and community groups in a bid to spell out desired goals and a grass roots 'vision of the future', (GLC, 1982, p.38). However the key question still remains, to what extent can such approaches be successful given the underlying constraints of bureaucracy, representation and bias, corporatism and so forth? Furthermore, are we really striving for participatory democracy or working towards a more tolerable consensus that in any case will remain characteristic of our existing representative democracy? Against such a restrained tradition it would seem that the development of participation in urban policy, in order to go beyond consultation and participation which is confined to the close proximity of individual surroundings, will be dependent upon the commitment of local authorities and the degree to which inherent limitations can be overcome.

Future directions for research in this field would need to take into account the applicability of the themes, issues and hypotheses raised here in the context of GEAR, and to apply them to comparable examples of urban regeneration outwith Scotland. Though the limitations of comparing the SDA with the Development Corporations in England and Wales are recognized, this would provide a valuable insight into the future scope for participation within an urban policy which advocates collaboration between such agencies and local authorities.

Approx 31,000.

APPENDIX 1

PERSONS INTERVIEWED

GLASGOW DISTRICT COUNCIL

Tom McInally	(Planning Department)
Hugh McDonald	(Housing Department)
Tim Mason	" "
David Hepburn	" "
David Delmont	(Community Development Officer)
David Futherford	(Parks Department)

SCOTTISH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

John Wallace  
Peter Swinson

SCOTTISH SPECIAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Mary Hope  
Kenny Simpson

GDC: MANAGEMENT HELENSVALE PARK: Jim Docherty

GDC COUNCILLOR: Duncan MacLennan

STRATHCLYDE REGIONAL COUNCIL:

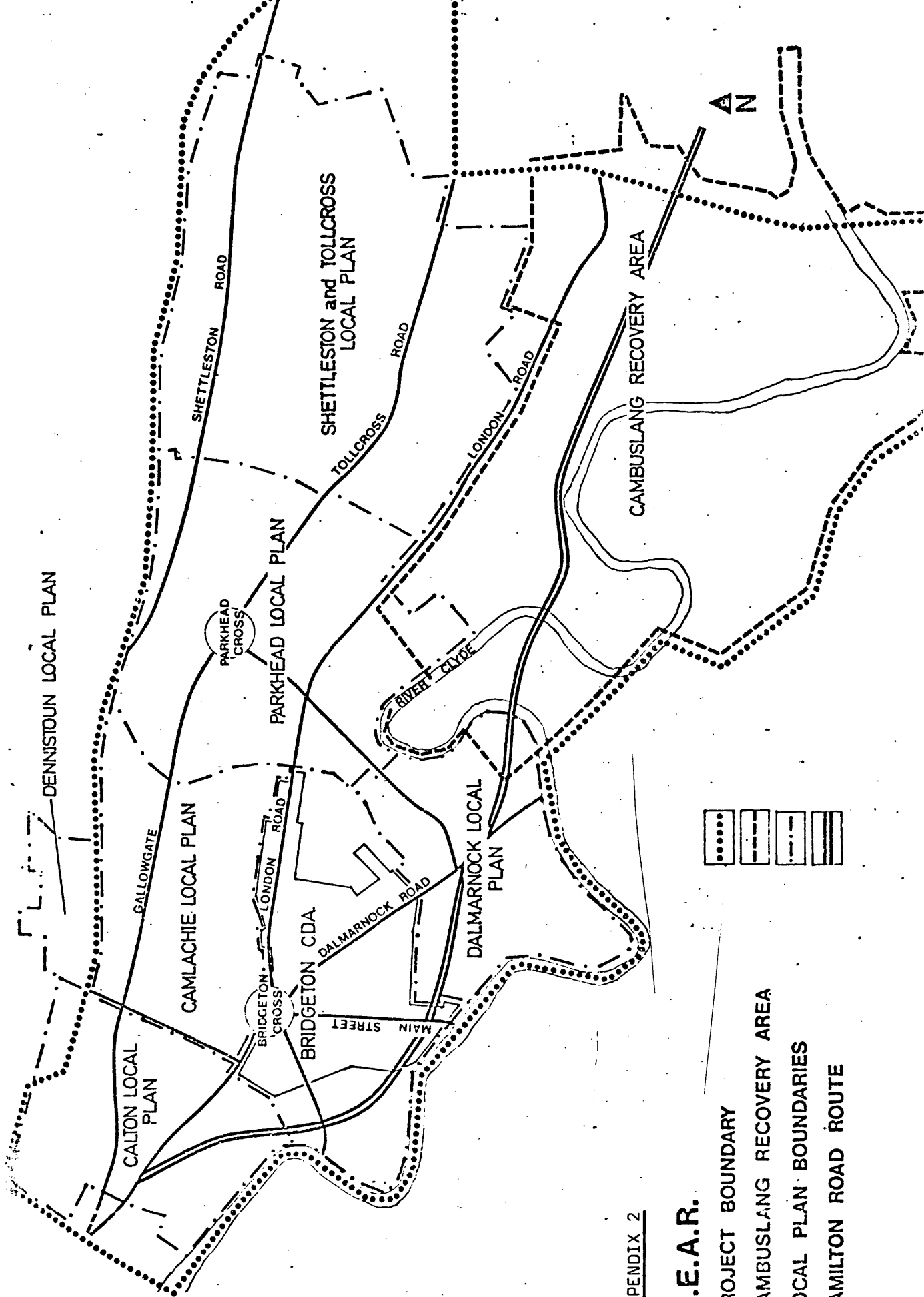
Margaret Cullen	(Community Worker)
Tom Lloyd	" "

GLASGOW COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICES: John Anderson

PARKHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION: John Hendry (Treasurer)

Discussion group organized by M. Cullen with residents from

GDC, SSHA and Parkhead Housing Association (8)



APPENDIX 2

G.E.A.R.

PROJECT BOUNDARY

CAMBUSLANG RECOVERY AREA

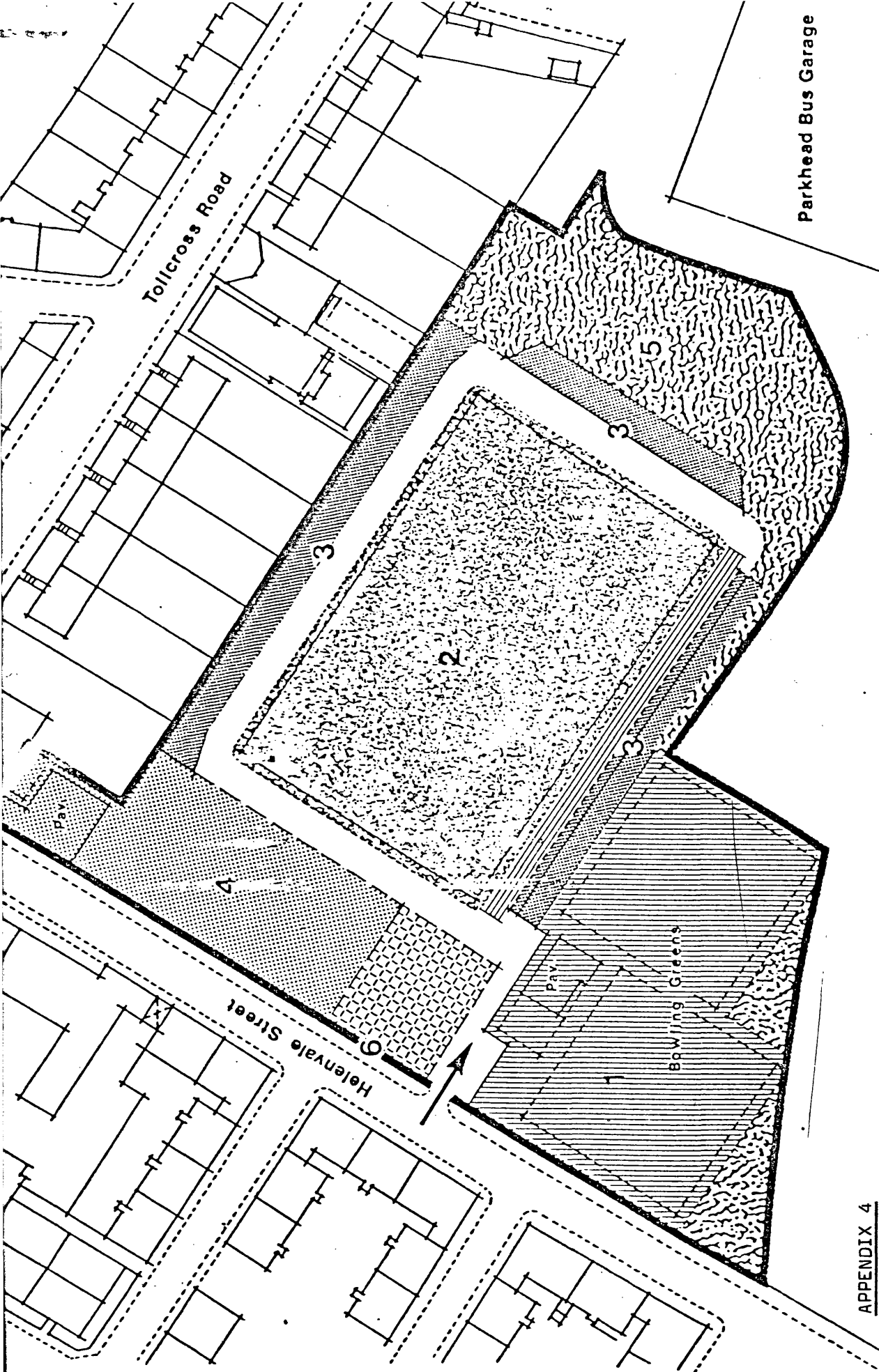
LOCAL PLAN BOUNDARIES

HAMILTON ROAD ROUTE

### APPENDIX 3

The nine proposals put forward by the housing working group with regard to identification of needs were:

- (1) To examine the relation between housing policies required to achieve the GEAR objectives, and current district-wide housing policies and objectives.
- (2) The assessment of the needs of present and future households in GEAR and ways and means of best utilizing existing and proposed public sector stock to meet those needs.
- (3) The implications raised by the possible surplus of housing stock within the GEAR area and the possibility therefore of accommodating a considerable number of newcomers.
- (4) The development of house letting policies to meet the demands of households who:
  - (a) wished to remain in GEAR
  - (b) wished to move into GEAR
- (5) The need to establish a supply of private housing of the right type, size and price, which should be related to the decline of the private sector within GEAR, particularly at the lower end of the market.
- (6) The assessment of the demand for special needs housing and the supply of suitable accommodation to meet the needs of the area.
- (7) The involvement of communities in the management and maintenance of their houses and surroundings.
- (8) An assessment of the cause and effect of the anti-social behaviour of certain residents which contribute to the social, physical and community blighting of specific areas of the East End.
- (9) To remove obstacles encountered by housing associations with regard to minimizing delay in rehabilitation programmes, pending amendment to housing legislation.



APPENDIX 4

# PROPOSALS PLAN

'ASTROTURF' Playing Surface



Bowling Facilities

Local Sports Centre



Car Parking



North

Scale 1:1250

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