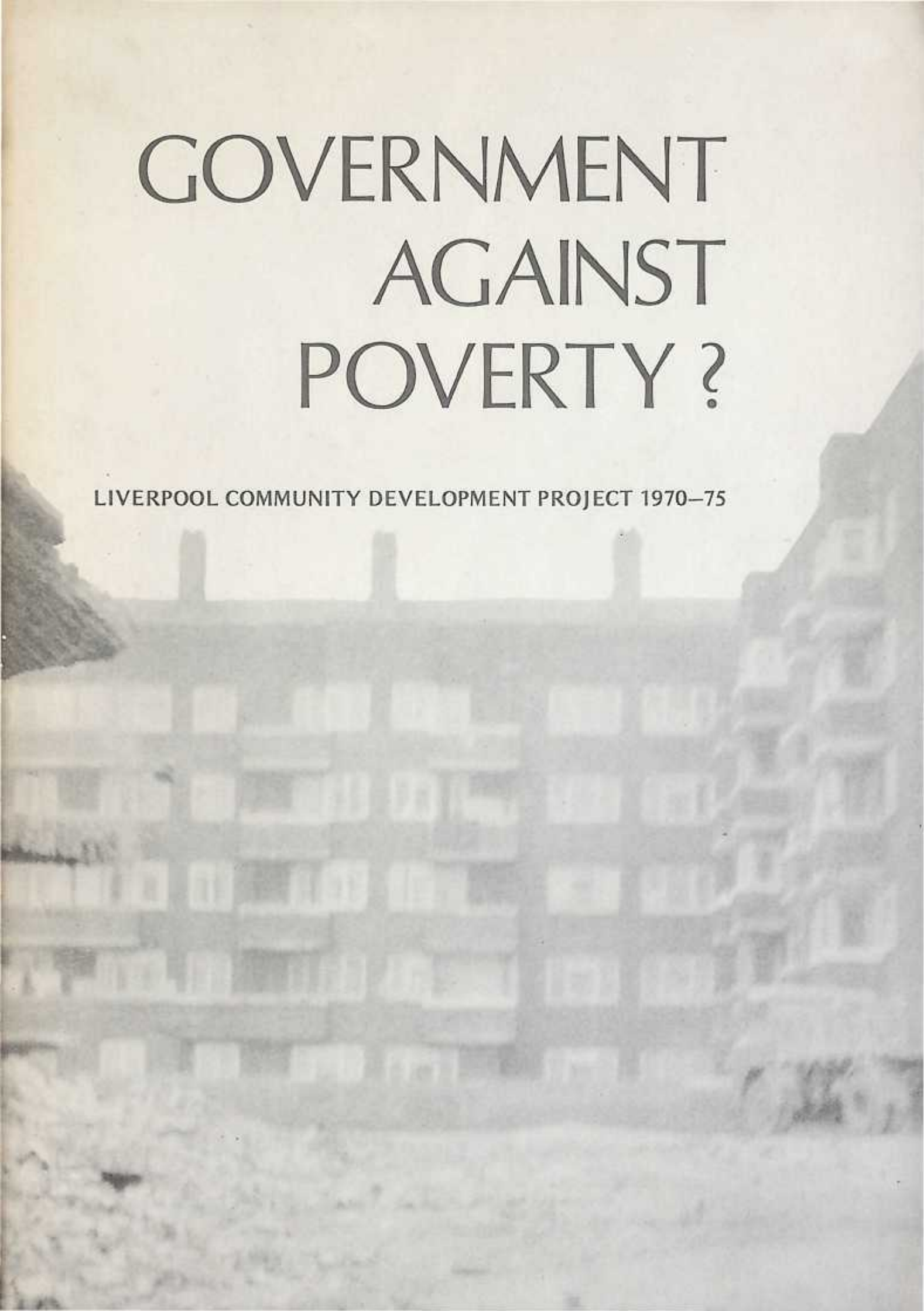
GOVERNMENT AGAINST POVERTY ?

LIVERPOOL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT 1970–75

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Seaforth
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Victoria Park
Hartley's Village
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Walton on the Hill
BOOTLE
Lifeboat Sta
New Brighton
Kirkdale
Anfield
Clubmoor
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West Derby
Tuebrook
LIVERPOOL
Everton
Egremont
Promenade
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Road Tunnel (Toll)
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Knotty Ash
Wavertree
Wavertree Nook
Broad Green
Olive Mount
Edge Hill
Dock Office
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Tranmere
Egerton Park
Woodhey
New Ferry
Port Sunlight
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Mossley Hill
Calderstones
Aigburth
Allerton
Grassendale
Garston
Garston Rocks
BEBINGTON
RIVER MERSEY
Garston Channel
The Sloyne

Government Against Poverty?
Liverpool Community Development Project, 1970–75

Phil Topping
George Smith

Published by:
Social Evaluation Unit, 40 Wellington Square, Oxford
September, 1977.

Liverpool CDP Project Area. See inside back cover for Detailed Map.

Cover Photo: Peter Leeson

Publication of the Government's White Paper 'Policy for the Inner Cities' in June 1977, has once again focussed attention on the problems of poverty and urban deprivation. Public and political interest in these questions, however, has often proved short-lived. The Home Office Community Development Project (CDP) was a major initiative of an earlier burst of enthusiasm for these problems at the end of the 1960s. Launched with a flourish in 1969, CDP was to be 'a radical experiment in community development involving local and central government, voluntary agencies and the universities in a concerted search for better solutions to the problems of deprivation . . . ' 'Government Against Poverty' (Halsey, 1974) the title of a paper originally written at the outset of CDP, reflects this early confidence.

But the reality has been very different, as accounts of the tangled and frustrating history of the national project have increasingly underlined (Lees and Smith, 1975). In addition to these internal problems, CDP was soon followed by a series of similar government sponsored experiments, most claiming to be built on the 'CDP experience' – one even claiming a similar title – the CCPs (Comprehensive Community Programmes) announced by the Home Office in 1974.

Perhaps more disturbing than the rise and fall of public interest in what after all are complex and fundamental questions of social organisation, is the way each new initiative fails to build on what went before. Lessons are at best only superficially learnt. Experiment follows experiment. Though the emphasis on industry and the economic base of the city are welcome developments in the latest initiative, many of the ideas on education and social services in the recent White Paper closely parallel those in the original CDP prescription nearly ten years previously. A decade of practical experiment seems to have made little impression.

These are major reasons for presenting a detailed account of the Liverpool CDP. Unlike several of the other CDP projects, Liverpool stuck closely to the original CDP objectives – of increased coordination of local services and the growth of community organisation. It thus represents an important example of one approach to urban community development, sustained over some five years.

Though the report is principally the work of two members of the research team and necessarily reflects their view of the project, it draws heavily on the work and writing of others, particularly Phil Doran, Terry Page and Tom Reti of the action team: Keith Pulham on the history of Vauxhall, education and community work; Keith Hodgson on local industry and the development of the Information Centre; Ian Hering on the 'Scottie Press'; Tony Scoggins on the Tichfield St. Community Centre; Dave Godman, Paul Mercer, Keith Jackson and Bob Ashcroft on various aspects of education; Angela Skrimshire on the census and 'social malaise' data; Teresa Smith on voluntary agencies, Margaret McGlade on the Multi-Services Centre; and Connie Topping on the Epsom St. playground, community workers, and for taking the major part in selecting photographs and layout for the final report.

The photographs in this report were all taken in Vauxhall and Liverpool during the CDP project.

This report is based on an earlier version, circulated to the local authority and Home Office in 1976. This in turn was based on a series of longer papers produced by the research team, some of which are available from the Social Evaluation Unit.

Further copies of this report available from:—
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Price: £2.00

ISBN 0 905627 04 0

Printed in Great Britain by Express Litho Service (Oxford).

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Chapter 1: The Liverpool Community Development Project

Liverpool: City of Change and Challenge

When in late 1969 the Liverpool CDP was launched with the appointment of its first director, Liverpool had already established a long tradition, pioneering new forms of voluntary organisation and community work. The city could fairly claim to be the origin of many voluntary movements that later spread to other parts of the country. Recently the Liverpool local authority has been among the first to move officially into the community work field.

In 1965 the Education Department appointed a number of area community wardens to form links with the community and promote local organisation; some became closely involved with the growth of community or neighbourhood councils. Other departments followed this lead by appointing 'community liaison officers'. At the same time the University, through the Institute of Extension Studies, was experimenting with community work as a form of adult education, and with the Council for Social Services and the University Settlement encouraged grass roots work in several parts of the city.

By 1970 'community development' had become one of the eight major objectives of local authority policy, and in 1973 a community development section was opened in the Town Clerk's Department to coordinate developments. Under the Liberals in 1974 this was matched by a community development committee – a standing committee of the city council, though these developments have fared badly in the recent local authority cut-backs.

Liverpool has also been a major centre for the recent wave of experiments in national policy, beginning in

Photo: Peter Leeson

1968 with the three year Educational Priority Area action-research project, and the Shelter Neighbourhood Action Project on housing (1969–72). Since CDP, Liverpool has played host to another Home Office project – the Brunswick 'Neighbourhood Scheme' – and the Department of the Environment Inner Areas Study, to name only the largest. Only in the recent round of Comprehensive Community Programmes, originally sponsored by the Home Office and now transferred to the Department of the Environment has Liverpool been left out.

In its own organisation, too, the Liverpool local authority was one of the first to reorganise its internal structure, following a McKinsey report in 1970. This reduced the number of departments and committees, and grouped the main spending areas into programme departments with increased corporate planning. Many of these changes foreshadowed those recommended to all local authorities in the 1974 general reorganisation following the Bains Report on the structure of local government.

In part these attempts to extend and reorganise services reflect the very high yet growing levels of need in the Liverpool area. Of the major English cities outside London, Liverpool is undoubtedly in the worst position overall, though the Tyneside conurbation has a higher proportion of housing with poor amenities and more overcrowding. Basic unemployment in the Merseyside region has remained stubbornly high even at times of prosperity elsewhere, and in recessions has reached disastrous levels. In May 1977 the unemployment rate for the Liverpool area was 10.7%, the highest of any UK conurbation and higher than the overall figure for Northern Ireland (10.5%) against a national figure of 5.5%. Industrial decline, population loss and the large-scale clearance of sub-standard housing – though much still remains – have left their physical mark on the central areas of Liverpool, while growth has been in the outlying estates and surrounding new town developments. Together these changes have contributed to an overall decline, which so far shows no sign of reversal, despite a series of local and national policies stretching back even before the war.

Great Homer Street – before redevelopment, 1970.
Photo: Peter Leeson

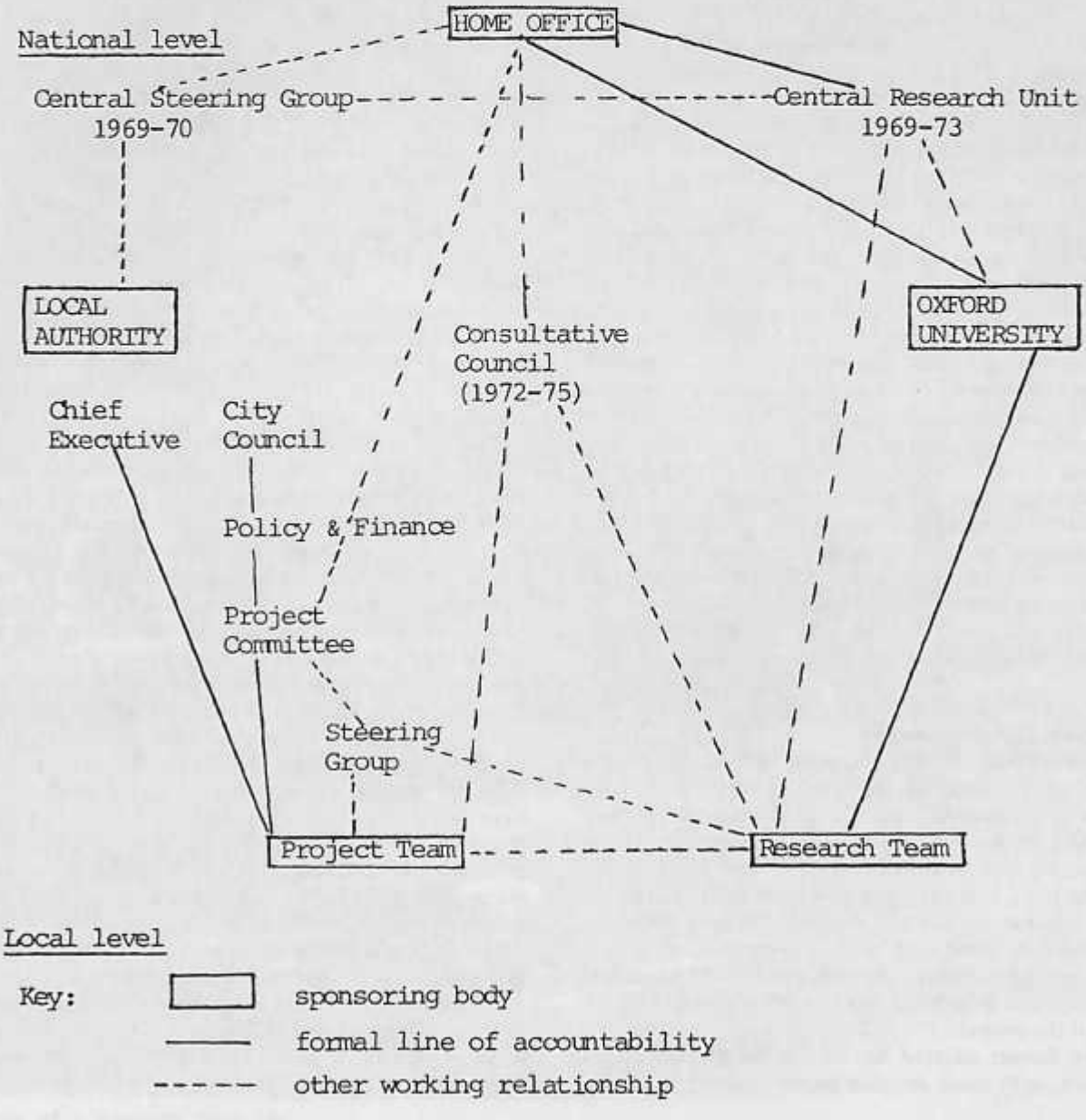
The Community Development Project: National and Local Structure

It was thus hardly surprising that Liverpool was one of the first four areas selected in 1969 for the pilot phase of the Home Office CDP programme. CDP grew out of an alliance of different interests within central government, seeking to test out on a small scale ideas that might be the basis for future policy development. Despite the rise in general affluence, it was argued, there were certain pockets of disadvantage which had missed out, not through any lack of opportunity, but because people in them were unable to take advantage of what was available. What was wanted was not 'more of the same', but new forms of locally developed policy. There was unmet need; yet also untapped resources of help — self-help — available in such areas. The programme was to uncover this unmet need, to find out more about deprivation, to improve coordination of existing services, and to develop self-help and community organisations.

There were to be twelve local projects in total. In each area there would be an action team attached to the local authority, but 75% funded by central government through the Urban Programme with limited 'social action' money to promote experimental schemes, and a research team attached to the local university or polytechnic with 100% grant from the Home Office to assess local conditions, and monitor or evaluate the action. During the pilot phase the original plan called for an action team of three; further workers would be recruited by secondment from existing agencies to improve the prospects of coordination. Though this idea was soon abandoned and had no influence on later projects, the first two in the field, particularly Liverpool, began their action programme on this basis.

From the start the national structure of CDP was complex and changing. Though action staff were appointed to the local authority, they had regular meetings with the central Home Office team. The central

Chart of National and Local Structure of Liverpool CDP



team was itself backed by a central steering group, including representatives of the local authorities, the Home Office and other government departments – its function to distil and pass on the lessons of CDP. This arrangement quickly fell into disuse partly because at the early stage there were no 'lessons' emerging from CDP. No formal mechanism was put in its place, until under pressure from the growing number of local projects a Consultative Council of project and Home Office representatives was set up in 1972 to coordinate the national development of CDP. On the research side CDP had begun with a national research director and later a central research team, but in practice local accountability took precedence over these more distant national links, particularly as local action and research teams began to work more closely together. By 1972 the Home Office had officially recognised the independence of local projects, and the national research director was redefined as 'research consultant' and finally phased out in 1974.

As one of the pilot projects the Liverpool CDP followed the original blueprint, though agreement to base the research team at Liverpool University was finally abandoned after lengthy negotiations. Some 18 months after the project had started, a research team attached to Oxford University joined the action team.

Locally the project had a complex structure of accountability. The action team was appointed to the Liverpool Town Clerk's Department and worked from the Municipal Offices until the Multi-Services Centre building was opened in the project area in 1972. Originally the Home Office had intended that a broadly based local steering group should be the central coordinating body for each project. This was to include representatives of interested parties, central and local government departments, other professionals, the voluntary agencies and local people. Though such a body was set up in Liverpool the local authority clearly felt the need for a small sub-committee of 'Policy and Finance' to manage their 25% of project resources. Thus both steering group and project committee existed side by side throughout the project, the latter having final power to authorise expenditure from project funds. Over the five years of the project, action expenditure amounted to about £310,000 with some £220,000 being spent on social action projects during the main action phase. The research team received an average grant of about £15,000 per year for its four year programme.

Liverpool CDP Final Report

This account of the Liverpool CDP has been produced by members of the research team. It is based partly on research carried out during the project, involving interviews, observation and participation, but it also depends heavily on the work of others, particularly the action team whose written material, records and actions are central to any account, on other professionals associated with the project, and local residents who freely allowed researchers to attend meetings and gave much time to interviews and discussion of the project.

The format adopted has been to publish an overall account, with more detailed papers covering the major elements in the action programme available for more specialist audiences. This overall account traces the development of the project from its origins within the Home Office, to the transfer of activities to the local authority and the Vauxhall neighbourhood council at the end of the project in 1975. The neighbourhood council itself grew out of the project's local steering group, and is accountable by annual report and review to the city council and the Home Office, which has continued to grant aid the programme for a further five years from 1975–1980. Its annual budget in 1976 was some £70,000 – the majority going on staff salaries, including the locally recruited neighbourhood workers, information centre staff, lawyers, adult education organiser, and coordinator for the community development work.

Unlike Coventry, which has produced a series of occasional papers and reports, Liverpool CDP has so far published little of its experience. In their final report, the Coventry team concentrated on their analysis and conclusions, particularly their changing approach to poverty and deprivation – and much less on the details of their actions in the project area. By contrast the Liverpool team spent little time developing analysis or theories of deprivation; but instead concentrated on the action programme mapped out early in the project, modelled closely on the original ideas behind CDP. These emphasised practical ways of improving and coordinating local services, and developing community groups and local organisation.

While other CDPs followed Coventry's lead away from these original objectives, Liverpool stuck to them doggedly. The Liverpool project thus represents a determined attempt to put into practice one approach to community development, though an approach less and less favoured in CDP at large. The approach concentrated on practical schemes that could be mounted within a local authority framework, not a wider attack on the problems of poverty and deprivation.

We have followed the same emphasis in this account of the Liverpool project. Though we do on occasions address the wider questions raised by CDP and would in no way deny their importance, our main concern has been to present an overall account of the Liverpool project. In the next three chapters we trace its early progress, describe the project area, and try to set out the underlying strategy that more or less determined the overall shape of the action programme – though in no way controlled its detailed development. Chapters 5–10 cover the major action programmes. Much has had to be left out, and readers in search of more detail are referred to the supporting papers. Inevitably this section has to cover the separate development of each element and we have included a series of case studies to give a flavour of the more day to day sequence of events. It is important to remember that many of these developments were going on at the same time, involving a limited number of people in the project team, local authority and the more active in the community. There was thus far more interaction, both planned and unplanned, between different elements in the programme than it is possible to convey in an account of this kind.

By setting out to tackle the problems of poverty and inequality by action and research at the local level, CDP

raises almost every dilemma or problem linked to social intervention. In our conclusions we have attempted to cover this range – from how effective a local area approach to poverty might be, to some of the more details lessons from the Liverpool project's practical experience. But no finding can be conclusive; for they are drawn from a single area. We cannot know what the results might be if the same ideas were attempted by different people in different settings. Here we see no alternative to the patient amassing of detailed experience in this way. Research, however sophisticated, cannot immediately discern whether one approach is conclusively right or wrong. Nor can political slogans or grand theory – though they have sometimes replaced practical argument in CDP.

We have put forward a number of conclusions, that will no doubt make clear our overall position on some of the major questions raised by CDP. Not everybody in CDP, not even all on the Liverpool project, will agree with this position. But we have taken care to present a detailed account of the project – in no way a 'whitewash' – so that those who disagree can at least base their arguments on what happened – not merely on their basic opposition to the reformist approach largely followed by the Liverpool project.

Bottom of a Vauxhall 'Walk-Up'
Photo: Peter Leeson

Chapter 2: The Origins and Early Development of Liverpool CDP.

The national CDP experiment — from its origins in 1967 in the Whitehall committee on community development chaired by Derek Morrell of the Home Office Children's Department, to its conclusion more than ten years later as the last of the twelve local projects finally peters out in 1977 or 1978 — has been a long drawn-out and frequently interrupted process, with many sharp twists and changes of direction. For most local projects, the early phase of the national programme now has little relevance. The long delays in establishing local projects, the rapid turnover of personnel and the change of objectives, all meant that this phase was over before most local projects were fully in action. Its major function subsequently has been to serve as the main source for the 'social pathology' approach to deprivation — blaming the individual — an approach that in CDP is regularly taken out and ritually slaughtered, in contrast to the current emphasis on 'structural' explanations for poverty and inequality, where the problem is seen to lie in the wider structure of society.

However for Liverpool CDP, one of the four pilot projects set up in 1969, this early phase is important. Perhaps more than any other CDP, the Liverpool programme was an attempt to experiment with many of the ideas in the original formulation of the national programme. Though other projects followed the lead of Coventry CDP away from these objectives, Liverpool stuck to its programme doggedly. We begin this chapter by placing Liverpool in the national context, showing some of the problems of translating the general ideas behind CDP into action, the practical difficulties of selecting an area and establishing local teams. In one way this is small-scale and insignificant stuff; no multi-million pound programmes were at stake. Its importance lies in the light that it throws on the relationships among central government departments, local authorities, universities and polytechnics, voluntary agencies and finally local people, who were all to be involved 'in a radical experiment in community development . . . . in a concerted search for better solutions to the problem of deprivation than those we now possess'. (Home Office, 1968).

Early National Plans and Organisation:

Unlike several recent 'action-research' projects which when announced are backed by material little thicker than a press release, CDP was widely discussed within government. By the time it was publicly launched in 1969, there were already papers covering the philosophy behind the experiment, the main lines of action and research to be tried in local projects, and the structure of its central and local organisation. These were hardly detailed enough to be called a blueprint, but they provided substantial guidelines. How realistic were they when it came to translating ideas into practice?

As Mayo (1975) shows, CDP represented an alliance of different interests within central government, not a panic reaction to urban crisis and racial unrest. The thinking behind CDP combined many of the ideas current in social policy development in the 1960s. Despite the general spread of prosperity, there were, it was argued, still pockets of disadvantage that had failed to gain their share of this growth. Merely extending existing policies on a 'more of the same basis' was a course with 'no apparent limits . . . . ' (Home Office, 1968) — 'pouring money down a bottomless pit.' There was, too, a strong belief that 'a sense of community' was in decline, for which the rising rate of vandalism, child neglect, or isolation among the elderly, provided all too frequent evidence. The Home Office paper on community development spoke of the need to develop 'the awareness of interdependence' and 'the growth of persons in community.' Yet it was also accepted that much social need was undetected or poorly handled as a result of the partial and ill-coordinated coverage of the existing social and welfare services. There were strong echoes here of a central theme in the Seebohm Report, that existing services are specialised and vertically organised; yet individual needs rarely fall so neatly into a single category.

CDP was a device to test out one response to these problems — a new form of policy initiative for disadvantaged areas. There were to be three main strands. First there would be programmes to create a greater awareness of interdependence both within the community and with outside groups, and stimulate increased self-help organisation. Second was an emphasis on integrating and coordinating existing services better, and making them more accessible to clients. This second objective was consciously an attempt to test out the Seebohm Report's main recommendation for more integrated local authority social services. When Seebohm was unexpectedly implemented on a national scale (Hall, 1976) before CDP was in full operation, the programme was enlarged to include services not involved in the Seebohm reorganisation. The third strand was the presence of research to provide information for action, but more importantly to monitor and evaluate the experiment; for 'the optimal methods of improving the standard of life and welfare in poor communities are by no means completely known.' (Home Office, 1969)

As the project gathered way, it naturally accumulated other ideas and objectives. Nowhere is the way different and conflicting interests were at times uncritically accommodated, shown more clearly than in the list of 'indicators of deprivation' compiled by the central team. The list was initiated by the Home Office, and each central government department then added items. The result was formidable and amorphous, ranging from the incidence of imprisonment for debt, through vaccination, infant mortality and the number of junior library ticket-holders to marital fidelity and personal hygiene. These were then solemnly presented to local research

Photo: Peter Leeson

teams as the basis for assessing the impact of CDP. At face value this seems a lunatic way of conducting research, but this is to overlook its value in drawing in central government departments and keeping the alliance together — a prime concern of Morrell's early strategy. Yet the main lines of the programme did provide an intellectually coherent approach, though Liverpool CDP found that in practice the spread of objectives contained the seeds of considerable tension and conflict within the overall programme.

Much has subsequently been made of the underlying 'social pathology' approach to deprivation in early CDP literature, as a reason for rejecting all the objectives in the original package (CDP 1974). In part this is a fair charge; individual characteristics are singled out, though the idea is far less prominent than in later projects associated with Sir Keith Joseph's 'cycle of deprivation', where it becomes the principal explanation. In early CDP papers individual characteristics are seen to be part cause of deprivation, but so are poorly co-ordinated services. Nor was the wider framework completely ignored, though this was outside the scope of CDP — a small supplement to existing social and welfare programmes. 'Large-scale remedies' the Home Office intoned, 'belong to the steady evolution, as resources permit, of familiar general policies.' (Home Office, 1969). Though projects have rightly challenged the belief that CDP areas necessarily benefit from the onward march of these 'familiar policies', it is clearly wrong to conclude that the original approach laid the sole blame for deprivation on individual characteristics.

Already by 1968 the main lines of CDP organisation had taken shape. Twelve local projects were to be based in areas selected on broad criteria of deprivation with populations of 3,000–5,000 people. Each project was to have a core action team of not more than three people; others would be added by secondment from existing local services — a way of generating commitment for an integrated programme, though the project would be able to act 'only to the extent that the parent service was prepared to concede.' An independent research team would be provided by the local university or polytechnic. Local teams would be 'operationally accountable' to a local steering group, composed of local authority officers and members, representatives of central government departments, other professional and voluntary interests, and 'private members of the local community, if as part of the developing strategic plan, this seemed to be one way of securing the realistic involvement of people living in the area' (Home Office, 1968).

Nationally these local steering groups would be complemented by a central steering group, comprising the interests involved in CDP at this level. And this in turn was shadowed by committees and working parties stretching up into the Whitehall machine. The role of the Home Office and the local authority was exactly analogous at these two levels. At national level CDP was presented as an inter-departmental initiative lodged for convenience within the Home Office, which provided for its administration. Similarly at the local level, the project's activities might extend beyond the scope of the local authority, though it would play a central role in providing an administrative base. In both cases the steering group symbolised this broad framework. All were to be involved.

By 1968 a timetable had been drawn up to select four pilot areas early in the following year, make public the project shortly afterwards, and get the first projects into operation in the summer when there would be a joint training programme for new staff. Meetings with local authority representatives before the project was officially launched produced some small changes. Project areas were to be nearer 10,000; and there was concern about selecting the pilot areas to avoid confusion with the Seebohm reorganisation. But the main lines were unchanged, as the project moved into the action phase.

Selecting the Pilot Areas:

From the start, Liverpool was an obvious choice for one of the three or four pilot projects. There were four main criteria for selecting the local authorities to take part at this stage; the areas had to be distributed across the country; one at least had to be linked with the educational priority area (EPA) action research programme that had just begun (Halsey 1972) and there had to be potential backing from the local social services and neighbouring university or polytechnic. The arrangements for selecting the actual project area once the local authorities had been chosen were less clear cut. Again a balanced mixture of different types of area was envisaged, and the need to avoid particularly difficult districts in the pilot phase.

Only Birmingham and Liverpool of the 23 possible local authorities considered had an EPA project, and once Coventry had been selected as one of the pilot areas, Liverpool was inevitably chosen to give a geographical spread. The four local authorities selected were approached early in 1969, and the intention was to announce the details simultaneously. Though Liverpool and Coventry quickly agreed in principle to participate, negotiations with the other areas, Southwark and Cardiff dragged on; Cardiff belatedly dropped out and was replaced by Glyncorrwg in South Wales. This stage had taken far longer to complete than had been anticipated; the result was to delay the announcement of the pilot phase and the appointment of staff by several months, though Liverpool went ahead with the selection of the project area. One casualty of the delay was the proposed summer school for newly appointed staff. This developed into an Anglo-American conference on the evaluation of social action programmes, involving the senior figures in CDP but nobody from local teams. None had yet been appointed.

Setting Up the Liverpool Project:

Negotiations to set up the action and research teams on the Liverpool project were conducted entirely separately in a series of bilateral meetings, in part a reflection of the divided responsibility for action and research in the central team in what was, after all, intended to be a collaborative 'action research' venture. Formal negotiations with Liverpool University only began once the local authority had officially agreed to take part.

Though there was some initial confusion within the local authority, as the Home Office had channelled communications both to the Town Clerk's Department and also to the Children's Department, reflecting the location of the central team, the inter-departmental nature of the project was quickly established, and formal approval given. A committee of 'delegates' from local authority departments was appointed to hold discussions with the Home Office about the detailed arrangements. These delegates comprised the chairman of five major committees and six chief officers.

Once the formal approach was made, there was little discussion about whether Liverpool should take part. Discussion centred on two main issues; the selection of the local area, and local organisation, particularly the role of the steering group. Both show clearly the limits of central direction, once negotiations began with the local authority. What had not been fully taken into account in the central plans of what was seen as a small though significant pilot experiment, was the extent to which this was immediately taken as a real resource at the local level, both in terms of money and the prestige attached to a central government venture.

(i) Selection of the Area:

One major reason for selecting Liverpool in the pilot phase was to link up with the EPA action-research project, and this was explicitly stated in the Home Office's invitation for Liverpool to participate in the scheme; 'it would provide an opportunity to study the interaction between community action on a broad front, and action initiated in the schools, and elsewhere, to improve educational opportunity for children from deprived families.' The idea of linking EPA and CDP was boosted by the arrival of Dr. Halsey, national director of the EPA projects, as the national research coordinator for CDP in the autumn of 1968. The Liverpool EPA project was by far the most active and successful at this stage. However there were two problems. First the EPA project covered a far larger area with a population of over 100,000. And as a second complication or perhaps opportunity, the Shelter Neighbourhood Action Project (SNAP) had just begun work in part of the EPA area in Granby.

Both projects, however were anxious to attract the CDP to their area, though how the two projects would have been organised was never made clear. Both saw it as an addition to their own resources, not as an independent project. As SNAP was already working on a 'total approach' to urban problems, the arrival of CDP would bring more services into the scheme, making it even more total; SNAP was the 'device of the moment'. But both projects were uneasy about the other. A joint

scheme with EPA would, in SNAP's opinion, have presented the city with a threatening line-up of central government projects – though EPA was not strictly a central government exercise. The EPA project viewed SNAP as 'rushing its fences' in the attempt to gain support for its approach. In fact both projects had leapt into action, propelled by the pace and personal style of their directors – a Liverpool model followed by the first local CDP director.

Despite these frictions, the Home Office, in its all-embracing style, explicitly suggested the triple overlap at the first meeting with the local authority delegates in May, 1969; 'joint action by three projects with highly cognate purpose, might achieve a great deal.' However the Home Office conceded that the city might select another area. It was clear that the city team was opposed to the idea of placing three projects in one area. It was concerned that resources were fairly distributed, that one area was not 'saturated' with research – there were already rumblings in the Education Department about the EPA project – and also that the effects of the different projects should not be confused. It was agreed to wait for the 'social malaise' data to guide the final selection. This exercise by the Planning Department involved collection of 'malaise' indicators for small areas of the city. (See Flynn, M., Flynn, P., Mellor, N., 1972 for a list of these indicators.)

By July, discussion between the Home Office and Planning Department had settled the criteria for selection. Population was to be from 5,000 to a maximum of 20,000; the project was to be in the inner area of the city in a district unlikely to be affected by large-scale clearance, but one with high social malaise rates. Using these criteria the Planning Department recommended the Vauxhall area. In the meetings that followed, it was quickly accepted that Vauxhall had performed as badly on the malaise indicators as the other areas considered, particularly Granby. But this was not the case. Vauxhall Ward fell into the lowest 25% of Liverpool wards on 19 of the social malaise indicators, and the lowest 10% of wards in eight indicators. Granby, however, was in the lowest 25% on 33 of the 36 indicators and the lowest 10% on 24 of the indicators. Several other wards were in positions as low or lower than Vauxhall. What is also obscured by the simple ranking of wards on each indicator of 'social malaise' is the pattern of results. The profile of Vauxhall was very different from that of Granby, suggesting a very different pattern of disadvantage.

At a meeting of delegates to consider the social malaise figures, a compromise decision was reached to select part of the Vauxhall Ward, part of Granby in the SNAP project area, and the Devonshire Road area of Princes Park Ward. These were only two physically distinct areas, though on opposite sides of the city centre. This decision was formally approved and sent to the Home Office.

The compromise decision to select two or three areas appears to have been a tactic to get the Home Office to drop its proposals to link CDP with the EPA and SNAP project areas. For the Home Office was unlikely to accept this unnecessarily complicated arrangement in the pilot phase of the CDP programme. Enthusiasm for a joint scheme was weakening rapidly; the EPA project director had grown lukewarm about loosely coordinating his work with yet another project, when at an earlier stage a merger or joint identity had seemed possible. In the response to the local authority the Home Office insisted that more than one area would over-commit the limited resources of the project team. Vauxhall was acceptable and there could still be 'liaison' with the EPA and SNAP projects in the City. Vauxhall Ward was selected at the next meeting of the delegates. It was a physically distinct area, isolated by major road developments, though population movements through major slum-clearance had ceased. The decision and arguments were rehearsed again at the first meeting of the local steering group at the end of September, 1969.

View across Vauxhall towards the Mersey
Photo: Liam Gilligan

(ii) The Local Steering Group

In the original plan the local steering group was to be the first line of accountability for the project team, a way of holding together the many different interests likely to be involved. The idea was typical of the 'cathedral building' at the early stages of CDP, and the belief that many different interests could be brought together to work in a 'concerted search' for solutions to the problems of deprivation. Once constituted the local steering group was to appoint the project team, and act as a channel for recommendations from the project to the different agencies. Binding in different agencies at the steering group stage would help 'constitute the guarantee of the commitment of local resources .... and their commitment to look seriously at any suggestions regarding general procedures and organisation.' (Home Office, 1969). Given the range of representatives — local authority and central government departments, local councillors, other statutory and voluntary agencies, local and central project teams, as well as some local people — the steering group envisaged had to be of some size.

However the local authority quickly made clear that the committee would have to be small. A small group was essential 'to maintain control of the project.' Membership would be restricted to six councillors, with non-members for cooption restricted to four. One of these was to be a representative of the central steering group, and another from the Liverpool Neighbourhood Organisations Committee (NOC), which was felt to represent 'city voluntary interests.' This left two places for local people or other interest groups, completely different from the Home Office proposal.

In response the Home Office recognised 'the council's desire to have a small body responsible for council policy towards the project', but pointed out that some at least of the project's activities would be outside the scope of local authority responsibility, for example in work with central government agencies based locally. For the Home Office at this stage CDP was an experiment lodged for convenience within the local authority, but not wholly of it. But for the local authority, which had to employ the staff and act as a channel for resources, it was clearly part of their activities, and as such, subject to the standard procedures of control.

Again the outcome was a compromise. The Home Office accepted the local authority's proposal for a small committee, but asked for a larger steering group to be set up as well. There would thus be an inner 'project committee', a sub-committee of local authority 'Policy and Finance', and a broader steering group with a wide range of interests.

At the first meeting of what was now the 'project committee', plans were made to set up a 'working group' to establish the constitution and membership of the local steering group. These plans were made public when the project was officially launched at the end of 1969, at a large meeting with representatives from many voluntary and statutory organisations. In drawing up members for the working group, the Home Office argued against too strong a local authority involvement, proposing the directors of the EPA and SNAP projects, as well as HMIs. In fact four chief officers were eventually nominated, and a further four representatives of other organisations selected from the meeting to launch the Liverpool project.

The working group met three times, and in consultation with the central Home Office team and local voluntary and statutory agencies drew up a membership list and constitution. This was completed by April 1970, and the first meeting proposed for June 1st. The terms of reference for the steering group were advisory, rather than executive — 'providing cooperation', 'appraising proposals', 'providing advice and guidance' and 'transmitting recommendations to local agencies involved.' The proportions of members from different categories were also fixed, but despite an attempt to exclude several agencies with marginal interests in Vauxhall, many of these successfully appealed for reinstatement. The early meetings of the steering group were thus overweighed with such agencies, which were perhaps more interested in links with the Home Office, the source of Urban Aid funding, than with the day to day activities of the Vauxhall project. The proportion of local residents or resident organisations was initially fixed at 25%, although the Home Office favoured a larger number. This restriction on 'local' representation was introduced despite the limited 'consultative' role of the steering group, responsibility for the control of expenditure being retained by the local authority Vauxhall project committee.

Both sequences of decision-taking over the selection of the area, and local organisation show how rapidly the central plans were amended once they met opposition from the local authority. Selection of an area free from other projects was probably a wise step, in view of the complications that could have arisen. However the compromise over local organisation had long term implications, first in the unclear relationship between the project committee and the local steering group, and second in the formal, professionally dominated arrangements for the steering group. At the start it was chaired by a councillor from the project committee, with a formal local authority style of agenda. Professionals far outnumbered other groups.

By the beginning of 1970 the project director and two assistants had been recruited, and began work from the corporation offices in the city centre, thus again establishing that the project was very firmly part of the local authority. They were as yet, however, without a research team.

The Research Saga:

The original CDP plan envisaged the recruitment of the local university or polytechnic to provide the research team with 100% grant from the Home Office. This was an attractive proposition on almost every count, involving local centres of higher education in the practical solution of local problems, and making use of their interest, accessibility and local knowledge. Unfortunately in almost no area was such an arrangement successfully struck, and when a deal was made, it quickly came unstuck. Liverpool was no exception.

At the centre, the research arrangements had initially been the responsibility of Dr. Halsey, the coordinator of research. Need for full time help resulted in the

appointment in 1969 of Professor Greve from Southampton University to act as director of research, though initially without a central research team. Once these arrangements had been made, official approaches could begin to establish the local research teams.

Formal discussion with Liverpool University began in July 1969, once the local authority was well on the way to reaching agreement with the Home Office. This proved ill-fated from the start. Initially two departments were approached, education and social science. Education was involved because of the proposed link with the EPA project. Unfortunately the initial contact in the social science department was seriously ill, and the professor who took over the negotiations was unwilling to make a joint arrangement with other departments. By the end of 1969 with a series of meetings and correspondence some of the earlier difficulties had been resolved, particularly as there was now to be no action link with the EPA project. But there was still concern about the implications of action-research and control over the project. Ironically the professor involved had recently written a prominent article in 'The Guardian' – 'A Smokescreen of Research' suggesting that projects such as EPA and CDP were a delaying device to cover inaction.

By now the action team had begun work and was beginning to express anxiety about the lack of a research team. Negotiations dragged on, covering grant rules, the role of the action team and whether they would conform to a research design, a control area, the possibility of a second project area, and the appointment of staff. In March 1970 agreement seemed to have been reached and appointments made, only for more problems to emerge about the grant, the right to publish, and for the research team to have prior consultation and probably even veto over action undertaken by the project. Some of these demands could not be met; for the project organisation gave considerable freedom to the action team, and they were accountable to the local authority and local steering committee – not the Home Office. At points of conflict in CDP research needs rarely received priority.

Though almost all parties were now sceptical that agreement could be reached, negotiations were continued, with Liverpool University, while possible alternatives were explored. Once again in August 1970 agreement seemed to be near, only to founder over the size of grant demanded. By the end of the year, steps were taken to extricate the Home Office from the negotiations; the possibility of links with other departments in the University was briefly considered, but rejected in view of the already long and tangled history of negotiations.

Oxford University had been canvassed as a possible source of research in the second phase of the national project; it was already involved in the EPA action-research project in Liverpool. Though reluctant to take on the Liverpool CDP research at this late stage, Oxford was formally approached in February 1971, and agreed to take part the following month. The research team in Liverpool, however, did not start work till October 1971, in time to dovetail with the end of the three year EPA project. More than two years had elapsed since the first formal attempt to recruit a Liverpool research team.

Liverpool was by no means unique in this respect, though the saga was excessively drawn-out. Universities were genuinely reluctant to commit themselves to such an open ended and unfamiliar exercise, though in the case of Liverpool, the fresh difficulties and objections that arose whenever agreement looked close, make it hard to accept that there was ever a serious commitment to the project. There was apparently no appeal against the final Home Office decision to cease negotiations.

One of the anticipated by-products of the CDP experiment was to be the closer involvement of universities, particularly social science departments in the practical solution of social problems and the generation of more relevant research. Winning over universities to the proposals was thus imbued with missionary zeal, and negotiations unnecessarily extended. The result of attempting to bring about such a fundamental redirection of academic effort at the margins of a small project, was that the main purpose, providing a locally active research team fell by the way.

Changes at the Centre:

By the time the Liverpool CDP was established in 1970, the national project had begun to falter. Progress through 1969 had been slow as a result of the sluggish response from local authorities and universities. Morrell, the principal architect of the project, died at the end of the year; there was an interregnum of several months before the arrival of his successor. Impending government change and the move of the Children's Department to the DHSS in 1970, leaving CDP and the urban programme at the Home Office further confused the picture, when momentum might have been recovered. A further almost complete change of central staff occurred again at the end of 1970.

As local teams moved into action the central team through its regular contact with project directors, was brought increasingly into the practical problems of the original design. Once the director and two assistants had been appointed in Liverpool, an important task was to identify people in other agencies to create an 'inter-service' team. This produced difficulties from the start. First there were problems of recruitment; for the Seebohm reorganisation was imminent and new posts were being created. Liverpool was also in process of its own McKinsey reorganisation. Second as CDP's objectives were so broad, there was no limit to the number of departments where secondment of staff might be relevant, but this would have created an unmanageable team, particularly the problems of responsibility to different masters. And third the creation of an inter-service team placed CDP squarely into an executive role, with the need to take on normal statutory work and caseloads. This was clearly at odds with the role of 'change agent', not to be tied down by a day to day responsibility. The idea of a seconded team was quickly dropped, in favour of a 'nuclear' team with contacts in other departments arranged on an informal basis. And even this arrangement was dropped by later projects which generally recruited the staff they required directly. However the idea of an 'inter-service' team was central to the first phase of the Liverpool project, and it influenced many of the later programmes.

Derelict site, Burlington Street.
Photo: Peter Leeson

Gradually as more local teams were appointed, and the central team declined, the Home Office lost the initiative in CDP. At a meeting with the Home Office in 1972 a number of changes were proposed by local teams, and their implementation fundamentally affected the project's development over the next few years. These included greater autonomy for local projects, the creation of a central Information and Intelligence Unit to service local projects, the regular meetings of the Consultative Council of project and Home Office teams, and the promotion of inter-project work. Together these changes opened the way for a more radical programme in CDP, and a move towards a structural explanation of poverty. Liverpool played an active role in establishing the Consultative Council but by then the Liverpool action programme had already been settled. It was hardly influenced by the change in direction adopted by many CDP projects or the development of inter-project work, though individual team members frequently attempted to import some of these more radical elements into their own areas of the programme.

The problems and delays experienced in setting up the Liverpool project were not unique, and far less than in several of the other pilot areas. Far from galvanising into action a concerted search for a solution to the problems of deprivation, the all-embracing structure of CDP demanded enormous energy, organisation and luck to move itself laboriously forward. Once the centrally devised plans were put to the test they were dependent on the interpretation of other groups. Both local authority and university in Liverpool had very different perceptions of how the project should be run – the first seeing it as essentially local authority activity, the other as a tightly controlled piece of research. Though the Home Office team had different views, they lacked the power or confidence to push ahead with the original formulation. The results in Liverpool had long term effects on the programme.

Scotland Road 'Clearance' 1970
Photo: Peter Leeson

One of the major assumptions underlying the CDP programme and many other social policy initiatives of the 1960s, was the belief that deprivation was conveniently concentrated in a limited number of geographical areas. If these could be identified, their problems analysed, and additional resources applied in the form of 'positive discrimination', a major step forward on previous attempts to tackle deprivation would have been taken. Much effort was spent by both local and central government in devising statistical indicators and using these to identify the apparent 'black spots', where deprivation was concentrated. Liverpool with its two 'social malaise' studies has been a clear leader among local authorities in this field.

However this area approach to deprivation has come under attack on two main grounds. The first is an essentially technical argument based on comparison between *individual* and *area* characteristics, though it raises important questions whether the target for programmes of positive discrimination is 'deprived individuals' or 'deprived areas'. A series of research studies (Barnes, 1975, Holtermann, 1975, and Townsend, 1976) has shown that when individual data from census or surveys is analysed on an area basis, 'deprivation' or 'being at risk', as measured by a range of social indicators is not really concentrated into a few distinct areas. Though there is some degree of concentration, any geographical area selected contains a mixture of the 'deprived' and 'non-deprived'. To concentrate on positive discrimination at an area level is likely to be an inefficient method of reaching the 'deprived' individual. It will benefit the 'non-deprived' who also happen to live there, and miss the 'deprived' who live elsewhere.

The second line of attack has been developed by CDP itself. This argues that to single out particular areas of deprivation is to encourage the belief that the causes of deprivation are also to be found within the area, and to be explained principally in terms of the characteristics of people who live there. To single out deprived areas is to risk separating their problems from the question of wider inequality in the social structure. Yet such areas are not separate and different, inhabited by some 'under-class'; merely working class areas which suffer in particularly acute form the inequalities experienced by the working class in general.

This is not the place to enter into detailed arguments in favour of an area approach to deprivation, though it is important to be clear whether the objective is to reach deprived individuals, or to tackle the problems of an area. Clearly deprivation and disadvantage do not cluster neatly into a few areas, and an area policy would make little sense on its own. However the data recently used to support arguments against an area approach has been presented in a relatively simple form, and may for this reason be a misleading guide to the degree of concentration. As Webber (1975) shows in his social area analysis of Liverpool, semi and unskilled workers are found in all parts of the city, but for example those in the more prosperous areas are far more likely to own cars than their counterparts in the inner city. Location will also be important for job prospects and security – a point clearly illustrated by comparing the position of semi and unskilled workers in different regions. And areas will vary radically in their reputations. Several school leavers in the Vauxhall area commented on the reluctance of certain employers to take them on once their origins were known.

We need to move away from the simple idea of deprivation as a characteristic which is more or less unevenly distributed, and only has to be measured by some form of universal head-counting process to an approach that maps in the very different types of area

St. Martin's Cottages — oldest Corporation housing in the country — taken over by Student housing association after reprieve from demolition.
Photo: Liam Gilligan

that may be labelled 'deprived' and indeed goes beyond this, to include all categories of area within the urban form, linking social and spatial analysis. This was begun in the EPA project which contrasted the conditions found in the four project areas (Halsey, 1972), and has been well developed in the Liverpool Social Area Study (Webber, 1975) which identified five 'families' of areas within the Liverpool district, each with its own pattern of social problems. Though in some final sense all such areas may experience the same problems, the particular blend can be very different, calling for a very different mix of policies at the local level.

An account of the project area is important for several reasons. First it provides a context for the description of project activities, a basis for judging their relevance. Second it should help bring about a better understanding of the different areas likely to be classified as deprived. And third, by adding a historical perspective it can say something about the causes and persistence of such problem areas. By providing local detail, there is no logical reason why one should fall into the trap of believing that the area's problems spring solely from the characteristics of the local population or from local conditions. To emphasise the particular problems of an area is not to deny that they can also form part of a wider analysis. The strength of projects such as CDP, based in a local area, is their ability to link an account of local conditions to a wider analysis. In this they offer important advantages over the national social survey, whose generalisations rarely touch the ground, or, at the other extreme, the blinkered community study.

The process by which Vauxhall emerged as the Liverpool CDP project area has already been described. Once the project team began work, its precise boundaries were quickly settled, and with marginal changes, remained fixed throughout the project. Forming a long rectangle of land alongside the Mersey just north of the city centre, the area had well defined boundaries. To the west it was edged by an almost solid line of industrial and warehouse buildings on the docks, and on the north beyond Boundary Street, marking an old city boundary, by an area where housing had almost completely been demolished. The city centre to the south, and Great Homer Street, one of the main local shopping areas, and the higher ground towards Everton on the east, marked the other boundaries.

Like other CDPs, the Vauxhall district — or 'Scottie Road' as it is known locally — shares the familiar catalogue of problems found in any rundown inner-city area. But, like other districts, it has characteristics which make it unique. Both sets are crucial to an understanding of the area's development. Vauxhall has followed a well recognised pattern; a long established working class community, predominantly Irish Catholic in origin, a product of the demand for labour as Liverpool expanded as a port in the nineteenth century, housed close to its work-place, principally in docking and dock-related industries; but now increasingly crippled by the shift in dock work further down river, by growing mechanisation, by the decline in Liverpool's importance as a port and the closure of related industries; fragmented by the dispersal of its population through clearance and redevelopment programmes; and finally carved up into isolated sections by new motorway and tunnel developments, its open spaces a convenient parking lot for lorries heading for the docks, or the cars of city centre commuters.

However, the plight of Vauxhall in the 1960s cannot be understood merely by listing its present troubles, the industrial decline and loss of jobs, the overcrowded and

Photo: Peter Leeson

substandard housing, or all the other indicators of 'social malaise' carefully collected and analysed by city planners and statisticians.

It lacks a historical dimension. The crucial point is that Vauxhall's relative position has always been the same — always one of the areas in the city with the highest levels of overcrowding and unemployment. Though the housing has changed, and the private landlord given way to the corporation, overcrowding persists. Property is still in desperate need of maintenance and repair. Nor has the reputation of 'notorious Scotland Road' changed dramatically, from 'the man catchers' 'bands of prigs (juvenile thieves)', 'poachers' and 'smugglers' listed by Hume in the 1850s, to the teenage gangs of the 1960s vandalising property and sometimes terrifying the elderly and alone.

History

With the growth of Liverpool as a major port in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the development of Vauxhall as an industrial area was inevitable. As the city spread northwards, building had at first been on the higher and healthier ground away from the river Mersey. But with the Leeds and Liverpool canal built at the end of the eighteenth century, the construction of new docks, and the coming of the railways, the low lying strip of land close to the river was the natural location for industry and its work-force. By the 1840s Vauxhall was already industrialised — 'its character in manufacturing consisting of iron foundries, soap, alkali, chemicals, and other manufactories, and it contains a dense population of labouring people, supported to a considerable extent by employment in the ward' (Finch, 1842).

At first housing development appears to have matched this rapid growth of population in the early period. Between 1841 and 1851, there was an increase of 4000 houses in the Scotland Road area, roughly parallel with the population growth. But more detailed figures show that the peak years for building were 1841–1846; the building boom for cheap housing in industrial areas of the city collapsed just at the point of greatest need, as speculative builders turned to more prosperous and secure districts (Treble, 1971). For now the arrival of the Irish immigrants had increased dramatically, following the Irish potato famine; — 'by the end of June (1847) not less than 300,000 Irish had landed in Liverpool, and it is estimated that 60–80,000 had located themselves amongst us, occupying every nook and corner of the already overcrowded lodging houses and forcing their way into cellars . . . ' (Duncan, 1851). These cellars had earlier been closed by law but were now reoccupied on a large scale, with an estimated population of 30,000 at their peak. There was a rapid growth, too, in the notorious Liverpool 'courts' — houses built in a small square, each block almost touching the next row, allowing little room for ventilation or sanitation. By 1864 when these buildings were officially proscribed, the 'courts' had a population of more than 100,000 in the city as a whole.

Vauxhall and Scotland Road were at the centre of these pressures. Though the population in the Vauxhall Ward only increased slightly between 1841 and 1861, Scotland Ward rose from 35,000 to 81,000 in the same period. Overcrowding increased sharply. More than half of the Vauxhall population was housed in cellars or courts in the 1840s and the two wards contained more than 50% of the inhabited courts in the city. The inevitable result of these overcrowded and insanitary conditions, was outbreaks of fever and disease, the Scotland Road area frequently recording the highest rates in the city. In the cholera outbreak of 1849, 2000 of the 5000 recorded cholera deaths were in the Vauxhall and Scotland Wards.

This, then, was the important formative period for the Vauxhall area — in part the result of industrial development, and in part the arrival of large numbers of immigrants forced to crowd into the nearest available cheap housing. The remaining history can be seen as the playing out of a complex equation of population, housing and employment from this starting point. From this angle the dramatic changes in Vauxhall over the past 10 years are only the latest twist in a long sequence. By the 1860s the population in Vauxhall had reached its peak, and has fallen regularly ever since, now down to a fraction of its original size. In part this reflects the natural outward movement of population as Liverpool and opportunities expanded elsewhere; in part it reflects the decline in local jobs, and in part the deliberate intervention of the corporation in the local housing market. Vauxhall provides a classic example of the workings and progress of such intervention.

The reoccupation of cellars and the growth of courts in the mid 19th century was clearly a setback to attempts through health and housing acts to control insanitary and substandard conditions. Despite being condemned and proscribed by legislation, the courts and cellars continued in use. For these was no alternative; and the corporation was forced to accept a gradual programme of closure, and even then condemned cellars tended to be reoccupied. The next stage beyond attempts at legislative control on existing and new building was clearly powers to demolish slum properties, and to intervene directly to provide new housing.

Liverpool had taken these powers by 1864 in an Act described as a 'pioneer of housing reform' (Caradog Jones, 1934). Vauxhall was the first area to benefit with the building of St. Martin's Cottages in 1869, the first municipal housing in the country. However, these were an isolated example; not till the next century was there further extensive public building in the area with the construction of four large blocks of flats.

However, the policy of demolition was more actively pursued, and by 1884 the city was clearing substandard houses at a rate of 1000 a year, though with no equivalent building programme. Even the Housing Act of 1890 made the corporation only responsible for housing 50% of those whose houses they had demolished. But in areas like Vauxhall, dependent on casual labour on the riverfront, workers could not easily move away from the area. They relied on local contacts for knowledge about shipping movements and cargoes, and daily attendance at the hiring 'stands' for work. Thus the well intentioned policy of clearing substandard housing in fact added to the slums elsewhere, as the local stock of houses declined. Every time a proportion of the displaced workers decided to stay where they were and cram into available housing. The same process is apparently still at work, with many households overcrowded through 'doubling up' as young married couples, anxious to remain in the area, were unable to find housing locally, the result of their low priority rating under the local authority 'points' system.

Since the beginning of the century, the corporation has steadily increased the proportion of the housing stock under its direct control – but always matched by a decline in the population of the area – sometimes by small, and sometimes by massive amounts. First came four blocks of flats at the turn of the century; then in the inter-war period, the building of a large number of four and five storey walk-up flats which give the area most of its present character. They are in direct line of

Ashfield Gardens
Photo: Peter Leeson

Fontenoy Gardens
Photo: Peter Leeson

descent from the earlier 'courts'. For Orwell in the 1930s, they were 'definitely fine buildings' 'built in the form of an immense ring five storeys high, round a central courtyard about 60 yards across, which forms a playground for children. Round the inner side run balconies, and there are wide windows on each side so that everyone gets some sunlight.' (Orwell, 1936).

Yet like the earlier St. Martin's Cottages, the standards were soon surpassed. And the walk-up flats though still structurally sound, offer extremely restricted space by modern standards, particularly for the many large families in the area. With massive blocks the problems of maintenance and modernisation are formidable. Yet many of the corporation's more recent developments pose even more difficult problems, particularly the high rise blocks of the mid 1960s, which only a few years after completion were already heavily vandalised. In several blocks the whole ground floor was uninhabitable. The blocks were officially deemed unsuitable for families with young children, but in a decision reminiscent of earlier attempts to clear substandard property, it was accepted that clearance could only proceed at a limited rate, as there was no other accommodation available. Much of the low rise development, maisonettes and town houses has been far more successful, but there was a deliberate policy of concentrating on one or two bedroom houses to provide a 'balanced' housing stock in the area. These, of course, hardly met the need of Vauxhall's many large families. Of the 370 new units of accommodation built by the council in Vauxhall between 1970 and 1975, 50% consisted of single bedroom flats, a further 29% of two bedroom flats; only 17% and 4% respectively were three or four bedroom houses.

Docking and dock-related industries — sugar refining, flour milling, chemical plants, and cigarette manufacture, as well as warehousing — were always the major source of local employment. Women were employed in the packing and processing of these imported materials. At first there was an expanding number of jobs as Liverpool grew as a port; but there were always high levels of unemployment or underemployment. For

docking depended on casual labour; and labour available was always larger than the work in hand; a full working week must have been unusual for a large part of the work force.

After a temporary boom during the first world war, where Liverpool's geographical position was crucial, trade through the port fell back far more sharply in the 1920s and 1930s than in other major English ports. By 1931 the value of trade through the port was only 41% of what it had been in 1924. Employment was also sharply down. Though the second world war again brought a revival, the relative trend has continued as Liverpool has lost ground to other ports. With the move of the docks further down river, decreasing tonnage and increased mechanisation, the labour force has dropped rapidly. Over 20,000 jobs have gone since the war, and several thousand more following the recent severance pay agreement.

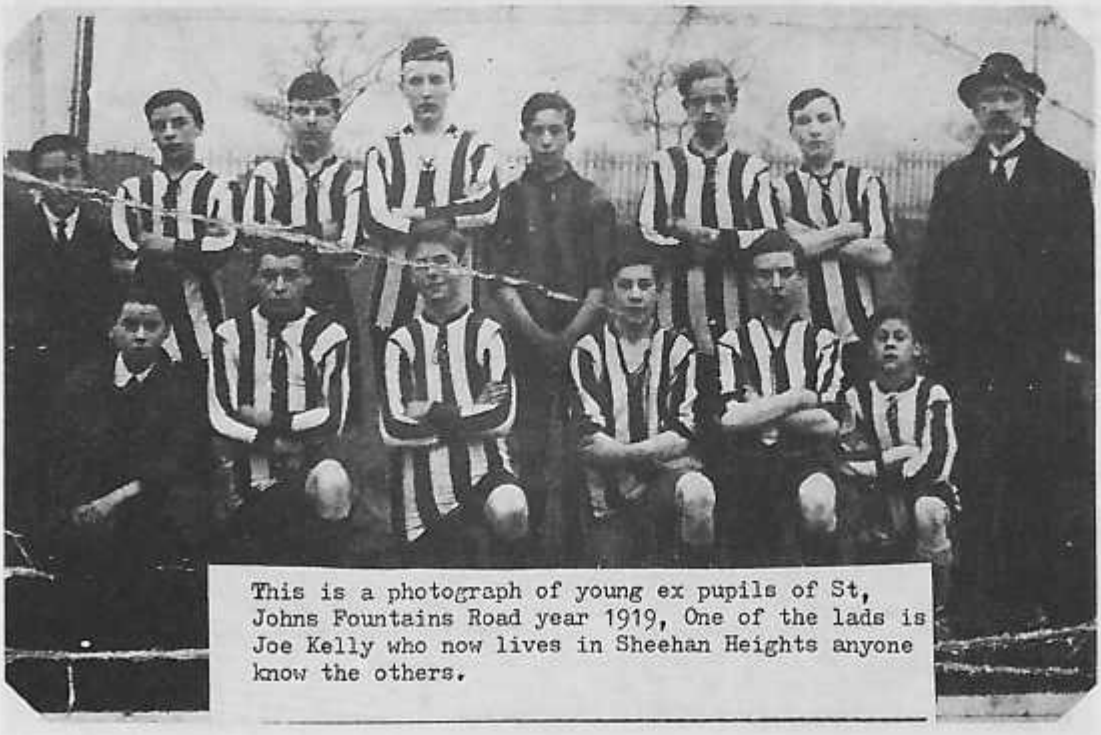
As Liverpool has declined as a port, related industries have less and less reason to concentrate in Vauxhall. And they themselves in many cases have faced the need to 'rationalise' or shift production to new plants. Vauxhall with its industrial dereliction and restricted sites has little to offer. Between 1967 and 1972 some 20% of the jobs in the Vauxhall industrial strip disappeared, and the decline has steepened since then. There are few gains, perhaps only in warehousing and road haulage companies, which provide relatively few jobs. The local unemployment figure has remained twice the rate for Liverpool as a whole, even though this has steadily increased in the past few years, and is itself twice the national rate.

Docking and dock-related industries required a large semi or unskilled working population living close at hand. Once these industries decline, the population remains, with a skill profile unlikely to attract new industry — nor are there suitable sites. It is a problem shared by many of the older industrial areas, particularly

Workers at Tate and Lyle
Photo: Liam Gilligan

mining districts. There are virtually no modern industries which could use the sites available, and employ the same number of manual workers as the earlier labour intensive industries.

The development of Vauxhall has created a closely knit community. With perhaps 95% of the population of Irish Catholic origin, the position of the church is central. There is close identification with the local parish, of which there were eight within the project area. Most were linked to their own primary or secondary schools, and a network of social and religious organisations. The importance of the parish structure can be seen in the way the project sponsored resident groups tended to spring up within parish boundaries, though several prominent in these resident groups were not involved in local religious organisations.



This is a photograph of young ex pupils of St, Johns Fountains Road year 1919, One of the lads is Joe Kelly who now lives in Sheehan Heights anyone know the others.

Though a massive number of families have moved out or been cleared from the Scotland Road area, it retains its position as the heartland of their community. Many still have links through relatives, schools or the church, or return to visit local clubs or pubs; some even still register with local doctors. The local newspaper 'The Scottie Press' started by the project, for a time captured this feeling with its picture of 'Old Scottie'; old photographs of club gatherings, school classes or sports teams were the occasion for memories and recognition in the following issues. And there were frequent letters from outside, several from abroad, where the correspondent would retrace step by step the streets of the area, many of which no longer existed.

The Area in the 1960s and 1970s

When the project began in 1970, the area had probably reached its lowest point – at least visually, as unemployment rose steadily over the next few years. Housing to be cleared had been partly demolished, sites left empty and derelict, or used for parking heavy lorries. The second Mersey tunnel and its motorway approaches were under construction. There had been a rapid rise in vandalism; the remaining shops and pubs were boarded up even during the day, and public buildings grilled, barred and draped in barbed wire as if against intruders. Even housing that was to remain standing was heavily scarred, and courtyards full of rubble. It was as if the area was dug in against assault from official and unofficial demolition.

Conditions were worst close to the tunnel cutting where a whole parish had been wiped off the map. One of the walk-up blocks, Lawrence Gardens, was actually in the middle of a huge 10 acre motorway loop, cut off from the rest of the area, and as one resident put it after the local pub with the one telephone had closed in 1970, with 'no communication with the outside world'.

Since 1966 there had been uncertainty about possible demolition of the block, and families had begun to move out. Their flats were boarded up. During the construction of the tunnel the decision was taken to demolish the block, and maintenance ceased. Tenants were ready to move out. But the decision was again reversed, and compensation paid to tenants. Conditions did not improve, and in 1971 the council agreed to rehouse all existing tenants until it had been decided to improve the block or demolish it and give the land over to industry. Numbers had gradually dwindled, but by 1974 six flats were still in occupation. A member of the project team described the conditions:

> 'the building looks deserted at first sight, but life manifests itself in the form of orange curtains hanging at a window, and a few items of laundry suspended on a washing line in front of a first floor flat. Having made your way up the stone spiral stairs strewn with rubble making them precarious for the elderly, you pass an endless number of empty, boarded up flats until you find one that is occupied. Water is trickling from an empty one – looters have removed the tank and some of the piping. The flat is warm and cosy inside, at least in the living room where there is a fire. Walls show that redecoration has been due for many years and the damp patches suggest a lack of external maintenance. The kitchen, hidden behind a curtain, is cold, damp, cramped and dark. The windows are dirty with the grime of cement dust and the dirt from the busy road outside. The noise of the traffic can be plainly heard. The brand new settee has old blankets protecting it from the unpleasantness of its surroundings, to be unveiled on the rehousing of its owners. The settee was bought over a year ago. And the next visit – the day after Mrs. – had been rehoused I visited her vacated flat – windows had been broken, old furniture smashed, water tank removed, stone fireplace heaved out of the chimney stack and smashed on the floor – it looked as if it had been deserted for months.'

These were the extremes. Once the tunnel had been completed, derelict sites grassed over, and some of the older 'walk-ups' demolished or modernised, conditions

Table 3.1 *Age Structure of the Population, Vauxhall Ward*(1) *1961, 1966, and 1971, and Liverpool CB, 1971.*

Age Group	% of total population			
	1961	Vauxhall 1966 (10%)	1971	Liverpool CB 1971
0– 4	11.9	9.2	6.7	7.6
5–14	20.8	18.8	18.3	16.9
15–19	7.8	9.9	10.2	8.1
20–29	13.7	11.9	11.6	14.0
30–44	17.8	17.4	15.9	16.1
45–59	14.5	16.5	19.5	18.4
60–64	4.3	3.8	5.5	6.0
65+	9.2	12.5	12.3	12.9
Total Population	15,684	12,170	8,287	610,115

Source: Census data

(1) Note: Vauxhall Ward forms the major part of the project area.

improved at least visually. But many of the problems of Lawrence Gardens were seen in other parts of the area, though in less acute form. Clearance for the tunnel and redevelopment had reduced the population by 37% between 1961 and 1971 to about 14,000 compared with a citywide decline of 18% in the same period. Since 1971 numbers have risen slightly as a limited amount of rebuilding has taken place on cleared sites — though largely of one or two bedroom developments.

Though the population of Vauxhall has fallen consistently over the past hundred years, this is a particularly sharp decline. Apart from the scars left by demolished buildings, there are less obvious effects on the population balance as housing stock is reduced. One major by-product is the change in the age structure; it is as if the natural change in the population has been interrupted. The result over the ten years is an increase in people of pensionable age, from 9% to 12% of the population between 1961 and 1971, and an increase in families with teenage children. Families with younger children are in decline (see Table 3.1).

Overall this change in the population balance increased two of the 'at risk' groups in the case of vandalism — the elderly and alone, and teenagers, who in some parts of the area made up as much as 25% of the population, against a city average of 16%. Many persioners were often concentrated in the older blocks, due for demolition or improvement.

By 1971 almost every style and period of public housing was represented in the project area, but to no overall plan. Buildings ranged from the first municipal housing, St. Martin's Cottages, to recent 22 storey high rise blocks, low rise flats, maisonettes and town houses of the 1960s and 1970s. Though the walk-up flats of the inter-war period are arranged at the centre of the area in a network of parallel streets, other developments have been squeezed in as space became available. This is particularly noticeable on the fringes of the area. One modern development of a tower block, and low rise developments 'Over the Bridge' occupies a site almost totally surrounded by industry and unable to support a population large enough to make many local shops viable or fill the newly constructed school.

Logan Towers — 'Over the Bridge'
Photo: Liam Gilligan

Table 3.2: *Number of Bedrooms in Houses or Flats, and Number of Persons per Household, Vauxhall Project Area, 1971.*

Housing Type / *Houses/Maisonettes*	1	2	3	4	
Flats	830	875	1379	75	
Houses or Maisonettes	—	132	450	59	
Total	830	1007	1829	134	3800
% of total Stock	21.8	26.5	48.1	3.5	100%

Source: Housing Department

Households with	1 person	2	3	4	5	6	7+
%	19.6	22.2	17.1	13.2	10.3	8.0	9.6

Source: 1971 Census

By 1971 though a few privately owned terrace houses remained, 92% of the households in the project area were council tenants, and the proportion has increased further with clearance and rebuilding. Though the proportion of houses has increased gradually, 89% of the council dwellings in 1971 were flats, and just under half of them were in the 'walk-up' blocks. 17% were in new tower blocks, the rest in low rise developments.

Most of the flats were relatively small with just under half having three bedrooms, and a further 27% two bedrooms. Only 4% had more than three bedrooms. Yet in 1971 18% of the households consisted of six or more persons. The result was a high level of overcrowding, though this had declined since 1961. In 1971 nearly 10% of households in the area were living at a density of more than 1½ persons per room, compared with 2.6% for Liverpool as a whole, and 1.4% in England and Wales. On this standard 28 of the 31 census enumeration districts (EDs) which made up the project area fell into the most overcrowded 15% of all urban EDs in Great Britain and into the worst 10% on Merseyside.

With the high proportion of pensioners in the area, the worst over-crowding occurred in families with children. In the school leavers' study carried out by the project research team where interviews were conducted with a complete age group eligible to leave school in the summer of 1972, the average number of children in each family was 5.4, and 23% of those interviewed were living in overcrowded conditions in households with more than 1½ persons per room (Jones, Smith and Pulham 1975).

Apart from the serious overcrowding, the condition of the housing in the area was better than in parts of the city where accommodation was privately owned and rented. In 1971 91% of households in the project area had exclusive use of all amenities.

However, despite these conditions and changes, attachment to the area remained high. Most had lived there a long time — the majority of the school leavers all their lives; some were forced to leave as their housing was cleared, and there was a minority anxious to leave the area altogether. Surveys of particular blocks carried out by the project to test attitudes to modernisation fill out this picture. In one block, Portland Gardens, the average length of residence of head of household was 15 years, with 13% resident for 30 years or more. The majority were committed to the area, and planned to remain where they were after the flats had been modernised — but a minority — some 23% were anxious to move out, most to newer estates on the outskirts of Liverpool. These attitudes were not significantly affected by the prospect of modernisation; the disadvantages of the area — the dereliction, dirt and noise from local roads and factories, vandalism, and the inconvenience of the walk-up blocks — were too strong, and many had relatives who had already left.

Again these changes and the population decline had little effect on the social composition of the area. It was still predominantly working class, with less than 10% of the male workforce in non-manual jobs. The largest proportion were in unskilled jobs (37%) with a further

Table 3.3: *Household tenure and type — Vauxhall Ward 1961, 1966 and 1971.*

% of Households being:-	1961	1966	1971
Council tenants	81.7	85.5	92.3
unfurnished rented	13.5	10.5	5.6
exclusive use of all amenities	56.9	69.5	92.0
1–2 persons all pensionable	14.8	17.4	18.0

Source: Census 1961, 1966 (10% sample) and 1971.

Table 3.4: *Socio economic group of economically active males at 1971 Census (10% sample) Vauxhall Project Area and Liverpool CB.*

Group	*% of economically active males*	
	Vauxhall	*Liverpool*
Managerial and Professional	2.3	10.6
Junior non-manual	7.0	16.8
Skilled manual	22.8	36.3
Semiskilled manual	23.5	18.8
Unskilled manual	37.1	13.6
Armed forces and unclassified	7.2	3.9

Source: 1971 Census

24% in semiskilled and 23% in skilled work. This last category had declined slightly between 1961 and 1971, perhaps an indication that this group was more likely to move out as conditions worsened.

Census figures for 1971 showed some 17% of the economically active males were seeking work, compared with 4% in England and Wales, and 9.6% in Liverpool. Later attempts to measure unemployment locally during the project, using the monthly counts conducted by the Department of Employment, showed an estimated rate of 15% for the area in January 1973, against a figure of 8.2% for the Liverpool travel to work area. At the same time in the school leavers study, 25% of those who had left school were unemployed, and at both interviews in 1972 and 1974 20% of the fathers were reported as unemployed. By present standards these figures may seem on the low side, but if the same relationship has been maintained with city and national rates, the unemployment levels in the area in 1976 can be estimated, suggesting that up to one in every four workers is unemployed, and more than one in every three in the school leaver age group. Low wages and high unemployment were reflected in the low level of car ownership in Vauxhall. In 1971 92% of households in the CDP area had no car, compared with 48% in England and Wales, and 67% in Liverpool.

Like many other stable working class communities, many families in Vauxhall had been there for several generations in the same type of work. The survey of school leavers showed how this pattern was being reproduced in the next generation, though the economic and employment context was changing rapidly. The majority of the sample, like their parents, left school at the minimum age. Only two out of the original sample of 160 were still in full-time education at 17, though a small number were taking various further education courses. Only 3.5% gained five or more O-levels, compared with 22.4% for a similar age group in the Northwest region. The majority – 79% – went into semi or unskilled work with little or no introductory training; only 7% obtained apprenticeships. Of those who had left school at 15, 46% had had four or more jobs in 2½ years and 37% had experienced two or more months of unemployment during that period.

At first sight these findings would appear to support the cycle of deprivation theory put forward by Sir Keith Joseph, where failures are attributed to the problems of family background and personal inadequacy. Yet at each stage in their lives, this group has been at a disadvantage compared with middle class or even working class youngsters from other areas – in housing, in education, in employment and access to other scarce resources. Their aspirations and attempts to find work showed that they were not by any means apathetic or lacking motivation. Suitable jobs were not available. The majority had strong ties to the local area; by the time of the second survey only a few had left the district.

Vauxhall in the National and Merseyside Context

Data from the 1971 census analysed nationally on an enumeration district basis (Holtermann, 1975), and from the Liverpool 'Social Malaise' studies make it possible to place Vauxhall in the national and Merseyside contexts. The Vauxhall enumeration districts emerge relatively well on the variables related to the exclusive use of household amenities (hot water, bath and w.c.) only three of them falling into the worst 15% for Great Britain. However, they perform outstandingly badly on indicators related to overcrowding, unemployment, low socio-economic status, the proportion of households lacking a car and educational achievement.

Over 70% of the 31 EDs making up the project area fall into the worst 15% of the national distribution on each of these indicators, and over 90% on the indicators of overcrowding, male unemployment and no car. Substantial proportions are in the worst 5%. The project EDs perform nearly as badly on these last three indicators relative to the rest of Merseyside.

Merseyside as a whole has markedly more male unemployment than the national average, and rather more housholds with no car and men in unskilled occupations. On the other indicators, including overcrowding, Merseyside is close to the national average. However the CDP area again stands out relative to both the national and the Merseyside distributions, with 10% of households overcrowded, 92% with no car, 20% of economically active males and 11% of economically active females unemployed or sick, 36% of economically active or retired men in unskilled manual occupations, and almost no one with educational qualifications equivalent to ONC or A level. On the other hand only 8% of households lack exclusive use of amenities, and only 6% of the population have moved during the past year.

It is important to look at how far these indicators

cluster together. We have computed the number and percentage of the CDP area EDs falling into the worst 15% of the national and regional distributions on the three indicators of overcrowding, male unemployment and no car simultaneously. 28 (90%) of these were in this category for Great Britain and 25 (81%) for Merseyside. In this respect Vauxhall Ward and Central Ward are the worst in the city. 83% of the 18 EDs of Vauxhall Ward, and 70% of the 20 EDs of Central Ward fall into the worst 15% of Merseyside EDs on all three variables, compared with only 31% of EDs in the 'inner area' wards, 1% of EDs in the 'outer area' wards, and 10% of EDs in the city overall.

However when lack of exclusive amenities is added to the list of indicators the picture not surprisingly changes. Now only three of the project EDs fall into the worst 15% of the national distribution on the three indicators — overcrowding, unemployment and exclusive use of amenities. And only one ED falls into the worst 15% of the same distribution for Merseyside. These findings are a general pointer, much more clearly demonstrated in the Liverpool Social Area Analysis, to the way that indicators of deprivation do not necessarily cluster together, allowing a simple ranking of areas on some general measure of deprivation.

In the preliminary analysis made of the first Liverpool 'social malaise' study of data collected in 1966–68, a simple ranking procedure was followed, placing each of the city's 40 wards by their rank on each of the 36 malaise variables. Vauxhall falls into the 'worst' ten (25% of wards) on 19 variables, and the 'worst' four (10% of wards) on eight variables. Several other wards appear much more seriously disadvantaged on these measures, particularly Granby, Abercromby and Central. (Webber, 1975).

More detailed analysis of this 'malaise' data has set it firmly into the framework of the far more reliable census data, using census rather than city ward boundaries to define the areas for analysis. The first malaise study was related to the 1966 sample census figures, and the second malaise study in 1971–74 to 1971 census data. Cluster analyses were performed on this area data, producing 25 clusters grouped into five or six broad 'families' of area.

In both analyses the bulk of the CDP area as expected fell into the broad 'family' of inner area council estates, and within that family into a cluster made up largely of dockland areas. Webber (1975) shows that the inner area council estates were distinguished in 1966 by a high proportion of unskilled workers, large families, serious overcrowding, low car ownership and high sickness and unemployment. Since they consisted mainly of council housing they scored above average in the exclusive use of amenities and no worse than average in the proportion of shared dwellings. In 1971 a smaller, more reliable set of 'malaise' variables was analysed. The dockland area was again characterised by relatively high unemployment, both long term unemployment of adults and unemployment of youths, delinquency, and supervision orders. There was also relatively low average reading ability, and moderately high rates of educational subnormality, free school meals, dwellings disinfested and possession orders.

However, these analyses confirm the impression of

Industrial Landscape — From Logan Towers, Vauxhall.
Photo: Liam Gilligan

the earlier 'malaise study' that the type of area in which the project is located, though in many respects seriously disadvantaged, has no monopoly of the city's social problems. Within the inner council estate area the dockland cluster was in some ways less badly off than the 'inland' cluster – council estates on the fringes of the inner city 'rooming house' area with a population partly rehoused from this area. In the 1971–74 data this 'inland' cluster scores 'worse' than the dockland area on unemployment, truancy, and delinquency, as well as on almost all the other indicators on which the latter has high or moderately high scores. This is particularly marked in the case of educational subnormality. Once again the inland cluster is singled out by high rates on all the indices of poor social cohesion, being in particular distinguished from the dockland area by high rates of illegitimacy, children in care, and infectious disease.

The Liverpool Social Area Analysis emphasises the complex nature of 'social malaise' and deprivation. In terms of 'general malaise' based on a rag bag of indicators the bulk of the CDP area occupies a position about midway between the city average and the apparently most severely 'deprived' areas. However a number of the indicators used in the earlier analysis of 'social malaise' are of doubtful reliability and validity, being largely based on figures collected for administrative purposes, and therefore as much a measure of efficiency of the service and its definition of the problem, as any underlying 'social malaise'. Also some of the indicators – for example the number of children in care, have an extremely low value for any single area of the city, and for this reason are possibly an unreliable guide. When relatively hard data is used, the major part of the project area falls into a recognisable type of area, the inner area council estates. This type of area, created by social policies and pressures over many years, has a defined position in the structure of the city, and a specific pattern of social disadvantage that is qualitatively different from those found in other areas.

This pattern cannot meaningfully be ordered with others on a single quantitative scale, except in a very broad way, but nor can its problems be tackled in isolation from the rest of the structure with which it interacts. Its salient features include the serious overcrowding of large families in housing with the basic amenities, low socio-economic status, low car ownership, and high rates of unemployment and job instability. Further study of the malaise data suggests that this combination of problems may be associated with 'income problem indicators' and with what is officially defined as truancy, violence and crime, but that relative to other parts of the city there is little evidence of outstanding family instability and lack of social cohesion. This constellation of problems is clearly related to the social, economic and housing structure of the city as a whole and exceptionally difficult to translate into individual or community pathology.

Perhaps more than any other CDP area, Vauxhall shows in acute and clear form, the negative effects of 'structural change': change that is imposed from outside the area, the result of wider social and economic developments, and is in no way attributable to the inadequacies of local people or institutions, though the fact that it strikes here rather than somewhere else may reflect the area's weak bargaining position. In Vauxhall it was the withdrawal and closure of local industry, the decisions to redevelop the area and reduce population, or the building of urban motorways and the second Mersey tunnel through the area, though these were only the latest in a long line of adverse changes.

As these changes arise from outside the area, they cannot be solved merely by action at the local level. Industrial decline in Vauxhall is in sharp form the problem of Merseyside in general, particularly the decline of Liverpool as a port, serving a once flourishing industrial region. The balance has clearly shifted, symbolised perhaps by the recent proposal to build a Toyota plant on the Bristol rather than the Liverpool docks. It was partly at Bristol's expense that Liverpool first developed as industrialisation gathered way in the Northwest. The problems of Merseyside are in acute form the problems of industrial decline nationally.

Yet even if these trends could somehow be reversed, there is no guarantee that areas like Vauxhall will benefit. They have few attractions for industry, whose progress here resembles the 'slash and burn' methods of primitive agriculture, where land once exhausted is abandoned for new territory. Yet we are not entirely powerless to bring about change at the local level. For though Vauxhall's problems may be 'structural', these are not merely the working of blind economic forces, but of groups of people taking decisions in the light of national and local policies, and the costs and benefits to different groups. What is striking about Vauxhall is the extent to which many of these decisions – on the motorway tunnel, on clearance and redevelopment – were at least theoretically within the public domain, under the control of local or central government, and potentially open to change. Even decisions by industrialists to close down or 'rationalise' away from Vauxhall are partly shaped by public policy. In the face of inner city decline many have argued that the only effective solution is for the state to take on a far more directive role and new powers over the movement of investment and industry in such areas. Yet the example of Vauxhall suggests that in part the area's problems were the direct result of local and national policies. Rather than new policies and powers, what was lacking was the political will and administrative follow-up to give the needs of the inner city priority over other social and economic objectives.

Unemployed school leavers in Vauxhall.
Photo: Teresa Smith

Chapter 4: Strategy, Organisation and Programme.

Previous chapters have outlined the framework within which the Liverpool project was to operate. First, the ideas in the early Home Office papers formed an apparently coherent programme, linking community development to the improvement of local services through the mechanism of experimental action-research schemes. Liverpool was already familiar with this approach through the EPA and SNAP projects. Second, the local organisation tied the project very firmly to the local authority through the formal project committee, and linked it closely with the well-organised city-wide voluntary agencies, which had a powerful voice on the local steering group. These were quickly joined by representatives from two existing — though professionally dominated — local groups. The project would have had a hard task to break free from this pattern of regular accountability, but it would be wrong to suggest that it ever challenged the structure directly — or alternatively let it fall into disuse. In fact the project accepted the arrangements and serviced them faithfully — while working to redefine their purpose, gradually pushing the local steering group to form the nucleus of a neighbourhood council.

The final major element influencing project strategy was the Vauxhall area. What emerges strikingly from the previous chapter is the clear 'structural' nature of Vauxhall's problems. The project, however, preferred to focus on two other aspects — the dominant role of the local authority in providing services, and the decline of any community organisation that might have effectively mounted pressure for improvement in these services. It is within this framework that Liverpool developed its strategy, project organisation and programme.

CDP Strategy:

Unlike the Coventry project, where the overall strategy and development was frequently the subject of discussion and write-up, the Liverpool CDP rarely committed itself to an explicit account of its philosophy and direction, either in spoken or written form. This did not mean that it lacked an overall policy. Though there was no explicit plan or design, its general direction can be derived from the action programme, and its detail from project discussion.

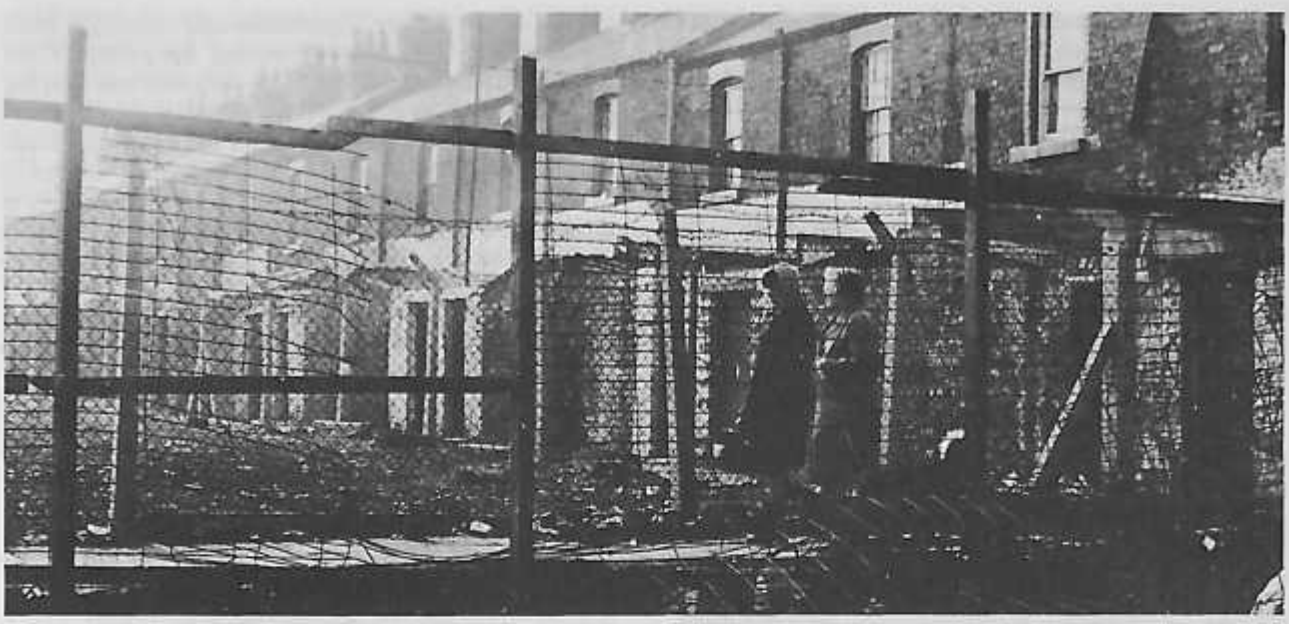
Many community projects survive without an overall strategy — indeed make it a virtue, by claiming to respond to local demands, and proceed by a mixture of *ad hoc* reactions to issues as they arise, guided by some underlying but vague notion about the appropriate subject matter for community development. CDP, in contrast, has always been concerned with an overall strategy as a way of linking its general analysis with day to day action. This makes it possible to point to a higher order justification for action, and a way of testing the significance of any further proposals. Whatever its limitations, this approach is in sharp contrast to the often absent-minded incrementalism of most local authority expansion.

However as the focus of analysis in many CDP projects shifted from local problems to the wider questions of inequality, links with day to day action have become more and more tenuous. For some projects, action set up at an earlier stage has become almost an embarrassment, clearly an attempt to patch and improve, where they are now claiming that no amount of patching or improvement can be effective. The result has, in some cases, been the creation of two almost separate projects, one centred on research and analysis, drawing on material from the local context, the other a series of local action programmes.

Liverpool never reached this stage, though it has echoes in the running battles with those in the team anxious to push the project towards a more radical line. By sticking closely to the original analysis and programme the Liverpool project's overall approach related closely to what was actually done. There was much less discussion about strategy, and it thus never developed into a separate and self-contained debate, unrelated to action on the ground. This does not mean that there was necessarily consensus within the team about the overall direction. The focus of discussion was usually on the means or practical problems, not about basic direction, perhaps partly because the overall strategy was never made explicit, and because the scale of the venture involved enormous effort merely to keep it moving slowly forward. In practice team members concentrated on their own area of work, not necessarily committed to or in some cases even fully aware of the overall picture. The sum was thus always more than its sometimes rather ragged parts.

Where conflict with the overall aims did arise, it was frequently from individuals less central to the project, or those who worked for other agencies with very different views about community development. The most bitter clashes were with those who worked for outside groups on attachment to the project. Here the lack of any explicit published strategy placed the project in a weak, establishment position, appealing to 'an agreed programme' against some articulate and powerfully argued alternatives, even though their practical implications were less than clear. This opposition was strengthened and encouraged by the general shift in CDP away from the original programme; and this too had its impact on Liverpool, where there was a move to take up issues such as housing and employment. Nevertheless the project continued to labour on with its main programme.

Before turning to an account of the action programme, it is important to make explicit this overall approach and its development, not least because the local authority seems to have misunderstood the direction of the project and too easily rejected the project's final move to set up a local authority area management scheme for the Vauxhall district — in a sense the



Tunnel-works near Scotland Rd., 1970
Photo: Peter Leeson

keystone of the strategy. Perhaps alone of the CDPs, Liverpool consistently followed one strategy on a grand scale. Whether right or wrong, this means that its programmes constitute an important field test of one approach to urban community development. Though no longer an approach favoured by CDP at large, it is closer to the likely development of local authority policy, and deserves close attention.

Liverpool CDP Strategy:

The Liverpool strategy was a distinct advance on the loose set of ideas behind the national programme. It explicitly avoided the simple equation of urban deprivation with individual pathology, though there was as yet no mention of a more 'structural' explanation; as an early Liverpool memorandum argued 'it is the substandard services and attitudes of officials which are the main determinants of community deprivation in Vauxhall.' At a more sophisticated level the analysis pointed to a breakdown between the 'vertically organised' local authority and other statutory services, and the 'horizontally organised' community groups, that were themselves in disarray. The gap was widening rapidly, as services were amalgamated into larger and more distant units, subject to increasing bureaucratic and statutory control and the local community was weakened by population movements and the collapse of traditional local organisation. Thus community development involved three separate activities — first to improve the performance and coordination of services at the local level, second to strengthen the organisation of community groups, and finally to develop techniques and institutions that would bind these community groups effectively together, providing a coherent structure to which the local authority could relate.

Translating this broad prescription into a course of action produces a clear cut programme. It has three major elements. The first is to stengthen local statutory or voluntary services and bring them into a closer relationship with the local community and its needs. This means greater coordination to prevent one service duplicating, competing, or even undermining another's programme. The project's plans to create a 'multi--services centre' which grouped local authority and voluntary services together into a single building falls under this heading, as does the attempt to persuade departments which had less need for a local base, to work together on an interdepartmental basis through a regular 'interdepartmental working party.' This foreshadowed later attempts to develop a full-blown set of area management proposals which would have taken the ideas behind the community services centre and interdepartmental working party to their logical conclusion, where the various structures would have merged into a 'mini-local authority' for the Vauxhall district. The assumption was that this form of grouping and local base would increase the chances of local control and accountability. Though this was the grand design, it was never clearly presented as such. Many participants in the community services centre were scarcely aware of their agency's role in the centre, far less of the centre's role in the overall strategy. Such a policy of 'low profile' may have been the only way for the project to gain support at the start, but at the end many were to complain that they had 'never been told.'

The second element in the strategy was to strengthen community organisation; this was to be achieved by encouraging the formation of resident groups on an area basis or to carry out particular activities, for example the summer playschemes. Though there was a network of traditional local organisations, and at least one community group for the area, the driving of the second Mersey tunnel through the district underlined the lack of any effective local opposition to such destruction. Indeed there was widespread belief that the tunnel was driven through Vauxhall largely because it was an area unlikely to mount effective protest. Creating a network of active local groups was an important way of shifting the balance of power locally.

But equally important was the third element in the programme. This was to create organisations to bind such groups together and ensure a more sustained and coherent approach. Only in this way would the local authority and other services be able to relate fully to the community through its organised groupings. One device was the information centre staffed by local people. But there was some uncertainty here. It was never clear whether the centre's main function was to service individuals or act as a resource for community groups. Nor was its relationship clear with other organisations set up by the project, such as the community services centre, particularly when towards the end of the project, the information centre moved into the same building. In addition to local people who staffed the information centre, the project recruited local residents as neighbourhood community workers, each concentrating on 'parishes' within the area. This was a further device to strengthen and link community groups. The community newspaper 'The Scottie Press' also had an important role

Photo: Peter Leeson

Tunnel works and completion
Photo: Liam Gilligan

in making community organisation and campaigns more coherent and effective by opening up problems for debate, making public the local response and keeping issues alive.

However the main focus was the local steering group. This organisation — almost mandatory for the early CDPs — had originally been the way of binding the different controlling interests into the CDP experiment and securing a measure of local participation. In Liverpool its role had been largely upstaged by the local authority project committee, though it retained the original cross-section of city-wide interests. Gradually the balance began to shift in favour of local Vauxhall people as a result of pressure from residents and the project. An alternative role began to emerge. Rather than being the first line of accountability for the project team, it was the major local organisation to which the local authority could respond. Previous experience with neighbourhood councils in Liverpool had convinced the project director before joining the Vauxhall project, that the local and central government departments would respond to community groups 'once there was an identifiable structure to relate to.' (Doran, 1971) But the pace of translating the local steering group into a neighbourhood or community council as a reference point for the local authority was deliberately slow — 'the development of a representative district organisation is the end result of the community development process, not of an artificially structured initial meeting.' (Doran, 1971).

These, then, were the components of the 'grand design'; but it is not enough merely to describe the overall package. What would breathe life into these complex structures? From where would come the motive force to make them work effectively? For CDP this is the crucial question of how social change takes place, and the project's underlying assumptions about change.

The CDP inter-project report (CDP, 1974) was quite clear where Liverpool stood in relation to other projects. It had adopted a 'consensus' approach, where CDP in general was moving to a 'conflict' position.

> 'Consensus models of social change are based on the assumption that social problems are "malfunctions" which can be cured by adjustments and re-arrangements within the existing operating systems. The problems are defined mainly in terms of failures of co-ordination and communication, and the focus of change is thus on management and administration and the non-participant. The central tactic is debate . .
>
> Structural conflict models of social change are based on the assumption that social problems arise from a fundamental conflict of interests between groups or classes in society. The problems are defined mainly in terms of inequalities in the distribution of power and the focus of change is thus on the centres of organised power (both private and public). The main tactic is organisation and raising of levels of consciousness.'

These different strategies identified in the CDP inter-project report and refined in Coventry CDP's final report, mark an important first stage in attempting to

make sense of the confused debate about community development. But it has one major weakness; it moves too easily from the level of general analysis to the particular tactics used. There is too neat an identification between seeing interests as ultimately in conflict, and the use of abrasive tactics; or seeing interests as ultimately reconcilable, and relying on goodwill or 'cosy chats.' At each stage in the long process of translating an analysis into concrete action, there is scope for choice. In no way does a particular analysis tightly determine the tactics used, or, like holy writ, specify the correct action. These are matters for debate, and must take account of the empirical results of following particular courses of action (for a more detailed argument of this point see Smith, Lees and Topping 1977).

Liverpool undoubtedly operated within a framework of 'consensus'. After all, its aim was to persuade two very different groups, the local authority and the community, to move into a new and tighter relationship. Their interests were reconcilable, and the local authority was not cast, as it is in the demonology of some projects, as a force that serves the interests of dominant groups in society. Liverpool's approach required the voluntary cooperation of both parties, and its pace therefore had to be geared to the slowest partner, as it attempted to make the match, overcoming reluctance here, dampening suspicion there. But this was only the first stage. The next was to provide the organisation for a permanent 'docking', making it difficult for either party to break off at will. The device here was the area management scheme and the neighbourhood council, which would formalise the relationship.

The third stage focussed on how such a network of organisations would provide better local services. This is where the 'consensus' approach began to fade away, as the Liverpool report to the Home Office (Liverpool CDP, 1973) made clear: 'the principal source of change is counterpressure . . . Responsiveness can, in part, be managed provided that the scale of service operation is small enough, and the service personnel and policy decision-makers are continually, sometimes painfully, exposed to criticism and the active involvement of the service user.' The tactic was first to persuade services into a regular organisation, then apply the pressure, when they could not easily back out. Despite its consensus framework the Liverpool project certainly did not rely merely on goodwill to achieve change, and there were probably more abrasive encounters between officials and community groups – even though not always endorsed by the project – than in many CDPs with a far more aggressive and radical reputation.

The assumption that organised community pressure would produce improved services and more flexible management by the local authority, was itself dependent on theories of organisational change developed in the 1960s. Two findings from research were of particular importance. The first, derived mainly from industrial studies, suggested that where an institution enjoyed a stable and predictable market for its goods there was likely to be little change over time in its organisation and management procedures. These would remain hierarchical and bureaucratic. However where the market was unpredictable and subject to rapid technological change, the firm had continually to redeploy its resources to keep pace, resulting in much more flexible use of manpower and changing organisation. The second observation was the important contribution of 'job satisfaction' to the overall efficiency of the organisation. It was no longer adequate to assume that methodically breaking down work tasks into often boring routines would provide the best results. Staff needed to exercise responsibility and discretion, and be clear of their contribution to the overall programme.

The project applied both these observations directly to the local authority setting. The first provided an important argument in favour of resident participation. The local authority was a highly bureaucratic organisation with a relatively stable and predictable environment. Historically, local authorities had begun by exercising only a few functions, mainly public health and education. Increasingly legislation had brought new responsibilities, usually tacked on to the structure in the form of a new department. These departments were highly self contained, servicing a committee of councillors, and carrying out specific functions. Under the pressure of new legislation and the growing awareness of the complexities of many social problems, local authorities had taken responsibility for more and more aspects of social life. Yet the 'environment' of the local authority department remained stable and predictable, as it concentrated on its departmental function and worked to a committee bound by the same framework. It was thus powerfully insulated from critical pressure. As the pace and scope of local government grew, the argument runs, so did resident dissatisfaction at the gaps in services and the lack of coordination at the local level. Local authorities were still budgeting two years in advance using a system, incremental budgeting, which favoured the continuation of existing services rather than the introduction of new ones. Departments were putting forward city-wide policy proposals with no awareness of their combined effect on small areas of the city. Because of the committee system, most local councillors were involved in only a minute fraction of the decisions affecting the area they were elected to represent.

For the project, increased participation would provide the motive force, by analogy with the market, to produce more responsive services. First, local government officers would have to become more directly accountable to local residents. This would challenge many of the professional values and assumptions on which they worked. To be more accountable, they had to be more accessible. The formal protocol of communication running from residents to councillor, from councillor to committee, from committee to chief officer and from chief officer to professional had to be loosened to allow free access by local people to all levels of officialdom. This would channel a greater flow of more varied information about needs and priorities into the local authority, making the 'environment' more unpredictable, and forcing a change in management procedures. New arrangements would give more discretion to middle and junior management staff. Having to respond to issues in ways directly defined by local people, would increase the pressure for coordination at all levels, allowing greater devolution over local decision-making for small geographical areas. The local councillor would be able to make a more coherent

appraisal of local authority policy for his constituency area, and many professionals would be freed from a diet of routine administration, to tackle the more rewarding task of taking the initiative in local problem solution.

It was an attractive picture – one that embodied the central ideas in the original Home Office plan, and turned them into a coherent programme of action. Even some of the cumbersome structures the project had been saddled with could be turned to advantage. The local steering group would be the basis for the proposed community council; the project committee kept the project in touch with the local ward councillors, who, by retaining final control over project expenditure, might be less anxious of developments locally that threatened to bypass much of their traditional function; the project's base in the Town Clerk's department, soon to become the Chief Executive as Liverpool adopted this form of local authority organisation, ensured contact with the centre of power in the local authority, and the original inter-service team proposal brought the nucleus for a future district team in the area management proposals.

To turn such a strategy into action was a long and laborious road, demanding enormous amounts of energy, coordination and control for a small project. Though the motive force for change might come from the impact of community organisation on local authority services, the local authority had first to be persuaded to buy the package, and not pull out at the first sign of community aggresssion. Community groups had to be convinced of the need for patient and sustained pressure on the local authority when more militant tactics might appear more attractive in the short term. The complex organisational structure actually had to work.

Project Organisation:

The project team was the key to translating this strategy into action; and project organisation was crucial, as the bewildering array of different schemes developed. The grander and more extensive the design, the greater the need for coordination and control of effort. This was particularly important, given the delicate balancing act at the centre of the strategy, calling for simultaneous development on the community and local authority fronts. Though the strategy was intended as a whole, it quickly broke into two obvious sections, one concerned with the community end of the programme, the other with the local authority. Staff roles reflected this division, and only a few worked in both camps.

The first project team, appointed in 1970, planned for a five year project; the first period to assess needs, the second to implement experimental programmes, and the final phase for assessment and follow-up. By the end of the second year, this small team had already developed a clear view of the community organisation that would be left at the end of the project. In summary the project had accepted the role of a 'demonstration project', concentrating on comprehensive but realistic reforms at the local level. It had accepted the geographical area focus and worked within it, content to save any wider presentation of its ideas and action until the results had been assessed at the end of the project.

All might have gone well, and perhaps even been amenable to some form of systematic evaluation, as envisaged in the original plans for the project, but for the lack of any staff continuity and the absence of a research team. Of the three staff who devised the overall strategy in the first two years, only one remained to see it through, as project director. For the Seebohm reorganisation of social services presented alternative attractive posts elsewhere. But the Liverpool CDP programme was already launched, and posts advertised. When the research team finally arrrived two years late, they were faced by an almost completely new action team – two assistant directors, an education liaison officer, a tutor organiser responsible to the WEA, a second adult educationalist working to an independent action-research brief attached to the University Institute for Extension Studies (IES) and an organisational expert on a six months consultancy looking into 'the appropriate community and local authority structure to achieve the project's goals.' Other appointments were in the pipeline. But the main action programme was already well under way. The project director found himself committed to working out the existing plans through an almost completely new set of staff, some of whom were only tenuously linked to the project.

Project team meetings, usually held weekly, were the main way of holding together this disparate group – though discussions of overall strategy rarely featured on its formal agenda, which was often taken up with project 'housekeeping' items. However in the final analysis several in the team were formally responsible to university departments or other agencies, not to the project director, local steering-group or project committee. In some cases this 'distance' was symbolised by their base in separate offices. As the programmes expanded the project team grew, with increasingly ill-defined boundaries, taking in community workers and professional social work or probation staff based at the community services centre. It had begun to resemble the original inter-service team. Various more specialist sub-groups emerged, for example on the community work side, but their role was trimmed if they seemed likely to threaten the overall position of the team meeting.

The complexity of the programme increased the importance of gaining the commitment of the new staff. Yet the strategy in a sense had to be experienced to be understood. There was no clear statement that newcomers could come to grips with; nor was the strategy explicitly discussed at team meetings. Instead debate on minor items frequently developed into an unstructured discussion about strategy, to be cut short by the demands of the agenda, and the need for concrete day to day decisions. In part this was the result of the incremental development over the first two years – the inevitable mix of what was desirable, and what was feasible for the project without executive power. In part the vagueness was intentional, or else it could never have been sold at face value to the local authority.

However action programmes were by now well under way, and there was no chance of another gradual induction. Experience was gained by working directly in the field. Programmes were justified as the continuation of existing work, or as a product of the administrative home of the project in a local authority department.

Discussion frequently concentrated on what could *not* be done because of the project's position, not on the overall strategy. The result was that the project's central objective of linking local authority more closely to the community organisation, was never fully shared by many of the project team. Some were preoccupied with their own responsibilities, and content to operate within a loosely agreed framework. Others repeatedly pressed for a discussion of the wider policy, and for alternatives to be considered.

These divisions were heightened by the division of responsibility within the team. Only the director and occasionally the two assistant directors had responsibility for promoting change in the local authority. Tactics for the development of the multi-services centre and the inter-departmental working party were controlled by the director, as was any tricky mediation between community groups and defensive local government officers. This mediating role was intended to put an acceptable face on change in local government procedures, spreading a gloss of professionalism over developments which sprang directly from grass-roots reaction in the community. As most of the team worked with the community, the director often found himself arguing for 'restraint on the community side in order not to frighten off the local authority', to a team who were largely unaware of, or unconvinced by these aims.

These tensions were faithfully reproduced in the debates at team meetings, with the local authority element fighting to avoid being overrun by the momentum of community action. Frustration at these attempts at restraint encouraged many on the community side to join forces with those basically opposed to the project's strategy, though they may not have shared the increasingly radical standpoint of this group. These tensions and shifting alliances contributed to the confused and abrasive clashes among staff during the middle phase of the project, culminating in the final split between the project and the linked IES adult education programmes, though the same frictions quickly reemerged with new protagonists. It was sometimes as if the project's strategy inevitably attracted powerful opposition, whether this was within the team, from one of the associated groups, or from other radical organisations operating in the area, like the Scotland Road Free School.

Though some members of the team basically disagreed with the overall strategy and would have preferred a more openly radical programme, for others the constraints imposed by the local authority were seen in more practical and immediate terms. It was hard to accept that the pace of community work had to be regulated by the demands of the local authority. For the organisation of community work emphasised open-ended working, long-term commitment to groups, and accountability to the community. For many of the staff, work in the community was end in itself, and it was difficult to disengage from controversial issues because they worked for the local authority. Most were ready to 'go over the top' if they felt the issue was important enough.

Thus the constraints imposed by the overall strategy were a key factor in the development of the community work. For the strategy implied that the community work — the development of skills, knowledge and organisation — was not so much an end in itself, more a means of providing a stable and representative organisation to influence the provision of local services. The result was that work with resident groups unlikely to contribute to this stable organisation was played down. On the educational side the importance of educational courses promoting the growth of 'relevant' groups was stressed, rather than offering courses with uncertain or indirect benefits. Similarly on the local authority side, the overall strategy had its costs. With only a handful of project staff working at this end, resources were minute in comparison to the number of local authority departments or the scale of the changes proposed. Persuasion was almost the only weapon, but this could easily be rendered useless by the threat of community action.

The cost of attempting to preserve the overall balance, of holding in check the community side so that it did not jeopardise the local authority programme, was high in terms of effort, and the strain it placed on internal project organisation. On several occasions the project came close to breaking up, preserved perhaps only by the enormous weight of day to day business which demanded attention. Instead individuals withdrew or resigned, and there were splits with some of the attached teams. Perhaps the most optimistic assumption of the overall strategy was that community action once set going could be channelled away from areas where it would jeopardise the balancing act, or could somehow be made less threatening. As the development of the community programme shows clearly, the project was rarely master of events, which quickly took on a very definite life of their own. Similarly on the local authority front, the project was often 'blown off course' by events outside its control.

Programme:

In this section we cover the main sequence and phasing of the action programme, before turning to a more detailed account of each programme. Developments on the community and local authority fronts are treated separately, though of course they went forward together.

(i) Community:

We begin with the community programme, including both attempts to organise local groups, and devices to bridge these different interest groups, as this consumed by far the largest proportion of project time and resources. It was the source, too, of the most anguished dilemmas within the project; how far should the project play a directive role in forming local groups? How far could it identify with their actions? The development of new roles, particularly the employment of local people as community workers, the setting-up of new institutions such as the information centre, multi-services centre, community centres and finally the community council, and the attempt to build in local accountability, all raised fresh problems and dilemmas.

The first phase was one of assessment. In addition to a large number of meetings and discussions about the project and the area, there were two small surveys, organised in the absence of a research team. The first assessed the level of dependency on welfare benefits, particularly the level of take up. The second examined

Photo: Peter Leeson

the sense of community and identity of the area. Not surprisingly this revealed a strong Scotland Road identity, and more locally still with the particular parish. The survey was also a way of assessing the prospects for a local newspaper. The 'Scottie Press' was launched in October 1970. These were still tentative forays into the community, for the project staff were still working from the council offices in the city centre. The information centre had opened in August 1970 initially to gain feedback – to act as a 'listening post' – for the project about local problems. It began with professional project workers, did badly at its first location, and then transferred to the more central League of Welldoers building where business began to pick up. A small group of early users were quickly persuaded to run the centre themselves, at first voluntarily, and from August 1971 as part-time paid workers. Before long it moved across to The Grapes, a disused pub, where it remained until the move to the multi-services centre in 1974.

These were the two major initiatives in the first year. The 'Scottie Press' was intended to be representative of the community, run by local people, 'non-political', 'non-sectarian', and thus not attempting to inject ideas or act as a vanguard in the political sense. It was felt that a crusading newspaper would deter many people from being closely involved, and would in any case require a good deal of professional support, thus losing its local feel. The paper would encourage a sense of identity and present a powerful portrait of local problems and grievances to the local authority. In contrast the information centre would provide the project with an image of 'getting things done'. The centre would, of course, remain a listening post, but would also aim to establish the case for information and advice in working class areas. Eventually the centre would gain enough experience to generalise about local issues and problems, providing ammunition for local groups to act in concert – 'the pump-priming mechanism', as it came to be known. None of the stated objectives of the information centre suggested a casework or advocacy role; yet this was to prove the dominant approach, reinforced by the arrival of the community lawyer in 1973.

In the following year there was a number of 'one-off' projects; working with residents in one area to design and construct an adventure playground, and several small-scale environmental improvements. The aim was to establish among residents that the project could deliver the goods while at the same time bargaining with local authority departments to take a share in these and future developments. Work with residents concentrated on the group linked to the information centre and 'Scottie Press', who were also active in the summer playschemes of 1970 and 1971. But momentum was lost in 1971, with the resignation of early staff, the arrival of replacements and of research and adult education teams at the end of the year.

Before there was much chance of induction for new staff, discussion or plans, there was the first example of

Scotland Road C
Photo: Peter Leeso


POLICE NOTICE
WILFUL DAMAGE
AND
STONE THROWING
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN
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CURRO
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CHRISTY
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LOAF
FRANNY
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GANDY

many future events, when the project had to make a rapid and unplanned response to local events. It was a very gentle introduction, involving old age pensioners. The slum clearance programme in the Scotland Road area had left many old people isolated; their relations had moved away to outlying estates. With much of the area affected by large scale redevelopment, and the second Mersey tunnel adding to the demolition and mess, many pensioners were living in appalling conditions in outdated and unmodernised blocks. There was growing local concern about their plight, and pressure on the project to take action. The project became involved in limited ways, and a survey was carried out to locate all pensioners in the area, and refer those in need to the statutory services. Possible ways of tackling the housing problems of the elderly were also discussed, though it was some time before any firm proposals were made. However the exercise raised the stock of the project locally, and increased its visibility with local social and welfare workers.

By now it was clear that the very general plans laid down by the project would frequently have little relation to where the project staff were spending time. Thus in early 1972 while the research team was laying plans for a study of the information centre, or a study of vandalism and youth work in the area – all apparently central to the project's programme, community workers were increasingly preoccupied with the developing Scotland Road subway campaign. Or they were working to develop community organisation in each parish so that local groups could be involved in deciding how to spend money on environmental improvement schemes – money which had come unexpectedly at the end of 1971 and had to be spent immediately. At the same time the project was suddenly given a lump sum of £20,000 under the government's winter infrastructure programme to be spent on a capital scheme to ease unemployment. This had to be spent within the year. Finally the Recreation and Open Spaces (ROS) Department announced that it had secured a further £20,000 under phase five of the urban programme for a community building on the playground site. Plans would have to be developed with local residents as soon as possible. The timing of these windfalls effectively determined the strategy for the early part of 1972.

The pace began to quicken with an intensive local campaign against the Fair Rents legislation in the autumn of 1972, and a series of rent strikes in the area. Though the project was not closely involved in these developments, the various organisations it had set up, particularly the resident groups and the 'Scottie Press' played a central part. Much to its embarrassment, the project was at one stage asked to act as banker for the unpaid rent monies, and this was only narrowly avoided. Nevertheless the intense activity allowed the project to extend its network of resident groups. The rents and road tunnel campaign emerged in a new form the following year as a tenants campaign to put forward candidates in the local elections of April and May, 1973. Though a traditionally safe Labour area, with low key and low turnout elections, this new arrival shook up the position. In the two sharply fought elections with charge and counter-charge about local conditions, project activities were inevitably involved. Between the two elections there was an official local authority inquiry into the project's links with local political groups. This underlined the confusing overlap of roles that was developing; as the project director argued in his report to the local authority, 'the amalgam of community worker, local resident and politically conscious elector has rarely, if ever previously existed as now in the deprived inner areas . . . '

These campaigns could hardly have been ignored by the project. The activists usually formed the mainstay of many resident groups and were prominent at the local steering group. Local involvement shifted regularly between these relatively short-lived flash points and the longer term 'plugging away' through the more representative structures. Nor could the project regulate these developments, both because of the sudden impact of outside events, and the presence of semi-independent activists such as the IES team, or totally independent groups.

The development of community organisation continued throughout 1972 and 1973. Tenants' associations were started in most of the walk-up flats, some round repairs and maintenance problems, others round the phasing of the modernisation programme, and others over environmental improvement schemes. There were further summer holiday play schemes, and expansion of the information centre with the arrival of a community lawyer. These developments were serviced by a relatively small number of people, as the neighbourhood community workers had only just begun to be appointed. And several of the team had very different views on community organisation.

Both the adult education tutors were partly responsible to other organisation. The WEA tutor organizer spent more than a year resisting the pressure from the local WEA branch to put on formal classes. Instead his preference was to develop links with local labour organisations to strengthen their opposition to redundancies. He saw less point in the development of a series of tenants' associations and so took little part. The IES appointment brought ever greater friction. The IES team analysed the problems of the Vauxhall area in predominantly 'class-conflict' terms. Their education programme was aimed at promoting greater working class consciousness in the area. Though the project could accommodate many of the practical developments this approach involved, it was ultimately not prepared to be identified with this position. The project director argued that the IES approach made 'the movement or engagement of citizens dependent upon a specific creed or "ideology", whereas the only acceptable line for a local authority project was to promote and encourage citizen participation in local problems, issues and organisation.'

Formal links between the IES and project were finally dissolved at the end of 1973, but the field workers remained active in the area, working with local activists and groups critical of the project's work. Much of their energy went into the development of a local community centre, financed by a direct grant from the city. They had previously approached the local steering group for support, but been turned down, perhaps partly because their application was linked with the Scotland Road Free School, which had just had its grant cut by the local education department.

Despite these clashes the main programme moved slowly ahead. Two additional neighbourhood community workers joined the project in spring 1973, and two more appointments were planned. This would mean eventually one community worker for each of the five parishes into which the area had been divided.

By 1973 the main elements in the programme were established. First there was need to service groups affiliated to the steering group, particularly the tenants' associations, in order to increase gradually the responsibility of the steering group for the allocation of project resources. Eventually it was to be responsible for the overall budget. Second the playground had developed into an experiment in local management of community resources, run on a day to day basis by an untrained local play leader. Third there was the development of the community centres. The Tichfield Centre, financed from the £20,000 infra-structure grant, was intended to serve the whole area, though two more small centres were planned at the north and south end of the area. Finally there was a programme of free evening classes in Vauxhall schools — work which had been started by the IES team and was continued by the project, until it fell victim to cut-backs in the educational budget.

With the increasing number of community workers, the original project began to retreat into a more managerial role, the face to face community work taken over by the neighbourhood community workers and occasional student help. From then on the debate turned on how to maintain the structure. Should community workers attempt to keep tenants' associations meeting every week or every month to keep them nominally active or should the periodic lulls be accepted and the association allowed to remain dormant, ready to mobilise when the right issue came along? Should community workers relate to a fixed geographical area, or where they had the best links? Should they become specialists in certain types of community problem, housing or environment, and act as consultants to groups? How could they avoid becoming yet another local caseworker, living in the area and eternally on call?

These developments were part of a gradual change in style for the project. In the final two years the focus shifted from devising forms of community organisation, which had to be acceptable to local residents and to local councillors on the project committee, to problems of keeping up momentum. The debate turned not just on the proper role of the neighbourhood community workers, but also on training programmes and the importance of one programme reinforcing another. By now the 'Scottie Press' was running out of steam, victim of the pattern of local voluntary help which, apart from the hard core of helpers, often took the form of unpredictable, spontaneous offers of assistance from those who happened to be around. It had gradually become a mouthpiece for the project, publishing more welfare rights information or minuting meetings. It had begun to lose its local flavour.

The information centre, despite its original place in the strategy, had developed strongly along casework lines, until by 1974 there was need for a review to consider why workers at the centre were endlessly being faced with the same type of case, particularly delays in housing repairs. Though the project had an underlying view of how the elements in the programme should fit together, they were increasingly working at a distance through other people, particularly residents who had very different perspectives on what was needed. There was a possibility that each component would follow its own path, when the project was no longer available to hold the complex structure together.

The final year of the project was mainly spent in negotiating the continuation of the project's work on a long term basis. It soon became clear that the full area management proposal was going to be shelved by the local authority. The project instead concentrated on securing funding for an independent community council, based on the project's local steering group. At first the steering group had little community representation; it was a device to secure the commitment of local and central government and local voluntary organisations to the project's goals. Gradually the voluntary agencies faded out, and the attendance of local people increased. Voting rights were slowly transferred from professionals to local people so that from the end of 1972 it was possible for residents to be in the majority, though professionals still often held the balance of power on split votes, much to the annoyance of residents. By the end of 1973, the steering group had a small budget of £2,500 to spend, and £5,000 for the following year. An executive committee was formed, and local membership broadened to include more local groups. A system of group voting was introduced. By the final year attendance at the regular meetings averaged 64 people, with residents forming 59% of those who attended. 43 local groups were by now affiliated to the steering group.

Despite these changes the meeting retained a formal local authority flavour, with the local resident chairman relying heavily on professional support over procedure. Agendas were often long, with detailed supporting papers from the project director in formal local authority style. Many felt that the format inhibited local people; but for others it was an important training experience in handling the formal procedures needed in grappling with local authority departments.

The project's proposals to turn the steering group into a neighbourhood council were pushed through, and from April 1975 a new Vauxhall Neighbourhood Council was given responsibility for most of the existing 'social action' programmes, including the employment of a secretary to the council, an adult education tutor, the five neighbourhood community workers and oversight for the community centres. With the new set-up came dilemmas of accountability for the community workers who were worried about immediate formal accountability to friends and neighbours. Some were also elected on to the community council in their capacity as local residents, further complicating the relationship. The complete package was supported by the local authority and Home Office which would provide 75% funding for a further five years.

(ii) Local Authority:

The project director's report to the Home Secretary in 1973 contained an explicit statement of the project's objectives in the local authority.

> 'Neighbourhood management is a technique intended to make local government services more accountable to those who use them. The technique will be

measured by (1) the increased ease with which people find the service they need; (2) the reduction in the gaps and overlaps between departments; (3) an increase in the responsiveness (speed and effectiveness) of integrated local government neighbourhood services as experienced by people rather than as classified by departments; (4) a development of effectiveness with humanity, as opposed to cost-efficiency and (5) an increase in the opportunities for users to influence the policies and practices of local government services; (6) a greater share for inner city areas of financial and manpower resources.' (Liverpool CDP, 1973)

These implied both a change in attitude and a change of organisation. There were two ways by which the project could bring about change, through its general influence on the local authority, and through the specific schemes it promoted.

However they could hardly have chosen a worse period to attempt to change the local authority. For it was already subject to almost continuous reorganisation. First the McKinsey inspired reorganisation of Liverpool local authority departments and committee in 1971, which grouped them into a smaller number of programme departments with increased corporate planning, under a 'chief executive' structure; in the same year the national reorganisation of the social and welfare services, following the Seebohm Report. These changes had hardly been absorbed, before there was the national reorganisation of local government in 1974, and changes in the organisation of the health services, which affected certain local authority departments and services.

Perhaps the state of flux allowed the project to move some way forward with its multi-services centre and interdepartmental working party schemes, but by the time the area management proposal was ready, there was a distinct cooling of interest in any further reorganisation. The changes proposed by the project were of a very different order from those preoccupying the local authority, which were generally concerned with the creation and management of large central departments. The project in contrast was anxious to achieve decentralisation and coordination at the local level, with increased accountability to local groups. Yet both sets of changes involved the same people, the senior and middle management levels, where roles and relationships were already shaken up by the major reorganisations. Project proposals were accepted up to a point, for example in the inter-departmental working party — but not when they appeared to threaten the main structure. The proposals for local authority change and increased local accountability, in a report prepared by the management consultant working for the project, had little impact; and the area management proposals were turned aside. These were a more basic challenge to the organisation of local government.

There were, of course, other more locally relevant changes within the local authority during the project. Notably the creation of a community development section within the Town Clerk's department, and later under the Liberals in 1974 the setting up of a parallel community development committee. Though the project was independent of these new structures, there were, as is the way of organisations, strong attempts to incorporate the project into this section, effectively reducing its formal point of contact with the local authority to a lower tier. There was, too, the area management experiment as part of the DOE Inner Areas Study. This was not in any way closely linked with community organisation, more a form of internal management change; and its acceptance virtually ruled out a similar scheme elsewhere, until the results of the first experiment were known.

It was also a time of political change, the Conservative, Labour and Liberal parties all controlling the city during the five years of the project. Though the project's target was management change, and it was not closely identified with any political party, nor involved councillors extensively as a source of leverage, these changes of control clearly had their effect, unpredictably speeding up or holding back proposals.

Despite these unfavourable conditions, the project did make progress with two schemes, the multi-services centre and the inter-departmental working party. Both in a sense stemmed from the original idea of an interservice team. This had been formally abandoned at an early stage in CDP, but the idea lingered on.

Finally the project's most visible activities in 1970 and 1971 were in the community — 'the Scottie Press', the summer playschemes, information centre and residents groups. These brought a broadside of criticism against local services which was bound to put departments on their guard. The only direct success was the secondment of a teacher to act as the education liaison officer, but with a brief to work in schools.

By the time the main project team had finally been assembled in December 1971, the plan was for a looser form of attachment; fieldwork services would be grouped together in a local multi-services centre; departments without local fieldwork staff and middle management from fieldwork departments would meet together regularly to develop a more integrated approach to the Vauxhall area in the inter-departmental working party.

The two main objectives of the multi-services centre were to increase the accessibility of services, both physically and psychologically, and improve standards of service through better coordination. A comprehensive services centre would reduce the number of fruitless journeys made by the public, and increase the take-up of services. Better coordination of services would operate at different levels — ranging from simply enhanced interpersonal relations and greater awareness of other professionals' roles, to the fluid exchange of agency resources, whether of staff, equipment or funds. The aim was also to make services more accountable locally, both by the closer contact with the area and in the management structure of the centre. A residents advisory group was set up.

However finding and converting a suitable building, and persuading the various agencies to move in took enormous amounts of time and energy. Some departments were in the process of centralising away from small local offices; others were wary of the community action element in the project. Effort went on getting them in — less on how they should cooperate once in the centre. The result was that a large number of agencies agreed to part-time attachments, and only social services and probation joined on a large scale. In time the

part-time attachments tended to fall away, leaving a core group of agencies which towards the end of the project had begun to work out a management structure for the centre, and ways of coordinating their activities more effectively.

The multi-services centre was to be complemented by the interdepartmental working party, which was intended to perform the same coordinating function at middle management level. Thus gaps or inadequate services identified by field workers could be transformed into policy through the working party, which would look at the input of services for Vauxhall as a whole. This would contrast with the normal practice of deciding departmental policy independently for the city as a whole without regard to the total impact of local authority policy on a given geographical area.

The proposals for the working party put forward by the project, were endorsed, somewhat unenthusiastically, by a meeting of chief officers at the end of 1971. It was given a general brief to devise models and procedures for an effective corporation district team. The team would not only be concerned with coordinating existing work, but with local research, the planning of more integrated programmes, the necessary public consultation, and finally implementation. At this stage it was envisaged that the working party would operate at two levels, with regular meetings at middle management level, and 'steering meetings' involving chief officers. There was little support for this higher tier. The cool response at this level almost certainly acted as a brake on the enthusiasm of middle management at least in the early stages. It was clear that the main task of the working party was to develop a case for district management, rather than work out the details. At the first session it was agreed to gear the meetings to a report on district management at the end of two years, though the group would also concentrate on practical ways of improving local authority programmes in Vauxhall in the short term. As with its other developments, the project clearly believed that attempts to grapple with the problems of inter-departmental cooperation would gradually develop experience and commitment to district management.

Over the next two years the working party met regularly, sometimes dividing into more specialist subgroups; attempts were made to get departments to reveal any plans they might have for Vauxhall before these had hardened up; or to consider the mix of policies for different parts of the project area. Despite making considerable progress in some of its objectives, the working party never reported in detail. At the end of two years, a weekend conference was held to pull together the main arguments. But by then the project was deeply involved in gaining support for developments after the project ended, and a formal report on the working party was never made. The political climate on area management had also changed significantly. Reactions to successive reorganisation had dampened enthusiasm for change; there was tension over the further development of inter-departmental management teams which might further cut into the independence of departments at the local level; the project was closely identified with grass-roots community work, and the Inner Areas Study area management scheme had effectively upstaged the CDP proposals.

The Liverpool project's overall strategy called for a wide range of changes across the board. Though it never finally achieved the area management scheme, and we have emphasised the way it was frequently 'blown off course', a surprisingly large number of its other proposals did make progress.

It stuck to its programme doggedly. The result was a bewildering array of different activities and an almost Byzantine collection of committees, steering groups, working parties, advisory groups and so forth. Few were aware of or understood fully the interrelationships. For some it was a thoroughly contrived and mechanical structure, dependent on an active project team to keep it going. Yet it did have a momentum of its own, which continued once the project had ended. Many of its components built up considerable momentum and it is to a more detailed account of some of these developments that we now turn.

Chapter 5: Local Authority

In a nutshell the project's local authority strategy was intended to improve the coordination of local services, and make them more accessible and accountable to local people. This necessarily involved some decentralisation away from the Town Hall to bring professionals into greater contact with local people and local pressures; this move, it was hoped, would lead to closer identification with the area and its problems. It also involved the creation of a local organisation to match the developing community groups.

In choosing from the start to identify itself closely as a local authority venture, the project experienced costs as well as benefits. As an urban aid programme, the authority contributed 25% of project expenditure which also gave them power of veto. Though a veto was almost never used, councillors were able to influence the programme through the project committee by pushing through their definitions of the community's needs and of what was appropriate expenditure. The effect of this was most marked when the Labour group had a majority from 1972 to 1974, as it was the local ward councillors, long-standing representatives in a safe Labour stronghold, who ran the committee.

All project staff were employed by the local authority and subject to standing orders of the city council. As such they were in a strange position. For they were colleagues of other local authority staff, given cooperation and access to departments; yet their brief was to challenge traditional procedures, both by short-circuiting the machinery themselves, and by encouraging direct community pressure on officers and departments. Such a role was virtually unknown in local authority departments at the time.

As a further complication some project staff were also local residents. This quickly raised problems over the dividing line between community work and political action, and the difficult question of when a community worker who lived in the area was off duty.

Use of Formal Channels

The project made use of the leverage available through its links with the Town Clerk's Department in a number of ways. First in the role of 'trouble shooter' to try and break a way out of deadlock. But this was rarely successful in getting departments to deliver the goods. There was little progress in solving a dispute about modernisation between the Bevington/Summer Seat residents and the Housing Department (see chapter 10 for details). Following up resolutions of the steering group, the department pressed for the speedy renovation of the swimming baths; tried to persuade local doctors to improve surgery conditions, negotiated with the Law Society over the appointment of a community solicitor, and attempted to persuade the Social Services Department to proceed with an appointment to make up a detached youth team in Vauxhall. Some progress was made with the Law Society, but otherwise results were very disappointing.

The second role was to generate support for the project's initiatives among other chief officers. In three chief officers' meetings to launch the inter-departmental working party little success was achieved, and the meeting called to set up the Multi-Services Centre never took place. Here the project unfortunately suffered as a result of the backlash from the very rapid McKinsey reorganisation of 1971, which had introduced a form of corporate planning to Liverpool. Third the project expected support as it moved into more controversial areas. Two examples were the Scotland Road subway campaign and the tenants' campaign in the local elections. The reaction of the local authority here is described in the case studies in Chapter 10.

The project's strategy did not give a key role to local councillors. It was primarily concerned with management change and a reduction in distance between officials and local people. The response of councillors is best gauged from the workings of the formal project committee. This showed how difficult it was to plan a three to five year programme in politically changeable climate — the first two years were under Conservative control, the second two under Labour, and the final year under a Liberal majority. In some ways the local authority emphasis of the project was in sympathy with the Conservatives' managerial outlook. It had been their administration which brought in the McKinsey reforms as a way of increasing the efficiency of local government. But this emphasis on brisk managerial efficiency took no account of the likely costs in time if the linked programme of participation and local accountability also went ahead. However the Conservatives had no councillors in the project area, and were prepared to leave large areas of discretion to the project. Social and welfare help for the poorer areas of Liverpool was clearly a good thing.

For all political groups the experimental status of the project tended to be interpreted in a conservative framework. The area's problems were seen to be self-evident and the solutions the traditional ones of stimulating more local, charitable work from a community base. Broad welfare goals provoked little political controversy; ideas of community councils spending their own budgets, or very substantial shifts in the pattern of local authority expenditure to favour poor areas was another matter. The expectation of councillors on the way project funds should be spent, reinforced the pressure from the community for their own problems to be solved in their own terms. This was especially true of the crucial Labour-controlled phase from 1972 to 1974, when the major spending was undertaken.

With the arrival of the Liberals in 1974 and their emphasis on 'community politics' there was a further change. Community development could now be firmly identified as 'grass roots' activity, and the project steered

away from the more contentious questions of service coordination and area management, and possible links with community organisation.

Councillors concerned themselves most with aspects of the programme most visible to the community. They tended to see the work of a community development project as being mainly in the community, not with the working of local authority departments. Debates on spending relatively large sums on establishing the Multi-Services Centre were muted, while £50 to this or that local group could often give rise to some impassioned oratory. As guardians of the public purse, councillors were most resistant to any proposals which involved increasing the number of staff. For this reason, particularly, they supported many of the liaison arrangements with other departments, as a way of adding to Vauxhall's resources without incurring new expenditure.

However the project's activities had considerable influence on the local councillors' role. Both local people and councillors remarked on the way councillors were often bypassed by local pressure groups. The strength of local feeling forced councillors to take positions on issues that would otherwise have received little attention – for example the traffic campaign, the renovation of the Burrough's Gardens swimming baths and wash-house and the Arden House affair. Sometimes they dug in their heels when local opinion was divided, for example in turning down a grant to the Scotland Road Community Trust, the parent organisation of the Free School, despite guarded support from the steering group and project. For this group aroused strong hostility from the more 'respectable' end of the community with which local councillors were more closely linked. And they were reluctant to accept the idea of local resident neighbourhood community workers, arguing that the job would be beyond unqualified local people; or approve the neighbourhood council with power to spend money. Both clearly cut substantially into the traditional powers of the local councillor in handling individual problems and grievances, and steering small 'dollops' of local authority expenditure to their area.

The local steering group which met on a six weekly cycle was the forum where local people could put their views directly to officials. Local councillors also attended. At first this was a professionally dominated group, but gradually local people took part and put their views with increasing force. As a result officials frequently found themselves directly under attack for the failure of their department locally, or even for problems not strictly their responsibility at all. There were regular favourites besides housing and the environment, particularly the presence of rats in Vauxhall – dead specimens were usually flourished in evidence – or the lack of chemists and post offices in the area. On several occasions representatives of the local health executive committee were hammered for the refusal of local doctors to consider a health centre. The doctors declined to attend the steering group.

These attacks undoubtedly kept some departments on their toes locally. After one particular drubbing over the rats problem, the public health official concerned produced for a later meeting not only a list of manholes baited and poisoned and almost a body count, but also for good measure data on noise and pollution levels in Vauxhall, and evidence that most of the food shops in the area were infringing one public health regulation or another. But with other departments, the abrasive tactics were counterproductive at least in the short term. Staff either refused to go into the area, or used their discretion wherever possible to avoid 'trial by steering group.'

The Inter-Departmental Working Party (IDWP)

For the project the working party was a way of reaching the six major objectives set for local authority management change. These were described in the previous chapter, and included the increased accessibility of local services, improved coordination, greater efficiency in human rather than economic terms, a better chance for local people to influence the patterns of service delivery, and a larger share of the city's resources for inner city areas. The working party was also a step towards area management, and a way of building commitment to this goal within the local authority.

In theory all local authority departments at middle management level were represented on the working party under the chairmanship of the project. In fact representatives from most departments did attend, though some, such as education rarely, if ever, took part. The committee first met in February 1972, two years after the start of the project. Most members obviously still knew little or nothing of its aims or programme. They tended to challenge any suggestions that laid responsibility for Vauxhall's plight on their own or other local government departments.

These early discussions were themselves a powerful argument in favour of setting up the working party. In reply to the suggestion that Vauxhall was deprived of resources, the Transport and Basic Services Department (TBS) actually argued that the upgrading of Scotland Road to a three lane dual carriageway and the siting of the second Mersey tunnel in the area represented a large proportion of the department's budget and a resource to local people. Similarly, the Recreation and Open Space department (ROS) pointed to the building of the costly Edinburgh Street Sports complex close to Vauxhall as a major investment, Environmental Health and Protection department (EHP) to continual vigilance on rodent control and atmospheric pollution in Vauxhall, Housing to the modernisation programme and proportion of the north city district maintenance budget spent on Vauxhall, Social Services to the priority programmes for three vulnerable groups, the elderly, the mentally ill and the physically handicapped which would benefit Vauxhall, and Planning to the existence since 1970 of the Vauxhall 'Action Area Plan' which integrated aspects of physical planning and land use in Vauxhall.

The counter arguments were either not considered, or not seen as their responsibility – that the widening of Scotland Road and building the tunnel had reduced the area to a construction site for years, split the area into sections and increased traffic hazards, all in a district with the lowest levels of car ownership in the city; that the Edinburgh Park sports complex was long overdue, was outside the area in 'foreign territory', and may not have been seen as a resource by Vauxhall people; that

News from the Town Hall

HOUSES FOR FLAT DWELLERS.

The Housing Committee are considering a plan to allocate 10% of all houses in each housing district to flat dwellers who have been there 15 YEARS or longer and who would have little or no chance of a transfer to a house. (20/2136/643)

COMMUNITY CENTRE - TITCHFIELD ST.

It has been approved that the former Our Lady's Boys School be adapted as a centre for the community.

SUMMER HOLIDAY PLAY SCHEME.

£1,000 grant is to be paid to the Scotland Road Play Scheme Association. (21/2238/378).

OLD BLACK DOG PUB TO BECOME BETTING SHOP.

Application has been granted, to use the former pub (The Black Dog) on Vauxhall Road as a Betting Shop.

OLD PEOPLE'S HOSTEL.

The proposed Old People's Hostel at Hermia St. over the bridge, is still under consideration. (12/2007/356).

ST. ALBAN'S YOUTH CLUB.

The recommendation by the Vauxhall Project that a grant be paid to St. Alban's Parish Youth Club Committee, is to be approved. (19/2006/351).

FIRE STATION FOR VAUXHALL ROAD.

A Fire Station is planned for Vauxhall Road at the top of Chisenhale Street. (19/1989/312).

IMPROVEMENT AREA.

It has been provisionally resolved to spend, £776,153 over the period of 1972/73 for the Flower Streets General Improvements area in Sandhills Ward. (20/2140/649).

REMOVAL EXPENSES - SLUM CLEARANCE.

The Housing Committee has approved a plan to pay the removal expenses (£12.50) of all householders affected by clearance or Compulsory Purchase Orders. (20/2134/642).

VAUXHALL PROJECT.

The following proposals submitted by the Vauxhall Project have been accepted by the Policy & Finance Committee:-

(1) A District Youth Officer for Vauxhall for 2 years
(2) A Environmental Officer for Vauxhall for 1 year.
(3) Two local resident members of the Vauxhall Steering Group be co-opted onto the Vauxhall Project Committee.
(4) The appointment of a Play Leader to the Epsom Street playground, for 1 year.

The Policy & Finance Committee are awaiting a report on:-

(A) The progress made with the Vauxhall Project since 1969.
(B) Whether any success has been achieved in reducing crime in the area. (19/2006/352).

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RATS

We the residents of the Celia Street area are at our wits end! We have been complaining about the rodents forming armies in our homes to Enviromental Health, Paul orr - the councillor, and Joe Morgan - The MP. since the trouble started, some time ago.
Doesn't anybody care about this situation. What do we have to do to get something done? We are getting desperate. This is a disgusting state of affairs these conditions are not fit for anybody to live in. Rats carry germs and disease- somebody will be very ill soon if something is not,done quickly.
We were given these new houses because our old houses were being demolished, but we never had to put up with rats and mice in our old homes. It looks as if we are worse off instead of being better off. Can't something be done to KILL OFF THESE CREATURES BEFORE THEY KILL US ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! !

why are we waiting?

On the 3rd. of April 1973 The shattered glass on the door at the entrance to nos 14to 18b Goodwood Street(pensioners Flats)was reported. On the note given to the Pensioner who reported it was written DANGEROUS Now if that word has the same meaning now as when I went to school, one would have expected this job to be done pretty quickly, NOT SO, It is now July 2nd.. 1974 (at the time of writing) and NOTHING HAS YET BEEN DONE.I have reported this myself to the Information Centrebut all to no avail One begins to wonderwhat exactly is happening to the system of repair work in the Corporation. It would appear,in this instance at anyrate to have broken down completely. In the last couple of weeks a large piece of this glass has fallen out Thank God without injuring anyone HAVE WE TO WAIT FOR A NASTY ACCIDENT BEFORE SOMETHING IS DONE

the slum clearance programme and loss of industry had left so much open derelict land that rodent control was at best a sporadic response to the growing menace of rodent guerilla warfare; that industrial pollution may have been monitored, but it was still affecting local housing; that the housing modernisation programme was partly used as a regulator in the capital budget, undermining any firm assurances on starting or completion dates or that the proportion of the north city maintenance budget spent on Vauxhall could not be estimated and delay in housing repairs was still one of the main items of local complaint; that Social Services were desperately short of trained social workers and were often able only to make crisis visits; that planners were only just beginning to look seriously at social planning, and though they might make detailed plans they had little or no way of influencing the phasing of each spending department's programme in the area.

These arguments were tossed around with varying degrees of commitment. Not all members necessarily defended a narrow departmental viewpoint. But even the representatives of Environmental Health and Protection (EHP), Planning and Social Services who were most ready to consider a new approach, were openly daunted by the climate of opinion within their departments. It was essential that they would have to gain the cooperation of others in their department to launch any coordinated schemes for Vauxhall.

Size and complexity of the parent organisation was clearly relevant. The larger the department, or the number of major sections within that department, the more difficult was the prospect of coordination. Education, the largest department, rarely turned up, Housing had major sections dealing with maintenance repair or improvements over which the District Housing Manager, the committee member, had little influence; and these had apparently little to gain from cooperation with other departments. ROS would clearly benefit from improved community responsibility towards its facilities, but in fact it left the designation of ROS areas to the Planning Department. Finally TBS saw the cost and efficiency of transport networks from the viewpoint of the road user and tended to argue the merit of every local development from its place in the city blueprint.

One of the first hurdles faced by the project was to make the case for the working party with the representatives themselves. Most of the members knew of or attended the steering group. Some wondered why it could not have done the job. The project argued that the steering group was for the general discussion of broad policy, whereas the working party was concerned with the details of policy options. Then there was open scepticism on the status of the committee. Was there any guarantee that the working party's recommendation would be put into action? At the time the project director felt that chief officers recognised the need for the group, and there was a high probability of action being taken. The problem of having to work with little or no resources was also raised. The first meeting resolved to attract more departments to future meetings, and to set out the objectives and current programmes of their departments for Vauxhall. An important aim for the committee was to build up relations with groups of tenants on an issue-related basis — a gradual development — rather than formulate a single coordinated plan for Vauxhall to be presented to the steering group.

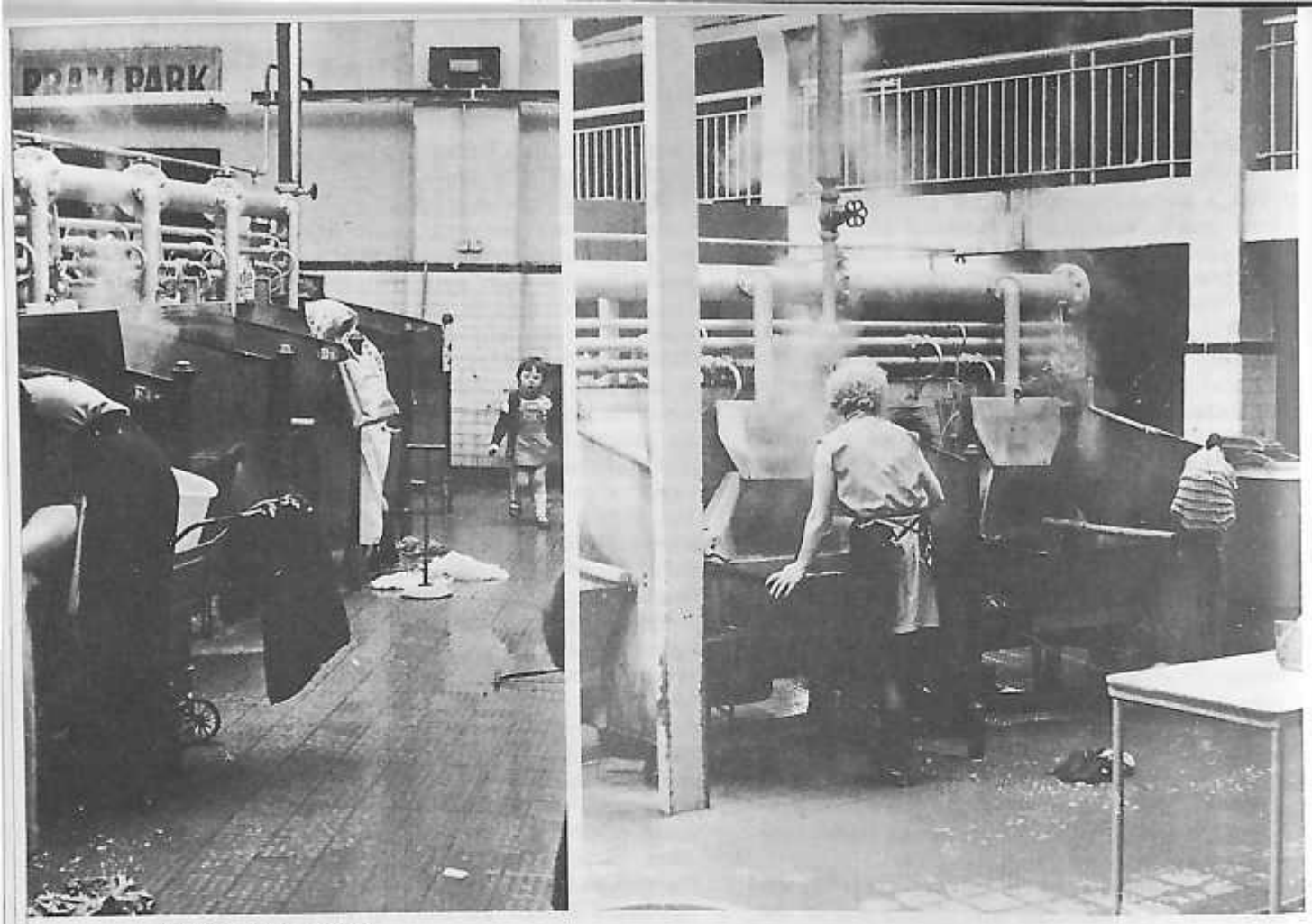
The next meeting began to identify the areas for cooperation between departments. ROS gave details of the problems of maintaining grassed areas where access was difficult, or there was too much rubble and debris. Housing could help by allowing the access over their land, and by coordinating the clearing programmes with ROS and EHP, so that cleared areas were not immediately inundated by rubbish from adjoining sites. Housing were interested in the provision of sheltered housing for the elderly; Social Services saw the elderly as one of their priorities; Personal Health were also trying to secure an extra health visitor specialising in the elderly. The District Housing Manager was prepared to argue more provision for large families in Vauxhall to reduce the degree of overcrowding, which Social Services felt to be a contributory factor in the problems they tackled.

EHP agreed to look at the need to keep the local baths and wash-house open, though both were losing money, as the electrical wiring of most of the nearby housing did not permit the use of domestic washing machines. By taking advantage of the DOE's special environmental schemes local conditions could be improved considerably to complement the modernisation programme. The provision of football pitches by ROS would possibly reduce vandalism and disturbance as children kicked footballs against walls and shuttering. The introduction of a traffic management scheme by TBS would increase the safety of the local streets and reduce noise levels. These were the initial areas of cooperation that were explored and several were taken up at a later stage.

Discussion also focussed on additional information departments might need to define their priorities. Most departments could give no response; they had no research capacity, and were not geared to collecting information. To get the representatives to consider possible alternatives to their department's plans was even harder. Planning put forward some suggestions — for example residents' views on the suitability of housing, or adequacy of housing maintenance; dual use of schools, or Vauxhall's position on the city's league table of open space provision per thousand population. But these ideas were cautiously received. The McKinsey reorganisation had tried to build a PPBS system into departmental thinking — constantly comparing levels of provision with indicators of need. But it was an uncomfortable implant in local government. One problem was that departmental objectives were pitched at such a high level of generality and without any ranking of priorities that it was difficult to draw out areas of cooperation. They had to emerge gradually during discussion of the Vauxhall area.

Even this proved hard going, and by the fifth meeting of the working party in May 1972, many members were still clearly confused about the functions of the group, and were not yet convinced of the need for coordination at the local level. To focus their attention more closely, the meeting concentrated on one part of the project area — 'Over the Bridge' to see whether coordination of plans could be achieved.

Planning described the relevant action area plan and summarised the proposals for the area. The area was completely isolated from the rest of the district,



Vauxhall Wash-house
Photos: Connie Topping

surrounded by industry and main roads. A new tower block and low rise developments had been put down on an available site without adequate consideration of how such a small population could be serviced. It was too small to support many local shops, other services, or the local primary school – even though a new one had been built as part of the development. Though there were suggestions from some members that the area was not viable, should be cleared and 'given over to industry', there was obvious scope for coordination.

The under-use of the local primary school offered the opportunity to set up nursery classes or playgroups. The Leeds–Liverpool canal that traversed the area could have recreational use, and land owned by the Gas Board could be turned into play space. If graffiti were removed, and the pollution standards rigorously enforced, the combined effect would be considerable. There was an increasing problem of traffic noise along the northern boundary of the area caused by the rerouting of heavy traffic to the docks and local industry. Traffic management, pedestrian crossings, double glazing on council property fronting the road were considered. But there was growing scepticism in the working party that much would be achieved, where land was owned by different agencies.

The next meeting reaped the harvest of this frustration. The project director began the meeting intending to pursue the 'Over the Bridge' district strategy, based on a paper arguing that resident participation would help provide the necessary integration of policy. Discussion was sluggish, and the organisational consultant employed by the project saw a chance to open up the situation. The group had to sort out its own problems before tackling a district strategy. It lacked openness, and was beset by 'technologists' who tackled problems in terms of their own expertise and forgot that it was all about human beings. The response to this criticism was partly defensive, and partly an attack on the 'weak chairmanship' and 'lack of leadership'. There was obvious frustration at the lack of progress by the working party, and the characteristic low key approach of the project, which stressed the importance of individuals experiencing and working through their own difficulties. In part it underlined the difficulties of innovation in large organisations such as local authorities.

Members of the working party were expecting to be told what to do, unable to work through their ideas as a group. There was also a practical problem. Their other responsibilities left little time for the working party, and attendance was in fact very sporadic over the two year period. At the time a crisis seemed to have been reached; for the intervention of the consultant released a wave of feeling, without offering more of a solution than 'talking it through'. It was also significant that members were not prepared to give much information on the ways that pressure from their department acted as a brake on progress.

Constraints were frequently mentioned, but never elaborated. It was not just that members were worried that their views might filter back to their departments, but they were still unsure that the working party offered a viable or desirable alternative to existing practice. The project had hoped that members would gradually transfer feelings of accountability from their departments to the community far enough to allow frankness and openness in the working party which could then function as a support group for members under attack. In practice this stage was never reached; many members came to feel more personally accountable to the community without wanting the impression to be gained that they had thrown in their lot with the working party. They remained departmental men. This was in contrast to the marked development of a group identity among staff at the Multi–Services Centre, though here there was much more interaction over a far longer period.

Over the next two meetings the working party received a paper on district management from the project director, and papers on groups, setting goals, achieving cohesion and communication, and rating group effectiveness from the management consultant. This protracted introspection did not appear to lead to any noticeable improvements in the short term, but may have helped the general improvement which occurred later. Gradually after this period of soul–searching, the 'technologists' made noticeably fewer defences of their own formal criteria for taking decisions, and 'people processing' departments were less critical of the low key approach of the chairman.

The next stage was to break the working party into smaller subgroups. Though the full group now met less frequently, overall contact increased through more frequent small meetings, sometimes chaired by a member of the project team. Some were ad hoc meetings of two or three members on a practical item. By the end of 1972, the subgroups had met on four occasions and reports on the housing needs of the elderly and handicapped were being produced. Most of the members of the 'social' subgroups were also based at the Multi-Services Centre which helped coordinate this level of activity. An attempt was made to develop comparable machinery to bring together the 'physical services' at the level of foreman and cleansing inspector; the result was a successful scheme for integrated cleaning. Even so the

Photo: Peter Leeson

level of coordination fell away with the frequent change of staff, a characteristic of the working party itself, showing the need to get the structure right if the programme was to be maintained.

The sub-groups and main working party continued to meet at intervals, discussing the dual use of schools, rehousing of residents in the area, and the need to compare resources and facilities in the Vauxhall area with the level in other parts of the city. But progress was extremely slow, and much of the information required to make the case strongly was never collected. Another significant event at the end of 1972 was the appearance of a report by the management consultant. Though the initial response was that it was too general, it was agreed to hold a two day session, where the report would be studied in depth.

This was an important turning point, for the meeting failed to cement the commitment of departments to the idea of the working party. Chief officers had been invited to attend the discussions, but only one attended for a short time. Other developments continued to weaken support for the working party. Turnover of staff meant that previous debates had frequently to be repeated. And more seriously the Inner Areas Project, with an explicit brief to experiment with area management had now entered the scene. A debate was held in the working party, leading to a proposal that the IAS experiment should be conducted in Vauxhall to link in with community development. But the idea was unacceptable higher up. Clearly the link between area management and community development was not seen as desirable, and the IAS project was placed in another part of the city. Though the working party continued, commitment was weakened, and by the latter part of 1973 it had ceased to meet.

Photo: Connie Topping

Area Management:

Area management proposals were first formally put forward by the project in 1973 but the thinking was already in evidence by early 1970 when the first director floated plans for an inter-departmental working party with the corporation. No detailed model of area management was discussed, but the idea was apparently endorsed by the Town Clerk's Department; a letter to another Chief Officer encouraged cooperation with the working party, arguing that 'the familiar vertical division of services must give way to a form of organisation which can, in fact, hope to respond to overtures made to it from an area or geographical point of view'.

Before formal proposals for an area management scheme were drawn up, the groundwork was laid by a series of project activities. First, there was the development of the inter-departmental working party; this body was to consider the effect on Vauxhall of city-wide policies, with a view to producing a more integrated policy. The working party attempted to be comprehensive, including departments which had then no area policy or area office for Vauxhall. The next level was the 'area management secretariat'. This group comprised officers who led area teams in Vauxhall. In practice, this meant teams who worked from the Multi-Services Centre. However, the two groups were by no means distinct as the working party was often little more than the area secretariat. The picture was even more complicated as the officers based at the Multi-Services Centre met monthly in the form of a 'centre liaison group' to sort out inter-departmental links within the building.

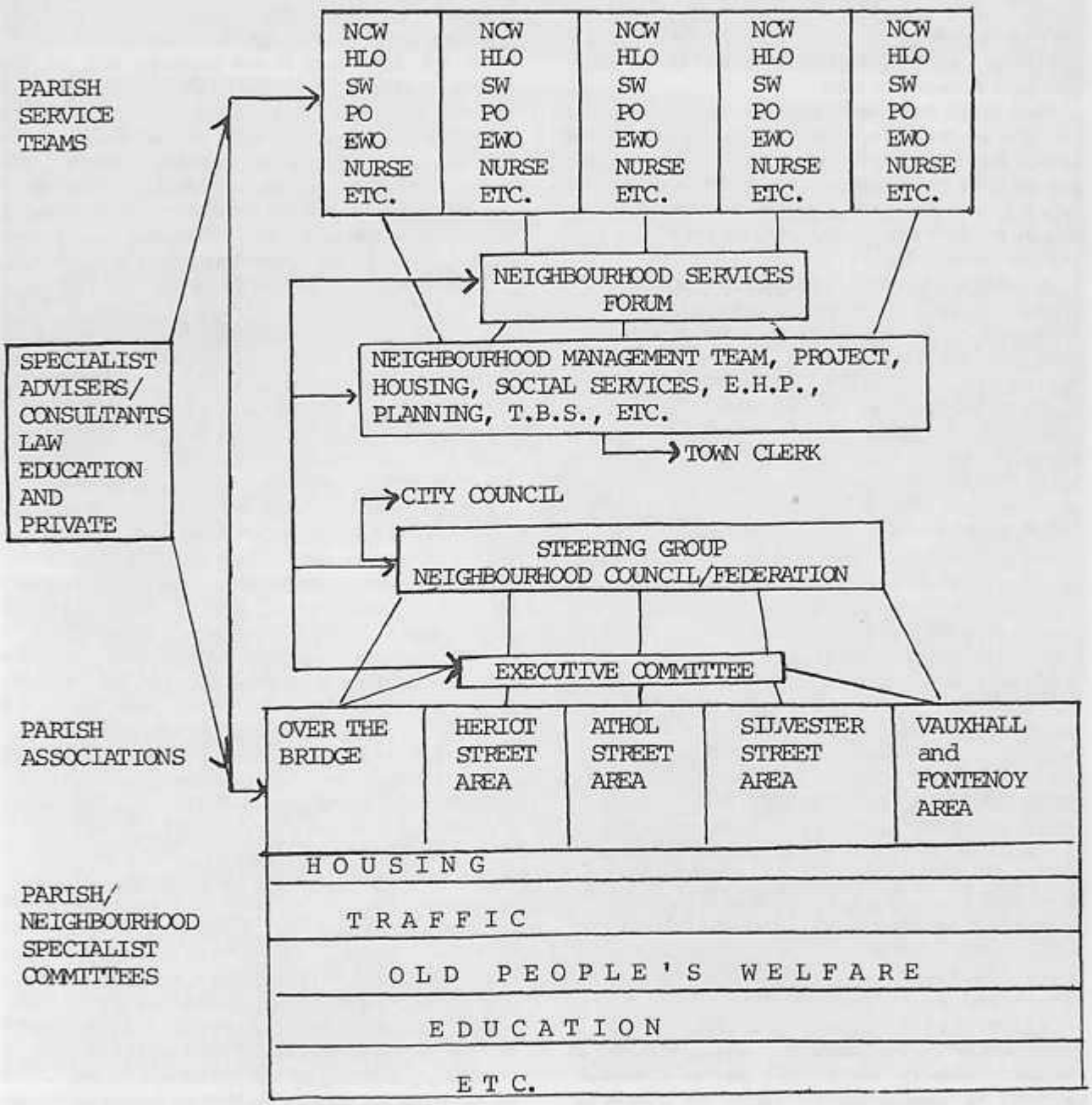
The third element in the area management proposal was the development of the Multi-Services Centre itself. It was to provide integration at the fieldwork level between a large number of departments. It was also the place where community pressure on officers was exerted through the day to day demands, representations, and frustrations of local people — a counter-weight to professional definitions of the problem. The fourth and final element was the creation of 'parish teams', fieldwork staff operating a totally generic role in areas with populations of two to three thousand people. They were to meet occasionally as a team, but concentrate on being a familiar figure on their 'patch' — the human face of their departments.

These four levels of operation appear to make up a complex and integrated structure of relationships. In fact they did not really represent an integrated policy for Vauxhall at any of the levels, and involved no change of formal accountability. In the project's view, their main purpose was to promote closer working relationships between agencies, and produce a climate of acceptance for the later district management proposals. All the elements were in operation by 1973. The inter-departmental working party had come first, beginning in early 1972; the Multi-Services Centre came later in the same year, and the parish teams by summer 1973.

But though all levels had been set up, their operation remained uneven. The working party was beginning to run out of steam by 1973, and the parish teams never really got going.

Despite these practical problems, the project was by 1973 able to put forward an embryo model of area management, though the relationship between each level was still far from clear. Figure 5.1 shows the model. Starting at the top of the diagram, each of the parish teams was to service one of the five parishes into which the project area was divided. These roughly corresponded to existing church parish boundaries. The neighbourhood services forum was designed to bring together all fieldwork staff and, eventually, interested residents into a large monthly, informal lunchtime meeting. Any new issues raised here which had policy implications for

Figure 5.1: Neighbourhood Development and Management Proposals



Key to abbreviations

NCW	-	Neighbourhood Community Worker	EWO	-	Education Welfare Officer
HLO	-	Housing Liaison Officer	NURSE	-	Nurse/Health Visitor
SW	-	Social Worker	EHP	-	Environmental Health & Protection
PO	-	Probation Officer	TBS	-	Transport & Basic Services

Vauxhall as a whole were to be forwarded to the inter-departmental working party or neighbourhood management team. This was the officer structure. On the community side there were the parish associations, various interest and neighbourhood groups which were all represented at the Vauxhall steering group later to become the neighbourhood council. Tenants groups would set up working parties on themes such as housing, traffic, education and could make an impact on, or gain professional advice from the parish teams. They could both call on outside experts from corporation departments or elsewhere. The steering group was to elect an executive committee to discuss policy in more detail than was possible at the open meetings. This executive committee would become the counterpart of the neighbourhood management team.

Most of the components were already in existence by the time of these proposals. Only the neighbourhood services forum, the steering group's executive committee and the issue group were missing. By the end of 1973, only the issue groups were missing from the structure, though by then some other parts of the edifice were beginning to crumble.

In addition to these practical developments, the project employed a management consultant to prepare the ground for 'area management'. He was commissioned to examine and recommend ways in which the corporation, through its organisation and administrative processes, could contribute to the success of the project, and suggest possible ways in which the corporation could learn from the Vauxhall project and apply these lessons to the management of other inner-city areas. His report was completed after six months consultancy, and was under discussion in the early part of 1973.

The report strongly supported the project's ideas for area management. It referred to two major problems in city management. First, 'creeping political apathy due to people perceiving that the central and local government apparatus is unresponsive to their needs and growing belief that direct action is the only way of airing frustrations and getting needs satisfied.' And second, 'growing dependence in government (both central and local) and other institutions on technology and techniques as a way of solving problems which often involve people either directly or indirectly. This development ignores a fundamental principle of good management — that people problems can only be successfully solved by participation of the people themselves.' The report went on to stress the advantages of decision-taking at the lower levels of an organisation where the solving of complex social problems was involved, and the greater sense of local responsibility for decisions where the community itself had participated. It offered a model drawn from attempts at change in large organisations to achieve the necessary commitment to the new roles in the local authority. But the changes had to be sold carefully; for 'local authorities receive few rewards for successful innovation and few penalties for failure to adapt to changing conditions'.

Until the publication of the Cooper report, the project had never put forward a clear public statement on the scale of its intentions. The report was received with suspicion by councillors on the project committee, because of its reference to the 'transfer of delegated responsibilities to local groups' — already a problem with the growth of powerful community groups in the areas which were already bypassing councillors. And the report fared no better among officials — sinking like a stone with those who were still bemused by the 1971 McKinsey reorganisation, and preoccupied with the prospect of another upheaval in 1974.

However despite this damp response, the project pressed ahead, putting forward the first proposals for area management in March, 1973. The final proposal came over a year later in August 1974. These proposals provided a framework, not a detailed blueprint. The first proposal mapped in the structure of a 'local scheme'; the second extended this to Liverpool's inner areas.

At the local level it was proposed that an area approach to policy making would coexist with a city-wide approach. Existing departments would be retained but spending would be divided into city-wide and local categories, each with a separate budget. Local policy making would be through a neighbourhood committee of local ward councillors representing a population of up to 45,000. This would have its own budget, as would the resident neighbourhood councils, each covering a population of about 15,000. The lowest tier would be the 'parish' — with 2,000 — 3,000 population. At this level fieldwork staff would be deployed, echoing the project's 'parish team' experiments. It would be the base from which people would organise, and the level at which local authority staff should be identifiable.

On the official side, for each of the larger neighbourhood committee areas, an area manager would be appointed, responsible to the chief executive, and chairing a middle management team from other departments. These proposals also gave a chance to rationalise the various central government projects in Liverpool's inner areas, placing them under an inner city areas development committee, which would oversee the development of three adjoining neighbourhood committee areas. Two of these already existed, in the Vauxhall area to the north, and the Inner Areas Study area in the south. This proposal, of course, also depended on some degree of rationalisation within central government over its various anti-poverty initiatives, though this had been promised with the setting up of the Urban Deprivation Unit within the Home Office in 1974.

However by now the project had far overshot its ability to bring about any of these changes. Though it received some political support from the Labour party for area management in 1973, there was then a change of political control. Any momentum built up in the interdepartmental working party was gradually running down through lack of progress and support at higher levels. The parish teams had not proved a notable success. And as it neared its final year, the project was increasingly preoccupied with the survival of what it had set up; it had lost much of its leverage for any additional changes. The area management proposals were shelved until the management experiment in the Inner Areas Study was complete.

As with many of its programmes on the local authority side the project may have adopted a low key, low profile approach, but its ambitions were formidable — nothing less than a transformation of local govern-

ment and its relationship with local areas. It is hardly surprising that it failed, particularly in the face of so many other reorganisations. The limited practical developments the project was able to make through the working party demonstrated both the need and the potential returns from greater coordination of local services – but even these devices could achieve little tangible, and certainly increased frustration among many participants. As usual the project had an 'across the board' approach, involving all departments, and in its proposals working out grand structures where all would be linked together from the parish teams to the city council. As the development of the Multi-Services Centre suggests, a more selective programme involving fewer groups might have been more to the scale of what was after all a small, short life experiment.

Vauxhall Gardens
Photo: Peter Leeson

Chapter 6: The Multi-Services Centre

In the previous chapter we have described the project's attempts to gain the support of middle and senior management for a policy of decentralised local authority organisation. The Multi-Services Centre was the device to bring this about for local fieldwork services; in many ways it was the one obvious linking institution between the project's community and local authority programmes. It was intended that the development of the Multi-Services Centre should be strongly influenced by local people both in its formal management and through the pattern of informal use of the building. Though the development of the inter-departmental working party might be affected by local pressure through long range encounters — correspondence, formal meetings and the occasional drubbing at the steering group, the Multi-Services Centre was sited in the middle of Vauxhall, was intended to be accessible and had to deal with community participation as a fact of life — the running of the centre itself, invitations to attend local community groups, policies towards vandalism, help with the adventure playground, to give just a few examples. The centre also gave a chance to change fieldwork practices more indirectly, by promoting greater inter-agency awareness and coordination that would lead to improved services and perhaps a reassessment of how appropriately casework might meet the area's problems.

In the Vauxhall project there was obvious tension between the project's twin goals of community development and service integration, particularly their combination in plans to develop the Multi-Services Centre. Resident participation is founded on notions of increased self respect and self confidence, and the development of strong organisation. Yet these very skills can be undermined by the system of benefits and the administration of the social services which tend to individualise the client and his problems. There are further contradictions between the two objectives. Local authorities are likely to be embarrassed by the increasingly open pressure from low income groups and have an interest in keeping them disorganised. Eligibility for benefit applies to client categories such as the unemployed or broken families — not roles around which political or community organisation normally takes place, because of the stigma attached to social failure. The poor or 'multiply-deprived' are not geographically concentrated — and thus will not dominate groups such as tenants associations. Acceptance of benefit increases dependence and decreases self respect, and the exercise of professional discretion can appear as a series of arbitrary decisions. The development of the centre provides a potential test of how far the development of welfare services is compatible with a wider community development programme.

The idea of a multi-services centre:

Almost as soon as the project began, the idea of such a centre was under discussion: an internal memorandum in May 1970 argued for a centre incorporating 'as a wide a spectrum of statutory and voluntary agency representatives as can be mustered, managed or housed . . . ' A massive amount of project energy was spent in finding and converting a suitable building, bargaining with these different agencies over their involvement, and then getting the centre to function and develop.

When the project team began planning the development of the Vauxhall centre in 1970, their knowledge of similar schemes elsewhere was limited to the Kingsmeade Centre, London, the Craigmillar Project, Edinburgh, and the Roxbury Multi-Services Centre in Boston Massachusetts. These had provided some experience to go on. Kingsmeade had experimented with the role of professional receptionists; Craigmillar had brought together different agencies particularly those representing health and built in some formal evaluation of the impact of the centre; Roxbury had a unified structure of administration for the centre in contrast to the 'federal' arrangement in most of the others. Apart from Roxbury, an American venture, the other two were very different from the Vauxhall experiment in that they were experiments in management, and did not involve the threatening presence of community participation at least in their early stages.

Establishing the Centre

In 1971 the project director outlined the proposed development of the centre. This called for a phased programme. The first phase of the centre beginning in May 1972, would have a basic core of social services, the social services sub-district team, the education welfare unit, and voluntary agency staff. This was to be completed by November 1972. The second phase was to include second tier social services, health, probation, employment and certain police services by the end of the year. By then the centre would be managed by a working party drawn from the project steering group on which all the agencies involved would be represented. The working party would operate at two levels — the chief or principal officer level establishing commitment and defining objectives, and the operational level where staff would plan administrative and management details for the centre. Representatives from the project steering group would put the views of local people, and thus form a new partnership model of social service planning.

However the actual development was far less precise. A limited number of agencies met to discuss office layouts and reception procedures, but there was never a collective commitment by senior staff. In practice negotiations proceeded between each agency and the project on a bilateral basis. A package deal was never arranged.

From the start only one building was a clear

The Vauxhall Multi-Services Centre
Photo: Connie Topping

candidate – a two storey ex-school annexe comprising ten classrooms with corridors running the length of each floor. There were also several individual offices; the only communal areas were a canteen on the ground floor, and a conference room. Externally the building has uncharitably been compared to a prison. Certainly its dark red brick exterior is still gaunt and forbidding – its spiked walls protected by wire netting bearing testimony to the continual struggle against vandalism. The building was converted to a Multi-Services Centre, while negotiations went ahead to persuade agencies to move in.

The way agencies responded to the project's invitation to join the centre was related to how they saw their role, the organisation of the service and the relationship they had with clients. Naturally what they thought the project was about also coloured their response. Some such as probation and social services were relatively easy to convince, though not necessarily for the same reasons, but others were reluctant to join and ended with little more than a token presence.

(i) Police

As a Home Office sponsored project, CDP nationally had at first close links with the police, even an advisor on police matters. Locally the project built up contact with the police through a superintendent and area constable who was already working in the 'village policeman' role. By June 1972 the police had agreed to make themselves available one hour per day, four days per week, by appointment at the Multi-Services Centre, and for the project area to be covered by two juvenile liaison officers. The project had planned liaison with the police to be part of the first phase of the centre development, in operation by November 1972, though the police had reservations about actually basing constables at the centre.

It was thought that the deterrent value of the man on the beat would be lost if he was available in the centre for specified periods. And members of the public who used the surgery might be suspected of acting as informers.

In common with many other agencies, there was little awareness among the police of the aims of the project. Their view was that the centre 'was rather a big organisation for a small area', or 'a waste of resources which could have been better used by the existing agencies.' Doubt was expressed that the project would achieve anything that could not be done by existing community councils. As for community relations, these were nothing new, but had long been practised by the competent policeman.

There was a tendency to define the aims of the project in terms of individual social work and care of vulnerable groups particularly old age pensioners, not any wider programme. The summer playschemes were agreed to be the best thing that the project had done. Policemen who attended meetings of the local steering committee, expressed impatience with its progress as it became more and more a vehicle for resident views. They clearly felt more sympathy with the earlier, more formal, arrangements. Order and discipline were highly valued.

However agreement was reached that a police constable, acting as a community liaison officer, would make himself available at certain times, but only to mix openly with public and professionals. This was a way of increasing detailed local knowledge, and reducing the professional isolation of the police. But the involvement of the police was to remain marginal to their overall work, a small extension, rather than any form of experiment.

(ii) DHSS.

The project was anxious for the DHSS to establish a supplementary benefit sub-office in the centre. Unemployment in the area was high and the take-up of benefits suspected to be low. However, the project succeeded in negotiating only a limited attachment. This did not involve dealing directly with applicants, but only advising the professionals at the centre of benefits available. The department argued that an adequate service was already provided by the local offices and that setting up a sub-office would run directly counter to their policy since 1966. This had been to set up larger administrative units.

The reluctance to set up a sub-office was partly a matter of increased costs and partly the administrative problem of transferring files and establishing new administrative catchment areas. But perhaps more importantly the department saw the aims of the centre as only marginal to its own objectives. These were defined as providing financial aid where necessary, but not engaging in other welfare activity except to refer cases on to other agencies. The department was willing to provide professionals with information about benefits and for them to pass on this information to potential claimants. It saw less value in its field staff engaging in dialogue with other professionals over local policy decisions, given the narrow range of discretion left open to them as an agency.

By January 1973, the DHSS fieldwork officer attached to the project had found difficulty in attending meetings of the professional services coordination group as well as his one or two hours a week attachment to the centre. The department cut back its involvement in this group. By November 1973, the liaison was formally limited to occasional visits to the centre in an advisory and consultative role; attendance at the neighbourhood monthly forum; occasional talks on supplementary benefit matters to community and voluntary workers and attendance at the project steering group, which was undertaken by a senior officer. Any greater exposure of DHSS fieldworkers to the views of the professionals or the community was effectively avoided.

(iii)The Education welfare Service

'The Educational Welfare Service starts with a basic emphasis that signs of neglect and social handicap are often seen for the first time at school, therefore it is essential that the closest possible coordination should be arrived at between teachers and Education Welfare Officers.' This quotation from an internal education department document probably reflected the main strands of departmental thinking, at a time when the Seebohm and Ralph reports had given impetus to a major national review of the service. The service was seen to be concerned with socially disadvantaged children but to be school based, and aimed at raising educational achievement. The skills expected of the EWOs were thus very much those of a social worker, but with a strong emphasis on links with the school.

The approach by the project produced discussion about practical, budgetary and professional questions. The educational welfare service was invited to transfer the district office, serving one fifth of the city's children, to the centre, joining social services, probation and the voluntary agencies as the fourth casework service. The project was initially optimistic about the decision, expecting a more liberal application of discretionary powers for financial assistance. In the event their hopes were not fulfilled. The educational welfare service already had its own plans for moving to a new centre. As they were school based the EWOs were more appropriately seen to be part of the city's 'social education teams' which retained a child-centred approach. There was a fear that this would be submerged in the centre's more generalised welfare service. However a senior EWO was authorised to attend inter-professional meetings at the centre, and be available to the public on a limited surgery basis.

(iv)Youth Employment Service (Careers Service from April, 1974)

Though the service favoured increased contact with other professional services, the nature of the job made this difficult. The service was approached to provide a careers officer full-time in the centre. The result of the discussion was that a senior careers officer would attend inter-professional meetings but not work from the centre. The reasons were either practical or lay in the nature of the service. Thus the Liverpool staffing complement was in line with national standards of one careers officer to approximately 400 14 year olds. Vauxhall could only muster 250 in this year group.

Smaller units would have raised clerical and other supporting costs unacceptably. Therefore the service did not feel it could delegate an officer to the centre, particularly as he would have needed regular access to central files on current job opportunities and background knowledge on local firms in order to make a proper assessment. These files were held in the district office and further decentralisation would have meant a fundamental change in the administrative system. There were also professional problems. Previous experience of the service just outside the city had suggested that job satisfaction dropped significantly for a careers officer working alone with only clerical support. Team support was important when staff had to face the frustration and extra work produced by high unemployment levels.

(v) Personal Health Services

The project team had raised the idea of a Health Centre with local GPs in August 1972, either as part of the multi-services complex or nearby. The response was not encouraging. A year later a formal approach was made to the Personal Health Services and Education Departments suggesting that a local school health and child welfare clinic was based at the centre, replacing two separate clinics in the Vauxhall area. It was generally accepted that neither of these was ideally placed, one in outdated property, the other on the first floor of the local League of Welldoers with no lift access. Personal Health accepted the possibility of providing services at the centre, but they were not convinced that the site was a significant improvement on existing provision. The decision against moving in was taken mainly on administrative grounds, without the ideas behind the centre being considered at the most senior levels.

For its part, School Health was not interested in moving from the nearby site at Blackstock Street. The issue was more one of policy — the preference to consolidate the position of ancillary educational services

around the school and its campus, and keep them separate from other services. The long saga of attempts to set up a health centre in Vauxhall is recorded in Chapter 10.

(vi) The Probation Service

In discussion about their role in the Multi-Service Centre, senior officials stressed the autonomy of the probation service, perhaps perceiving a threat of being swallowed by social services. In recent years, the Children and Young Persons Act has transferred control of juveniles from probation to social services, and there has been an exodus of well trained probation officers into social services. This defensiveness also accounted for the insistence on 'having a full team in the centre' under the control of a senior probation officer to keep a separate identity and maintain standards.

However staff for the team were specially chosen, largely by a process of self-selection among those already working in the area or interested in the project. The result was a young team likely to be sympathetic to the project's assumptions about local problems and the environmental determinants of crime. They were given experimental status, and as a group were the most prepared of the agencies at the centre to extend their traditional role. Contact with other professionals was welcomed, with the reservation that the probation team had a relatively high proportion of qualified staff, small caseloads, and a tradition of preventive work, but might be deflected from their main task to prop up the efforts of an overstretched social services team. However the centre provided the immediate practical advantage of accommodation, where suitable office space was hard to find. And again the project's Home Office link clinched the decision.

(vii) The Social Services Department

The department's attitude to the project had been affected by the negotiations within the local authority during 1969, to decide in which department the project should be based. At that time, the Home Office was stressing the social work aspect of the project, and the possibility of seconding social work staff to join the project team. Though in practice the project team in Liverpool was attached to the Town Clerk's Department, in some areas CDP teams were initially based in social services.

When the idea of the Multi-Services Centre was opened, it was perhaps inevitable that these earlier discussions were revived. The suspicion was that a social work team could well end up as 'project social workers'. This possibility was strongly resisted. Senior staff defined their approach to community work more as helping people to live in the community, and this did not involve community organisation, but casework.

The Social Services Department had recently decentralised its fieldwork teams to 11 district offices. And it was agreed to place the local sub-district team in the centre, the first such team in the city to operate on a small area basis.

In the move it was felt important to retain existing social work staff as far as possible to maintain continuity of casework relationships. The staff for the team came directly from the local office. There was no special selection of staff and none of them had any choice in the matter. Project staff did not conceal their disappointment that the team had not been specially selected from qualified staff keen to work with the project, in contrast to the probation team. As a result relations between social workers and the project were poor at the start and took time to improve, particularly as the team moved while the building was still incomplete and access for clients difficult.

(viii) Other Agencies

The Environmental Health and Protection Department agreed to place a full-time 'district officer' in the centre. He was to coordinate this 'omnibus' department's local activities which included: public health, cleansing, building control and refuse collection. The Planning Department allocated a senior planner to work full time on the Vauxhall area, and he was based at the centre for some of the time. The experimental appointment of Vauxhall voluntary agencies coordinator is described in more detail in the next chapter.

Despite the failure of some of the plans, the centre had brought together a wide range of professional services. As the building increasingly became the base for most project activities, even if these were not directly concerned with service provision, the centre developed into a major concentration of professional resources.

First was the project team: a director, two assistant directors, an education liaison officer, a WEA tutor organiser, an adult education worker employed by the Institute of Extension Studies, but attached to the project until 1974, a voluntary agencies coordinator (until December 1973) and five local neighbourhood community workers. Initially the project's Information and Law centre was based in a separate building, but moved into the Multi-Services Centre in 1974. By 1975 this included two full time solicitors, an information centre warden and two information assistants.

The social services team comprised an acting principal social worker, one senior and six unqualified social workers. This staffing has been maintained, though most workers are now qualified. The probation services brought in one senior and four probation officers. Environmental health had a full time district officer at the centre and other services had part-time attachments. In addition there were reception, clerical and other support staff.

The Development of the Centre

The main phase of the centre's development was from 1973 to 1975. Like other Multi-Services Centres, the Vauxhall project set as its objectives improved accessibility and coordination of local services, but it was also concerned to increase local accountability and control over such services. Many of the innovations thus filled several roles; accessibility was both an end in itself, and also a way of encouraging local pressure for accountability; formation of the residents' advisory group brought local people into closer contact with the services, but was also potentially a pressure group for greater coordination.

(a) Accessibility

Vauxhall residents now have better access to a wider, but by no means totally comprehensive, range of services. Agencies such as Personal Health, the doctors, the DHSS, are among the more important groups not

represented at the centre. Thus an essential element, the predictability of finding the service required in the centre, is missing.

However as far as professionals working at the centre were concerned, accessibility in itself is a mixed blessing. It has advantages and disadvantages for different groups of workers.

Social workers felt clients were being attracted from a wider area, that they personally had a better knowledge of the area, and that knowing community activists helped to give them early warning of crisis cases. The main potential disadvantage was that clients might not approach the centre if they felt their problem would become known to other local people.

It proved difficult to get workers to collect information on this topic, though research was set up to assess the relative frequency with which clients approached professionals directly, or preferred first to approach local people employed as 'paraprofessionals'. Social workers also found that community pressure was a problem where residents had an unrealistic expectation of what social workers could provide. As a result they made referrals which were trivial in relation to the rest of the social workers' work load, or which could not be attended to immediately.

Another measure of accessibility was the take-up of services. Other services at the centre found surprisingly little increase in local demand. The district environmental officer found that overall more complaints came his way over the condition of pavements, the rat population and gypsies through people calling at the centre, but most of his work arose from referrals from other corporation officers, admittedly sparked off by a resident complaint. The police liaison scheme did not attract residents into 'surgery' consultation at the centre mainly, the police thought, through fear that they might be thought informers. Only nine people ever took the opportunity to discuss police matters with a local police constable over a period of 18 months from 1973. The constable's contact was solely with other workers in the building. On the other hand the police would often be approached with queries while out on the beat.

The senior EWO very seldom had callers at his weekly surgery, and discontinued it after some months in favour of an individual appointment system. This may well have been due to the stigma attached to being seen to visit 'the welfare' in full view of local people. Ironically, the call on free meals and clothing allowances was dramatically lower than the numbers estimated to be eligible. The Education Welfare Service received only 80 household applications for assistance from the Vauxhall area in 1974, estimated to have been a fairly constant annual figure since 1970.

However, the weekly returns of visitors to the centre produced by reception staff, show a pattern of increased use.

The distribution of callers among agencies has remained constant, the percentages have been social services 38%, reception 38%, probation 16%, project 8%. Figures for 'reception' refer to callers with information queries, who were dealt with by centre staff, or referred to the Information Centre. However, these figures do not include many who did not go through reception. Some went direct to the Information or Law Centre. Others – regular clients – bypassed reception. An accurate census was taken during one week in November 1975 when a total of 637 callers was recorded.

The project also tried to make the centre 'psychologically' accessible. Though the impressively high use of the centre was a considerable achievement, there was little evidence that its focal position in the area attracted callers into staying beyond their formal purpose for chats with staff or fellow residents, or to inform people of local events or in small ways to increase the sense of community. However the building was used in the evenings by resident groups for some of their meetings, as a base for a club for the handicapped, and on three occasions for performances by the 7:84 Theatre Group, though these were generally evening events and did not necessarily bring professionals and local people together. An attempt to provide a canteen in the building for the joint use of staff and local people was vetoed by the local authority on the grounds that there were not enough staff to warrant such provision – an example of an experimental project not being allowed to experiment.

(b) **Coordination and Control**

The project set up a 'service coordination group' to bring together professional interests in the centre, and a 'residents' advisory group' to represent the interests of local people. Eventually the two groups were intended to come together in a unitary management structure. Early meetings of the services coordination group established that agencies had only the vaguest notion of one another's roles and responsibilities. Tensions were immediately apparent, some agencies arguing they could not afford to be seen to fraternise with repressive agencies such as the police because they would lose credibility with their clients. The groups also failed to attract in local teachers who felt threatened by the presence of the Scotland Road Free School in the area, not sure how far the project supported this development. The group lacked a sense of identity or purpose throughout its existence and so after fifteen months gave way to a more open monthly meeting involving local residents. The open forum, as it was known, lasted only six months with fluctuating attendance. It revealed sharply divided opinion on several issues without pulling together into any form of joint action – with one major exception. This was to write collectively to the *Guardian* about the problems caused by the sudden closure of the

Callers at the Multi-Services Centre, 1973–5

Period	No. of Callers Per Week
May 1973 – December 1973	70 (Little fluctuation)
Jan 1974 – December 1974	200 (Gradual build-up to these numbers)
January 1975 – July 1975	250 (Levelling off at this figure)

Free School. Within Liverpool this was interpreted as a direct attack on the Education Department and local schools; and relationships were further strained.

The other formal mechanism, the residents' advisory group (RAG), succeeded in drawing together individuals interested in extending their knowledge of welfare matters, without providing local guidance for the development of the centre or feedback for professional staff on how they were perceived by the community. Members tended to be 'Mr. Fixits' in their own area – people who voluntarily grappled with welfare bureaucracy on behalf of others. Many of the members were also active in residents' groups, coming to the residents advisory group when their own group or they themselves were going through an inactive phase. In fact RAG served as a kind of informal education welfare group and was therefore something of a rest from the heavy emotional and political involvement demanded in other residents' groups. It never got off the ground by applying the information it had gained on existing service delivery to look at areas of potential improvement and press for change. However it met with faithful regularity, meeting 47 times by the summer of 1974, with an average attendance of seven or eight people. Three had attended more than 40 meetings.

Coordination and Innovation

Coordination on a day to day basis only involved the two agencies with a major stake in the centre – probation and social services. Other agencies made few changes in their procedures as a result of attachment to the centre and were not closely involved in the major developments.

The fieldworker from the educational welfare service felt that the Vauxhall project has not made any real difference to relations between his department and social services. He felt that the coordination which the centre was meant to promote was superfluous because of the Education Department's social education teams. However his confidence about good communication between the education welfare service and other agencies was not generally shared by the social workers and probation officers in Vauxhall. There were several cases where coordination broke down, and the education welfare service was the agency most frequently mentioned as being missed, particularly by social workers. The close identification between project and centre may have increased problems of contact with this service, because of the generally cool relations between local schools and project.

The DHSS, other than making the reception facilities of their local area offices more private and welcoming, conceded no change to the project. They accepted the right of the Information Centre to negotiate on behalf of clients – preferably with written authorisation – but emphasised – 'not always does intervention of a third party result in extra payments', and – 'the level of officer dealing with the work did not warrant discussion of policy issues'. Environmental Health and Protection felt 'the Multi-Services Centre did not in itself bring about greater dialogue with other departments'. The police did not believe understanding of their role had improved very far and there was active hostility from certain of the staff. One officer related how on his first visit, he found himself approached by a young fieldworker and informed that no 'fascist pigs' were welcome at the centre. Not bad, he thought, before he had even opened his mouth. There was general view held by the police that some social workers did not believe in sending people to court at all – only in one to one relationships between client and professional. This made cooperation very difficult.

Between social services and probation coordination has taken the form of participation in a number of innovations; for example the duty officer scheme, in-service training through joint summer camps for youngsters, some joint preventive group work with youngsters in the area, development of the feature word index record keeping system, the parish teams, and participation in the project sponsored housing study.

(i) Local resident receptionist

Reception at the centre was manned by a local resident from the start, and a second local worker was added after the first year. The idea was to provide a more welcoming atmosphere. Like the neighbourhood community workers the receptionists were never briefed in detail about how to carry out their job. This was perhaps slightly surprising because the project team had long debated whether an untrained resident would have sufficient skills to refer clients to the right agency, or recognise a potential emergency. There was, however, concern that anybody appointed to the job, should retain a 'resident's perspective'.

Despite the obvious difficulties assessing how often people had been wrongly dealt with, experience so far seem to have vindicated early hopes. Most workers at the centre felt that the reception arrangements worked well. The receptionists' familiarity with the local area helped develop an informal atmosphere with clients. They also acted as an informal channel of information to local people about available services. Centre staff noted that the receptionists often went out of their way to emphasise the urgency of a problem to social workers when they felt that it was not being treated seriously enough. Though this may have sometimes been counter productive if it took social workers away from more urgent priorities, it certainly kept the interests of the clients in view.

(ii) Duty Officer System

The joint Duty Officer system started out with a commitment from the probation team to be available two days a week, the social services team three days a week, to receive any referral. It involved a member of staff being available for private consultation if a member of the public approached the centre with a personal problem. If possible the referral was dealt with immediately. Where a referral was the clear responsibility or statutory function of social services, and the probation staff happened to be on duty, no action was taken; a referral form was completed and sent to social services for internal allocation. Where urgent statutory action was required by social services a second tier duty officer from the department would always be available.

Essentially the probation team was aiding social services by operating this system, though they gained the benefit of greater familiarity with the problems of the area. The scheme began in February 1973, but by May

there was already frustration among probation officers – 'over constant involvement with referrals and clients very directly the responsibility of the social services department' and 'a range of phone calls about relatively trivial matters which would normally be dealt with by the clerical staff in the probation department'. Eventually their commitment was reduced to one day a week, and later phased out altogether.

(iii) Feature Word System

The initiative for the feature word system came from the planning department, and the project research team. The argument put forward was that the welfare services had in their files besides confidential information about individuals, more general details of local social conditions. These were completely irretrievable. The aim was to create a new system which by giving each file a number, and recording in a brief way the important characteristics of the case, it would be possible to obtain information quickly, while at the same time retaining confidentiality on any individual. The scheme quickly ran into problems. Many departments already had their own city wide procedures, and were reluctant to let one area begin a new system. There were also problems over the clerical resources needed to operate the system – no one department being prepared to allow its resources to be used for this purpose.

For all workers involved the confidentiality of the information in the system was the source of most reservations. As a social worker put it – 'I didn't like the idea of the feature word system. It was getting too much information into it. Anybody could get into it – such as the police. Confidentiality is bad enough, but that would have been the end.' The probation team was concerned about possible disadvantages even in the exchange of information between themselves and social workers. They feared that knowledge of a person's criminal record could prejudice other aspects of welfare provision for him or his family. The general fear was that a unified system of holding information about individuals and families would be more open to abuse than one in which information was fragmented and inadequate.

In fact many of these fears were unfounded; the system in no way changed procedures over access to information, only for storage. In practice information on individual cases flowed freely between departments where workers had built up confidence in one another's integrity. The feature word system aimed to make this process more efficient. But formalising it in this way was seen even by those in favour of the scheme, as potentially threatening; for it would reveal the amount of information that was normally exchanged through informal contacts.

(iv) Parish Teams

The initiative for parish teams came from the project. The idea was that all the welfare agencies involved in Vauxhall should be organised on to even smaller neighbourhoods of perhaps 2,000–3,000 people and each worker would be solely concerned with his particular area. Workers from each service would then meet regularly with workers from other agencies concerned with the same area, and with key residents, to discuss issues of common concern.

The agencies to be involved in the parish teams were social services, probation, the health visitors, the housing department, and the EWOs. The neighbourhood community workers had already been appointed on a parish basis and were expected to service the area teams with detailed local knowledge and contacts. For probation and social services working on a small area basis meant a major departure from the methods of allocating work then in use. Existing caseloads had to be reorganised so that each worker drew his cases from a particular area, and new referrals were also allocated on the same basis. Inevitably this meant disruption for clients.

Despite initial support from the agencies, very few of the parish teams ever got into full operation. Most met once or twice and did not meet again as a group after that. In some areas, useful contacts were established in providing services for the elderly, but often the interests of one worker were, for example, with the youth of the area, while another was more interested in the elderly or handicapped.

Only in the area immediately adjoining the centre did social workers and probation officers get together with key residents to discuss problems. Meetings continued for longer than any other area; the group discussed housing, started work on a video film, and mapped out the location of the elderly in the area.

The parish teams had ceased to operate by the summer of 1974. In a short while with the turnover of staff many workers at the centre had never taken part in them. The social services team recognised the breakdown as complete, when they reorganised their team on an intake/care basis in September 1974. The three intake team workers handled all new referrals from the whole area, and the care team reverted to a more specialist approach.

There were several reasons for the collapse of parish teams. The areas had been chosen on a simple geographical basis, without any detailed information about the nature and number of individual problems they contained. The result was that work was very unevenly distributed with some areas, particularly the one close to the centre, having far more referrals than others. They also demanded a totally 'generic' approach and identification with workers in other departments. As yet the centre had not built up an identity; staff still saw themselves as part of a wider department. The problem of the parish team was the problem of the centre in microcosm.

(v) The Housing Project

In the final year of the project an attempt was made to involve all centre staff in a housing project. The intention was to collect and pull together information about housing conditions and issues known to staff through their day to day work, which could then be used to present a case for change in the area. After pilot work by the research team, three priority areas, of housing for young married couples, housing for large families and housing maintenance were identified. Yet again after large amounts of information had been collected, the project gradually lapsed as interest declined. The idea had originally come from the project as a way of linking agencies together in a campaign; but without project support, the scheme was not self-sustaining.

As with other project initiatives, the Multi-Services Centre was a development of considerable scale. Rather than select particular agencies to take part, the attempt was to get them all in, with less thought as to how they might operate once in the centre. The project was relatively successful in this first stage; it is no small achievement to have convinced so many agencies to have changed their pattern of working, acquired and converted a building, and moved in professionals less than two years after the idea had first been raised.

Once in the centre, development was left very much to the chemistry of the different groups, with the project every now and then raising the pace with a new scheme or idea. During the project the management structure of the centre was never clear. In theory project team meetings were open to anyone working at the centre, but though they discussed the centre on occasions, it was rarely the main item of business. After the project had ended, the position was simplified; a coordinator for the centre was appointed, and there were regular meetings of all centre staff to develop an overall policy.

Agencies with marginal involvement tended to fall away, but gradually a strong core of probation and social workers was established. Though many of the attempts at coordination were in themselves a failure, they set the pattern for at least attempting cooperative work, and there are signs that some of these schemes have been revised and tried again. There was no doubt that by the end of the project the centre had begun to develop an identity, and professionals were more likely to see themselves as a group working to help the area, rather than as representatives of many separate departments.

Photo: Peter Leeson

> 'It is always necessary for each (statutory and voluntary) agency to be aware of what the other is doing in relation to a particular client.'
>
> The Aves Report,
> *The Voluntary Worker in the Social Services*, 1969

In this chapter we describe an experiment in co-ordination between statutory and voluntary agencies in Vauxhall. The initiative for the appointment of a liaison officer came partly from the original concept of the CDP's Multi-Services Centre, and partly from independent developments elsewhere in the city. It is important to outline this background before taking up the story of the 'liaison officer' and her role.

When the possibility of establishing a Multi-Services Centre was being considered by the project, it was natural that the strengthening of links between voluntary and statutory services should take a high priority. Interest in the services offered by voluntary welfare agencies to Vauxhall residents stemmed directly from the emphasis on coordination and voluntary effort in early Home Office documents:

> '. . . there are immobilised or untapped welfare and self-help resources in communities; and if ways could be found to release them through appropriate social action, they might have a dramatic effect, far greater than their apparent value, in reducing dependency on statutory services.' (CDP, 1971 (a)).
>
> 'One of the major assumptions underlying the project is that the building of bridges between local communities and the agencies of welfare empowered to determine the quality of life constitutes an important means of reducing deprivation, and the way in which the project has been set up provides it with a unique opportunity to do this.' (CDP, 1971 (b)).

The Multi-Services Centre was to contain a 'basic core' of welfare services, including the Social Services Department sub-district team, the Educational Welfare team, and voluntary agency staff, thus linking statutory and voluntary services at the local level. Vauxhall had a long-established Catholic parish network with associated voluntary effort; the potential for self-help community groups, though undermined by large-scale slum clearance programme, had not entirely been destroyed.

Developments elsewhere also make up part of the background. The Seebohm Report, with its call for a coordinated and comprehensive family service, and the McKinsey consultants' management review commissioned by Liverpool Corporation, both contributed to the pressures on statutory departments and voluntary organisations to formulate precise objectives and clarify procedures. One outcome was the proposals by the Liverpool Council of Social Services (LCSS) for 'machinery to coordinate the voluntary organisations and the authority', and more particularly, 'a more systematic approach' to funding for voluntary organisations from the local authority and the Urban Aid programme. As a result, the Welfare Organisations Committee (WOC) was established in 1970 as a subcommittee of the LCSS. The following organisations were members of the WOC subcommittee:

Title	Abbreviation
Dr. Barnado's	
Catholic Services Society	CSS
Family Planning Association	FPA
Family Service Unit	FSU
Liverpool Association for the Disabled	LAD
Liverpool Council of Social Service	LCSS
Liverpool Diocesan Board of Moral and Social Welfare	LDBMSW
Liverpool Old People's Welfare Council	LOPWC
Liverpool Personal Services Society	LPSS
Merseyside Jewish Welfare Council	MJWC
Merseyside Marriage Guidance Council	MMGC
National Children's Homes	NCH
National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children	NSPCC

WOC defined three objectives: '(a) to examine common problems and new developments in the social welfare services; (b) to coordinate the work of bodies represented on the committee; and (c) to maintain and improve working arrangements with the Local Authority.' At one of the earliest meetings, a study was proposed of the organisations' objectives and operations, following the Corporation's Programme Definition Statements; the Report (Helen Jackson: *Independent welfare agencies in Liverpool: a report on self-studies by thirteen selected agencies.* LCSS, June 1971.) was published in 1971. Its importance for the development of coordination is clear: 'one of the basic aims of the Welfare Organisations Committee was to complement the work of the Social Services Committee and Department. It was felt that the report would provide a good basis for consultation with the Social Services Committee and Department when complemented by the evaluations now in progress.' At the same time, WOC meetings discussed applications for the Urban Aid programme; cooperation with the Social Services Department; and joint overall planning for welfare provision in the city. At the end of 1971, with the postponement by the Social Services Department of proposals for joint planning, WOC decided to explore the possibility of cooperation at a more local level, by concentrating on small priority areas and appointing a liaison worker to coordinate statutory and voluntary agencies in the light of local needs. At the same time the CDP director had put forward proposals for the Multi-Services Centre in Vauxhall, and had suggested that WOC might wish to use its accommodation for a local 'linkman'.

The Vauxhall proposal for a WOC representative was welcomed 'as a chance to begin defining WOC fields of

activity.' The need for such a local coordinator was recognised – 'a community worker type rather than a social worker heavily involved in an existing caseload'; and it was agreed to explore the possibilities. A questionnaire was planned to discover what WOC members were already doing in Vauxhall. A job description was accepted in March 1972 for a 'WOC Liaison Officer' to work primarily with voluntary organisations, and funds for one year were made available by the John Moores Trust Foundation through the Committee. The Liaison Officer took up post in September 1972.

The Vauxhall Liaison Officer

The starting point for the post was the project's proposal to the LCSS that through WOC they should appoint a 'Social Services Coordinator' for the Vauxhall area. The job specification which emerged for a WOC Liaison Officer talked of making casework services 'more effectively available in the locality'. None of the WOC agencies had an office in the Vauxhall area. The liaison officer would promote 'swift and effective referrals to the voluntary agencies': 'he will work closely with the local element of the Social Services Department from which the majority of referrals are likely to come, and will need to be fully informed, and on a basis of close colleagueship with all the voluntary agencies whose services may need to be called upon.' He would not carry a caseload, nor work directly with clients. The emphasis was to be on 'interpreting and utilising the resources of the voluntary agencies in cooperation with Local Authority services in the area'. Salary was to be paid by the LCSS and the person would be responsible to WOC, whilst working from the Multi-Services Centre.

Debate over the role of the coordinator

Even at the start, however, there was a diversity of views about the role of the coordinator. The project was looking for someone both to stimulate local voluntary effort and to integrate the work of the highly localised groups with the more formal church organisations and the big city welfare organisations. This work was then to be integrated into the operations of the local social work team also based in the centre, who were looking for support. The sponsoring welfare agencies, on the other hand, were far more concerned that the person should act simply as a clearing house for referrals to the welfare agencies themselves, channelling clients to the right organisations, and leaving work with local community groups to the local authority Social Work Liaison Officer.

Some agencies were also anxious to recruit more volunteers from the Vauxhall area: in general helpers tended to come from the more prosperous parts of the city whilst need was concentrated in the inner areas.

In September 1972 the coordinator took up the post at the Multi-Services Centre. The appointment got off to a confused start. The LCSS understood its responsibility ended with payment of salary, but found itself obliged to provide office furniture as well. The coordinator was initially accommodated in a separate office, where the total isolation from other agencies in the building made the job of making formal and informal contact exceedingly difficult. After two months she joined the project team in a large open-plan office. It should be noted that the centre was in its infancy at this time. Only the project and the Social Services team had moved into the building; the voluntary agencies and the public were slow to realise that the Social Services team had moved from their previous district office in the south of the project area. Other services did not begin to operate from the centre on any scale until the end of 1973. It was a difficult time for working contacts to be made.

In May 1973 discussions began between the research team, the coordinator, and the WOC agencies on ways of evaluating the role. Initially, it was hoped to compare cooperation between agencies at the outset of the appointment with the position two years later in 1975, at the end of the project's life. Fieldwork took place in late 1973 and early 1974. However it had become clear by this time that the Vauxhall project area was not particularly suitable for a test of inter-agency cooperation. With a population of only 15,000, many agencies had very few clients in the area. Any assessment of the potential for cooperation between these independent casework agencies would have to be made on a city-wide scale. It also became clear that agencies did not, on the whole, have spare capacity to take on referrals from the coordinator. This pushed the coordinator into a two-pronged role. She had first to uncover duplication between agencies and second coordinate the efforts of local voluntary groups in the welfare field. In the event, the coordinator resigned at the end of 1973 and WOC decided not to make a further appointment. The project was left with her experience of trying to make the role work for some fifteen months, and research exploring factors which seemed important in determining whether coordination was likely to take place between large welfare organisations, by examining areas of overlap and duplication.

The coordinator's first report in December 1972 already raised doubts about the original brief; instead of coordinating a steady flow of referrals and routing them appropriately, very few referrals had been received. Consequently, 'the role of the liaison officer has been more concerned with community education, advice to information centres, and provision of information as to various services within the Multi-Services Centre.' Only two agencies were mentioned as receiving referrals. WOC agencies were seen not to be very active in Vauxhall, and greater activity was urged. There was clearly considerable concern over the coordinator's role, WOC's role in Vauxhall and the relationship between WOC and the Vauxhall CDP. WOC felt that the Vauxhall Information Centre needed more information about WOC organisations and closer links with other CABs and the LCSS's Advice Centres Group. It was accepted that the liaison officer should work with local voluntary organisations or residents' groups in Vauxhall in order to encourage WOC organisations to work more closely with such groups; WOC activity in Vauxhall should be 'closely interrelated with the overall Vauxhall CDP planning'; and the liaison officer should 'augment the feedback between residents' groups and the Vauxhall CDP, concerning both the needs of the area and planned responses.'

The problems over the coordinator's role as originally envisaged by WOC arose partly because of ignorance

about the project and existing provision in the area. The social work team moving into the Multi-Services Centre were uncertain about joining an integrated service arrangement. None of the team was specially appointed for this purpose. Though all had previously worked in Vauxhall, few had come into contact with WOC agencies, or knew local voluntary groups. As a first step, the coordinator set out to contact key people in the community, such as doctors, priests and teachers, to inform them of her liaison role: as a result, there was a flood of referrals which had then to be reallocated. Thus one unexpected by-product was that she acted as an early catalyst in developing relations between the Social Services team and potential sources of referrals in the area.

League of Welldoers
Photo: Peter Leeson

There were a number of reasons why the expected flow of referrals from the local Social Services team to the voluntary agencies did not materialise. First, the move to the centre temporarily reduced the number of referrals to the Social Services team, particularly from people calling with enquiries. Second, many of the WOC agencies had few clients in the area. Third, the types of case for which the Social Services Department carried statutory responsibility had increased with recent legislation, and there was less chance of transfer to voluntary organisations.

This picture became clearer with the coordinator's second report in February 1973. There had been an increase in referrals both to the coordinator and to the Social Services team, and some had been passed on successfully to WOC agencies. The question came up again of 'why it was necessary to "sell" the voluntary agencies'. Again, lack of knowledge of the resources of voluntary agencies seemed a key factor. Many referrals came to the coordinator direct from community groups; very few of the cases being dealt with by the social workers were transferred to WOC agencies. Reasons suggested were partly social workers' statutory responsibilities; partly uncertainty as to which cases would be acceptable to voluntary agencies; partly lack of contact between fieldworkers and voluntary agencies; and finally perhaps the random nature of referrals — with no planned framework of coordination and allocation.

There was thus considerable awareness of the difficulties involved in coordination between statutory and voluntary agencies, and amongst the voluntary organisations themselves. The geographical spread of services, and the city-wide organisation of the major voluntary welfare agencies, were two further complicating factors.

Discussion throughout the early stages illustrated yet a further problem of coordination — the difference in perceptions between the city-based WOC organisations and the Vauxhall-based project. From the point of view of the WOC organisations, the problems of coordination were largely those of fitting Vauxhall issues into a larger organisational framework and a city-wide support network. But from the project's point of view, coordination was basically a matter of finding common ground between locally-based groups such as residents' groups, and other statutory and voluntary bodies.

Having looked at some of the problems of a voluntary input into an integrated Multi-Services Centre, we now consider in more detail the rationalisation of statutory and voluntary contributions in Vauxhall. There were two aspects to the coordinator's work: one was to determine which type of client was being served by which agency and direct future referrals accordingly; the other was to organise local volunteers to best advantage.

Rationalising the work of agencies by type of client

Rationalising services by redirecting clients from one agency to another was one of the coordinator's main areas of work, but also one of the most difficult. There was some reorganisation of the visiting services for the elderly, not, however by rationalising the activities of WOC and the statutory agencies, but by the Catholic Services Society agreeing to coordinate groups of OAP visitors from the catholic parishes in the area; this was carried out on the initiative of the project team and local social workers rather than the coordinator. Ideas for coordinating services for the physically handicapped were raised but without success.

Some successful rationalisation was achieved by redirecting welfare referrals from the Information Centre. The Information Centre was manned by local residents who had learned the complexities of welfare legislation, and successfully attracted many clients who might have been unwilling to approach a professional agency. At that time, the centre was a key referral point for the social work team. By acting as a point of first referral for Information Centre staff, the coordinator was able to offer some cases to WOC agencies. However, this policy had its penalties; for it became difficult for the coordinator to resist pressures to take on a caseload herself. Information Centre staff took the view, no doubt partly produced by the pressures on them from clients to provide immediate help, that the coordinator should take on cases; and they began to refer people to her directly. It was some time before the coordinator succeeded in persuading staff not to refer cases to her directly, but this stance may have at least temporarily weakened her working relationships with local groups.

In her final report the coordinator recommended that agencies such as the Personal Service Society, the Liverpool Welfare Rights group, CHECK, could usefully assist the Information Centre staff in improving their diagnostic work, and some sessions did take place. This momentum was eventually taken over by a local Welfare Rights campaign.

The following extracts from the coordinator's final report tell their own story.

> 'Once the credibility was established it became increasingly obvious that in order to free resources which were already stretched there was a certain amount of rationalisation required, between the voluntary organisations and the statutory services, since few of the social work agencies were in a position to handle the extra cases which were being discovered. One of the first steps toward rationalisation was that of obtaining lists of cases in the Vauxhall area which were at that time being dealt with by the independent agencies, but only one list was forthcoming, that of PSS. This step was taken around February and March. To my knowledge another agency was working on their list, CSS, who also have a high caseload in Vauxhall, but other agencies have either ignored the request or as in one case been directly obstructive on the grounds of confidentiality, despite the fact that it was clear that these caseload lists were not under any circumstances for public consumption. Having requested these lists on two occasions I have not particularly chased up the remainder of the lists, mainly because there was work to be done on the PSS list, and they have one of the highest caseloads in the Vauxhall area. Of the 68 cases being dealt with by PSS in Vauxhall, 40 were also being dealt with by the Social Services Department. The majority of cases were wireless for the bedridden, or seamen's pensions, and only a "watching brief" was being maintained by both agencies. However it appeared sensible for one of the agencies to "opt out" or for local volunteers to be involved in the cases. A meeting was arranged between the senior social workers from PSS and Social Services, in order firstly to give Social Services a better idea of the type of case which was suitable to be dealt with by PSS and with the hope of gaining some rationalisation of the overlap. Although the meeting was successful from the first point, no action appears to have been taken with regard to the duplication.'

There were other factors working against more efficient use of WOC and Social Services resources in the Vauxhall area. Social workers had a selective picture of the services which WOC could offer. One commonly held view was that PSS were less willing to take on full responsibility for long term cases and preferred to give selective assistance. FSU were thought to specialise in families where inadequate relationships led to monetary problems. There was little local knowledge of, or contact with, Dr. Barnardos and the NSPCC. The NCH was thought to be relevant mainly in terms of child day care facilities in Walton, close to the Vauxhall area. How far these perceptions of agency activity were accurate is doubtful but they were the basis on which workers took decisions.

By 1974 there was a real possibility of progress because the Vauxhall social work team began to operate with an 'intake team' organisation able to acquire specialised knowledge of alternatives. However, there proved to be a general unwillingness to transfer cases from statutory to voluntary agencies, except at the early stages, because of the importance attached to continuity of contact. There was also caution about transferring cases to voluntary organisations if children might sooner or later be taken into care, or other statutory intervention was likely. Similar problems arose over coordination between PSS and the social work team. Though PSS had given a list of the elderly they were visiting to the social work team, they were not able in the view of social workers to provide adequate feedback on their welfare work; thus the team were having to attempt some 'screening' themselves. The only area where the coordinator seemed successful in diagnosing and redirecting inappropriate referrals was with the Information Centre.

Finally, little or no progress was made in linking local residents' groups and the welfare agencies — a crucial area from the project's point of view, and increasingly so for WOC. The coordinator's first report stressed the importance of linking up with locally-based groups; the project had already encouraged the formation of a local coordinating body for the Multi-Services Centre — the Residents' Advisory Group; and WOC, at the time of the coordinator's appointment, was already debating the city-wide possibilities of coordinating the activities of neighbourhood organisations and welfare organisations. Vauxhall provided 'a good initial testbed for such coordination' with 'fifteen neighbourhood organisations in that area alone' and the new coordinator. However, despite lengthy discussions little progress was made.

Relations between Social Services and WOC agencies failed to develop partly because of the confidentiality question, and partly through the inability or unwillingness of agencies to produce locally-based information on their work.

The place of volunteers

Further problems arose when an attempt was made to help one particularly overstretched agency by organising local volunteers to deliver batteries in a 'wireless for the bedridden' service; this was met with resistance from the agency's own social workers. Here the coordinator was touching on one of the most sensitive areas in the relationship between professionals and volunteers. The Aves Report on the role of non-professionals came out in favour of volunteers, given suitable training and supervision, and stressed the advantages of recruiting more local volunteers to work in mainly working class areas. It may be that long standing professional doubts over the use of working class volunteers, such as maintenance of confidentiality or persistence and continuity with clients, were still more widely shared among WOC agencies than among some statutory workers. Indeed members of the Vauxhall social work team expressed doubts about the suitability of middle class volunteers working in Vauxhall. One way of tackling the need for semi-skilled help for statutory social workers was the proposal to appoint welfare assistants to the

staff of the Social Services Department. An experimental appointment of a non-qualified local resident was made in Vauxhall. However, plans to extend the experiment were axed on financial grounds shortly after the first appointment.

The Social Services Department attempted to recruit suitable volunteers in the Vauxhall area through the 'Scottie Press' and the 'Liverpool Echo'. The first advertisement in 1972 raised no local volunteers, but seven other non-locals were allocated to the Vauxhall team; two years later only three still remained, dealing exclusively with the elderly. The second advertisement in 1974 resulted in two local volunteers. After considerable preparation these took on responsible work, one in the field of mental health where the building of long-term relationships and the ability to give time are of central importance.

When the coordinator resigned after one year of work, WOC decided not to appoint a successor on two grounds: first, that WOC agencies had found it impossible to respond to requests to take on cases; and second, that the brief was too restricted in the Vauxhall project; the coordinator would have been better placed in a District Office with a wider responsibility. The confused experience gained in fifteen months in the early development of the Multi-Services Centre cannot be conclusive. However, the impression remains that the role which the coordinator fashioned ultimately had little impact on the activities of the local Social Services team, local voluntary groups, or WOC agencies themselves.

The role of coordinator met a range of problems. The most serious stumbling-block was the varied expectations of the job held by the different agencies with a stake in the scheme, and the varied, and in some cases unrealistic, definitions of the Vauxhall set-up. The WOC organisations saw the coordinator as working primarily with voluntary agencies, channelling referrals in their direction and creating extra resources in the shape of volunteers. Yet few of the agencies had much commitment in the Vauxhall area, or spare capacity to deal with extra referrals when they came in. Thus there was no capacity to experiment with coordination.

As the major voluntary welfare organisations were organised on a city-wide basis, the Multi-Services Centre in Vauxhall represented only a small fraction of their interests. The casework agencies depended on clients either presenting themselves at a city office or being referred by persons familiar with the organisation. They could not identify the parts of the city that used their services, nor were they able to recruit volunteers from working class areas of the city where much of the need was concentrated. Thus the WOC agencies found it hard to relate to a locally based welfare agency. Clearly they could not have been expected to move overnight into a district-based organisation. But a more systematic survey, both city-wide and in Vauxhall, of caseload distribution and volunteer support would have helped the coordinator into the job. Only one agency actually came up with the survey promised by WOC members. From the viewpoint of the Social Services Department, the job was originally envisaged as an experiment in area work, but there was no policy decision to use the opportunity for intensive and focussed liaison with voluntary agencies on an area basis. The local Social Services team seemed unsure how to make use of the new role. Nor were they aware, except in the broadest terms, of the services which the WOC agencies could offer. There was virtually no knowledge of the professional specialisms of the welfare agencies, the skills of their social work staff and amount of spare capacity, despite the 1971 study sponsored by WOC.

Again, there was inadequate support. Although the coordinator was formally employed by the LCSS, as part of the WOC structure, advice and support in casework referrals was not forthcoming. To some degree, this was available from the Social Services, but the coordinator was never a member of the social work team, although a qualified social worker – nor of the project team. There was no formal discussion or organisational link-up between the employing organisation, LCSS, and the Social Services team on the setting up of the appointment. And LCSS claimed to have received no feedback at all either from the project or from the Social Services team on the value of the appointment.

The conclusion is that the inevitable problems faced by the coordinator were increased by the lack of support from the sponsoring and participating agencies. The differing perceptions of the role, the small area focus, and the concept of voluntary participation in an integrated service, were all thought through inadequately. The large voluntary organisations missed a rare opportunity to coordinate activities focussed on a small geographical area; and the Social Services Department likewise let slip a chance to achieve the aim so often quoted of integrating statutory and voluntary services at community level.

The coordinator's final report in March 1974 raised the question of the potential for cooperation in any form between large voluntary organisations, quite apart from the experience of the experiment in Vauxhall. It seemed doubtful whether there was much chance 'of finding resources unless there is greater coordination between the voluntary organisations and the community groups'; 'the WOC liaison hinges on the degree of coordination and cooperation which can be achieved between the voluntary organisations, and the very nature of the independent organisations may militate against greater cooperatioion . . . It may well be that apart from a notable couple of agencies there is not a great demand for increased coordination.'

LEE JONES DAY OUT

INFORMATION REGARDING THE LEAGUE OF WELLDOERS OLD FOLKS CLUB.

Membership - 180. The majority are from this area but a few come quite long distances.

Subs - 2½p per week

Open Monday to Friday inclusive - officially from 12.00 noon to 5.00 p.m. and then from 7.00 to 10.00 p.m.

Members are starting to come in earlier, from 10.30 a.m. onwards and those who do come in are given cup of tea. Lunch at 12.15 p.m. 5p, comp[lete] cooked meal with bread, a sweet and a cup Numbers between 50 and 60 each day.

Monday afternoons - Informal
Tuesday afternoons - Social. Average number[s]
Alternate Wednesday afternoons - tea party an[d] concert. Average 100.
Thursday afternoons - Cookery/Confectionery Cl[ub]
Friday - Bingo 5p, including refreshments. Avera[ge] Average 120.

Chiropody (N.H.S.) Monday morning and afternoon [and] Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.

The Club is open in the evenings but only a few me[mbers] attend to watch T.V.

Facilities in the Club include T.V., Radio, Indoor Games - billiards, darts, draughts, cards. Books and periodicals.

Launderette - two washing

Advice and help. Gifts o[f] and furniture. Visiting

Theatre parties.

Inter-Club visits.

Outings.

Holidays are arranged, fo[r] pay and the League provid[es] addition, thirty Club peo[ple] holiday each year.) (T[o] Liverpool 150.)

We have arranged a limit[ed] car outings for house-bou[nd] eople and are trying to

Offers of cars would be welcome.

LEAGUE OF WELLDOERS

A party of 140 old people had a motor coach outing to Colwyn Bay Mountain Zoo on Thursday, 10th June. They were fortunate with the weather as it was the only fine day of the week and they thoroughly enjoyed the run and seeing the various animals, birds, etc. set in natural surroundings and the lovely gardens, and above all the panoramic views from the grounds, so different from their normal environment.

After a nice tea of chicken, chips, tea, bread and butter, as the day was getting cooler, the elderly folk re-entered the coaches and were taken round the countryside to The Crooked Horn at Brynford, near Holywell, where they were w[elcomed] by Mrs R. Swain and [her] son Webb provided additional harmony.

The "senior citizens" sang all the way back home.

W.J. Horn

WANTED

The decorating team from St Anthonys are badly in need of more helpers aged 15 upwards. They decorate most Sunday afternoons and evenings. If you

Director of Housing at League of Welldoers meeting
Photo: Peter Leeson

Chapter 8: Community

Despite the scale on which the project attempted to change the local authority, in practice far more of its resources went on the community side. The first phase was very much one of making contact and establishing the credibility of the project locally. Much of this was on the basis of stimulating 'good neighbour' voluntary work with the elderly or handicapped. Gradually the main strategy began to emerge. This was for a network of local groups, either on area basis or responsible for particular schemes. These would be serviced by the community workers, and later the locally recruited neighbourhood community workers operating at the 'parish' level, themselves relating to a team of professionals based at the Multi-Services Centre. The Information and Law Centre, the 'Scottie Press' and community centres were various devices to promote the development and continuity of such groups, ensuring that sustained and informed pressure was applied to the local authority. The local steering group was the main forum for these encounters.

This was the overall picture. In practice such organisation once set up tended to develop in its own way, one part interacting only loosely with the others. In this more detailed account of the community work in the Liverpool project, we have concentrated on five of these developments, the Scottie Press, the Information and Law Centre, the Epsom Street playground, the neighbourhood community workers, and the community centres. Inevitably this leaves out many schemes, particularly any separate accounts of the resident groups — some 43 groups were affiliated to the local steering group by the end of the project, and the steering group itself. In part these developments are touched on in the following accounts; resident groups and the local steering committee were the vehicles for several of these developments. Also their role emerges in the case studies in Chapter 10.

1. Scottie Press.

With the Information Centre, the Scottie Press was the major initiative in the first year. Its role was clear; it was to be a local newspaper run by local people, representative of the community, but non-political and non-sectarian. The paper was a way of encouraging community identity, and presenting in the community's own words a powerful portrait of local problems to the local authority.

The paper was set up by the project drawing on a group of local people known to the community workers, and on a fund of technical expertise from some dissatisfied city journalists. This 'editorial group' was set up in autumn 1970. The views of local professionals were also canvassed. They were either suspicious or indifferent, depending on how far the paper might pose a threat. Once committed to a start, it was decided to produce a form of 'tabloid' monthly with big headlines, usually a lead story about local conditions, plenty of picture material, as well as letters, items of information, news of campaigns and finally a local sports page. Later an increasing amount of space went on local social events, and nostalgia about 'old Scottie' often prompted by an old photo or letter from abroad in a previous issue. The first issue *'Greaty Down — Prices Up'* — a story of the closure of shops on Great Homer Street was produced in February, 1971, selling at 2½p. The editorial 'What we want . . . ', promised to keep people 'fully informed with what is happening in the area and also what is going to happen. We intend to bring to the notice of the city fathers the difficulties we are faced with and to bring home to them the undeniable fact, that we are entitled, as citizens of Liverpool, to a clean up in our district and a great improvement in the amenities . . . This is what we want. This is what we are entitled to. This is what we intend to have.'

It was important to keep up a minimum level of circulation, as low circulation had been the downfall of other community newspapers. To achieve good distribution time was spent in cultivating local outlets for the paper, and there were not many pubs or shops where it was not available. At first the paper was distributed in a car stopping off at all the outlets; later members of the editorial team became responsible for distribution in their home areas. This policy began to fall down as the editorial group slowly changed and covered fewer parts of Vauxhall. Many of the most active lived close to the centre of the project area. Distribution in the outlying areas was always difficult.

The other way of achieving good circulation was attractive material. Here the maxim was local material with local flavour. As the organising community worker said of the early period —

> One of the ideas was that everyone should be a journalist and that, if possible, we should try to break down separation between those who write — the experts — and the rest who could well remain at best passive letter writers. So the slogan was 'write it yourself'. And the cry of 'you know I can't write', was answered by 'you can say it — just write it down'.

This approach was coupled with a minimum of corrections to grammar and spelling, as long as the contribution was understandable. In this, the paper was notably successful. By August 1972 over fifty people had written one or more substantial pieces; twenty others had made a small contribution and there had been many letters, questions and 'thank yer pieces' from others.

The Editorial Group.

Once the editorial group had been collected together by the project, a degree of self-selection took place to provide the nucleus of the group. However it was clear that those who moved out of this core group, still played

SCOTTIE PRESS

Number Six Non political **3p** Non sectarian **July 1971**

AFTER THE QUEEN

June 24th: the opening of the New Mersey Tunnel by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II brings joy to a lot of the residents of the Scotland Road area. Not joy for this marvel of modern engineering – oh no – joy that maybe now, with its completion, there will be an end to the trials and tribulations that the people living in the vicinity of the Tunnel workings have had to face. The dirt, noise, vermin and difficulties that have been their lot for so long, should – we hope – be at an end.

Whilst we congratulate all engaged in the building of the Tunnel and say "Well done" on the completion of a wonderful engineering feat, we would do well to pause and think of the cost to the people of Vauxhall. Whilst we gaze at the beautiful Tunnel approaches we could be misled into thinking that everything in the garden is lovely until we let out minds wander and we think of the old Scotty Road, Post Office, Chemists, Grocers, Butchers, Sweet Shops, Tailors, Boat Shops, General Shops, Greengrocers. Alas all gone! a sacrifice to the Second Mersey Tunnel, the building of which has resulted in an almost complete destruction of the Basic needs of this Community roadway; it was planned and built with a complete and utter disregard for the people of Scotland Road.

After the City Fathers and Civic dignitories have wined and dined with Her Majesty in the Tower Restaurant far away from the dirt and desolation of the Tunnel Surrounds, might I venture to suggest that they pause and begin to dwell on the wrongs they have done to the Scotland Road Community and as Prince Philip once said they should "Pull their fingers out" and get cracking to right the wrongs.

We don't ask for a lot here in Scotty Road: just the basic amenities, an end to dirt. Something for our youngsters and the right to a decent existence.

LAWRENCE GARDENS Decision this month

In last months issue of Scottie Press featured the desperate plight of the people in "The Forgotten Block" Lawrence Gardens. Also Scottie Press asked the City Planning Department and Housing Committee to make known the future of Lawrence Gardens to the residents individually or, through the pages of Scottie Press.

A copy of Scottie Press was sent to Mr C. Pascoe (Chairman of Housing Committee) and here are some of his comments. He appreciated the problems, the dirt, noise etc., caused by the tunnel roads.

It was because of these problems that the rents were reduced. He also admitted that the amenities of the area had been reduced because of all the roadworks taking place in the area.

He disclosed that a recommendation that Lawrence Gardens be demolished, would be placed before the Policy & Finance Committee at the end of June, and if this recommendation was approved then it would go,via the Housing Committee, before the City Council. It was Councillor Pascoe's personal view that, subject to the decisions of the various committees, Lawrence Gardens would this time come down.

We hope he is right, but the residents of Lawrence Gardens can not be blamed for doubting the statements of any City Council members in view of the history of fairy tales told over the period dating back to that summer of 1966. For a brief history turn to page three.

LIVING BY THE MARKET

Every Saturday morning, residents near the Great Homer Street Market awake to the din of stallholders erecting their premises for the day. And if that isn't enough throughout the day various inconveniences make a mockery of the £3.59 rent people pay for their maisonettes.

After all, they like to relax on Saturday too, but it is upsetting to see people using the wall at the back of Chatburn Street as a toilet, and to find the entrances to the maisonettes full of rubbish from the market square. One resident even complains that after walking across the market square one windy day, his white shirt turned black. To find it impossible to park the car outside the front door or in the garage is something else these people bear, so there is poor hope for emergency vehicles getting through either. (Cont. Back Page).

Corpy flats for sale ?

It was brought up at the Sept. meeting of the Vaux. Steering Group in Lee Jones Limekiln Lane, that the L'pool Housing Dept. are contemplating selling flats in Ct. Richmond St. and St. Anne St. to the University These are walk-up flats, 22 in all.

It was decided by City Estates that if they found them unfit to modernise they would either knock them down or sell them to the University

The Steering Group condemened the idea of selling the flats, the argument being that young couples in group -2 register cases have no other choice but walk up flats. If the Association can make a silk purse out of a cows ear, why not the corporation? These flats are only 3-high and they are modernising 5-high flats.

The order of priority at the moment are

1) Special Priority Medical Officer of Health.
2) C.P.O. - Clearence - Demolition.
3) Modernisation(if contractor is waiting to start work.
4) Transfers taking in Multi-decanting, that is couples in high rise flats with children/mobile homes/ tranferring O.A.P's from top landings to lower floors, transfers beneficial to housing dept. etc.
5) Group one, that is applicants with points mentioned below:-

Most young couples seeking advice on housing at the Info. Centre have only 5-6 points and if you consider that you need 10½ points for a one bed-flat and ...

11½ points for a 2-bed flat
13 " " 2-bed house
13 " " 3-bed flat
15½ " " 3-bed house
17½ " " 4-bed flat
25½ " " 4-bed house....

what chance have the young couples got by the time the above list have had had a bite at the cherry, so they are told to apply to Kirkby. If they go to Kirkby they break family ties and it costs over 30p return fare today and with the high unemployment rate, if a man is not working he cannot aford to visit family or friends.

Most couples have a desire to stay local, and for a couple saving for a deposit and mortage the rents are ideal, it saves them taking high priced private accomedation. By all means, rehouse the present tenants do a good job on them and let group 2 cases have them, for if you can see any answer to the present shortage in this area it will be a miracle. The other thing the housing dept might do is a survey on the 3 ugly sisters "Haig,Crosby,Canterbury" Malts. I am sure they would fill these flats 20 times over with couples who are sick of high rise flats.

Mrs. Joan Neil would like to welcome all her old regular customers back, and of course any new customers that want to come along.

I regret any inconvenience caused to my customers for the time I was closed but due to fire and vandalism I had to have the Shop done from top to bottom. I would like to say that the Shop is very nice now, and of course the Staff are at your service. Joan Neil (JOAN'S)

Education Fodder ?

Dear Sir,

I have read with interest the last two issues of the "Scottie Press" the articles asking if the local children are getting a raw deal.

A lot of the criticism voiced by you correspondents are now however, for the history books. The old Grammar Schools, for instance, in the middle class suburbs are now comprehensive schools. The only Grammar schools remaining being the city schools Collegiate and Institute, neither of which in areas which Mr. Rutter might claim are "Capitalist Bastions".

Reorganisations of the three Catholic Secondary schools in this area is still under review, as I suspect the Catholic Authorities are waiting to see the result of the reorganisation of the non-sectarian schools not a bad idea.

If local people still feel that in this area the secondary school pupils are still under privileged one proposition has been - that children of the area should be "bussed" to surburban schools and the local schools shut down. Although this would save the, as I see it, mythical problem of discrimination it would be tragic to close down St. Pius X, St. Catherines and Archbishop Whiteside, even though they are under subscribed at the moment.

We are entering a new phase of teacher involvement in the area after school hours — witness the "Time Off" programme, and P.T.A.'s could be just around the corner — and I can assure you readers, the teaching staffs of this area would be delighted if there were such a demand.

With reference to Mr. Rutters remarks concerning the internal disciplining in our schools, I can only say that people have a choice in this area between a conventional schooling and the Free school, and are perfectly capable od deciding for themselves which provides the best basis for their children education. Please do not take this as being a wholesale condemnation of the Free school.

In every school we have a certain percentage probably less than one pupil per class who does not "fit in" shunned by the other pupils. Perhaps in frustration for the lack of attention he or she receives at home, or for other reasons, this child has a miserable time at a conventional school, and may be a perpetual truant. This is where the Free school serves its most useful functions they seem to be able to get through to suchchildren possibly because they have a very favourable teacher or pupil ratio, and have funds for camping etc. during term time which we do not. However, the Free School is NOT a viable alternative for the normal child, happy at our local schools.

YOURS
Adrian Esmat B.SC.

On Monday 29th OCTOBER at the Community Services Centre, Silvester Street at 7.30 p.m. members of the EVERYMAN THEATRE PLAYERS will be presenting -

"THE REIGN OF TERROR AND THE GREAT MONEY TRICK"

The play is based on the lives and problems of working people and should prove to be both entertaining and interesting. There will also be an afternoon performance, when it is hoped baby-sitters will be available to look after children to enable mothers to enjoy the production.

FREE ADMISSION FOR ALL RESIDENTS OF THE AREA.

DAVE GODMAN, ADULT EDUCATION VAUXHALL PROJECT

a part writing for the paper, selling and publicising it. For the nucleus, the Scottie Press became a regular activity and a large part of their voluntary commitment. Even so most were prominent in other community organisation, often taking a leading role in tenants' associations or were active in local campaigns – for example for the Scotland Road subway, or to prevent closure of the Burroughs Gardens baths. In September 1971 the group consisted of three women and eight men, and the community worker. Most were employed, full time or casual, as secretary, ship repairer, scaler, factory engineer, plumber, engineering draughtsman, gas man, docker, and part-time worker in the Information Centre. Two were unemployed.

The editorial group was one of the linking mechanisms among community groups that the project was anxious to develop. With the Information Centre, it provided the best means of drawing activists together in such a way that 'making connections' between their apparently local problems could occur. The paper was also fun. Most of the selection of material and page design was done at the same session. Juggling around the typescript, the headlines and the photos and glueing them on to pages for the printer was often creative and satisfying – 'a good laugh.' However there were soon problems. Only six people of the twenty who had at some time turned up for the sessions were totally proficient at laying out the pages. And even these six did not have a grasp of all the other aspects of running a local newspaper – for example, finance, advertising, printing, distribution. This was restricted to the community worker. There was an unwillingness in the editorial team to circulate tasks and develop an overall picture of the paper's policy. By the time this 'circulation' occurred only a hard core of two or three were left with the necessary experience.

It was also difficult to involve any large number of people. As the community worker put it

> It can be observed that after a certain number of people have become involved in a particular activity, an equilibrium develops where actions seem more or less matched to people who can perform them. As this regular stable group meet, they develop an in-group situation as a result of which those inside say, 'why aren't more people getting involved?' Especially as the functions begin to get too arduous and expand further than those involved can cope with. Meanwhile those outside are saying, 'they won't let us get involved – we feel excluded,' and a sort of stalemate occurs.

Thus the group developed a firm public identity, but stuck to a fairly rigid pattern of work within the group. In the second edition the community worker introduced, perhaps prematurely, the idea of group writing for big articles or editorials. At that stage the group were not ready for criticism of their work from others; they were just beginning to write themselves. Group writing did not develop but later some modification of material was made as a result of group discussions.

The group had come together with many different motives. Some had worked voluntarily for the community all their lives and the newspaper was just an extension of this practice. Others were active in the Labour Party or on the shop floor, and came with the idea of getting things changed. Others wanted to fight back at the corporation. Some came with their friends, perhaps just for the interest of helping to produce a local newspaper. Others came and left sometimes because of personal friction, but usually because they could not see the link between discussion in the regular group policy meetings and how the paper was made. Others left because they were not able to influence the policy, usually criticising the paper for 'pulling its punches.'

The editorial group tried to keep itself open to new membership by not adopting a formal constitution until it was absolutely necessary for handling money; the view was that a formal constitution would deter local people from joining in. It was always difficult to recruit new people. The community worker was anxious to turn the management of the paper over to local people as soon as possible, but ran up against the problem of no one wanting to take on the overall responsibility. Producing a monthly paper involved a heavy time commitment from part-time voluntary workers. The group discussed appointing a full time local editor, but the paper's circulation could not have supported paid staff. Thus the paper was always dependent on project and project organisational support, other staff taking over when the community worker left at the end of 1972. In fact the paper's fortunes ebbed and flowed with the strength of feeling behind local issues that were the current campaign topics – the paper often receiving a boost when members of the editorial group were temporarily unemployed.

Despite these difficulties the paper produced a regular monthly edition, reaching number fifty at the end of the project, but continuing under the auspices of the neighbourhood council. Particularly during the middle period, the paper represented an extremely successful blend of campaigning stories, news items and pictures, with local social and sporting events. There was no doubt that by focussing on problems such as Scotland Road traffic conditions, the activities of a relatively small number of residents could be given prominence across the area. For the newspaper undoubtedly fitted neatly into the 'Scottie Road' grapevine not only for major news items as the following letter makes clear:

> '*Warning* – I am a very patient person and like to give people a chance before I do anything drastic. So I would like the person *who I do know* to return the contents of the parcel, I had ready to send off as a little wedding present also the tape recorder, and wireless combined from my home during March. I do know exactly where the tape recorder is now and if it is not returned within the next couple of days I shall be forced to get the police to go and collect it for me . . . . . ' (Scottie Press, April, 1973)

Finances.

The paper began with £500 grant from project's funds. The grant had the advantage of giving the group time to experiment with a financial safety net, but also delayed discussion about how to break even. In the experimental period the paper changed from a small two sheet newspaper (8 pages) in one colour, to a small three sheet paper (12 pages) containing a flysheet 'Merseydotes' which concentrated on material from local

schools. By summer 1971 the paper was totally written by local people, inviting the occasional outsider to contribute. Numbers printed rose from 2,000 to 3,500 with one edition of 4,000. The amount sold varied, one or two editions going almost completely, others not selling very well. But in an area of 12,000 population, most households regularly received a copy. Several went to ex-Scottie Road inhabitants in other parts of Liverpool or further afield, judging by the regular series of letters. In the survey of school leavers carried out by the research team 78% of those interviewed claimed to read 'Scottie Press'.

At first it was difficult to collect money from the various shops and pubs serving as outlets — 'you can have it next week.' But once group members had clear responsibilities for their area, confusion and late collection of money was largely overcome. As the paper was likely to remain with a small circulation, sales were the most important source of income. Advertisers were difficult to recruit and never brought in more than £30 an issue, often less. As no one was paid by the paper, all the receipts went into the next issue. The paper retained its sales over the years, but could not maintain a large enough editorial group to keep the paper under local control. Apart from two or three regulars the paper was run more and more by the project, and later by the neighbourhood council. Gradually it gave more space to project activities, to information about local authority developments, or formal details of welfare rights, and began to lose the earlier blend of local material, though there remained a lively and controversial correspondence.

Impact on the community and local authority

The 'Scottie Press' clearly influenced local awareness of benefits and facilities, as approaches to the Information Centre demonstrated. Articles on meter insurance, housing modernisation, and playschemes all stimulated local interest, and many clients of the Law Centre first heard of the service through the Scottie Press. Many of those active in the major campaigns were also closely involved in running the newspaper, and there is no doubt that information about meetings, stories, progress reports and letters all kept up support, when a campaign was flagging. Thus the paper was a vehicle for airing many issues that the political parties had not taken up. These would be followed in issues after issue, sometimes provoking an annoyed reaction from readers wanting to know why the paper was always 'on about their block.' At another level of communication the paper was a place to record family or personal news, grievances or thanks for services.

Many of the campaigns featured in the paper were aimed at the local authority: the first issue of the paper had made its position clear — 'no doubt by now you will

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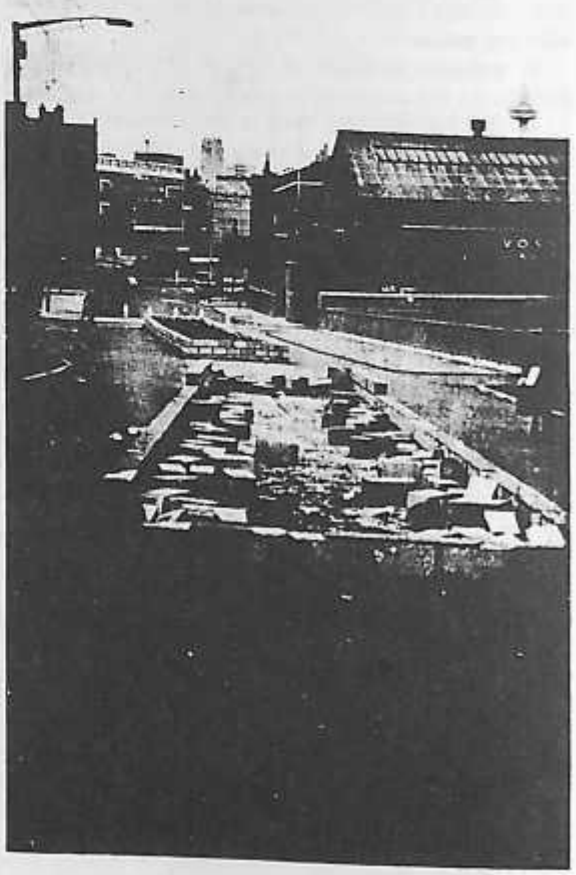
WHEN ARE THE CORPORATION GOING TO FINISH OFF WHAT THEY STARTED?

The Scotland Road subway, which was intended as a safe way of crossing one of the city's main traffic highways, is practically unusable. No lights, and bricks, rubble and uneven flagstones make it an obstacle course that deters the very kind of people it was intended to help - the very young and the very old.

Limekiln Lane bridge is another obstacle course. The Corpy went to great pains with cobblestones etc to give a plain looking bridge a bit of life, but the attempt at planting shrubs etc was a dismal failure. The brick compounds built to add this bit of greenery appear to be taking the form of large litter bins, or else are just being knocked down.

The waste land at the bottom of St Martin and Blenheim Streets was levelled off after pressure by local residents, and was prepared for tarring over. But in fact the tar has yet to arrive! So once again the stone throwing kids of the area have been provided with plenty of ammunition. The local carpet firm have felt the brunt of these attacks.

WE SHALL BE FOLLOWING UP THESE PROBLEMS AND HOPE TO PRINT RESULTS NEXT ISSUE.



Scottie Press, September 1971

have recognised what an awful mess the bumbling, tin pot, administrators of the Town Hall, have made of your district . . . ' The result was a hostile reaction from councillors, particularly as project funds had been used to launch the paper. At a meeting of the editorial group, the project director diplomatically suggested that the tone was moderated as too great a threat to the local authority would be counter-productive. Despite the intention that the paper should be written and managed by local people, it was closely identified with the project and inevitably formed part of the overall programme. Later the Scottie Press increased its 'distance' from the project, often carrying initial comment about the project or local authority, but this was frequently from 'a resident' or named individual — not part of a formal editorial.

2. Information Centre

The Information Centre was the other of the two early initiatives. Whereas the 'Scottie Press' would communicate ideas and report progress, the Information Centre would provide the project with a reputation for 'getting things done' — vital to gain local credibility. While remaining a listening post to gain early warning of important issues, its main aim was to establish the case for information and advice in working class areas. It was thought that agencies could not ignore the need for more information when the demand was shown to exist through the Information Centre; nor could they remain complacent in the face of large numbers of complaints against the services they offered. Eventually the Information Centre would gain enough experience to generalise from its individual cases, and provide ammunition for local groups to act in concert — the 'pump-priming mechanism', as it came to be known; this was the key role of translating individual grievances into wider action.

The centre opened in August 1970. It was staffed by professional project workers, did badly at first from a base at the edge of the project area, then transferred to the more central League of Welldoers where business began to pick up. A small group of early users were quickly persuaded to run the centre themselves, at first voluntarily and from August 1971 with three part-time paid workers drawn from the larger Information Centre group. Before long the centre moved across to the Grapes, a disused pub, where it remained until it was moved, with considerable opposition, into the Multi-Services Centre in 1974, when the pub was demolished.

The need to open the centre and attract in local people meant the centre was prepared to handle cases across the board, and not as in some CDPs concentrate on a limited set of problems. Housing and housing repairs formed a major part of the caseload, as the staff acquired knowledge in particular areas — on housing, welfare rights, or repairs. Nor was the dilemma of how far the centre should adopt an advocacy role on behalf of clients faced squarely, whether it should merely give information or actively pursue cases. In practice it was impossible to avoid an advocacy role in a local centre, and staff generally tried to get the best deal for clients within the constraints of existing roles and procedures. This meant they built up relationship with the relevant local authority departments, local housing office, and social security. The project had hoped the centre would be able to make the case for changes from their experience, handing over information to the tenants' associations and the steering group. But the staff adopted a casework advocacy role and did not keep records which could be used to establish a case for reform. When a constitution for the Information Centre was drawn up after nine months of operation, the objectives of the centre reflected the pressures of the

There are many services available for elderly people in this area, which a lot of people do not know about, or do not use.

At YOUR SERVICE

HEALTH VISITORS pay visits to the homes of elderly people to ensure the their adequate care, to arrange for nursing equipment, home help, adequate nourishment and any other extras they may need. There is also the

HOME HELP SERVICE

and

MOBILE MEALS SERVICE

We got our information from a booklet called "Welfare Services for the Elderly". There are copies in the Information Centre in Limekiln Lane (Open 10 am - 8 pm every Tuesday). The book contains details of many other services such as:-

BUS PASSES * BEDDING
CHIROPODY TREATMENT * REDUCED
HOLIDAYS * LARGE PRINT
BOOKS * WINTER WEATHER CARE *

Details of these and other services can also be obtained from:-

Liverpool Old Peoples' Welfare Council,
6 STANLEY STREET,
Liverpool L1 6AF
Phone: 236 4440

There are many other things like supplementary pensions and rent rebates to which people are entitled - BUT WHICH THEY DO NOT KNOW ABOUT. THESE ARE NOT CHARITY * THEY ARE YOUR RIGHTS

All information from the Vauxhall Community Information Centre in Limekiln Lane.

Scottie Press No. 1

Your INFORMATION centre

THE INFORMATION CENTRE IS RUN ENTIRELY FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THIS AREA BY THE RESIDENTS OF THIS AREA. Its main object is to give information on any problems (including housing) that it is in our power to give.

We are open every day, and if there is anything you would like to discuss in private, you can always come along and we will do our best for you. If you would like to know more about the Information Centre, why not come along and give an hour of your free time, as we are always looking for volunteers.

Mrs Susan Clarke
Information Centre
Grapes Hotel
Hornby Stteet

The Information Centre is open Monday to Friday. Times: 10-12 in the morning and 2-4 in the afternoon. Also 6-8 p.m. on the evenings of

No. 5, 1971

time – the ideas of the Information Centre in the Coventry CDP in pursuing income rights, the need to build bridges between the local authority and the community, and the Skeffington emphasis on participation, planning and environmental issues. None of the objectives suggested a casework or advocacy role; yet it was to prove the dominant approach, reinforced by the arrival of the community lawyer in 1973.

There is no doubt that the centre was successful in attracting local people. The setting in the Grapes was highly informal, sparsely furnished, almost shabby. The staff felt the appearance to be an important bonus, and the eventual move into plushly decorated offices in the Multi-Services Centre was strongly resisted to the last. The centre's style of limited advocacy was fashioned by its first warden, a senior and respected local figure, prominent in local ward politics, who saw a clear separation between voluntary or community work, and local politics. Here the warden had a different view from the project team which was more concerned to collect together information from individual cases to press for wider change. The result was that the Information Centre tended to go its own way, and based in a separate building from the project developed a separate identity. Between 1972 and 1974 the centre dealt with over two thousand enquiries, a majority concerned with housing, the rest fuel bills or faults, or arrears of rent and rates, or rebates.

In the final year of the project the policy of limited advocacy was severely undermined by a period of 'non-cooperation' by the Housing Department, themselves under pressure, partly from other project and resident activities. Local frustration about housing problems, over repairs, sluggish modernisation programmes and new housing partly turned on Information Centre staff, who had previously been an important link with the Housing Department. At this point centre staff joined in an attempt to pull together information on housing held by different groups in the project, including the Information Centre's records. An elaborate brief was drawn up, involving almost every group in the project, but the whole exercise eventually foundered, through lack of coordination, any experience of working collectively and conflicts within the project team.

The other major influence on the progress of the centre was the introduction of a community lawyer in

Scottie Press, 1975

May 1973, funded by the project, but employed through the local Law Society. There were two main reasons for this arrangement – at the time the only law centre where the solicitor was employed through the Law Society. First many of the cases likely to be handled would be housing, involving the local authority, another possible employer. Links with the Law Society would reduce the professional isolation of the solicitor working at a distance from other private practices. But the second and perhaps more important reason was the concern of the Law Society that the growing movement for 'community lawyers' should be within the mainstream of the profession.

> 'It is often the lawyer – and only the lawyer – with his particular skill and ethos, who can provide the assistance which is required. Because of the tools at his command, he carries a weight and a 'clout' beyond those of any Social Worker .... we believe it is of the utmost importance that community legal services, sited where they are really needed, should develop from the professional generally and not in alienation from it: from its establishment rather than from its radical fringe.' (Liverpool Law Society Report: November 1974).

In his first two years the solicitor working from a room in the Grapes adjoining the Information Centre tackled a wide variety of work including housing, crime, family law and industrial accidents, bringing legal remedies to some of the complaints brought to the centre and encouraging an increased use of tribunals. The approach was explicitly casework seeking to establish the legal needs of the area and trying to meet them. On the debate concerning casework versus the wider approach, the solicitor was clear; legal training did not provide a 'divine right to promote political agitation in depressed areas.' However in practice the nature of the work often took him beyond individual casework into representing the legal interests of groups. Two such examples were the appeals made by groups of tenants against the rate rises resulting from the 1973 rates revaluation. For revaluation had risen disproportionately in many working class areas, particularly in council housing estates. The second was a well publicised test case against the local authority Housing Department, brought on behalf of tenants in one of the high rise blocks. This centred on the Housing Department's responsibility for the upkeep of communal areas in the flats, particularly the lifts and passageways, which were heavily vandalised. The case became an important issue, going finally on a series of appeals to the House of Lords, where a technical victory was achieved. Using public health and housing legislation in this way against the corporation, clearly demonstrated that public funds were frequently inadequate to meet the legal requirements placed on public authorities.

Between 1973 and 1974 the Law Centre dealt directly with 407 cases, and gave advice in a further 210 cases. Inevitably as the centre became known and successful demand increased. By March 1975, a second solicitor had been appointed to relieve some of the pressure – a result of the expanding case load. This allowed the centre to extend its activities into the wider, more educative aspects of legal work. Talks were given to tenants' associations, the Vauxhall welfare rights group and groups of trade unionists on strike. Other work involved collaborating with sympathetic professionals in the Social Services and Probation Departments on the issue of possession orders, organising a course on housing rights which attracted a city wide audience, and producing a number of pamphlets on the law relating to squatting.

By this time the solicitor was concerned about how to select cases the centre could take on. There was far more work than could be handled, even by a second solicitor. The community lawyer wanted to introduce a management group of local people to whom the lawyers could be accountable over the selection of clients. Clearly the solicitors wanted to take some of the pressure off themselves by shifting the burden of decision. It proved difficult to establish terms of reference for a management group which would both map in a meaningful role for the members, and preserve the independence of the solicitors through their formal accountability to the local Law Society. The transition from the project's sponsorship to funding through the new Neighbourhood Council after 1975 offered an opportunity to work out a new structure. In the event the local Law Society took a firm line over independence arguing that 'control of the new centre by local residents, no less than control by the local authority, is a derogation from the necessary independence of the community lawyer'. Instead, a local advisory or liaison committee was set up with eight representatives from the Neighbourhood Council, four from trade unions, and one each from Social Services, Probation and Public Health Departments.

Towards the end of the project's life there were attempts to promote more extensive educational work in the welfare rights field than the Information and Law Centres had been able to offer. This was part of a practical critique of the earlier work of the centre which had concentrated on the role of the professional intermediary – whether lawyer or information centre worker – in gaining benefits for the client. The alternative was to spread these skills more widely, and prevent professional intermediaries from colonising yet more territory. Drawing on a number of clients and ex-clients of the centre, the welfare rights group was formed to develop a critical analysis of the welfare services. Rather than attempt to form a claimants only group, the initial objective was to develop as broad a base as possible within the community and the local workplace from which the unemployed and those on social security could organise collectively to obtain their rights. The groups were supported by the project's adult education tutor, and other staff from the Multi-Services Centre. There were difficulties in getting the group to see itself as an independent claimant's group, partly because of the reluctance of claimants to organise, with the plethora of agencies willing to intervene on their behalf. The group's independence too looked like posing a further threat to the project's overall strategy. The workers supporting the group were the more radical project staff and a new style of aggressively critical leafletting came at a delicate time as the project was negotiating over its future. There was insufficient 'distance' between the new organisation and the main project to prevent close identification. A new round of

bitter clashes took place inside the project, which delayed the progress of the group and drained most of the enthusiasm. But there were developments such as requests from trade unions for the group to address shop stewards and mass meetings on welfare rights, and strike committees could also call on the group for advice. Later the group developed its work to include advice on the legal and tactical issues of unfair dismissals, redundancy and picketing; a series of evening classes were organized under the title of a 'Trade Union and Unemployed Workers' course. Classes lasted over five months with an average turnout of twenty.

3. Epsom Street Playground and Centre

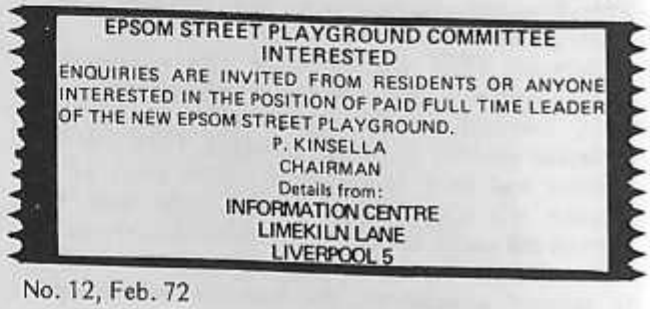
Like the Scotland Road subway, campaigns for play facilities in the Epsom Street area predated the project. Demolition in this area had left open a square of land for later development. This space, called 'the hollow' was soon taken over by local youth as a play area and rough football ground. Requests were made to the city for the provision of a sports centre but nothing happened. Several local mothers, amongst them the future playleader, used to go out, especially during holiday times and play with the children whilst supervising their own. When the project arrived, this was quickly seen as an area where the social action budget could help. One of the assistant directors took on the task of advising residents how to form an action group and management committee, the latter necessary to handle the money. By July 1971 definite proposals had been worked out in consultation with the Recreation and Open Spaces Department (ROS), and plans for an adventure playground were drawn up. £20,000 was given to the ROS committee from the project budget. The arrival of new project staff produced more ideas for the scheme. The playground committee extended the plans to include a building which could be used by children and the elderly of the area, and in spring 1972 the ROS committee obtained another £20,000 under phase five of the Urban Programme for a community building on the playground. By November 1971 the project had secured another £10,000 from the Home Office to appoint a district youth leader for one year, the post to be taken over by the Education Department if successful, though the appointment was not made until 1974 for lack of suitable candidates.

Not until March 1972 did building work actually start on the site, by which time many local people thought the programme had been abandoned. The builders were met with great hostility from local children thinking that they were to lose their 'hollow' to yet another block of flats. At one point ROS threatened to pull out their labour force which had been stoned by local children. The playground committee, with the help of the project director, succeeded in calming both sides and assuring local people that they were going to have both their playground and a play centre as well as facilities for old age pensioners. A local man was appointed warden to look after the site in the evening to stop vandalism; relations between workmen and local children improved steadily.

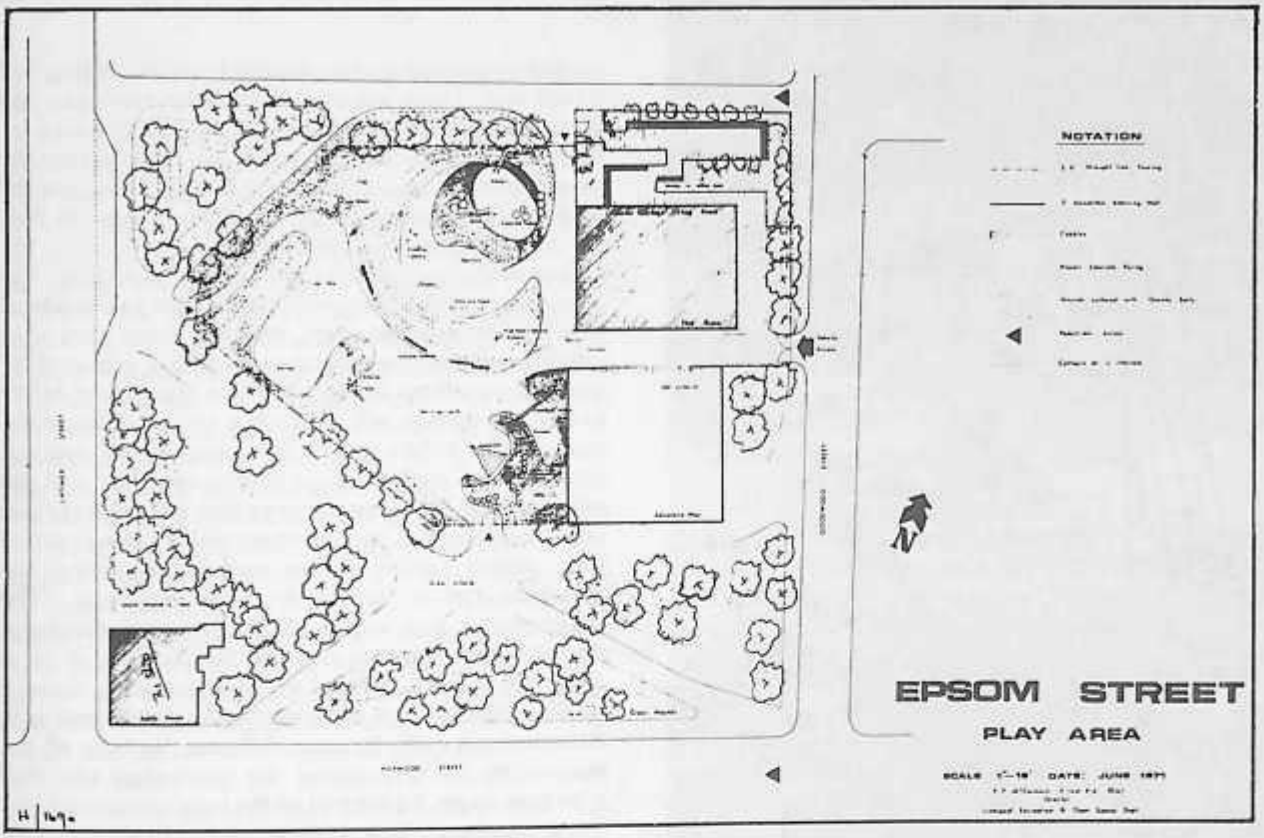
The project was anxious that the local management committee should have a major say in the appointment of the playleader. A candidate was quickly selected in the belief that local authority approval would be a formality. However the local authority insisted on reinterviewing all candidates; the management committee were only with difficulty persuaded from resigning en bloc over the affair. Eventually agreement was reached, and an appointment made. However the playground was not yet ready, and work on the playroom building did not in fact start until the end of 1973, more than two years after the plans had been agreed.

Though without a playground, the playleader began to organise trips for local children and families and involve local people in the work. Trips to local baths and beaches as well as outings to Blackpool and Southport became regular features of the neighbourhood, especially during the holidays, when she received help as part of the project's summer play-schemes. A local 'coach fund' of 5p per week to enable children to save up for trips was started. She ran local competitions and opened a 'disco' for teenagers in the still empty ground floor of the Multi-Services Centre during the winter of 1972–3.

By 1973, the growth of activities was sufficient to justify the appointment of an assistant, and a young unemployed local lad was taken on. The new assistant immediately embarked on an elaborate scheme to raise money for the play centre, on which building work was shortly to begin. With one of the first neighbourhood community workers, he planned a sponsored swim across Lake Windermere and enrolled local youngsters to help organise overnight facilities. There was great enthusiasm for the idea; they planned to bring families and friends of the swimmers up to the Lakes for the day to watch the event. The playleader filled six coaches with interested families, making sure children were accompanied by adults. The coaches were booked and stewards responsible to ensure speedy collection of fares and allocation of seats on the day. But this still left out a large number of children, whose parents were not able to come. Another local mother decided herself to book another coach and fill it with extra children and two mothers as volunteer helpers. On the day of the swim seven coaches set off for the lake. All were late, as a breakdown of one of the coaches on the motorway had caused a long delay and the children's coach had made a detour to the shops and stalls of Bowness. The shore itself, the spot chosen, was very restricted, and could not cope with the number of people in the coaches. There were no facilities and no room for children to play after long hours on the coach. So some, especially the coach full of unattended children, returned to the centre where the swimmers had spent the night and began to play in the grounds. This soon deteriorated into vandalism which left the centre damaged, swimmers' belongings


EPSOM STREET PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE
INTERESTED
ENQUIRIES ARE INVITED FROM RESIDENTS OR ANYONE INTERESTED IN THE POSITION OF PAID FULL TIME LEADER OF THE NEW EPSOM STREET PLAYGROUND.
P. KINSELLA
CHAIRMAN
Details from:
INFORMATION CENTRE
LIMEKILN LANE
LIVERPOOL 5

No. 12, Feb. 72



EPSOM ST.

It would seem that at last this playground for which we have waited for so long, is about to become a reality.

Many months ago Mr McDermott of the Vauxhall Project, called a meeting in Archbishop Whiteside School to which he invited all residents to meet Mr Neighbour from the Open Space and Recreation Department, and discuss the plans he had drawn up for the Epsom Street Playground. This meeting was attended by Councillor Tony Dunford. A full and frank discussion took place on every aspect of these plans and went into the pros and cons very thoroughly. The general opinion was that the plans as they stood did not meet with the approval of the residents. Councillor Dunford also spoke about various schemes for the area which had been debated in Council. The meeting closed with Mr McDermott promising to call another meeting to discuss still further this scheme.

The meeting took place again in Archbishop Whiteside School. Residents again gave their views on what form the Playground should take; It is only fair to point out that some residents were completely opposed to any form of playground at all. In their opinion the noise would prevent night-shift workers from getting any sleep and they felt that there was the ever present danger of the whole playground being turned into a teenager's football pitch. The majority of the Meeting however felt that it was something the youngsters badly needed and we should be prepared to suffer a little inconvenience in order to help them.

The third meeting was called by Mr Phil Doran, Director of the Vauxhall Project and took place in the 'Brittannia'. Mr Neighbour was also at this meeting which was very well attended. Quite a long discussion took place and it became quite obvious that the plans were completely unacceptable to the residents. Several suggestions were made including sheltered accommodation for the old age pensioners and for children for use in inconvenient weather, adventure playground, provision of seats all over the playground and most important of all high metal railings to enclose the whole play-area. None of those things were on Mr Neighbour's plans. It was then decided to form a committee who will got into all the details and draw up a list which would be submitted to Mr Neighbour; Mr Neighbour listened patiently throughout the meeting and after pointing out the high cost of metal railings and the amount of money allocated, agreed to draw up new plans would try and include the items submitted to him. The Committee was Peter Kinsella (Chairman), John Ord, Ronnie Houds, Harry Ryan, Syd James, Mrs Taylor, Mrs Kennedy, John Mulrooney. The Committee met several times in the Free School Centre, assisted and guided at al' times by Phil Doran. Detailed discussions took place on all aspects of playgrounds. Members of the committee visited other playgrounds in the city in order to include their best points in our own. The Committee then sent a list of what they wanted to Mr Neighbour.

After some time had elapsed with no word from Mr Neighbour, Peter Kinsella and myself had an interview with Frank Marsden M.P. He advised us on the procedure to get the information we wanted, while he made his own enquiries. Obviously his help was considerable because in no time at all Peter Kinsella had received the revised plan for the Epsom Street Playground.

We were pleasantly surprised at the plans which included all the things we asked for. I believe that the plans show vision as the result of a careful study of the needs of the residents.

Mr Neighbour is to be congratulated on an imaginative scheme. Peter Kinsella has just received a letter from Frank Marsden telling him that work will begin in August.

I must pay tribute to Peter Kinsella for the enthusiasm with which he tackled the job of chairman.

To the City Council a bouquet for implementing their promise to cater for the residents of this area. Let us hope that this is the first of many improvements to the amenities of this district.

John Mulrooney

Answers
(1) Arsenal, 7 times,
(2) Brentford, 1929-30.
(3) Middlesborough in 1895 and 1898.
(4) 1929 v Spain.
(5) C.B. Fry.

SCOTTIE PRESS
is published by Scotland Road Press
201 Hornby Street
Liverpool 5

Photo: Liam Gilligan

Epsom Street Playground and Centre 1975

Photo: Connie Topping

stolen and the contents of litter bins scattered over the carefully tended gardens. It then became known that during the earlier stop at the shops the unattended children had been shoplifting. All coaches were stopped by police on the way back and the one full of children searched thoroughly, apparently recovering most of the stolen property.

A day planned as the highlight of the season had turned sour. There was anger against the playleader and those who had organised the trip for not checking on facilities at the Lake. Legal action was taken against the coach company whose coach had broken down, and the sponsors of the swim refused to pay up as they felt they had not been given a fair day out.

The swim itself was fraught with near disaster. The 'professionals' had deliberately stood back to allow local people to organise the event, and then found themselves rescuing swimmers who were inadequately prepared for the cold conditions in the lake, with insufficient safety boats, and warning off yachts not to run down swimmers in the middle of the lake. Luckily no one was drowned and two people actually completed the one mile crossing. The sponsor money that was collected was used to compensate the swimmers whose belongings had been stolen. Feeling in the community against the organisers ran so high that when eventually £180 compensation was received from the coach company, the playground committee decided to give it to a children's hospital rather than the playground. It was a major setback for the neighbourhood scheme, ending in bitterness not only between different sections of the community but also against the playleaders who had tried hard to get the support of the local community.

However the summer playscheme of 1973 did much to improve relationships. With a grant from the Education Department, two student helpers and the playleaders ran a playscheme for about 150 children throughout the summer holidays based on the Epsom Street playground. This was by now completed though the work on the play room had only just started. Local mothers also gave support. As there was as yet no covered space on the playground some of the activities were transferred to the ground floor of the Multi-Services Centre which also served as disco rooms in the evening. There a playground for very young children was also started, with young mothers as volunteer helpers on a rota basis.

Now that the playground was open the playleader prepared reports every fortnight to be distributed in her neighbourhood to inform parents about proposed activities and ask for help from local mothers. Meetings of the playgroup committee were also publicised. But in time these formal news sheets became more and more infrequent; the last one was dated November 1974.

After the disaster of the sponsored swim the Committee were considerably demoralised and met only spasmodically. Throughout the winter and early summer of 1974 building work at Epsom Street continued and the playcentre was not formally handed over until July 1974, shortly before the 1974 summer playscheme.

The new building was close to some old people's flats, and on the original plans the site was marked as an old persons' sitting room and playroom for small children. Controversy again broke out when pensioners objected to 'their' room being used by children. The playleader tried to overcome the problem by opening 'the club' as it was locally called, to pensioners one evening a week for bingo. Unfortunately the pensioners found that they were sometimes 'mugged' on their way to the club, and also their homes were broken into when they were there. The session soon closed for lack of support. Reopening

the sessions in the afternoons later proved more successful.

By the summer of 1974, a schedule for the use of the centre had been drawn up and agreed with local people. This meant a daily series of sessions from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. for different age groups, and evening sessions until 10 or 11 at night. The part-time assistant had now left the centre, and as there was little regular help from local mothers, the playleader found herself in charge for twelve hours a day. Gradually her energy ran out, activities became less frequent and outings quite rare.

A local lad who had helped voluntarily at the centre, and whose family had been extensively involved in neighbourhood work, was appointed as a full-time assistant to work with youngsters in the area. For a time this arrangement worked well; but the job was becoming more and more a burden for the playleader, with little support from either professionals or residents. One of the major difficulties was that she could not rely on regular local voluntary help, which was essential with a fixed programme of events. Mothers would help with parties and sewing classes, but not on a regular basis. Enquiries into the reasons why people did not turn up meant that the volunteer might not come again.

Then there was the problem of truancy. Local children would spend the day at the centre, rather than school. The playleader was bound to inform the educational welfare officer – though without effect. Local people wanted the centre to shut during school hours, but this she was unwilling to do. For it meant, at least, that it was known where truants were. As unemployment increased in 1974–1975, a growing number of older youths were beginning to use the centre during the day. A member of the probation team agreed to spend one afternoon a week at the centre working with this group. Finally the playleader found it difficult to escape the way local people referred to the centre as 'Eileen's Club', and as such not open to other adults.

The centre had developed during the project into an ambivalent half-way position – on the one hand the symbol of authority, provided by the 'corpy', and on the other accepted as 'theirs' by many groups of young people. But this has not helped it to escape extensive vandalism, before it was opened and when in use; the building is already heavily scarred and covered with graffiti, and the 'adventure area' intended to be deep sand, a heap of broken bottles and rubble. The ambivalence of the centre's position was brought out clearly in a development after the end of the project. A detached youth worker from the area was appointed to the Vauxhall district in 1975, and decided to open the centre late at night during the summer, for those who were out all night, and often came into contact with the police. At first the scheme attracted several young unemployed, who were grateful for a warm and friendly place to play cards. But it soon ran into difficulties. The youth worker noticed that 'break-ins' and 'knock offs' were being planned and he was expected to join in if he was not to lose credibility. He had to close the centre at times to avoid 'loot' being brought to the club. The police and local people criticised the scheme, particularly when girls too began to join in the sessions.

Though frequently faced with such problems, the centre has without doubt made an important contribu-

Adventure – area
Photo: Liam Gilligan

tion to the facilities and social life in the area. Mothers' groups have been popular as well as ideas for fathers coming to play snooker with their children. Parties for every conceivable occasion have attracted many people and the trips organised by the playleader have brought children and adults to different parts of Liverpool, if only for a day. Organised holidays have taken children, who would otherwise never have had a break from home, to the Lakes and North Wales, and discos, still the most popular form of entertainment, have brought the children in from the street in the evening and probably reduced the incidence of crime and the other 'popular sport' of taking cars. 'One finds a car, pinches it, jams it full of other youngsters, then one rings the police to tip them off; when the Panda cars arrive, you race them through the area.'

The position of local people employed at the centre has also been difficult. When activities were organised by voluntary workers, and misfired, it was put down to bad luck. Somebody had gone out of their way 'to do something'. If any schemes organised by the paid staff did not work as planned, the reaction was often hostile, 'they got paid to do it well'. The paid local worker had constantly to remain acceptable to the neighbourhood, and not become too professional. The detached youth worker made out that he was simply taking the authorities 'for a ride', being paid for 'hanging around' as a way of building up the confidence of local youngsters. Perhaps only the playleader had the necessary skills, resilience and experience to play this intermediate role consistently for a long period.

4. Neighbourhood Community Workers (NCWs)

The overall project strategy demanded long-term pressure from the local community to achieve significant results. Some form of community work support was necessary. The project had to decide whether to appoint professional workers in their own mould, or take on local people. The arguments were delicately balanced. On the one hand local people might take time to come to terms with the project's strategy, perhaps never ultimately accept it. They might not be able to take on a 'semi-professional' role, but find themselves trapped by the expectations of the local community. They might be overwhelmed by the pressures of being on the spot for 24 hours a day. On the other hand they stood the best chance of broadening the base of local participation,

Photo: Connie Topping

The playleader and crew

Photo: Peter Leeson

LOOKING BACK

Many changes have taken place since that earlier issue, the Scotland Road Residents Association slipped into the background as the Vauxhall Project with all its Government backed resources came to the fore. The area was split into 5 new parishes, St. Albans, St. Gerards, St. Sylvesters/St. Anthony's - Holy Cross/St. Mary's and now each area has its own full time Community Worker.

Here are a few headlines from the front page over the last 4 years: Vandalism, Queen Opens Tunnel, Murder Mile - Demonstration on Scottie for Subway, Doctors Slum Surgeries, Tates, Unemployment, Fair Rents, Canal, Rents Strike, Tenants and Local Elections, 2 More Killed on Scottie, Road Safety, Housing, Evictions, Strike Victory, Great Homer Pirates.

CONTINUED ON CENTRE PAGE...

Scottie Press, April 1975

VACANCY

VAUXHALL NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL

VACANCY FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMUNITY WORKER

Applications are invited from persons interested in working with a group in the area. (Salary N.J.C. AP1 - 2 £1,608 - £2,187).

Forms available from:

The Secretary, Vauxhall Neighbourhood Council, Community Services Centre, Silvester Street, Liverpool, L5 8SE.

Closing date for completed forms, Friday 2nd May, 1975.

more approachable than a 'professional', more aware of what makes the community 'tick'.

A professional appointment would probably produce better short-term results in promoting new skills and organisation, but would maintain the community's dependence on outside professionals. A local appointment would have produced its own problems, but was closer to the idea of the community coming to terms with and tackling its own problems. Other factors tilted the balance in favour of local appointment. A local was more likely to stay for a reasonable period than a mobile young professional. If successful, the appointments would establish the ability of people with experience but little educational background to work themselves into demanding jobs. And it would provide limited employment opportunities in a depressed area. In fact the first community worker was a professional appointment made at the end of 1971. After a year the post fell vacant and the project was able to appoint an already prominent local activist. The project aimed to provide full-time community support in each of the five parishes into which the area had been divided. They applied for further appointments, with two more to follow the year after. The decision to appoint more staff in this way was important because it reduced the amount of money the project could give directly to support local groups, or local action projects. It committed the project to developing local organisation.

There was opposition to the idea of these appointments on the project committee, partly a reflex response to further staff recruitment. The project had to show how the job differed from the roles of other professionals already working in Vauxhall, and why preference should be given to local people who would usually not be qualified for such roles. When the job description was finally agreed, its complexity was felt to be 'beyond a local person'. The job description referred to the identification and analysis of local needs, encouraging and supporting local people to organise around problems, serving and assisting groups, liaison between community groups and local statutory agencies including the interpretation of local needs to these services. However the posts were eventually approved, and by 1974 there was an establishment of five neighbourhood community workers.

For the major part of the project the neighbourhood community workers each covered one of the local parishes with a population of approximately 3000. Until all five appointments had been made, project staff aided by student attachments worked the unallocated areas. Usually the NCWs opted to work in their home areas at first; they could build on their previous voluntary work contacts. But experience led to a general preference for working outside their own area in order to escape the constant scrutiny and sometimes the gossip and criticism of neighbours.

Fieldwork was coordinated through a regular community workers forum during 1972 and 1973, led by one of the project assistant directors. This was the support group for the 'generalist' role of the neighbourhood community workers. As the only workers with a fully generic brief at the time, with a grasp of the overall needs and problems of their parish, they were asked to chair the 'parish teams' set up by the project in the summer of 1973 – an attempt to get professional field workers in the Multi-Services Centre even more closely in touch with local areas. But the three workers at the time were unenthusiastic about this task, arguing that

the parish team represented yet another group for them to service. They were also aware of their own limited experience, and resented a role which could be construed as 'servicing a highly-paid team of professionals'. The parish teams were soon dropped on a combination of these and other grounds. The generalist role was maintained until the project was superseded by the neighbourhood council as the employer of the NCWs. By then the tactic of keeping the community organisations meeting regularly began to be questioned; the time spent could be better used to develop new interest groups. There was also sufficient experience in the tenants association to allow them to respond to new initiatives as they came up. From then on the workers began to specialise in topics such as housing or education on which they would work across the area, while maintaining a responsibility for their parish.

The project adopted an almost completely non-directive approach towards the induction of the NCWs. As with other local appointments such as the receptionists in the Multi-Services Centre or the adventure playground leader, there was a conscious wish to encourage 'new careerists' to continue to see their job 'through the eyes of a local person'. It was felt that too much control and instruction could easily result in a loss of confidence, or a parroting of a professional approach. However there were costs as well. While not wishing to become professionals in the accepted sense, the workers quickly argued for equality of access to the status and salaries which professionals enjoyed. But more significantly they felt that lack of professional qualifications hampered their work in the community. The traditional respect for the 'professional' shown in working class areas like Vauxhall was not just a 'bonus' they might eventually enjoy, but a necessity to achieve acceptance for their work locally. Thus pressure for in-service training opportunities came from the workers themselves, leading to a special neighbourhood community workers' course offered by the Institute of Extension Studies at the University in conjunction with the local authority community development section. The workers were also looking to the future; as one said, 'at the end of CDP I could still be classed as a labourer, and yet I am expected to work alongside professionals as an equal, but with inferior pay and status'.

Though the programmes developed by each of the NCWs differed according to personal interests, their work broadly covered the original specification. This is shown by the areas of work they chose to take up, and their comments on what they were trying to achieve. The following examples are taken from the period 1973–1974 when four workers had been appointed. At that time the team comprised two men and two women, all mature married people with families. With one exception they had lived in the area all their lives and did not wish to leave, even given the comparative attractiveness of other areas on Merseyside. As their previous commitments demonstrate, all had a deep concern for the community and had been active in community affairs for many years. All left school without formal qualifications between the ages of 14 and 16, and although one secured a 13+ scholarship to Technical College, left without taking examinations. Since that time they had each experienced many and varied work situations, averaging five jobs each before joining the project team. The men had been in the merchant navy, ship repairers, building labourers and barmen. The women had worked in factories as checkers, and as clerical and shop assistants. None had experienced lengthy periods of unemployment, except in the voluntary sense of leaving work to rear children. They brought to their jobs a wide experience of work both inside and outside the Vauxhall area. All were active in the community before joining the project, and were numbered among the minority of residents who emerged as local leaders and organisers. One had been drawn on by CDP activity to help with the running of summer play schemes, but the others were engaged in a wide variety of activities unrelated to the project and predating its arrival. They included swimming classes for young people, a canal improvement scheme, pensioners clubs, holiday schemes and residents associations. These experiences were in part reflected in their commitments and interpretation of the community worker's role. It is as though a voluntary service has been given official recognition and a better chance of success by full time commitment.

During 1973–4 the work of the four NCWs covered a wide range of activities. The following lists show the main activities of each NCW during this period:-

NCW 1

1. Setting up a new community centre, involving conversion of an old school building, setting up a management committee and attempting to combat vandalism.
2. Liaison with local residents attempting to set up a 'Peoples' Centre' catering for all ages.
3. Providing support services for elderly people at risk.
4. Dialogue with local secondary schools in order to set up community task forces comprised largely of pupils in the ROSLA group.
5. Servicing residents associations.

NCW 2

1. Two surveys of housing improvement areas.
2. Liaison with corporation housing department on a general improvement area.
3. Dealing with problems arising from a housing modernisation programme in walk-up flats.
4. Convening of tenants meetings.
5. Campaign for playgroup/day nursery provision.
6. Administration of non-vocational classes for mothers.

NCW 3

1. Organising outings and holidays for OAP clubs.
2. Administrative assistance with local area newspaper.
3. Collecting evidence to support a sheltered housing scheme for the elderly.
4. A project to convert derelict shop into a centre providing for the elderly, library and playgroup facilities.
5. Management of local Under 13 football league.
6. Servicing residents' associations.

NCW 4

1. Setting up a community centre.
2. Establishment of a temporary playgroup and sub/information centre pending opening of community centre.
3. Campaign to combat proposals to zone land for industry which local people want for housing. Petition and public meetings.
4. Organising social events for local OAP clubs including outings and holidays.

This list is by no means exhaustive, but it indicates the range of activities, in some cases with substantial developments like community centres where skills and organisational abilities were at a premium. Clearly their previous experience in voluntary work had been helpful, but the workers also stressed the value of professional support and advice. 'Going it alone' was seen as being perhaps two years ahead.

In a factory operation with an end product or service function where the objectives are clear cut, there may be little scope for individual initiative or job interpretation. Neighbourhood community work, on the other hand is by its very nature diverse and open to different interpretations. It is important to see how the Vauxhall community workers interpret their activities, and to look at the job advantages and disadvantages of the role as they saw them. 'The kind of things I have been involved in – for example – playschemes, nursery campaigns, are important aspects of a NCW's work. They are the ways in which you get people together who otherwise wouldn't be interested in residents associations and trying to solve the problems of Vauxhall.' This point was reinforced by another worker who viewed recreational, nursery and club facility campaigns as catalysts for community development, and a positive way of combating vandalism.

The second theme was 'self help'. 'My job is to create a community feeling and help people to organise so that they can begin to solve their own problems'. The third strand was the advocacy and link role. 'I am speaking for people who are not strong enough to speak for themselves. My job is to get the authorities down to the district and communicate with people. My role is as a 'link man' between agencies and people'. The fourth role was as providers and interpreters of information: 'I can give people information on where they can get help. I feel that the job necessitates the interpretation of information enshrined in bureaucratic circulars and official forms'. Lastly, there was the wider role of attempting 'to make people more aware of their rights and more socially and politically conscious'.

All the NCWs spoke of high job satisfaction, the advantages of breaking away from a nine to five routine and meeting people in many different contexts. Another credit were the relationships built up with officials as a result of their new status, which meant easier access to a large number of departments and agencies. The NCWs were fully part of the project team, attending team meetings, and participating in decision making. They were based at the Centre with project staff, and fitted in satisfactorily with standard local authority practices.

However there were problems. The process of induction was painful for some, and involved a long period of adjustment to the manner, style and language of professionals. They were unused to the format of professional team meetings. They found difficulty with the terminology and the practice of committing experience to written reports and monitoring their own activities. There was a problem of striking a balance between the NCW's aim to get on with the job and the professional's concern to find a rationale for acting via the medium of team planning.

The demands of working many evenings was not felt to be a disadvantage because of the flexible working hours and the break from boring routines, typical of previous jobs. The other possible handicap of having clients literally on one's own doorstep was not regarded as a problem. Perhaps in this context it was a wise policy to assign NCWs to areas away from the workers' own homes. Nevertheless, they regarded themselves as being available for advice or help even when off duty, and felt able to cope with any threat to their domestic privacy.

All spoke of the dramatic contrast between their previous occupation and neighbourhood work. Within their set hours of work, what had to be done was precisely understood and the targets clear. Now the workers found themselves working in a kind of no-mans land, where what they do had to be refined by experience and the differing needs of the areas in which they worked. This imposed substantial strain, particularly the intense personal pressure to produce results to maintain credibility with the clients, and demonstrate that they had earned their salary for community work, part of which they would have done on a voluntary basis before.

Setting up a residents' group, assessing local needs, or attempting to change local authority housing policies at the local level are all extremely difficult and slow moving tasks. There was thus enormous pressure for the NCWs to aim for small short term gains to be seen to be getting something done. This was particularly true of individual casework, where the worker was always accessible to client. He could easily become the 'Mr. Fixit' of the area, and neglect longer term tasks.

The other form of stress emphasised by the Vauxhall workers arose from the uniqueness of the work environment. Not only were they facing unfamiliar decisions about what they should do, but the rest of the project team was operating in territory where lines of action were rarely obvious, and where community expectations often clashed with those of their employers. This meant that the neighbourhood workers needed constant support on a regular and systematic basis. A one-to-one attachment with an experienced member of the team was arranged, but never worked well partly because of the day to day pressures on the professional staff.

This combination of pressures was intense, and heightened by the very active campaigns in the area, which were frequently directed against the local authority. One or two of the first NCWs found it difficult to work in the face of these conflicting demands, particularly where they may have been active in one of the campaigns before appointment as an NCW. One or two dropped out; but others were able to live with these pressures while still remaining active locally.

At the end of the project the NCWs became directly accountable to the neighbourhood council. Before it happened they had many reservations about the change,

centred on worries about job security, and particularly dismissal based on gossip and rumours. In fact this did not happen, and clauses governing dismissal similar to those of local authority employees were written into the contracts. But they found that the community in the form of the neighbourhood council was a more 'critical' employer; they were forced to change their role to take more account of solving immediate problems. Thus they started surgeries to deal with individual grievances to meet this pressure, despite the existence of the Information Centre to undertake this work, and they have a regular column in the 'Scottie Press' — now run by the neighbourhood council — reporting on the progress of work in their area. Most however preferred the earlier form of greater independence from the employing authority.

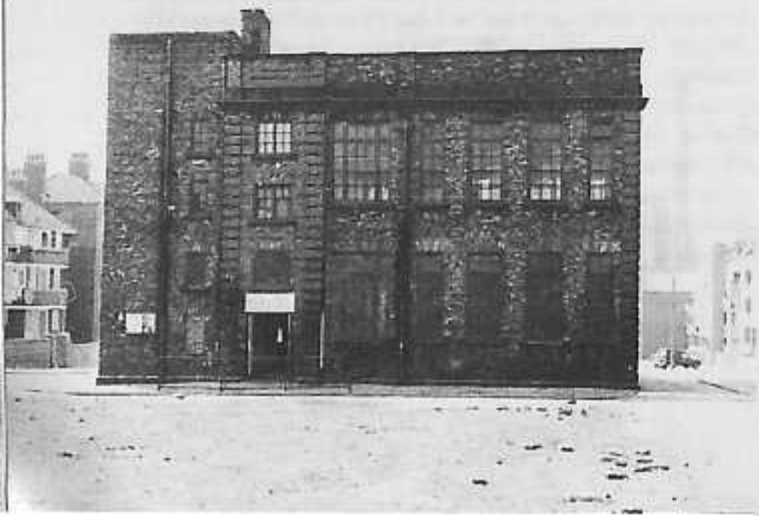
5. Community Centres

Several of the NCWs were involved in opening 'community centres' in their areas. The first came almost as a 'windfall' the result of a sudden decision by central government to set up 'capital projects' in areas of high unemployment in the winter of 1971/2. £20,000 was allocated to several CDP areas under this heading. The following case study of the Titchfield Street centre shows the problems of rapidly turning this windfall into an active centre, and the work put in by the NCW. As in the Epsom Street playground, the first major problem was delay in getting renovation started, partly a result of sluggish administration, and partly the high level of vandalism on building sites, which delayed work, raised costs, and deterred contractors from tendering. During this long drawn out process, the enthusiasm originally generated by the prospect of a local community centre had to be kept alive.

The idea of converting an unused primary school into a community centre first surfaced in January 1972. By September 1974 the project director presented the following timetable to the project committee:-

1972 January	Residents petition for use of building as Community Centre.
1972 April	Project Committee agrees that negotiations for Lease with the Church Authorities be started and consultations with the Director of Education for running costs.
1972 April	Project Steering Group recommends to Project Committee that first priority for £20,000 capital scheme allocation be the Community Centre with £5,000 of that sum being set aside for further adaptation/equipping costs of the Centre as these became known following a period of usage.
1972 October	Project Committee agreed that adaptation work be put in hand at an estimated cost of £5,820.
1973 February/ March	Tenders/contracts for work completed but original lease arrangment with parish Priest not acceptable to archdiocese.
1973 June	Lease negotiations completed.
1973 July	Further adaptation work (fitting of showers and changing rooms) included at estimated cost of £2,200.
1973 August	Renovation work commences.
1973 October	City Estates Surveyor advises that repair work due to vandalism and security work to prevent further wilful damage will cost an additional £6,000. Project Committee approves additional cost.
1974 July	Original contract work *almost* completed.
	Expenditure on renovations/ adaptations = £14,500

Titchfield Street Community Centre
Photo: Liam Gilligan



But this was only the bare bones of the affair as the neighbourhood workers' report presented to the same meeting makes clear:-

After an initial settling in period as a neighbourhood community worker I was allotted the added task of prompting, monitoring and liaising with the contractors, various authorities, and residents in promoting the centre. To my untrained eye the task seemed relatively straightforward and simple. These naive thoughts were soon dispelled and the responsibility turned out to be a major and formidable task, which in my opinion warranted the appointment of a full-time liaison officer. That is if there was to be any possibility of the centre being in operation within the time envisaged.

At the commencement of my involvement the building had been very badly vandalised. Access was easily obtained through broken windows, doors, and a large hole made by the contractors to link up to the drainage system. The contractors had ceased to work in the building because of the constant break-ins, even though they had received £500 to make the place secure. The whole interior of the premises was littered with old TV aerials, plastic waste, and assorted builders' rubbish which in some mysterious way had gained access to every room. Add to this the excavated earth from the

intended toilet block and one can imagine that the whole scene presented a very sorry picture.

My first task was to arrange through 'Community Industry' for a group of young people to try and clean the place up and bring about some semblance of order. A huge waste skip was ordered and the boys had no trouble filling it a couple of times over. Their second job was to knock out all the broken glass from the window frames and glass partitions and this work overall took a considerable time. The reason for the slow work rate was because the Community Industry Group at that time had no scheme consultant to supervise and I as a project community worker had no real authority over these lads. Nevertheless they responded and did a splendid and worthwhile job.

At this stage the building was not suitable to be used for any community activity and so I concentrated my efforts on trying to accelerate the progress being made by the contractors. This could supposedly be done by constant checking, pressing the clerk of works, and various contractors for completion times and dates. *It does not work* — at least it did not work so far as Titchfield Street was concerned. My observations at this point were that the clerk of works was virtually ineffective in instigating satisfactory progress, because when criticisms were made about the 'dead slow and stop' tactics taking place he, (and I) were presented with a seemingly endless stream of excuses, the classics being:- 'Can't get the materials', 'tradesmen been sick or taken away to do another job', 'the kids broke in again and robbed my hammer' etc. When I enquired about completion penalties and such like I got the distinct impression they thought I was talking about football.

Eventually I was informed that the glaziers were ready to put in the windows and so it being 1973 Christmas school holidays I personally leafleted 500 dwellings in the area and enlisted the support of all parents and children to try and stop the windows being smashed again. *Nearly two months later* the glaziers arrived to make a start — so I thought maybe some of the kids had forgotten my little leaflet and repeated the exercise, which turned out to be quite successful for about six months.

Residents were starting to show an interest in what was happening to the building and we were lucky to have one or two who lived close by and were able to act as unofficial caretakers. These good people proved to be a most effective deterrent to the vandals who still managed to get into the building on an odd occasion and but for their vigilance the building would be still further behind schedule. With the help of some of these people I arranged an 'Open Night' for children who could come along and help to clean up the premises. Ninety kids showed up and after putting them in the picture about the centre and what we hoped to achieve we brushed the place down, played some records, had a bonfire in the yard, roasted spuds, and in all had a rather dusty, good time. The object of the exercise was to involve the youngsters in the centre and help them understand what community involvement was all about. That occasion was the beginning of activities in the centre.

Before I became active on the 'Titchfield Street' project, a certain amount of organising had taken place. Residents who had shown interest had formed an ad hoc committee but had ceased to function because of the long delay in the building becoming available. It was a simple matter to get in touch with these people and continue where they had left off. Fourteen people attended my first meeting and a steering committee was formed, the nucleus of which is still in operation. A draft constitution was put together and submitted to the Education Authorities, and since that time, February 15th, meetings have been held at regular intervals. The numbers attending these management meetings is fairly constant (approximately 8) and without doubt the main criticism has been the delay in putting the building right.

At times there has been uncertainty about the finances of the centre and this has caused some confusion amongst the management committee. However, the position has been clarified and I feel the way is now clear to start equipping and decorating the centre. The acquisitions to date include adequate canteen and office facilities, stacking chairs, and of 16 mm. projector and screen. The main hall has been decorated by volunteers at a fraction of the cost it would normally take and has been used in presenting a theatre production, Discos, and various games and activities for the local children, supervised by student placements. It is also envisaged that the hall could be hired out at reduced rates for social functions etc. Some of the Groups who use the building on a regular basis at present are:- The Hornby/Mile End Tenants Associations, Burlington/Bond Tenants Association, Scotland Road Playscheme Association, Vescock Street Tenants Association etc. At this time the caretaker is acting as warden but the action will really start to take place when a full-time warden is appointed. Community Industry have undertaken to do the decorating and with luck the building will be realizing its full potential in the very near future.

One discordant note is that some residents who live adjacent to the centre have complained about the noise levels when activities are taking place. I do feel that these teething problems can and will be overcome and with resident participation the centre will become a lasting success story. (Report by NCW on Titchfield Street Community Centre — CDP Project Committee, September 1974).

By concentrating on five major schemes, we have inevitably had to leave out a large number of other developments, where the project was involved in one way or another — particularly the spread of resident groups, tenants groups pushing for modernisation and improvement of their blocks, the summer playschemes,

Community Industry at Work
Photo: Liam Gilligan

the campaign to preserve the local wash-house and swimming bath, the under-13 football league, or work with the elderly and handicapped — to list only a few. Some of these were community initiatives where the project played a minor role; in others the project took the lead.

Professional resources were thus stretched extremely thinly across a very wide range of activities. But this was deliberate policy, and the project rarely turned down flat any proposal or demand that came from the community, using it as an opportunity to set up another group, or launch another scheme. Inevitably this meant that several initiatives quickly petered out — or continued with very little substance behind the title. It was not the project's policy to concentrate on a limited number of schemes, and ensure that those worked successfully, nor to turn away proposals because the project lacked resources, expertise and interest. In contrast several other CDPs have followed a policy of restricting their work to a limited number of subjects where they have concentrated their skills; requests for help outside these themes are turned down.

Liverpool's policy deliberately placed emphasis on local people playing the major part, whether as volunteers or paid community workers. Resident groups inevitably rose and fell as individual interests declined, or were revived by controversial issues. However local people employed by the project, as community workers, Information Centre staff, playground supervisors, and receptionists at the Multi-Services Centre — in total between ten and a dozen people at the peak period — played an important role of providing continuity. Though there were extreme pressures on this group, and problems of linking voluntary and paid effort in the community, the appointment of local people to these roles was undoubtedly one of the most successful developments in the project.

Paddy's market
Photo: Peter Leeson

Chapter 9: Education.

The four CDP projects in the pilot phase placed strong emphasis on education, particularly work with local schools. The Coventry project, for example, in conjunction with the LEA set up a separate 'community education project' with a team of workers linked to the main CDP project. This emphasis on education was hardly surprising – for the educational priority area programme which ended in 1971, had concluded – 'the EPA can be no more than a part, though an important one, of a comprehensive social movement towards community development and community redevelopment in a modern urban industrial society' (Halsey, 1972). At this early stage CDP was clearly marked out as the inheritor of EPA and its ideas.

This was particularly the case in Liverpool, where the Home Office in selecting a project area had originally pressed for the Liverpool EPA area to be chosen, and when this fell through had continued to argue for strong links between the two projects. The Liverpool EPA was at this stage the most well known and publicity conscious of the EPA projects, putting out a powerful message on the virtues of 'community education' and home–school liaison. It had moved, too, through the work of Tom Lovett, into the field of adult education, with clear links and relevance to community development (Midwinter, 1972, Lovett, 1975). At the end of the Liverpool EPA project in 1971, relationships with CDP were further strengthened when Midwinter, the Liverpool EPA project director, became a part-time consultant to CDP on education at the national level, and locally a consultant to the Liverpool project. He had also set up 'Priority' in Liverpool to continue dissemination of the Liverpool EPA work after the formal end of the EPA project in 1971. The Liverpool CDP thus inherited both a specific set of ideas and practice in 'community education' with schools, and a growing interest in alternative forms of adult education, not only in the EPA project, but in the WEA which had been involved in the EPA programme, and the University's Institute of Extension Studies (IES).

For the Liverpool CDP, which employed up to three full time workers concentrating on education, an educational liaison officer and two adult education workers, one appointed through the WEA, the other part of the IES adult education team, this part of the programme should have been an important linking mechanism, a way of holding together the many diverse activities of the project, and of making them more effective. For many, the essence of community development lies in promoting increased awareness and new skills through a form of education by practical experience. But in fact education in Liverpool was far from being a harmonising influence or linking mechanism. Those working in education, instead of being at the centre of the operation, were at its peripheries, and – for different reasons – basically in conflict with the overall direction of the project.

Nationally the early emphasis in CDP on educational work with schools died away once the pilot projects had been set up. This form of education received very little attention in the first inter-project report and was easily dismissed as an approach requiring enormous energies for very little return (CDP, 1974). Projects which had invested heavily here found it exceptionally difficult to relate work with schools to their other community development activities, and in Coventry, the community education team became effectively a self-contained project. With the shift nationally to a more radical form of community development, adult education with its emphasis on raising local consciousness on major issues such as housing and employment, came into prominence. Yet this more radical edge, particularly the openly political language used, was ill-fitted to the Liverpool programme of balancing community development and action with changes in local authority organisation. Thus for different reasons the schools' programme and the adult education work were almost always out of step with the main project. This was heightened on the adult education side, as workers were employed either directly by the WEA or the IES and not by the project, though following the withdrawal of the IES team at the end of 1973, the WEA worker transferred to the main project. On the schools side, the educational liaison officer was employed on terms and conditions appropriate for a school teacher – very different from other project team members.

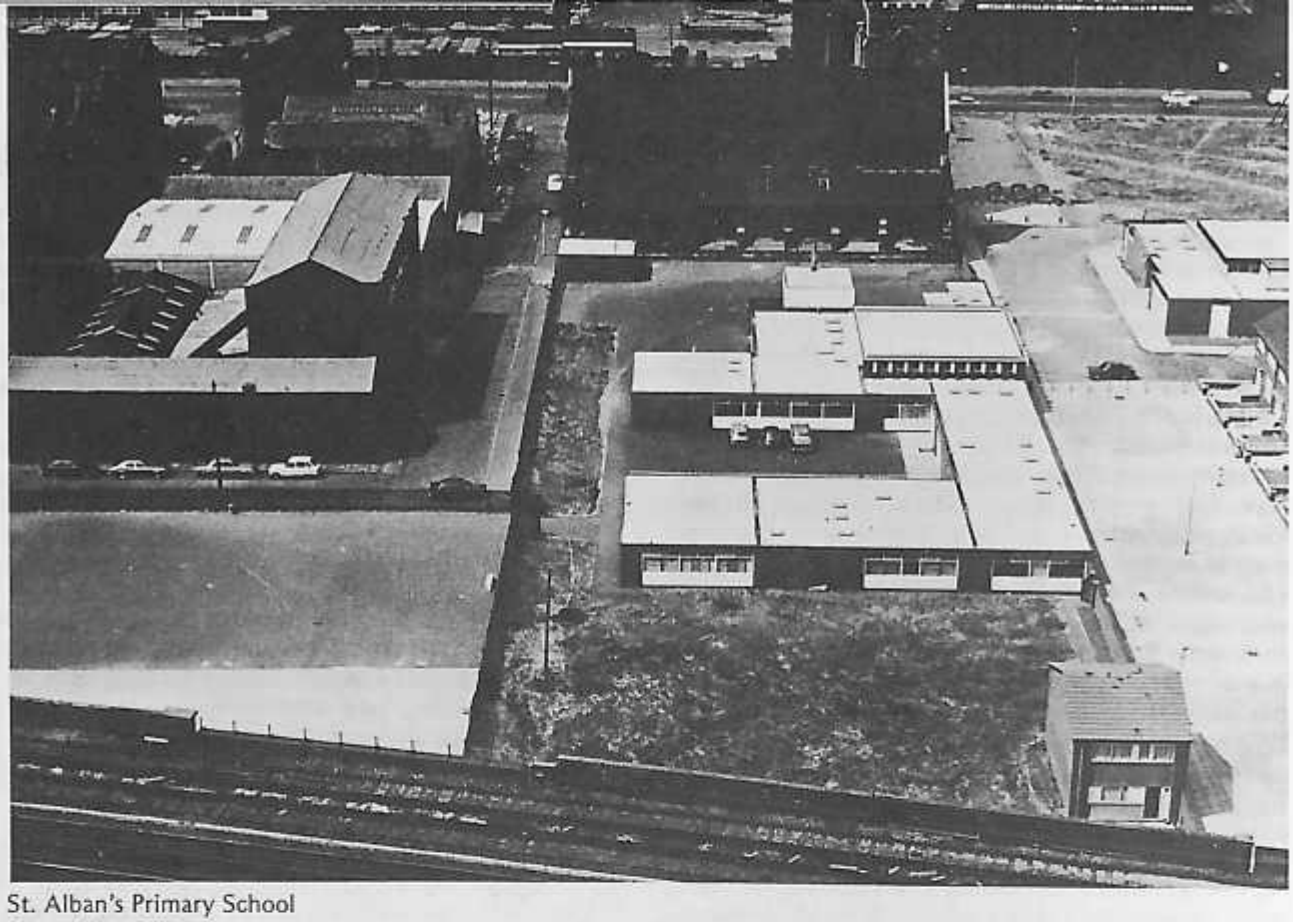
The Liverpool CDP experience of attempting to link various forms of education and community development, underlines problems not apparent in the EPA programme with its narrower focus. Though all could see the importance of an educational component in community development, the problem was to realise this potential.

1. The Schools' Programme

Local Schools.

In 1971 when CDP began its educational programme, the number of children in local primary and secondary schools had fallen to about 2,700 children, in fifteen different institutions, on eleven different sites employing altogether about 150 teachers. At primary level there were four straight through junior and infant schools, four separate junior and four separate infant schools – ranging in size from 90 to 268 children on roll. All but one had been built or rebuilt since 1954, and five new schools were in fact built between 1970 and 1972. Several schools too, had benefited from the addition of nursery classes under the Urban Programme.

At secondary level, there were three secondary modern schools, one mixed, one boys and the other girls. Slum clearance and rehousing had reduced numbers on roll, so that the overall numbers in 1971 were about



St. Alban's Primary School
Photo: Liam Gilligan

St. Catherine's Roman Catholic Secondary School for girls
Photo: Liam Gilligan

Pius X, Secondary Boys' School, Latimer Street
Photo: Liam Gilligan

40% below capacity. However at both primary and secondary level, the schools had been successful in retaining staff as numbers dropped. As a result pupil teacher ratios were generally below the average for the city.

Despite these apparently good levels of provision, the Vauxhall area presented a range of educational problems. Though no overall tests of educational attainment were conducted by the project, achieved levels of performance were likely to have been below average. In the school leavers' study the complete age group in Vauxhall eligible to leave school in July 1972 was assessed on three separate tests of attainment. With an average chronological age of just over 15 years, the sample's average score on a maths test was equivalent to that of 11 year olds. In reading, the average was about a year below their chronological age, and on a test of 'listening vocabulary' over a year. Even when the performance of those in the sample who had reached grammar school was analysed separately the level was only just at or below the national average. Truancy rates were exceptionally high in the final year of compulsory schooling, a figure confirmed by the 'Social Malaise' study, and staying on rates were low. Only 29% obtained one or more GCE passes against 53% for the Northwest region as a whole, and only two out of the 140 in the sample stayed to the sixth form, against 15% for the region.

Collectively the schools presented a difficult problem for outside intervention. All but two were Catholic, with strong emphasis on traditional patterns of learning, reinforced by parish priests, who through their positions among the school managers retained a powerful influence on school policy. There was a strong tradition, too, of home–school links, through the network of pastoral work and social activities, but home–school links very different from those intended by some of the

FAIR PLAY FOR FREE SCHOOL

Dear Scottie Press,

The failure of Liverpool Education Committee to provide for the setting up of the Free School Project is deplorable.

The existing system has so many flaws to it that any other method of teaching children, living in Industrial conurbations, should be closely examined, if only to obtain its best results.

Mr. Murphy and his band of pioneers in this scheme could be regarded as idealists, but it should be borne in mind that the present system was once somebody else's ideal!

The methods of teaching at the free school, regarded by some as too, too radical, should be analysed properly, and not compared with existing methods, which many teachers particularly in primary schools, don't like anyway.

Everyone appreciates that enormous amounts of money are already spent on education as it is, but there is little or no money spent in educational research, which is vital if progress is to be made. Come on Liverpool Corporation this is an opportunity for you to pioneer such research. Sponsor the scheme, provide accommodation, send your recalcitrant children and see if you can succeed where the system failed.

Give these young people a chance to show that they can improve on the system which produced them. They might be right you know, and if you don't help, or care, we might miss an opportunity to redirect some of the youth in the area away from robbery, violence, vandalism, foul language and impudence brought about by your failure to recognise that the system has an imbalance. The free school might well be able to produce something considerably better!

1. Look at your failures to provide proper recreational facilities.

2. Failure to recognise the faults in the present system.

3. Worst of all failure to attempt correction.

This Project might be an opportunity for you to climb the mast, see a different horizon, good or bad, and provide for its inevitable existence.

C. Foster, Chairman,
Highfield Gardens/Vauxhall Gardens
Residents Association,
24, Pownall Square,

Scottie Press, 1971

FREE SCHOOL

NOTICE TO QUIT.

The Education Committee decided this month the Free School has to quit the premises Major Street/ Stanley Road. The reason given is that the Free School has not kept the conditions of the tenancy Which they hold for a token rent of £1.00. per year. The Echo reported that parents of children attending the Free School intended to fight the decision. Estimates of children going to the School vary from 90 to 50 or even less.

Scottie Press decided to get some local reaction to this news. There is no doubt that the Free School provokes strong feelings for and against.
One lady said "I will be glad to see it closed- we get no peace - There is carrying on til all hours of the night" " Needs blowing up " was the explosive comment of one man , " It harbours vandals and is a School for drop outs " said another. One Marwood Towers claimed the block is wrecked by the pupils When asked by the Scottie Press if she was sure she replied " Yes, the teachers know and see what is happening but take no Notice "

On the other hand one resident thought the Free School is being victimised for every bit of vandalism in the area. Another person felt " the children get a better outlook on life at the Free School.

The Scottie Press would like to hear from readers about this decision and open up discussion in the district about the whole issue of Education Are the local schools doing the right thing ? Or as much as they should ? Is the Free School a way out protest or the right ideas with some mixed up followers, Or just not given a fair chance to prove itself.

Scottie Press, Aug. 73

more recent advocates of such liaison. Schools and teachers filled an important position in the local area, and one or two schools had established a high reputation for particular activities such as music. There was very little evidence of open discontent among parents or the community with schools locally.

The setting up of the Scotland Road Free School throws an interesting light on this picture. The Free School had been set up by two teachers who had left local schools, reacting against traditional and, to their view, irrelevant methods. The Free School survived for several years, undoubtedly supported by a number of local parents, whose children had rejected traditional schooling – though the school had basically to depend on outside help. But these parents were clearly a minority, and among others the Free School aroused strong feelings – against the life style of its teachers, its organisation, and free methods of learning. In this they reflected the position of many local teachers who adopted a 'they'll be sorry when it collapses' attitude to children who had left their schools to join the Free School. When the Free School did finally collapse in 1974, children were reluctantly taken back, and many were refused readmission. Finally the local authority had to set up a special rehabilitation unit to cater for those without schooling. These passions were faithfully played out in the project steering group, as the Free School and its various related projects applied for grants in one form or another.

The existence of the Free School undoubtedly made the project's work with schools more difficult. But there would have been friction; there was suspicion of the project's activities from the Catholic Church, particularly as the project moved into more controversial areas – the inevitable resistance to an outside group moving in with a programme of reform and the tacit accusation that existing organisations had failed. Several teachers were active in the professionally dominated residents' groups that preceded the project, and their activities here were by-passed and supplanted by the rapid spread of project sponsored resident associations.

St. Anthony's Orchestra
Photo: Peter Leeson

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

The Free School is part of the Vauxhall Community Trust which 'will attempt to provide in an informal way, a self-help centre to aid individuals families and groups in the area.' Facilities will include holidays, store of tools, ladders etc., street theatre and an arts workshop. The Trust also hopes to act 'as a pressure group to bring about the full use of all the local facilities like school buildings, parish clubs, open spaces etc.'

There has been a lot of talk about the 'Free School' Here and Free School does some talking, about all the activities it hopes to promote which go beyond conventional education.

There will be set up in the Scotland Road–Vauxhall area of Liverpool, an alternative type of school to be known as the Scotland Road Free School. The school will be a community school which will be totally involved with its environment.

The nature of this involvement will be such that the school will be in the vanguard of social change in the area.

It is felt that the organisation of education is insensitive, unaware and in content largely irrelevent to the needs of the children and their future role as adults in the society.

Particularly in the Scotland Road–Vauxhall area, it has not provided for the aspirations, life and culture of the people, who have a social heritage worthy of itself which must be given an identity and expression of its own.

The ultimate aim of the free school is to bring about a fragmentation of the state system into smaller, all age, personalized, democratic, locally controlled community schools which can best serve the immediate needs of the area in which they are situated.

It is felt that the state system in contemplating change considers only innocuous reforms which do not question the total structure. We are obliged therefore to step outside the system in order to best demonstrate the feasibility and fulfilment of the free school ideal. Having achieved this demonstration we are sure that society will enforce the adoption of the free school idea by the state system.

We wish to say that the education process should continue throughout a persons life but with the present academic criteria the finance allocated to a child obtaining a university place is ten times greater than for a child leaving school at fifteen. A major area of activity for the Scotland Road Free School will be to demonstrate how a community school can continue the educational process into all areas of life throughout life.

Scottie Press, 4, May 1971

Blackstock Gardens
Photo: Peter Leeson

The Educational Liaison Officer

From the start, following the Home Office attempt to link EPA and CDP physically in the same area, there was contact between Eric Midwinter, the EPA project director, and the CDP to discuss possible joint action. In early 1970 discussions were held within the team, with the EPA project, and with local headteachers, the last revealing suspicion of 'outside experts'. In June 1970 the EPA director drew up a community education programme with a recommendation for the appointment of an Educational Liaison officer (ELO); the brief called for 'a programme of community themes in the Vauxhall schools, including home–school projects, ranging from publications and exhibitions to parents' "at homes".' The programme would also make use of teaching kits developed by the EPA project, and a range of ideas running from preschool education to work experience for school leavers. It was a complete package based on the work of the Liverpool EPA. The scheme was endorsed by the local steering group, and discussions begun with schools.

However there were immediate problems. Vauxhall schools had not been included in the EPA designation, and were therefore not in receipt of extra funds, such as salary additions. Some schools clearly wanted to make designation a precondition for taking part in the local programme. The project, too, was not completely convinced by Midwinter's direct approach to 'community education', with its ready made kits – 'Home School Harry' and all the rest of it, which hardly fitted the project's indirect and rather less colourful methods. The project director pointed to the difference between Vauxhall and the EPA area. However the project was at the time trying to move forward on a number of fronts, and was as yet hardly established in the area. Staff turnover further delayed the next stage, and it was not until March 1971 that the education liaison post was advertised.

The arrangement closely followed those in the other pilot projects, with the Education Department taking a major part and particular emphasis on the secondment of a teacher already familiar with the area. When the appointment was confirmed in September, 1971, it was under regulations which included the provision that the teacher 'shall not be required to perform any duties except such as are connected with the work of a school.' This was to prove a major stumbling block over the next three years, and made it very difficult to blend the schools programme with that of CDP in general.

Once appointed, the ELO who had been a teacher in the area, retained allegiance to the LEA which continued to employ him, while looking to Midwinter as consultant for the framework within which he was expected to work. Attempts were made by the project to alter the terms of employment to allow for more flexible working, particularly during school holidays. But this was never satisfactorily resolved, and it was noticeable that the ELO moved increasingly away from the team forum, a process which was accelerated by the decision in 1972 to set up a local teachers' resource centre in one of the secondary schools. This became an office base and centre for the ELO's work.

There is clearly a powerful tradition of autonomy in education. At departmental level the project had difficulty involving education in the inter-departmental working party, and of attracting educational services to the Multi-Services Centre. At the team level, the schools programme tended to develop as a self-contained unit with little overlap or relationship with other activities. This was symbolised by the separate base and different working conditions of the ELO.

The Schools Programme

In setting out the schools programme the liaison officer outlined the major objectives in October, 1971, and supplied a list of activities so far started in six schools. These included the attachment of a small group of teachers from a local College of Education, who were studying for a one year diploma in the teaching of children under social handicap. They were allocated to three junior schools to pursue environmental projects and other schemes relevant to their special studies. In one of the secondary schools a course in nautical catering was started, leading, it was hoped, to CSE recognition. There were further plans to involve students from other colleges, produce a schools supplement to Scottie Press, and a proposed joint schools festival for Easter 1972.

However the project director pressed for delay in implementing this large number of schemes until they could be tied in to the main action programme. The educational consultant argued strongly that the programme should concentrate on a limited number of themes: 'over the last few years, the concepts of community education have been substantially developed. One was hopeful that the CDPs would either implement those concepts or accept them and build upon them.' By March 1972 there was increasing exasperation at the lack of progress and growing pressure for the liaison officer to mount 'a structured and unified scheme' to run for two years. Part of this delay may be explained by reluctance to implement the Midwinter package, and kits ordered by the project began to gather dust. However no alternative programme was proposed and the ELO continued to look to Midwinter for direction.

The consultant's main recommendation was that efforts should be concentrated in no more than two 'model' schools. These were to be used as demonstration points to reach schools which had so far been reluctant to cooperate. This idea was adopted, together with an LEA supported proposal to set up a local resource centre. The latter would function as a forum for teachers, where experiences could be shared, in-service work developed and the technical needs of schools met in a more sophisticated and relevant way than the less accessible city centres. It could also grow into a community education centre, servicing further education and community groups. The lion's share of the educational budget was absorbed by these two components.

From April 1972 onwards the number of activities and schemes multiplied. The investment at the resource centre, a converted classroom on the first floor of the boys secondary school produced a wide range of technical aids ranging from language master machines to printing and duplicating facilities. Many schools benefited from this equipment, and the technical expertise available on printing and duplicating work for exhibitions or material for Mode III CSE projects.

The pull-out schools supplement 'Merseydotes' in the 'Scottie Press' was produced on a regular monthly basis, and lasted throughout the project with assistance from a volunteer coordinator who had managed to enlist help from a large number of schools. Although not outstandingly creative in presentation, it reached a large number of homes. A parent-teacher association was started in the 'model' primary school. This concerned itself with educational as well as social matters largely as a result of the enthusiasm of the school staff for parent involvement in school life. A special reading scheme for slow learners was also introduced into this school, based on an earlier experimental programme in the West Riding (Smith, 1975) and its effectiveness monitored by the research team.

In 1972–1973 the ELO quite naturally became involved in curriculum development at the school where his resources centre was based. Indeed it was intended that this school should be the second 'model' establishment, though this was never very clear to the parties involved.

A seamanship course was set up, obviously appropriate in view of the economic dependence of the area on the sea and dockland. A second project was designed to illuminate the nineteenth-century history of Vauxhall from the evidence of glass and porcelain objects dug out of abandoned railway embankments in the area. The subsequent exhibition of glass bottles, clay pipes and pots attracted visitors from far afield as well as from other schools in the district, and became one of the more successful action schemes.

However, despite the early strictures regarding focus and clarity of aims, it was obvious that the programme had developed in a diffuse and unconnected way. The many and often bewildering variety of units did not contribute to a coherent whole; the original intention behind the programme of building on the EPA experience was definitely not being realised.

During 1973 the project team was split by internal conflicts, as the IES adult education group pushed hard for acceptance of their more radical definition of community development. There were several sharp clashes at team meetings, where the IES group challenged the assumptions underlying the main programme. The project director's response was to appeal to an already 'agreed programme', and resist the use of terms such as 'class' and 'class consciousness' in the Vauxhall context. During this time the ELO increasingly withdrew from the team context, and there was growing criticism from within the project of the educational programme and the resource centre which was clearly underused by schools and inaccessible to the Vauxhall community at large.

By the end of 1973 the IES team had withdrawn from the project, and the ELO taken over responsibility for the organisation of evening classes in the local schools. By the following year the WEA tutor had transferred to the project, simplifying the confusing patterns of responsibilities in the educational programme. A year later, in early 1975, as the main project came to an end, the ELO departed for a post elsewhere, and the resource centre was closed down, its equipment consigned to the main project to be used in community work at large.

At the end of the project the local schools' views of the educational programme and resource centre were collected through informal interviews. Six schools were in favour of continuing the ELO appointment, six were against and one could not venture an opinion having had no working contact with the project. Four were strongly in favour of retaining the resources centre, five were against, and three would have needed more contact and information in order to express a view. Very few headteachers had a clear understanding of the role of the ELO, and it seems that it was hardly explained in terms other than material support to meet the occasional needs for items which could not be met out of capitation or school funds. A few spoke of a liaison role. As one head put it 'it came across as a liaison job. He could tell me the set up in the area and what was going on in other places.'

At the level of tangible benefits the picture was very varied. The 'model' school obviously benefited substantially both in terms of ELO man hours and in resources. In addition to running regular 'discos' with the junior department for a period of two years, the ELO helped set up a PTA and provided substantial grant aid for the

purchase of musical instruments, material for the reading programme, the provision of a minibus for school outings and printing services.

The 'model' school programme, despite the considerable commitment of the ELO, never gave the impression of being guided by an overall strategy. It lacked a conceptual framework and clear goals. Even the resources centre, despite its large cache of equipment, was little more than a 'resource', and not a key element in an attempt to introduce a programme of educational change. Nor was the schools programme tied in to other parts of the project. Inevitably, the chances of a single person, even if he had been equipped with a coherent strategy and adequate resources, making a major impact on a local school system with 150 teachers in fifteen different schools, were low indeed. The EPA project required a team concentrating on education alone to make some impact. By not being linked with the other project activities in Vauxhall, the educational programme failed to gain any advantage from the team context — indeed this may have been merely an additional handicap, given the suspicion generated in schools by some of the other project activities, and the assumption that the project somehow supported or endorsed the Free School development.

2. The WEA Tutor/Organiser.

From the start of the CDP project there was a strong interest in the role that adult education might play in community development. This followed the Liverpool EPA experience where a WEA tutor had been at work since 1969 experimenting with new approaches to meet the educational needs of working class communities. These experiments had evoked interest beyond the bounds of Liverpool (Lovett, 1975). Within the CDP there was discussion about the need to establish links between community and local industry, and recognition that the team would need to consult with other agencies working in the field, particularly the WEA and appropriate departments in the University.

Links were established with the WEA, and by July 1971 the project committee had approved a proposal to appoint a WEA tutor-organiser to be attached to the project team, though directly accountable to the local WEA district secretary. The post was advertised by the end of the year, and the person appointed began work in July 1972.

At the same time the project had made links with the University Department of Adult Education and Extra Mural Studies, where the lecturer with special responsibility for community development at the Institute of Extension Studies (IES) had applied for a grant from the Gulbenkian Foundation to develop a new programme of teaching and fieldwork in urban community development and adult education. The IES had for several years been involved in community development work in Liverpool. The WEA tutor organiser was expected to work closely with the IES team, and office space was made available for him within the university. However even at this early stage it was plain that the approach being developed by the IES team was far more radical than the general direction of the project, emphasising the class position of people in Vauxhall, and the need to develop — or in IES terms, 'recognise' — consciousness of this class position. The WEA tutor was also expected to link up with the ELO, who again worked within a very different, almost non-political, framework.

The Tutor's Progress, 1972–1975.

The responsibilities drawn up for the post of WEA tutor were wide ranging, including: exploring opportunities within industry for the development of adult education and participation in the community; developing closer cooperation between schools, industry and parents at the point of transition from school to work; exploring ways of encouraging the adaptability of workers to a changing job-market; teaching 3/4 courses per week during the autumn and winter months — not necessarily in a traditional form; maintaining contact with existing part-time tutors and recruiting additional tutors; and finally providing guidance for their work and exploring new methods and approaches suitable for the needs of adults in the Vauxhall area. Although this description mentioned pioneering and exploratory work especially in the key area of relating industrial experience to the community, there were underlying assumptions about the more traditional approaches to adult education, particularly that the tutor would devote a proportion of his time to teaching what were recognisable classes.

At first the tutor began working with some of the resident groups initiated and encouraged by the project team to get first hand experience of issues being taken up by residents. The result was a diverse set of developments — the possibility of afternoon classes and a creche for mothers with young children, action over broken glass in the area linked with the production by a local firm of non-deposit bottles, and over housing maintenance. But by the end of 1972 there were problems 'in developing any real links with the industrial movement in the area. This has been due in no small measure to the fact that the WEA has a Tutor-Organiser dealing with the educational aspects of industrial relations. His teaching programme provides for shop stewards throughout Liverpool and including Vauxhall.' Any initiatives with trade unions thus had to avoid duplication of existing WEA arrangements. Early meetings with representatives on the 'shop floor' indicated that new approaches to adult education would not be easily adopted.

Other involvements in the early days included a brief and largely unsuccessful pilot scheme with young people employed by community industry aimed at interesting them in trade union affiliation, and association with a series of programmes produced by the WEA together with Radio Merseyside, aimed at stimulating groups on local problems. The tutor, however, was critical of the selection of problems here and the educational methods. 'Educational programmes' he concluded in his report, 'should come from within by beginning at a grass roots level. The traditional role of the WEA may not be the one most fitted for the development of a working class educational programme in Vauxhall.'

In 1973 the growing unemployment in the Vauxhall area underlined the problems of declining local industry.

In response the tutor increasingly shifted his emphasis to the work context. The first move in this direction was a proposal to set up welfare rights courses for local residents, based at the Information Centre, which it was hoped would attract the unemployed and others in need of support as well as equipping the Information Centre staff, and neighbourhood community workers, with knowledge and skills in income maintenance. At the same time the tutor was building up contacts with various unions, arguing that a valid educational role in the workplace would be to provide welfare rights information through 'teach-ins' and other methods. The major difficulty was to secure formal recognition. Acceptance at Tate & Lyle's was an important first step. A joint union action committee had been formed to fight possible closure of the Vauxhall plant. The tutor was coopted onto the committee as an observer. Working in this way fitted with the tutor's belief that the way to effect change in areas like Vauxhall was for 'workers to solve their own problems either through the traditional channels of organised labour or through their own growing social awareness.' The central issue was about people fighting to save their jobs, and from this angle there could be no compromise with traditional adult education.

However the tutor also continued his work with local groups. Activities in 1973 included assistance to tenants' associations with various campaigns, and an advisory role in a playground scheme, the arranging of afternoon dressmaking and weight watching classes for mothers, and schemes for adult illiterates, marginal involvement in the 'Time Off' evening classes organised by the University team in local schools, and theatre visits for local people to the Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse theatres.

However there was the usual problem of spreading and diffuse activities. Neither the project director nor the WEA could see them adding up to a coherent adult education programme. In part they overlapped in a confusing way with other aspects of the programme; the tutor was clearly influenced by the approach developed by IES, taking part in several joint projects, yet continuing other apparently unrelated activities. The project director recommended that the tutor should 'decide on a well defined programme of action which draws out four to six principal areas of work, as well as specifying the rationale or theory behind the strategy to be adopted.' The WEA was now also pressing for a more structured approach which would involve a regular one day a week teaching commitment outside Vauxhall and 'a programme in the Vauxhall area, within the liberal adult education framework appropriate to pioneer projects, which has sufficient basis of formality to be recognised by the Department of Education and Science.'

Towards the end of 1972 and throughout the following year relationships within the project became increasingly strained, coming close to breakdown on several occasions, against a background of the rent action and tenants' campaign. The IES pushed strongly for a more radical definition of community development against the projects' apparent emphasis on a local authority framework. For a time the position was highly confused with a pattern of shifting alliances within the project team and related groups. The WEA tutor was in a particularly untenable position, expected to work with both project and IES teams, while being responsible to yet another body with a further set of expectations.

In July 1973 the project director wrote to the WEA:

'it was hoped that some mutally beneficial bridge could be created between community and industry. In retrospect this expectation may have been unrealistic . . . The conditions and aims of the appointment should be redesigned. The principal alteration to the terms of the appointment should recognise that in the context of CDP, adult education can most effectively develop from a community base . . . There are unacceptable tensions and stresses created by a person working in one context and one group of colleagues, whilst remaining accountable to a different group. The issue of employer and work groups should therefore be simplified to give the tutor organiser a single agency and a single work constituency.'

Following lengthy discussions with the WEA, it was agreed that the post of adult education tutor should be fully absorbed within the Vauxhall project, and the WEA interest terminated. This, together with the withdrawal of the IES left the field clear for the tutor to formulate a more coherent and purposeful programme.

However while continuing to develop local theatre-going groups, and importing groups, such as the '7:84' theatre group, to mount local performances, the tutor in fact moved further into industrial and welfare rights work linking up with a member of the research team rather than working with community groups. A welfare rights campaign was begun early in 1974. It included production of posters and leaflets explaining various benefits, and the mounting of a stall outside the local DHSS office. Out of these ventures came a proposal to set up a Welfare Rights Group, which grew out of evening classes conducted on a weekly basis at the Information Centre.

Although professionally dominated at the outset, membership spread. The group responded to a number of needs ranging from those of individual claimants to those arising out of strike action, redundancy and low pay. Such welfare rights education strengthened links with the workplace and the local trade union movement. As a by product it had the effect of changing the emphasis in the Information Centre, and widening its sphere of influence.

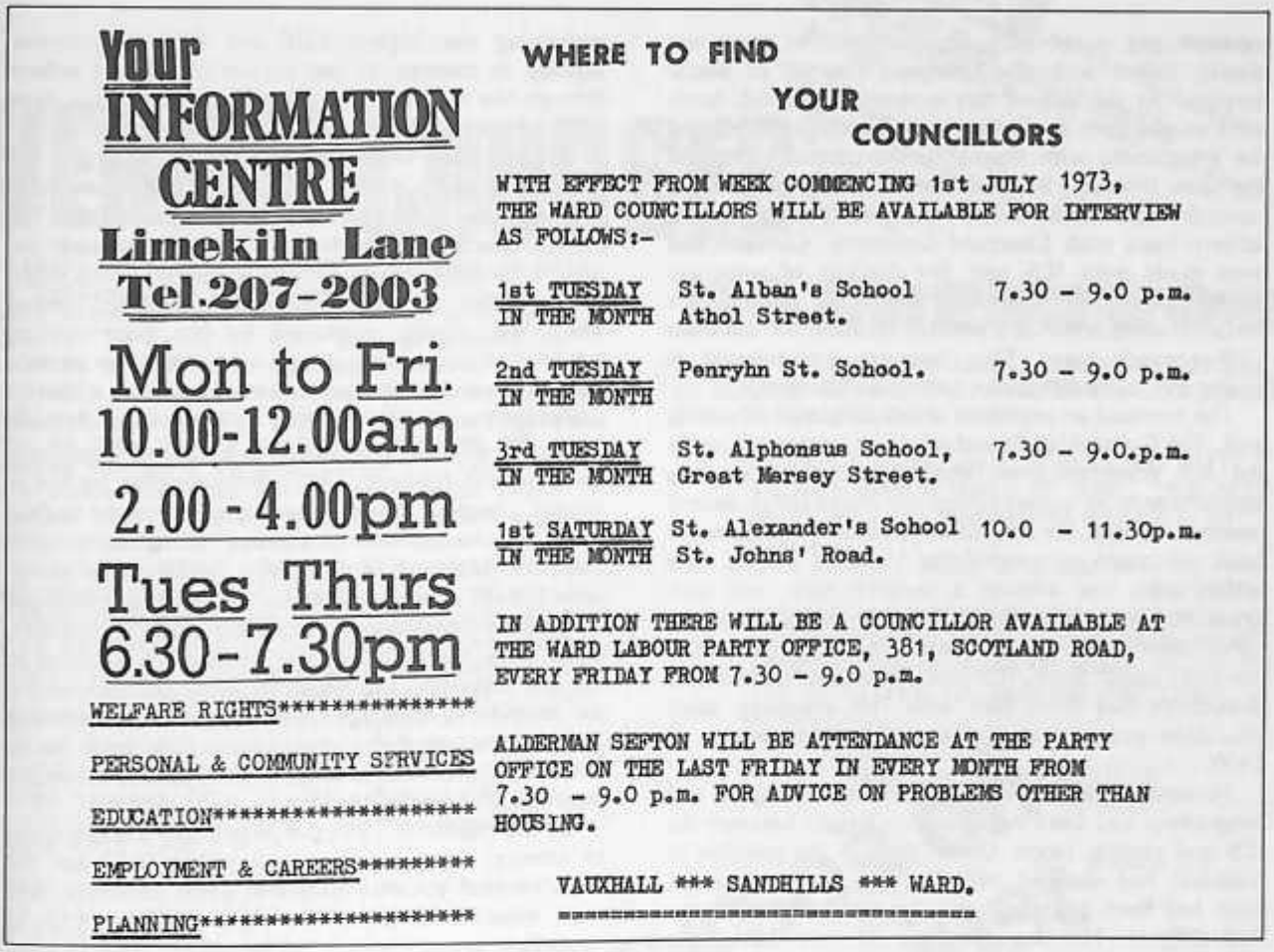
On Monday 29th OCTOBER at the Community Services Centre, Silvester Street at 7.30 p.m. members of the EVERYMAN THEATRE PLAYERS will be presenting –

"THE REIGN OF TERROR AND THE GREAT MONEY TRICK"

The play is based on the lives and problems of working people and should prove to be both entertaining and interesting. There will also be an afternoon performance, when it is hoped baby-sitters will be available to look after children to enable mothers to enjoy the production.

FREE ADMISSION FOR ALL RESIDENTS OF THE AREA.

DAVE GODMAN, ADULT EDUCATION VAUXHALL PROJECT



Your INFORMATION CENTRE
Limekiln Lane
Tel.207-2003

Mon to Fri.
10.00-12.00am
2.00 - 4.00pm
Tues Thurs
6.30-7.30pm

WELFARE RIGHTS**********
PERSONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICES
EDUCATION**********
EMPLOYMENT & CAREERS*********
PLANNING**********

WHERE TO FIND YOUR COUNCILLORS

WITH EFFECT FROM WEEK COMMENCING 1st JULY 1973, THE WARD COUNCILLORS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW AS FOLLOWS:-

1st TUESDAY IN THE MONTH	St. Alban's School Athol Street.	7.30 - 9.0 p.m.
2nd TUESDAY IN THE MONTH	Penryhn St. School.	7.30 - 9.0 p.m.
3rd TUESDAY IN THE MONTH	St. Alphonsus School, Great Mersey Street.	7.30 - 9.0.p.m.
1st SATURDAY IN THE MONTH	St. Alexander's School St. Johns' Road.	10.0 - 11.30p.m.

IN ADDITION THERE WILL BE A COUNCILLOR AVAILABLE AT THE WARD LABOUR PARTY OFFICE, 381, SCOTLAND ROAD, EVERY FRIDAY FROM 7.30 - 9.0 p.m.

ALDERMAN SEFTON WILL BE ATTENDANCE AT THE PARTY OFFICE ON THE LAST FRIDAY IN EVERY MONTH FROM 7.30 - 9.0 p.m. FOR ADVICE ON PROBLEMS OTHER THAN HOUSING.

VAUXHALL *** SANDHILLS *** WARD.

Scottie Press, August 1973

An example from 1974 illustrates the developing role of the tutor. In September women from a local factory had gone on strike for equal pay; a room in the project centre was taken over as a strike office – an unusual event in what was in part a local authority office. The tutor advised on welfare rights and taught administrative skills. The action was successful, and led to further engagements in similar situations, particularly where the tutor would represent workers at industrial tibunals.

The emphasis given by the project to adult education reflected its importance in community development – as a way of providing an immediate input to community groups, in contrast to the long term investment implied by work with children at school level. Yet the project was always dependent upon the contribution of other agencies with very different views on the role of adult education – one group, the WEA, originally emphasising the extension of existing adult education practice, the other interpreting adult education in a more radical framework of political and community action. The tutor organiser was caught between these conflicting pressures, and perhaps partly as a result took on a wide and confusing scatter of activities, which overlapped with several other parts of the project. His own background, however, pushed him increasingly to work in the industrial context with local trade union groups. His work demonstrated the gap between community organisation and the workplace, but no clear programme was developed to strengthen possible links. Once into the industrial field he was very much on his own, with the exception of one member of the research team, and even when transferred to the CDP team continued to work in this area. This left the community programme with little effective educational input, when the project had organised several community groups and local workers had been appointed. Though some new ideas and activities were tried out it remained an isolated effort, at a tangent to the main project's activities and programme.

3. The Institute of Extension Studies (IES)

The work of the IES and its role in the Vauxhall project has already been touched upon at several points in this report. A full account of the IES adult education programme in Vauxhall is being prepared by the IES team, in accordance with their action-research brief – both to carry out a programme and evaluate its effects. The present account is therefore only a summary of the major developments and an assessment based largely on material collected by the research team, rather than an IES view.

Perhaps more than any other arrangement in the Vauxhall project, the links with IES reflected the early 'cathedral building' style of CDP where all were to be involved in a concerted search for better solutions to the problems of poverty. The IES had for some time before CDP been involved in the links between adult education and community development through the work of a lecturer with special responsibility for community deve-

lopment and community organisation. His work was closely linked with the Liverpool Council of Social Services. At the end of this exploratory period, funds were sought from the Gulbenkian Foundation to expand the programme with several further appointments. At the same time in 1970 the Home Office was seeking a research team for the Liverpool project, having failed to achieve links with Liverpool University. Contacts had been made with IES over the funding of voluntary groups under the Urban Programme and the IES was certainly considered as a possible location for the main CDP research team. This, however, was rejected as raising too many difficulties within the University.

The eventual arrangement appeared to suit all parties well. The Gulbenkian Foundation was unable to supply the full grant required, and their contribution was supplemented by support from the Home Office central research budget for an action-research programme in adult education as part of the Vauxhall project. The action team was without a research team, and with apparently little prospect of gaining one, had begun to make their own arrangements. The possibility of a research input from IES was clearly welcomed and discussions had been held with IES about an adult education programme in Vauxhall in the autumn of 1970.

However by the following year when the grant and programme had been negotiated — largely between the IES and central Home Office team — the position in Vauxhall had changed radically. The Oxford research team had been recruited, and the first project director had resigned. His successor was far less enthusiastic about the IES programme, and the Oxford research team made clear from the start that to have another independent team in the area could only add to the problems of an already complicated set-up. The position was further confused by the fact that the Vauxhall project was only one aspect of the IES programme, which drew its main funds from another source. This, and the fact that the IES agreement was with the central CDP team, rather than local project, emerged strongly at points of conflict, with the IES insistence that it was not merely a part of the Vauxhall project, and therefore not bound to work solely through project organisation and channels.

The original outline programme for adult education had concentrated on the training both of professional and local people, and on research, particularly the way information and ideas were transmitted to areas such as Vauxhall. The project particularly welcomed the training aspect. The full time action-researcher was appointed by the end of 1971, and in addition there was support from the assistant director at the IES, with part time involvement of two or three other workers at the IES. The first six months were spent in making contacts in the area, and developing a strategy and basis for action later in 1972.

From an early point it was clear that this strategy would be at variance with the main project's approach. The notes on the appointment of the action-researcher had included arguments in favour of an approach based on a 'social class' analysis of Vauxhall, and this was refined in a paper delivered to the York conference on deprivation in April 1972 (Jackson and Ashcroft, 1972). The paper was a critique of many of the assumptions underlying the original CDP and EPA programmes. Already in contrast to the project's gradualist reform through the slow build-up of local institutions, a more radical 'issue based' strategy was being developed.

By now there were signs of tension, with the IES pushing for open debate with both project and local authority about community development strategy. The project director was particularly sensitive to such discussion involving local authority personnel, which might destroy other patiently created links and confidence, which was already weakened by the more militant activities of community groups in Vauxhall. An attempt by IES to set up such a seminar involving local authority and project was coldly received by the project director.

Phrases such as 'a challenge to bourgeois hegemony' (Jackson and Ashcroft, 1972), 'educationists are not in central Liverpool to *rescue* workers, or merely to *help* them but to establish a position of *solidarity* with them . . .' (Ashcroft and Jackson, 1972) while acceptable enough in academic papers may well have sounded dangerously revolutionary in a local authority context. Other team members, however, were more attracted to the IES approach, and began to apply pressure within the team for a more open discussion of the theoretical assumptions underlying the project. The main tactic used in response was to press the IES to put forward a programme of practical work.

By the middle of 1972 the programme was beginning to emerge; a survey was conducted to find out the experience of Vauxhall people in adult education, and work begun with groups on local problems such as vandalism, unemployment or recreation. The strategy was to respond to issues as they arose by close contact with resident groups or other local organisations, rather than organise classes on a fixed basis. The team also began planning a series of more conventional courses, 'Time Off', partly in response to the survey results. However a 'key issue' arose in the summer of 1972 with the implementation of the Housing Finance Act and its likely effects in local rent increases. This was undoubtedly an issue which raised spontaneous local protest. A day conference was organised for those interested in discussing the implications of the Act, and from there the Campaign took off with a series of mass meetings, organised throughout Vauxhall. The IES defined its role as one of providing information and informed comment on the Act and its implications, as well as expressing solidarity with local action. However as the meetings moved to consider action over the rent increase, and the possibility of withholding rent and rent strikes, the line became increasingly difficult to distinguish. Following requests from certain resident groups the IES team moved on to offer advice on the legal implications of organising and carrying out a rent strike. Perhaps the least well organised activity, a march, resulted from our advice being ignored in the final stages, but it was important to show our solidarity by a member of that team taking part in the march' (Ashcroft and Jackson, 1972). As the rent strike developed into a political campaign in the early part of 1973, the IES also offered advice on the procedures for local elections as tenants' candidates were put forward for the elections of 1973. These developments are covered in more detail in the following chapter.

EVENING COURSES

The present programme of evening classes is very much a continuation and extension of the Vauxhall evening course which was so successful last year. In order to make this programme as suitable as possible to the requirements of local people a survey was undertaken last Spring suggestions from which form this years programme. However as many people will have guessed not everything has gone to plan since the recent trouble concerning the safety of schools which have beams constructed of a certain quick drying cement have ment the postponent of some classes and the relocation of others. Every attempt to restart these classes if the structure of the rooms that they take part in are subsequently found to be sound but in the meantime the classes which are ro take place are as listed below. It should at this stage be mentioned that if it had not been for the help and assistance of Mr. Jackson of Archbishop Whiteside School and Mrs Walls of St. Anthonys who accommodated the displaced classes from St. Pius School there might not indeed have been a further education programme this term.

For their help in this matter I am most grateful. Classes will commence the week beginning Monday 30th September from 7 p.m.

Monday

Archbishop Whiteside

Typing-

for beginners
who wish to pr

Writers Workshop-

a continuation of valuable and succes work undertaken by Mr. Evans.

Sociology-

A new class suggested by many residents which will give an interesting & informative insight into the workings of society.

Art

The relocation of the Oil Painting Class with additional allied artistic crafts.

Thursda
St

oral Studies -

the opportunity for individual study and tution in quiet surroundings.

At St. Anthonys

Spanish

- a continuation of the existing class but new entrants most welcome.

Evening Courses on Your Doorstep - just for SCOTTIE

of words
of value.
part of the course
be devoted to
conversion.

WEDNESDAY AT ARCHBISHOP WHITESIDE

Maths G.C.E.

A new class for those who wish to take Maths to examination level over a two year period.

Typing+S/Hand

A class for those who have a little but not much experience of typing and want to continue with the opportunity to learn a little shorthand.

Pastoral Studies

A class for students who wish to have quiet

r playing

- A new class
tuition from a
professional musician.

English G.C.E.

A new class in this basic subject.

Swimming

this class is to take place at St. Pius Baths and is designed for swimming and non swimmers alike

Woodwork-Metalwork

A combination class to be taken by two experience craft teachers.

Needlework.

A relocation of last years successful class.

PLEASE DONT WRITE ON BACK OF PHOTOGRAPHS.

RESTART WEEK BEGINNING

7th JAN 1974.

MONDAY

At St. Pius School at 7.30
odwork and Home Maintainance.
eful to all Dad's with many professional tips
ked up.
a beginners class of painti-
ther art crafts you wi
d for.
pring A
ion

DO LET'S KNOW

DO YOU KNOW ANY ADULTS WHO HAVE DIFFICULTY IN READING AND WRITING. WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP THEM BY READING THIS TO THEM.

"YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO READ AND WRITE IN THIS MODERN WORLD OF OURS. YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND AND FILL IN FORMS.....
READ NOTICES.....
LETTERS
YOUR RIGHTS DEPEND ON THIS. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED AND WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT LEARNING HOW TO READ OR WRITE OR IMPROVING THE ABILITIES YOU ALREADY HAVE THEN CONTACT ME.

JUDITH LEWIS
VAUXHALL -SERVICES CENTRE,

MONDAY TO

TO SOME-ONE

Whether events would have taken quite the same direction without IES involvement is impossible to determine. The 'fair rents' legislation certainly produced a spontaneous reaction locally, though both members of the project who had originally raised the rents issue and the IES team acted to focus this reaction into more organised activity. Here the IES team was threading a difficult line between advocacy, support and merely giving information – a distinction which others saw as impossible to maintain, particularly with the clear sympathies of IES team members. Both the rents and tenants campaigns made extensive use of the network of organisations associated with the project, while formally keeping their distance from the local authority component in the project team. By being university based the IES team was far more able 'to test out the limits' of the strategy than the main project, which both by style and position was firmly anchored within the local authority. However the project team could not avoid some of the repercussions, as those not closely involved in the project tended to see it as a single unit. It was widely believed, for example, that the project had backed the tenants' campaign. Tension between the two groups inevitably increased.

In addition to work on these 'key issues', the IES had also begun to plan a series of more conventional adult education programmes at the end of 1972. These were held in local schools, using members of the team or local teachers; they were to be free, paid for by the LEA. Subjects were determined partly by the survey results on local preferences, and partly through contact with residents' groups. Negotiations to use school premises dragged on, and the IES team was preoccupied by the more fast moving action on rents and local elections. The classes were finally set up by the summer of 1973, with activities such as Spanish and swimming proving more popular than courses with a stronger social content. However a group interested in writing grew out of the discussions on literature, and eventually went on to produce published collections of work from the Vauxhall area – 'Scotland Road Voices'. Other groups on welfare rights, and on 'Crime in the City' were effective in welding together a group with particular objectives and these lasted for several sessions – in the case of the 'Crime in the City' group, preparing a report for circulation in Liverpool. Individual tutoring as part of the adult literacy campaign was also set up.

By 1973 relationships between IES and the project were close to breaking point. In addition to sharply conflicting strategies of action and approaches to community development there were different definitions of the formal set-up. The project director insisted that the arrangement was for a single action-researcher from IES to be attached to the project, while the IES maintained that Vauxhall was only part of their activities – 'the IES has responsibilities for providing university adult education to a wide area, and is not subject to or controlled by the Vauxhall project even in its work with residents in the Vauxhall area.'

In response the project director pointed to the problems of coordination with the IES, particularly the problem of part-time IES staff working in the Vauxhall area who were only marginally involved with the project. The problems, he claimed, were highlighted 'by an "academic" approach to organisational arrangements, which may be summed up by saying the idea is more important than its implementation.' There was clear conflict in objectives – 'the IES have argued freely that the objective of their programme is to create political and working class conciousness, which in turn would lead to engagement in community action . . . the only acceptable line for a Local Authority project is to encourage and stimulate citizen participation in local problems, issues and organisations.' Though the IES protested that their approach was to 'recognize' and work with such 'consciousness' – not develop it, styles of action and strategies were clearly now so different that they could not be explained away as simple verbal misunderstandings.

The matter came to a head following the local elections in 1973 and the investigation by the local authority of the project's role in party political activity in Vauxhall during the elections. At the same time the possibility that the IES might receive a substantial grant from an American foundation which would be directly distributed to Vauxhall groups working with IES, without necessarily using the organisational machinery such as the steering group set up by the project for this purpose, further distanced project team members from the IES group. It appeared to underline the criticism that the IES team was prepared to use project organisation when it suited them, but not when they had independant resources to channel directly to local groups. In practice the grant never materialised. However the final stage had been reached, and the Home Office agreed to terminate the links with the IES towards the end of 1973, offering instead a general consultancy role in CDP at large. The direction taken by the IES team was much closer to the shift in the national project, where there was strong interest in adult education of the type put forward by IES. With the usual delays and lack of information associated with most changes in CDP, the arrangement was ended by early 1974, though the IES continued to maintain its links with various groups in the area. The Writers' Workshop begun in Vauxhall by another IES team member as formal links with CDP were ending, has continued on a regular basis since 1973. The 'Time-Off' course and the training programme were taken over by the main project.

From the start the IES approach had been sharply at variance with the basic local authority stance of the project, and there had been no attempt to minimise this gap in team discussions, where the project was pressed to make explicit its own position, or to adopt IES perspectives and terminology. In this the two groups were in strange contrast – the one reluctant to explain or justify its actions beyond that immediately necessary for their implementation, the other attaching great importance to the adoption of a more explicitly radical framework and likely to wrap up its activities in a way, which at times obscured their similarity with other parts of the programme.

There were differences, too, in styles and pace of action, with the IES worker likely to display bursts of intense activity in comparison to the methodical and continuous pace of the main project, which finally tended to wear down most opposition by its persistence. With the rent action and tenants' campaign the intensive

involvement of the IES team with key groups of residents clearly had a major impact on their development and subsequent careers; this was reflected in the continuing activity of tenants' groups with which the IES had worked, even after their withdrawal from the project. It was seen too in some of the more successful of the groups set up by the team, for example the Writers' Workshop. However it worked less well in the more structured activities such as the 'Time-Off' courses which required regular input, and progress here was slow. What was finally set up under this heading perhaps differed little from developments in adult education elsewhere, that would not necessarily have emerged from a 'social class' approach.

The IES and project teams' strategies represented two different methods of community development – the one best at intensive work with relatively small, tactically mobile groups of residents – and there was no doubt of the impact made on those who participated, though some were undoubtedly confused by the perspectives offered; the other aiming at an organised and interlocking structure of groups that would 'key' in to the local authority organisation. In some ways these could have been complementary approaches, but in practice, given the clash of personalities, different styles and strategies, and the confusing pattern of responsibility, they proved incompatible in the same project.

Photo: Peter Leeson

So far we have described the main elements in the project's action programme separately. Inevitably this approach loses much of the day to day interaction between one element and another. Nor has any account been given of the way the local authority responded to pressure from the community in the major campaigns that sprung up during the project, and though not necessarily started by the project, were heavily dependent on its network of local groups. To try and capture this aspect this chapter includes five case studies. These have been selected to represent some of the major issues, and they represent a cross-section of the different stances taken by community groups towards authority – sometimes aggressive, sometimes defensive, sometimes defiant, sometimes conciliatory.

The first example is the Scotland Road tunnel campaign, in many ways an inevitable response that had been building up, to the drastic surgery suffered by the area in the name of redevelopment and urban motorways. It was a good example of a long-term campaign stengthened by the arrival of the project. It spilled over into a local tenants' campaign, the second example, first over the implementation of the Fair Rents legislation, and then into an electoral challenge to the local Labour Party in the local elections of 1973.

The third study is the long campaign to improve the surgery conditions of local GPs and set up a health centre. Here local people were struggling against their deep respect for local doctors, as much as the health service bureaucracy. The pressure was far more hesitant, conducted at long range through a host of professional intermediaries, all of whom trod very warily. In the 'Arden House Affair', local people attempted to reverse a decision of the local authority social services department, which though it affected the area, had been taken without reference to local people. This incident highlighted the problem of balancing the need for local participation against the needs of a stigmatised minority group. The final case study, the planned modernisation of the Bevington/Summer Seat housing was intended as a showpiece of local authority – tenant cooperation. But it turned sour, underlining both the attraction and problems of participation in such schemes.

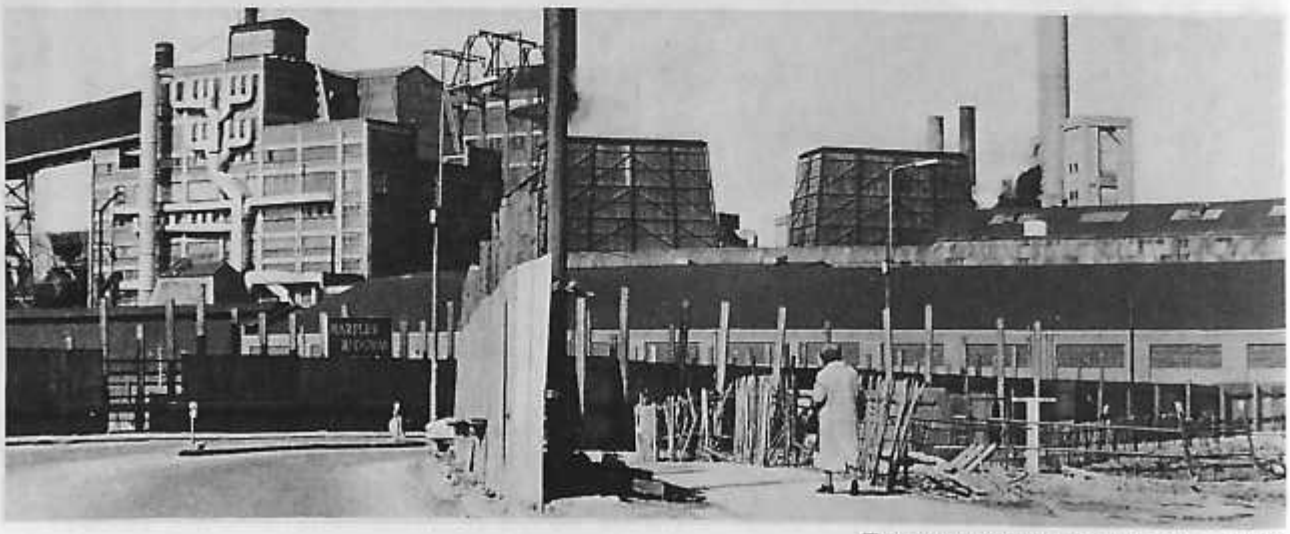
Direct project involvement in the five examples varied substantially. In the first examples, the project was drawn in almost against its will to a vigorous campaign conducted by local people. Over the health centre and the Arden House affair the project played the frequently uncomfortable role of broker, and in the final example, the project was fully involved as one of the main instigators of the modernisation programme.

1. The Scotland Road Pedestrian Tunnel Campaign

The Scotland Road tunnel campaign was the project's first real experience of local pressure group tactics. But traffic conditions had been the bread and butter of the Scotland Road Residents' Association, an organisation in existence before the project arrived, mainly composed of local professionals. During the 1960s the progressive upgrading of Scotland Road to become one of the Merseyside's key northern arteries had made the road more hazardous. Yet the mile long stretch of shop-fronting where it ran through Vauxhall served a large area of housing. At the end of the 1960s 'Scottie Road' still retained its pride of place despite the destruction of the south end through the building of the second Mersey tunnel.

Campaigns and agitation over the road stretched back to at least 1959, often sparked off by death or injury to local people. The local campaigners charted the following story:-

Aug. 1959 Proposals were put forward by residents for subways under Scotland Road: as a temporary measure, barriers should be erected until the subways were completed.



Tunnel-works near Scotland Road 1970
Photo: Peter Leeson

	The Assistant Town Clerk said that these proposals would be put before the appropriate committees.
July 1961	The Scotland Road Safety Committee proposed that subways be built at Mile End, Silvester Street and Rotunda and that barriers be erected on both sides of Scotland Road, that a 15mph limit be fixed for Scotland Road. These proposals were once again sent to the council.
Sept. 1961	The City Watch Committee suggested that a pedestrian subway be built under Scotland Road. The Highways and Planning Committee were asked to consider it.
Sept. 1964	The Highways and Works Committee recommended that a subway be built at Woodstock Street, and Chapel Gardens junction with Scotland Road and that a second should be considered for the Stanley Road junction. The City Engineers stated that 2,300 pedestrians cross Scotland Road at the five crossings per hour, and that the traffic flow is 1,400 per hour at peak times.
Jan. 1965	Vehicles stopped from waiting on Scotland Road to speed traffic and help safety.
April 1965	The local MP asked the Minister of Transport to direct that action be speeded up to provide a subway.
April 1965	The Minister rejected a subway proposal; 'Many pedestrians would continue to cross the road on the surface'. The Minister suggested that the council consider push-button operated lights.
April 1965	The Minister of Transport told the city council that if they wanted a subway at Silvester Street junction with Scotland Road, they would have to pay for it. 'We do not think that the amount of use likely to be made of a subway here would justify the cost, which is estimated at about £42,500.' 'If the council insist upon a subway they are, of course, free to go ahead with one, but without a grant from us, since we do not think a subway is justified.'
April 1967	Pedestrian controlled signals at Boundary Street, Bostock Street and Silvester Street and Tenterden Street officially switched on.

The opening of the second Mersey road tunnel in the middle of 1971, rekindled interest in pedestrian facilities and road crossings. The 'Scottie Press' contrasted the money spent on the tunnel with the squalor in the area. An attempt was made to get the Queen, who opened the tunnel, to drive through the area. This proved unsuccessful — but television cameras were persuaded to look at local housing conditions. Later in the same year the 'Scottie Press' reopened the issue, when the already heavy traffic was increased by the tunnel opening, and there was now a sharp transition from motorway to suburban road with speed limits and light controlled pedestrian crossings.

The 'Scottie Press' feature drew supporting letters from residents, but a discouraging reply was received from the director of transportation and basic services (TBS) for the city, who suggested that road safety education was the answer, not a tunnel that would not be used. However, the issue continued to rumble along in the correspondence column of the paper. In February 1972 another casualty brought a spontaneous demonstration the same day, and two days later the road was blocked by local people during the peak period.

The demonstration brought two main results. First project staff had been present during the demonstration in a 'supportive' role, though they did not actually take part. For this they were criticised by the police. The police felt that instead they should have helped disperse the demonstration. But the project's role was of greater concern to the Town Clerk who complained that project staff had allowed themselves to become too closely associated with illegal activity. The issue blew over, but a warning note had been struck. Second, the demonstration led to a series of meetings between the local campaign committee, the police and the TBS department.

At these meetings residents put forward a comprehensive list of demands, ranging from road safety campaign in local schools, to fencing off the entire length of the footways with guard rails, building a high fence on the central reservation to prevent 'jay-walking', and building of a subway. The police and the TBS department representative took up solid defensive positions at first and showed considerable impatience that their professional judgements were strongly challenged. They argued that a previous road safety campaign in 1970 had been badly received locally; vandals had torn down posters on Scotland Road within 48 hours and only two of the thirteen local schools had accepted advice on road safety. The pedestrian crossings were not used properly and people forgot to press the buttons. The residents argued that the 'green man phase' was too short, particularly for old people; motorists regularly jumped or totally ignored the lights, and the opening of the new Mersey tunnel had encouraged motorists to see Scotland Road as an extension of the Wirral motorway with only one 30 mph sign warning of the built up area ahead.

The debate then turned to accident statistics. The police argued that they were not significantly different from other roads in the city, carrying comparable traffic load; and the TBS department made clear that the DOE would not grant aid for a subway at the current levels of traffic and pedestrian movement. The residents pushed Scotland Road as a special case because of the densely populated area by the road, dependent on the local shops, particularly a Post Office on the far side of the road.

Moreover, the accident figures disguised the fact that most of the accident casualties on Scotland Road were pedestrians while it was mainly car passengers on the other busy dual carriageways. These early meetings ended with explicit threats of further demonstrations within a month if no action was taken.

As a result minor changes were made in the phasing of the lights, guard rails were planned and an official road safety campaign was launched covering the roadside with posters and the schools with safety demonstrations.

SCOTTIE PRESS

Number Nine | Non political | 3p | Non sectarian | Oct 1971

MURDER MILE!

On behalf of all the users of Scotland Road, w-
Scottie Press make the following demands.
1. That the timing of the three sets of light-
   Road — at Hopwood Street, Sylve-
   Tenterden Street — be changed t-
   pedestrians to cross.
2. That immediate consi-
   possibility of erectin-
   Road until such ti-
   We will be -
problem in t-

Three Pence

NON-POLITICAL

NON-SECTARIAN

March 1972

DEMONSTRATION!

Number 13

...wi
...Silvest...
...diate prio
...on reached as h
...th a greater mar...

...ths
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...en the ages
...ere are some of
... and we hope they

may prompt you in real
that this has, is, and w
happen unless the city
take action soon.

...orded Accidents January to September 1971

Hopwood St	Aged 57 years	Fatal in Dark	
Silvester St	Aged 6 years	Serious	Daylight
Silvester St	Aged 10 years	Serious	Daylight
Silvester St	Aged 12 years	Serious	Dayli...
Hopwood St	Aged 6 years	Serious	...
Hopwood St	Adult age unknown	Seri...	
Silvester St	Aged 6 years		
Silvester St	Aged 11 yea...		

JUNE 71

...acqueline O'Brian,

Scotland Road

2-More Killed

SAFETY BARRIERS ON SCOTTIE?

We want a SUBWAY

SUBWAY AT LAST?

The Transportation & Basic Services Committee, at a meeting on the 18th April 1973, resolved that the chief engineer be authorised to proceed with the detailed design for a subway under Scotland Road in the vicinity of Silvester Street at a budget cost of £90,000 & that this scheme be financed within the sum of £200,000 provided in the Capital Programme for 1973/74.

We sincerely hope that the City wi.. not hesitate to add £1,000 to the cost of the Tunnel and approach roads (cost in excess of £20 million) to help protect our children.

At the same time, as a result of project initiative, traffic management schemes for the area were developed by residents. Their suggestions were largely accepted by the TBS department and quickly implemented in part, it appeared, to shift attention from the subway impasse.

Though there was quickly agreement over the traffic management proposals, residents were not so easily headed off. The tunnel issue kept on surfacing, with special meetings between the campaign group and representatives from the transport department; it also came up at the steering group and at residents' meetings. Residents were under the impression that the TBS department was still looking into the technical feasibility and costing of the subway proposal. The 'Scottie Press' continued to concentrate on the campaign with stories, letters, reports of meetings and timetables. The project had in no way been responsible for raising the issue in the first place, and played a rather awkward broker's role of arranging meetings, forwarding requests and resolutions. It faced the repeated problem of its response when direct action was threatened to break the impasse. Many residents felt that the earlier direct action had produced a response, and used this as a threat with officials.

By the end of 1972 the campaign for a tunnel had been eclipsed by a series of developments linked to the Fair Rents legislation, rent rises, and a rent strike in the area. As this involved many of the same people, the tunnel campaign lapsed for a time. However, as the action over rents turned into a tenants' campaign in the local elections of 1973, the tunnel proposal was revived by one of the tenants' candidates, a leading figure in the local Road Safety committee. Either as a result of the earlier campaign, or more cynically for political advantage to spike the tenants' campaign, the tunnel proposal was accepted shortly before the election by the committee chairman and formally approved by the committee between the two local elections of 1973. The subway would by now cost about £100,000 and apparently the DOE would be prepared to provide grant-aid after all, though no formal application for the grant had yet been made. Ironically, the tunnel has not yet been constructed, though formally inserted into the capital programme and approved by the committee. In the 1973 cuts to the local authority budget the subway was lost as a low priority and has not yet been restored to the programme.

Photo: Liam Gilligan

2. The Fair Rents and Tenants' Campaign

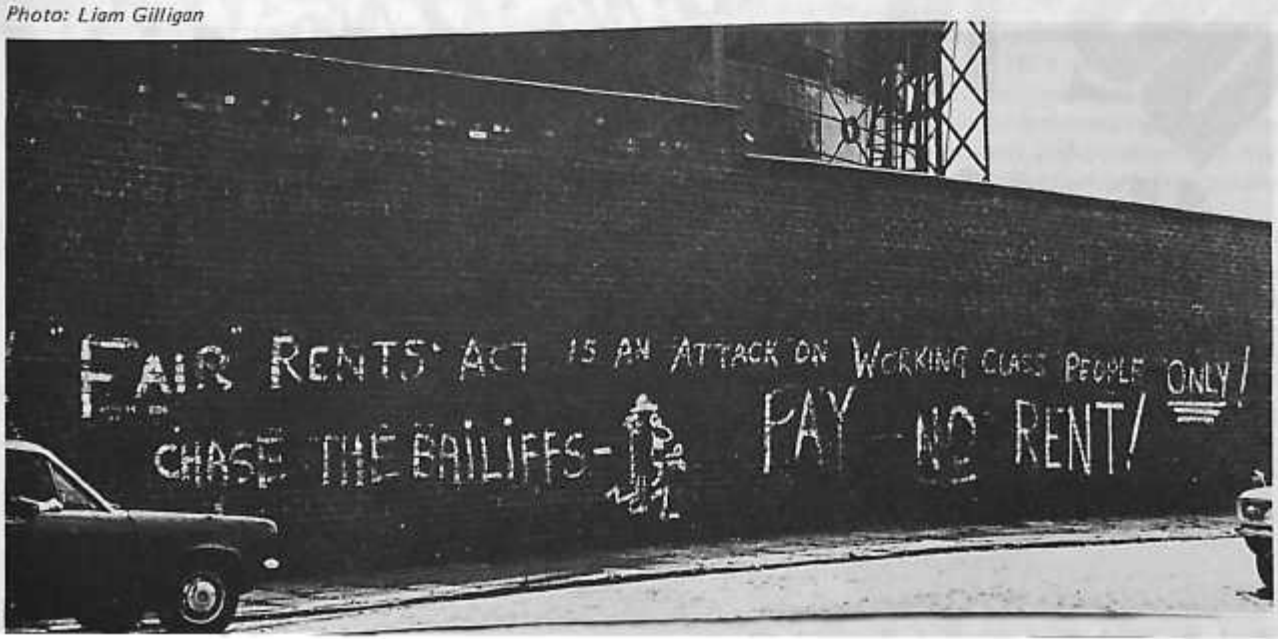
The origin of the tenants' campaign and the rent strike in the area which preceded it, can be traced back directly to earlier activities, particularly to the tunnel campaign where a group of residents gained experience in applying pressure on a local authority department. Their campaign brought them into contact with local councillors, and they attended council and committee meetings. In the summer of 1972 a playscheme backed by the project, included trips to Wales. Each parish had a week in Wales over a six-week period. This involved considerable organisation and brought together the more active in the community. The implications of the Fair Rents Act had already been raised in the 'Scottie Press' earlier in the year by one of the project team, who also raised it in team meetings, and discussion was held with Frank Marsden, the local MP, who was on the Common's committee considering the bill.

In the autumn implementation of the bill was imminent. The Liverpool local authority had agreed to implement it despite an earlier show of resistance. Events in Vauxhall moved quickly. Various resident groups met in September with extremely high turnout.

The workings and the implementation of the Act were explained at six local area meetings by the adult education tutor working for the Institute of Extension Studies, but attached to the project. A Rents Action Committee was formed. Decisions taken at local meetings were then referred to a central meeting called by this committee.

At a large-scale meeting, attended by perhaps 300–400 people, heated discussion took place on strategy – whether to go for a total rent strike or to withhold only the increase. These meetings produced considerable confusion. The more active resident groups arrived with resolutions from their area, and seemed to

Photo: Liam Gilligan



SCOTTIE PRESS

TWENTY NON-SECTARIAN Three Pence NON-POLITICAL OCT 1972

RENT RISE — RENT S[illegible]KE

'FAIR' RENTS? CA[illegible]

NO CHANCE!

'FAIR' RENTS

DOUBLE TROUBLE: [illegible] ACT

The Means Test Again

The Fair Rents Act becomes law Oct 1972, when Local Author will have to set fair rents their Council Houses. To some idea of how "fair" will be, the Rent Asse will be nominated by Chancellor". One be Lawyers, one Professional Va Property Comp and a furth Professio panel th Unioni

[illegible]POSE TO BRING OUT A NEW HOUSING ACT [illegible]f KNOWN AS THE 'FAIR' RENT ACT. WE [illegible]E DETAILS OF THIS ACT WHICH WE THINK WILL INTEREST TO OUR READERS.

[illegible]LL DOUBLE.

Your rent will probably go up by £1 this year. [illegible]ny experts think that rents will double over the next three years. Think what this means to you! Can you afford to pay this money out of your housekeeping?

NO APPEAL.

[illegible]nce this so-called fair rent has been set, you will [illegible]wed to appeal against it. Furthermore, if you [illegible]rent assessment officer into your house, [illegible]to £50. Under this act your rent [illegible]d every three years.

[illegible] will have to [illegible]ave grown- [illegible] be [illegible]d

[illegible]nd

[illegible] more be

WHO GAINS?

The people who g[illegible] act are those with mortgages – th[illegible] [illegible]x releifs. What this means in effect, is [illegible]wner-occupiers will be getting the highest subsidi[illegible]rough this tax relief.

TENANTS UNITE AGAINST RENT RISES

Join Your Nearest 'RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

the bill

assume that other areas had met and decided policy. But this was not the case, as resident group development was extremely patchy. This confusion undermined the representativeness of the large meeting, a point forcefully put by local councillors from the back of the hall. Amid the excitement the project director used the opportunity to get resident groups formed in parts of the district where there had been no previous interest. There was also considerable confusion about the role of the project and the structure of groups it had set up. The large-scale meeting was 'extra-curricular', though dependent on groups set up and recognised by the project. A proposal that the project should bank and be responsible for the withheld rent increases was proposed, to the project director's obvious embarrassment, and in the heat of debate was only narrowly averted. At a later meeting a decision to strike only over the increase was taken – though some of the more militant areas maintained a total rent strike.

These events had been preceded by lengthy debate within the project team over its response to the Rent Act. In spring 1972 one team member had begun to argue that the Act would discriminate heavily against working class areas and that the project should come out in open opposition to it. Others were not convinced that the Act would necessarily be so harmful; the Act was highly complex and there was the prospect of substantial rent rebates for some categories of tenant. The team decided to collect more information and the advice of outside experts. The Housing Department was asked to reply to lists of key questions, and two members of the project team agreed to gather further data. By now it was known that the first rent increase under the Act would be effective from October; if there was to be project-sponsored opposition, the homework would have to be speedily completed. In fact it took a number of weeks to put together the information, and even then there were too many uncertainties to convince some team members that a concerted campaign was justified. Later it was argued by the supporters of the campaign that these delays were crucial to the eventual outcome. However, the majority view was that the project should do no more than provide a back-up educational role in the campaign. The adult education tutor took on this responsibility which was liberally interpreted to include advice on campaign tactics as well as information about the Act itself.

Shortly before the first increases it was clear that the campaign was not going to recruit all parts of Vauxhall. Some areas in fact had no rent increases. It was also clear that the resources of the two most active areas were totally absorbed in maintaining local solidarity and picketing the Housing Department office to deter people from paying rents. The campaign organisation was never strong throughout Vauxhall. As with the national campaign of resistance to the Act, the local campaign gradually petered out as the line became harder to hold and those who had withheld the total amount were threatened with eviction. At its height the campaign succeeded in persuading over half the tenants in affected areas to withhold rent increases. In the aftermath, the project found itself fighting to prevent many of the activists being evicted; not many had put rent money aside in the heat of the struggle.

During the active period of the campaign local councillors came under heavy criticism, because of the stance of the Labour Party over the Act. At one of the large early public meetings attended by about three hundred people the local councillors were shouted down several times after challenging the representativeness of some of the speakers; and they were forced to play a 'low profile' during the winter months. Locally there was an exhilarating feeling of rank and file spirit which was not going to be headed off into making its case through the official channels.

Early in 1973 events took a further turn, as those involved in the rent action discovered that a meeting to nominate candidates for the forthcoming county and district elections was to take place. The decision to nominate tenants' candidates was thus a direct follow up to the Fair Rents campaign where local councillors with one exception (in fact, from a neighbouring ward) had supported the official line on implementation of the rent increases. The campaign by the tenants' group, though not necessarily well organised or planned, or proclaiming any clear programme, was able to use the various networks of resident groups, other meetings and media such as the 'Scottie Press' to gain attention.

The results, in comparison to votes cast in previous years for non-Labour Party candidates, suggest considerable impact for a group only formed a few months before the election. And again, it was clear that the Labour Party was disturbed by this new ingredient, particularly as Sefton, then Labour leader of the council, was the candidate for the Vauxhall district in the metropolitan county elections. It is perhaps no coincidence that approval for the subway went through at about the time of the elections, as did the plans for a large programme of environmental improvements in the most militant part of the Vauxhall area. Neither scheme has as yet been implemented.

Unfortunately for statistical purposes the Vauxhall ward in the 1973 elections was merged with Sandhills, making strict comparisons with earlier years impossible, and probably reducing the chances of the tenants' group. Summary results for the two elections were as shown in the table overleaf.

Though these results hardly constitute a near miss, no other group in the recent past had managed to take such a proportion of votes from the Labour Party, and Conservatives, Liberals and Communists had all tried. What is also significant is on the standard measure of participation – voter turnout. This time there clearly was a contest, controversial local issues, and much time spent on the election in meetings and in the local press. Vauxhall was the consistently lowest scoring ward in the city on turnout, coming bottom fifteen times out of the twenty local elections before 1973. And Sandhills was hardly any better. Both had never beaten the city average turnout in that time. In the county elections the Sandhills–Vauxhall turnout was slightly above the city average – and in the district election only marginally below.

Again, the networks promoted by the project were used extensively during the elections – too much so in some people's opinion, and an official enquiry was mounted by the local authority into the role of the project, following a complaint by a councillor after the

Vauxhall/Sandhills Ward, Liverpool

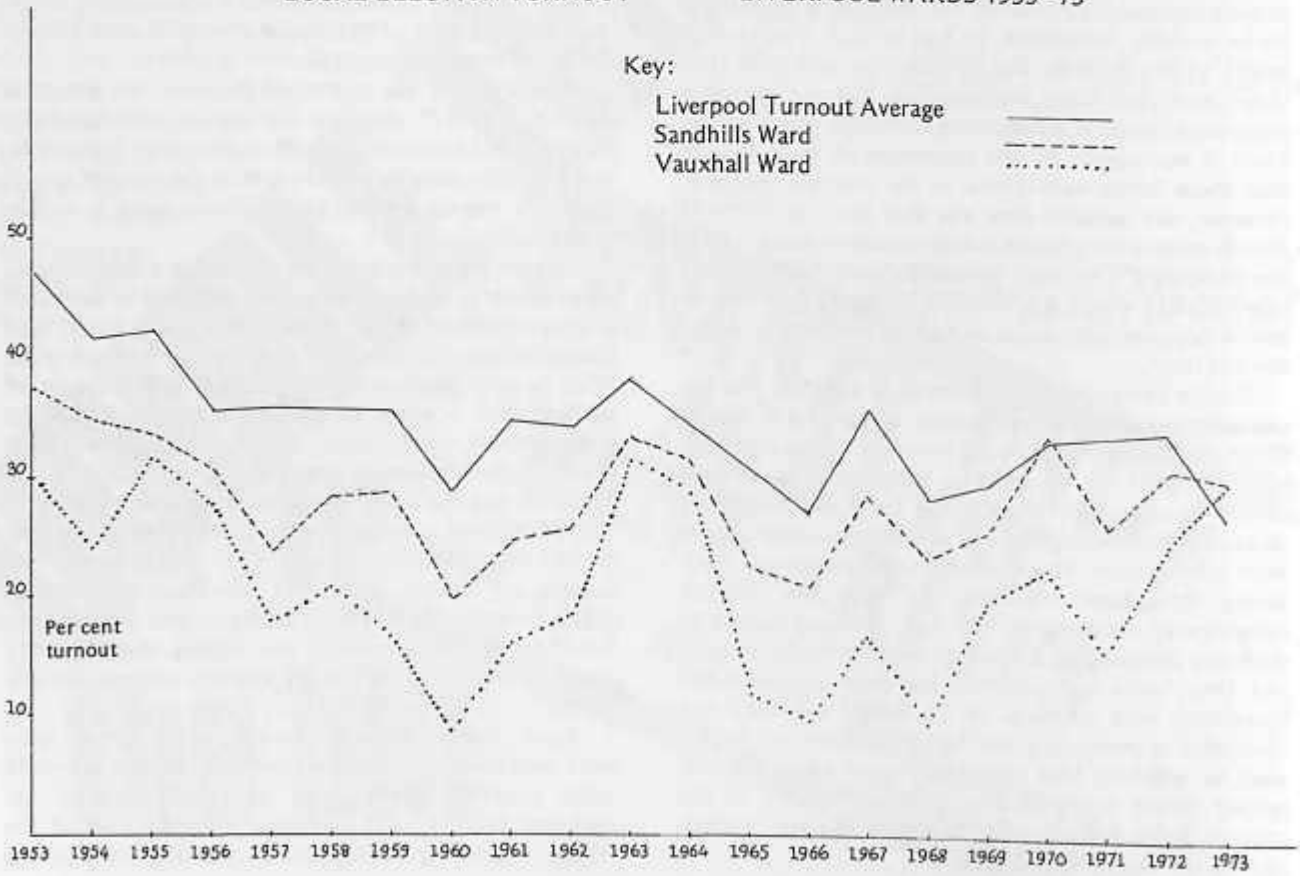
Metropolitan County, April 1973			*Metropolitan District, May 1973*	
Party	*Votes*	*% of votes cast*	*Party*	*% of votes cast*
Labour	1760	56	Labour	57
Tenants	1184	38	Tenants	37
Conservative	202	6	Conservative	6
Ward Turnout:	30%		Ward Turnout:	25%
City Turnout:	27%		City Turnout:	26%
(One candidate for each party)			(Three candidates for each party)	

county election. In response a memorandum was prepared by the project director before the district election. He distinguished between misuse of project resources, and activity incompatible with the local authority outside working hours:-

> 'Stories that Party Political meetings have been held on Project premises; that officers have used their vehicles and working time to further the case of a particular party, or that the resources of the Project have been used to this end have been expressly denied by officers, and on the available evidence have no substance. In some instances I know that *wrong* conclusions have been drawn from quite legitimate activities of Project officers (e.g. complaints about pavements, street lighting and conditions of old people's homes have been quite properly followed up even when reported by election candidates). However, Project officers have been involved with election candidates and their supporters in two ways: (a) when candidates have had other roles (e.g. Chairman of the Under 13 Football League) and (b) when candidates have made use of facilities or advice available to the whole community (e.g. about the Housing Finance Act). One particular activity may have been misinterpreted; namely, the Adult Education Seminar on Local Government and Elections. In this instance a group of residents asked for information and advice on the necessary procedures and techniques of putting forward a candidate in local elections. A clear distinction was made between technical information and advice and active participation in an election campaign. Thus the same educational and technical services are available to any and all groups within the community.

The second category of possible complaint — illegal, against Standing Orders or incompatible activities of Project staff *outside* normal working hours — has been more difficult to investigate for several reasons. Firstly, Project Staff do not work 'normal'

LOCAL ELECTION TURNOUT LIVERPOOL WARDS 1953–73



hours; that is, they often work in the evenings and at week-ends. Secondly, several members of the staff are lifelong residents of the Project area and have therefore brought with them well-known affiliations and sympathies to various political groupings. Thirdly, the conventions about what is acceptable and unacceptable in 'private life' and 'public work' roles are vague but also changing. This change arises, among other things, because the amalgam of community worker, local resident and politically conscious elector has rarely, if ever, previously existed as now in the deprived inner areas of urban areas . . . .

It may be considered that to hold Honorary Office in a Political Party in the area of one's work is unacceptable. Two members of the Project Staff hold such honorary office: Mr. —, Chairman of Vauxhall Sandhills Ward Labour Party, and Mrs. —, Treasurer of Vauxhall Sandhills Tenants' Federation. Both officers held these posts before joining the Project. Furthermore, several Project Officers are ordinary members of both these political organisations.' (Memorandum from the Director, Vauxhall Project to the Liverpool Local Authority, May, 1973)

A pledge that these individuals would adopt a lower profile in the district elections to follow, and the results of that election, defused the matter. Tenants' candidates did not reappear in either the 1975 or 1976 local elections, and by then the neighbourhood council had been formed.

3. Doctors and the Health Centre

In the Scotland Road area several doctors were based in surgeries which by any standards were shabby and inadequate. The tenth issue of the 'Scottie Press' under the headline 'Carry On Doctor' featured these conditions including a photograph of one of the surgeries in a corrugated iron roofed shop. In 1972 local residents began a campaign to encourage local doctors to move into a Health Centre. A survey was carried out to show the hardships suffered because of the lack of doctors at the south end of the project area and also the lack of chemists. The matter raised considerable heat in steering group meetings and the local authority tried to find a solution which involved negotiating with Personal Health Services, Social Services, Housing, the Health Executive Council and finally the DHSS.

The demands for more doctors at the south end of the area were rejected by the local Health Executive Committee on the grounds that provision was adequate, given the high population loss through slum clearance. Though many of those moving to overspill estates had retained their Vauxhall doctor, the doctors still only had an average of 2500 patients. The recommended range was 2100 to 2600. The lack of provision could be met if the doctors would agree to move into a Health Centre at Vescock Street, which could also include a clinic to replace the temporary use of the League of Welldoers building as a clinic. However, most of the doctors were sited at the north edge of the project area and drew clients from even further north. They were reluctant to move southwards.

Changing addresses can be a precarious business for a GP. The procedure is that the Health Executive Committee writes to all patients informing them of the change of address and asking if they wished to remain with their doctors. Anyone not replying is assumed to opt out, and thus is struck off the list. As doctors' income is partly determined by capitation, the probability would be that income would be lost. The financial arguments of the doctors were persuasive. Unless compulsory catchment areas were set up by the Health Executive Committee, it was clear that Vauxhall doctors stood to lose from the declining population, particularly at the south end, and from the possibility of losing substantial numbers of their existing patients outside Vauxhall if they moved. Despite strong pressure from the steering group, local doctors were adamant about not moving to a Health Centre and this had the effect of sinking plans for the clinic, though the possibility of a Health Centre somewhere else remained open.

Perhaps the doctors had become too complacent about the condition of their premises. Some clearly felt a close attachment to the community, felt they understood the 'Scottie Road' person, and showed themselves prepared to stay on through the considerable disruption, dirt and distress caused by clearance and development. The Health Executive Committee predicted it would be difficult to attract new doctors to the area, if any of the existing doctors left. The doctors themselves complained of costs incurred by vandalism to their premises which made maintenance a costly item. If alternative premises were the answer the choice lay between resiting individual or joint practices, and the Health Centre. Resiting within the area was impossible because of the lack of suitable property. The Housing Department could only offer some open ground at the north of the area suitable for a Health Centre.

The Health Centre option had several disadvantages for the doctors. At the time the centres were administered by the local authority to whom the GPs paid a rent. Most preferred to own their own property. Doctors working from the centre would have to be acceptable to one another and considerable expense would be involved in setting up the required equipment. They would be likely to be working even closer with health visitors and social workers and not all GPs welcomed their proposed new role as 'head of the family casework service'. Some resented the prospect of working office hours. Thus it seemed that the only scope for change would be a Health Centre at the north of the area close to existing surgeries, to complement a centre planned to open on the eastern boundary of the area in 1974, for which doctors with catchment areas to the east of the project area had already been found.

During these negotiations the community in public meetings expressed vociferous criticism of surgery conditions, but were understandably less enthusiastic to confront their GPs. The GPs were equally unwilling to meet residents to debate the issue. In the wake of a stormy steering group meeting in February 1973, the Town Clerk wrote to local doctors inviting them to attend the next meeting. They declined and the Health Executive Committee began to act in the role of mediator bearing the brunt of the residents' campaign. The Health Executive Committee representative at the steering group was able to report on the collective views of GPs but did not bring the crucial reasons behind their

position into the debate. Instead the debate continued through a chain of intermediaries. Even the project team was not directly involved, as negotiations were conducted by the Town Clerk's Department.

In April 1973, the 'Scottie Press' again featured 'Slum Surgeries'. This time with a series of photographs of doctors' surgeries at the north of the area. The next tactic of local residents was to call for a public health inspection of the block of houses containing these surgeries. The report was completed in January 1974. With the exception of an accumulation of domestic refuse behind the buildings, there was no evidence of health hazards – no rat infestation which was the main charge. Three of the properties surveyed were referred for possible action under the Housing Act, but it was not disclosed if these included the surgeries.

Meanwhile the Town Clerk had consulted the DHSS in August 1973 about a possible solution. A reply was received by Christmas: 'the delay has been occasioned because the department is working out its proper responsibilities to this kind of local issue in the future without damaging the proper responsibility of the new Health Authorities. Where such problems have occurred elsewhere the department has been able to assist towards a meeting of minds between parties without in any way seeking to trespass on the responsibilities and positions of either'. The letter also made clear that from April 1974 the Merseyside Regional Health Authority and the Liverpool Area Health Authority would become responsible, in consultation with the area Medical Committee and the Family Practitioner Committee. Thus the DHSS joined the ranks of the mediators among a profusion of interested parties.

By January 1974, the time of the public health report, most parties felt that the doctors would be likely to move into a Health Centre on an acceptable site. As one senior official said, 'frankly I do not see why some arrangement could not be made to rehouse these doctors in a Health Centre on or immediately adjacent to the Boundary Street site, with good access for both patients and doctors'. Unfortunately none of the sites proposed by the Planning Department was acceptable to the GPs, and negotiations continued to find a suitable site.

The sympathies of many of the intermediaries were clearly more with the doctors than the residents, even though all agreed on the inadequacy of existing premises. Progress towards a solution was bound to be slow. Though the campaign succeeded in highlighting for professional administrators the problems of doctors in inner city areas, that difficulty was never brought into the debate. Vauxhall residents grew tired of asking about progress, confused by the number of departments that had by now become involved, and no clearer as to how a decision to build a Health Centre could be reached.

4. The Arden House Affair

On several occasions there were sharp clashes between resident groups and local authority departments, when residents felt they had not been adequately consulted about new proposals. Frequently these were examples of a clash between professional values and the importance given to local participation. The best example in Vauxhall was the Arden House affair. This also showed the problems involved in rehabilitating former long term patients from mental hospitals. The background was the

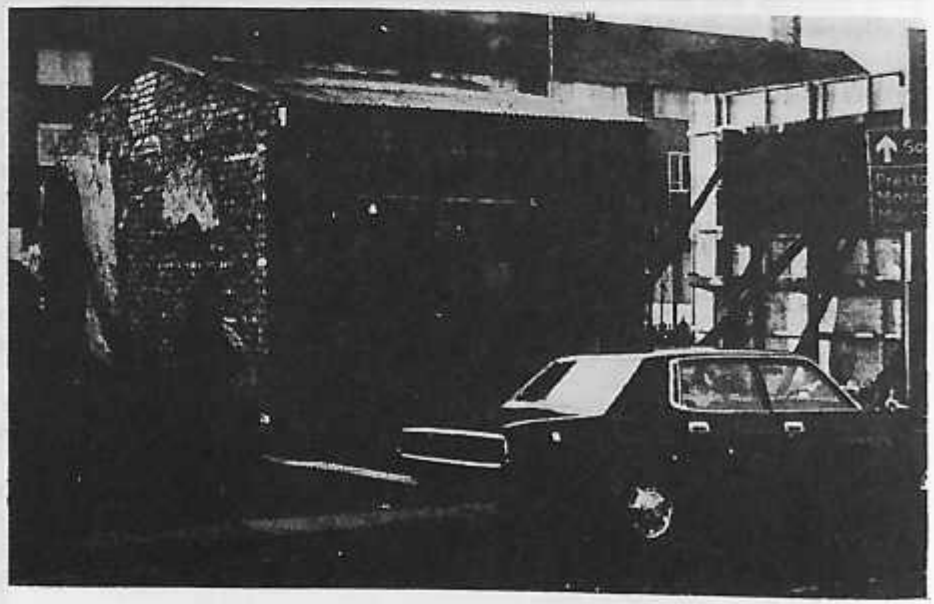
SLUM SURGERIES

In Nov.1971, the Scottie Press campaigned for better surgery facilities in Scottie Road.'

Last week the Health Executive Council told the Vauxhall Project Steering Group that there was no prospect, in the foreseeable future of the long prommised Health Centre, due to be built in 1973, because the local doctors were not interested.

How do they justify asking their patients into these slums when modern comfortable facilities are on offer? The doctors have been invited to the next meeting on April 5th. at 8.o'clock in the League of Welldoers Limekiln Lane.

It will be worth hearing what they have to say.



Scottie Press, April 1973

Arden House
Photo: Peter Leeson

national decision in 1969 to reduce the number of people held in longstay mental institutions on what were no longer adequate grounds, and reintegrate them into the community.

Arden House was a Salvation Army hostel at the south end of the project area, a bleak outdated high rise Victorian building backing on to Scotland Road, the main route for north bound traffic from the two Mersey tunnels. For years it had provided cheap lodging for long distance lorry drivers and many of Liverpool's single homeless men. Some of those ending up in Arden House had been discharged from local mental hospitals, particularly longstay patients with no family or home to return to, but there was no formal scheme to use Arden House systematically as a half way hostel.

Then early in 1971 the director of social services was approached by the Salvation Army which was concerned at a decline in the use of Arden House. Loss of income had made upkeep of the building difficult and they wanted to know if the social services department would be able to make greater use of the building. This would inevitably mean resources to improve the fabric of the building. The normal procedure was that costs had to be agreed with the city treasurer, after examining the voluntary body's accounts.

However, investigation of the Salvation Army's proposal was speeded up by an urgent note from the district personal services officer for the district including Vauxhall, and most of the city centre. He had been approached by senior staff from Rainhill hospital who were dissatisfied with the level of community provision for patients they intended to discharge. They had already placed people at Norton Street, a city centre Salvation Army hostel, and they were under pressure to discharge more patients from expensive Rainhill accommodation.

The first concern of the district personal services officer was for extra social work staff to deal with another perhaps 20 or 30 vulnerable individuals living in what was felt to be inadequate accommodation at Norton Street. A survey of homeless men was carried out by the district team in July 1971. This made the case for additional social work support. However, an internal department memorandum suggested that Norton Street, registered as a common lodging house, would not be recognised as residential accommodation under Part 3 of the National Assistance Act, or as residential accommodation under Part 3 of the Mental Health Act 1959. It was noted that Derbyshire local authority had a similar problem in early 1971 when patients were discharged to boarding houses without adequate supervision and there were reports in the press about neglect and malnutrition.

The department clearly saw Arden House as a better prospect. By October 1972, after long negotiations with Salvation Army authorities, locally and nationally, the director had agreed to use Arden House in principle and to give the brigadier in charge some say in which patients would be accepted. So far the district personal services officer had not been informed of the Arden House developments and he complained that he had only come to hear indirectly of the imminent plans to accept 20 patients into the hostel. He was then invited to take part in further negotiations with an assurance that there would be no extra burden on social workers, as the patients would be returning to the hospital daily for occupational or industrial therapy. By Christmas the scheme had been agreed in principle, and DHSS grant payments were secured.

By this time the project's policy of encouraging resident groups in the area had reached a very active phase. Tenants were encouraged to challenge departments which did not consult local people about their plans for the area. When residents first head of the Arden House proposal at a residents' advisory group the indignation expressed there and in subsequent correspondence from the particular resident group affected, stemmed directly from this lack of consultation. These feelings soon spilled over into suspicion and rejection of mental illness. Ironically the intention of the project, when first discussing the proposal with the residents' advisory group, was to lay the groundwork for better community appreciation of mental disorders, but to do this slowly with a long period of discussion. The sudden revelation of what had clearly been planned for some time cut the ground away beneath them by presenting the community and the project with a 'fait accompli'.

From the department's viewpoint this lack of consultation may not have been unintentional. There was a desperate need to provide residential accommodation but great resistance from local groups to their areas being involved. There were some 800 patients at Rainhill alone in need of release and rehabilitation. There were also other considerations. Once discharged, patients were free agents, able to live where they chose. Did the community have a right to refuse the opportunity of rehabilitation? Did the community even have a right to know, as the health of individuals was a private matter? Would any resident of Vauxhall ask permission of the community at large before accepting an ill relative back into the family? These were the ethical questions. On the other hand there were the practical issues — the likely backlash from the community if the scheme became known, the taunting of individuals used to a highly institutionalised way of life by local children, as had occurred with individuals at Arden House previously, the suitability of the building and the immediate environment.

In the event the department opted for a 'low profile'; they were surprised at the extent of the backlash when it came, and had to concede that they had been wrong not to consult earlier. The community reaction also forced local councillors to act. They had to oppose the scheme whether it had merit or not. It had not even been discussed with local councillors, they claimed, before it appeared on the social services agenda.

The community held two public meetings in January 1973, attended by up to 70 people each time. There was criticism of the project team for not informing them sooner of the proposal — 'the proposal is a breach of trust from the project as it was done without first consulting the residents to find their feelings.'

There were fears for the safety of women walking past Arden House on the way to local factory work; fears for the safety of children and allegations that Arden House men had been engaged in pub brawls. There was the resentment that Vauxhall was again being used as a dumping ground for developments which other

THE ARDEN HOUSE AFFAIR.

How can people who have made themselves known for looking after children Old People, The Lame, etc, etc, (Im talking about the people of Scotland Rd,) turn out to be so bad minded, callous, and a few stronger words, that can't be printed in our own News paper, I have never been so disgusted as when I heard of the objections to the new citizens that are to be brought into our midst, These poor people who have been forgotten for so long, who at last have been given a chance to prove they can manage for themselves.
I hope they are too busy to read the Scottie Press to see what stupid and ignorant people have to say about them there are persons in avery area Including Scottie who have ended in Rainhill because of nerves and one thing or another and I am sure that you are not afraid of them.
For God's sake I pray you will think again and give these people a chance to start a new life and restore the name "Understanding" Scottie .
Signed Mary Winnett(Foley)
****

Letter in Scottie Press, April 1973

areas would not tolerate. This particular part of Vauxhall had been badly affected by the second Mersey tunnel and its approach road, which had left bitter memories. In a Labour Party stronghold, the proposal to pay men £3 a week wages for the occupational therapy work was dismissed as exploitation. As one councillor put it to officials 'you think we are numbskulls – you are only doing scab labour'. Feeling among residents was running so high that there was little chance they would not pass their prepared resolution condemning the scheme.

In fact the scheme had obvious weaknesses – the Salvation Army had not always endeared itself to the local community; people could argue that the hostel was just as much an institution as the hospital and no substitute for small four-man unit accommodation; local social workers were apprehensive about the prospect of more work. On top of this was the clear resentment of local councillors at being caught out by a massive community reaction to a scheme they knew nothing about. Finally, the social services committee voted out the scheme, leaving the department with a damaged reputation, Arden House in continuing disrepair, and Rainhill patients with even longer to wait.

5. The Bevington/Summer Seat Rehabilitation Scheme

Relations between local authority and residents were often under the greatest strain in the field of housing, where they met as landlord and tenant. The programme of modernisation and rehabilitation of housing which was selectively applied to the Vauxhall area, and in some cases brought forward at the instigation of the project, was an important way in which the corporation could improve this relationship. Tenants could be given some discretion in the work undertaken. Of the housing schemes which the project helped initiate, the rehabilitation of houses in Bevington/Summer Seat had the makings of a showpiece of tenant/corporation cooperation. A small group of 52 houses, the pride of the corporation in 1911, of brick and timber construction with considerable character had been included in the slum clearance programme in 1972. But money was found to begin a rehabilitation programme in April 1973. At about this time the merits of improvement rather than redevelopment were being widely debated. The social costs of clearance and redevelopment, and the five to ten year reduction in the general housing stock which followed clearance led to a boom in improvement grant work under the 1969 Housing Act.

Housing Department officials made great efforts to set up the Bevington/Summer Seat scheme with maximum participation of local residents. A residents group already existed to help in the negotiations. Project staff put a great deal of time into 'oiling this machinery' at the planning stage. And yet, once into the implementation phase, the scheme went badly wrong, so much so that compensation claims were only settled two years after the event. Why this should have happened provides an interesting commentary on the complex problems facing community development work. In particular it showed how, within a large Housing Department, the goodwill built up by one group of officers can be quickly dissipated by the action of others. It illustrated the dangers of over-stimulating tenants' expectations by not warning them adequately of the various hurdles to be negotiated. The fortunes of the tenants' association were closely bound up with the scheme. The following account demonstrates the number of pitfalls which even the best prepared schemes have to face in making resident participation work.

The scheme arose out of a quick survey taken in May 1972 to find out residents' views of housing conditions in the south end of the Vauxhall area. The aim was to use the results to argue for improvements in housing maintenance work. In Bevington/Summer Seat it was found that complaints centred on the structure of the houses, damp, window frames, cramped conditions, and electrical fittings. The project had originally hoped that the survey would link into a three month resident self-survey of one of the walk-up blocks where they were documenting the speed with which maintenance requests

were acted upon, and the quality of the work. The outcome of the Bevington/Summer Seat survey suggested a full rehabilitation scheme would be far more appropriate.

Absurdly, initial investigation of the future plans within the Housing Department revealed that the houses were in the slum clearance programme and had already been cleared. Further investigation produced some agreement that they were still in the slum clearance programme but had not yet actually been cleared. Further discussions led to an agreement between officials and project staff that they were excellent examples of property which could well be improved rather than cleared. The decision to fit the houses into the rehabilitation programme was helped by the impending declaration of an area including Bevington/Summer Seat as a General Improvement Area.

Meanwhile the tenants' group formed after the survey began to put pressure on the Housing Department. One week after the survey was completed, more than half the households in Bevington/Summer Seat were represented at a meeting with project staff at which a private architect was also present. Tenants were informed that the corporation had been willing elsewhere to give improvement grants to 'two-up and two-down' houses, and even to compel landlords to do the improvements under threat of compulsory purchase. Now likely to be in a General Improvement Area, they should be in a strong position to press their case. There were three possibilities: to ask the corporation to include them in the rehabilitation scheme immediately; to ask the corporation to back a scheme where residents undertook rehabilitation work themselves on grants available; or to consider forms of housing co-ownership and cooperatives. The district housing officer felt the second to be the most likely option, but was also prepared to back the first. The tenants decided to make a bid for the first option with a request that they should be allowed to employ a private architect to draw up the plans.

In early July a letter went from the newly formed tenants' association to the Director of Housing –

> 'we have read much about house improvement recently in the local papers, and have seen on television Ministry advertisements selling house modernisation to all. We also understand that your Committee and the City Council have in other parts of the City used Compulsory Purchase Orders to force private landlords to improve. If this is so, we suggest that we in Summer Seat and Bevington Street wish desperately to see houses to be improved very soon, they should be included immediately in your improvement rehabilitation programme.'

At the same time the association applied to the project for funds, and received a favourable response. The request for funds to pay for the architect's report was made to the September meeting of the project committee. The normal practice of using a corporation architect would not be convenient for reasons of timing. Working closely with an architect would make residents aware of the constraints under which architects draw up plans. The project director also wrote to the Housing Department pointing out that if this scheme proved successful, the chances of the project making progress in the field of public participation in modernisation of the walk-up flats would be increased. As modernisation of walk-up flats would affect approximately 40% of the Vauxhall community over the next five years, it would be an important development. By now it was agreed that the housing was suitable for full rehabilitation, and the committee approved the request.

The private architect's report noted that the physical conditions of the houses varied. Some had been improved at the tenants' expense over the past years. However most houses required 'new plumbing, provision for a modern bath, an inside WC and lavatory basin, solid floors levelling and tiling, new wiring throughout, patch wall and ceiling plaster, new doors and windows, the blocking up of redundant fireplaces and the installation of an up to date heating system.' Early meetings of residents wanted the architect to focus on alternative schemes likely to comply with the Housing Department's cost yardsticks.

The architect circularised all houses with a short questionnaire asking them to 'draw on the enclosed plans the arrangement of kitchen fittings, bathroom fittings, power points etc. and to note all of the improvements and repairs you would like to see done to your house.' Of the 51 households, 42 replied and a wide range of requirements was identified, with a central core of agreement on such items as solid floors, bathrooms and repointing. The architect suggested a standard specification to cover all possible items should be drawn up in order that the Housing Department could exercise flexibility with individual houses. He recommended that further choice should be offered in fittings and colour schemes. 'Each house can therefore be considered in isolation from its neighbours, but when related to the standard specification, the entire block of properties can be managed and controlled by a single contract'.

The insistence of tenants that they should be able to remain in their houses during improvement was clear at this very early stage. People wanted guarantees that where it was agreed that houses should be vacated because of disturbance to vulnerable groups such as the elderly or large families, tenants would be able to reoccupy their previous dwelling. The report specifically asked that a start should be made on small groups of houses at a time to minimise the disruption to individual households, a request which led later to major recriminations. 'If a programme is produced and discussed with the tenants, the care of children, the provision of cooking and washing facilities etc. can be organised between the community, thus creating the minimum of inconvenience to all'.

The architect's report was well received by residents and the Housing Department, but money for the scheme was not to be forthcoming until 1974. The rest of the year was spent debating the areas of individual choice, and setting up a show house for gas central heating in Bevington/Summer Seat. The Housing Department formally agreed to the scheme in principle in a letter of April 1973. But by the end of 1973, there was still no certainty about the areas of choice for tenants and therefore no individual specification for work to be done on each house.

Meanwhile residents had taken up the question of

local environmental improvements. The Transport Department was approached to take measures to protect local children from building contractors' traffic; parts of the area were to be blocked to traffic and play areas were to be railed off. In this way the impetus of the residents' association was maintained. But early in 1973 the area had experienced what residents saw as an attempt by a corporation department to 'pull the wool over their eyes' in the Arden House affair. This inevitably produced growing suspicion which quickly spilled over into the improvement scheme.

The attempts by residents to get minimum guarantees on key issues before work began were persistent, but were first formalised in a well attended meeting on the lst October 1973, at which the architect and the area planner were present to explain some unavoidable minor alterations to the initial plans. But important details were still uncertain — central heating, sliding doors in kitchens, communal TV aerial, the need for false ceilings, tiling of ground floor rooms, the insulation of lofts. Residents also wanted firm assurances on the major issues — the length of work, guaranteed rehousing for those who had to move, and individual specifications.

In February 1974 all houses were surveyed by the Housing Department to determine the layout of individual fittings, and on the lst April 1974 each tenant was sent a letter which outlined the scheme. It was to include total reroofing, modernisation of windows, new plumbing and electrical systems, new bathrooms, gas central heating, modernisation of kitchen, complete internal and external decoration and general overhaul, including damp proofing to all dwellings. The complete project was scheduled to be completed in 26 weeks overall. No household would be disrupted for more than forty days.

In many ways the early months of 1974 were the critical period. The rehabilitation and planned maintenance officer who had nursed the scheme along, left the corporation in March 1974 to be replaced by a person who had no prior dealings with the scheme. The work itself was to be mainly corporation direct works, under the supervision of the Housing Maintenance Manager, who was also only brought into the detailed negotiations at the later stages. Though the rehabilitation and planned maintenance section retained overall control of the scheme, the phasing of work was effectively the responsibility of the maintenance manager. Thus the scheme gradually slipped out of the control of the original staff who had worked hard to create local confidence.

At a residents' meeting on the 4th April, attended by all the key Housing Department officials responsible for the scheme, promises were made that tenants would be given individual specifications and that options on choice were still open. This meeting and the months of preparation by housing officials had fuelled the expectations of residents that the scheme was a firm commitment — a firm agreement between the association and the Housing Department. Though the Housing Department had never committed itself to precise costs at any stage, the residents felt that agreement in principle had been reached and the deal was on. Thus, when two months after work had begun the Housing Department informed the residents association that the DOE was not prepared to sanction the level of spending involved, residents felt they were justified in holding the Housing Department to its agreement.

This development raised immediate questions about the previous negotiations. Had residents jumped the gun and read into discussion, promises which were never made? Or did officials fail to warn residents of the various stages that the scheme would have to negotiate? Did they take the easy way out of a tricky negotiation with enthusiastic tenants by allowing residents to draw conclusions which were unfounded? Observers present at many of the discussions felt that housing officials had not adequately explained how decisions on options within the scheme would be taken in the department. Nor had they warned residents on the importance of the DOE sanction. A common response from officials under attack or even under pressure from enthusiastic residents was, in the general experience of the project, to play 'by the book'. The official approach denied residents any knowledge of the officials' dilemmas, lines of responsibility, or range of discretion. Thus a situation which demands maximum communication and trust between residents and officials does not breed the necessary conditions for a free exchange. For their part, once a major problem frustrated plans, the response of the residents was usually verbal aggression, which had the effect of making the official retreat further behind 'the book'.

Bevington/Summer Seat was an opportunity for a real interchange between officials and residents but it was never really exploited. Residents learnt little of the problems of the Housing Department. When things went wrong there was no fund of goodwill based on greater awareness to draw on, which might have cushioned the worst of the problems. The conflict was heightened by the feeling of betrayal. Initially the Housing Department had been fortunate to have a group of residents who enjoyed the confidence of the neighbourhood and who wanted to make the scheme a success. The fact that the scheme was underway before the spectre of the DOE was invoked suggests that officials were caught out, and had overplayed their hand.

Progress on the building work, and the intervention of the DOE were at the centre of events after April 1974. The building work ran into difficulties immediately. Workmen complained that some of the properties were badly infested, and treatment had to be given to all houses. The need for renewal of rotten plasterwork had been badly underestimated, and the scheme faced a workload 20% higher than estimated. The age of the buildings made work difficult and the renewal of floors, roofs, window frames made life unpleasant for the inhabitants, particularly as winter came on. The direct labour force was paid on a bonus scheme which was generally admitted to result in much shoddy work; many door and window frames were out of true, and gaping holes were left between floor and skirting boards.

Persistent complaints about the quality of the work led to strained relationships between residents and the clerk of works. Residents were embarrassed to criticise fellow trade unionists and for this reason complaints may have been muted. Some of the work was redone more than once before it reached a satisfactory standard.

Supply of materials became a problem; shortages were caused by the national building workers' strike. There were shortages of labour and the usual problem of the summer holidays shortly after work had begun. The maintenance manager felt that the residents should have been moved out, despite their agreement and the city council's policy of keeping people in residence, because of the sheer amount of work to be done in what were quite small houses.

Once the work dropped out of phase, some of the first households in the scheme suffered disruption for far longer than had been envisaged or agreed. Details were collected on the progress of the work in 36 of the 51 houses. Six houses were started on the agreed date in April. In a few houses work started in May or June 1974 only a month or two after the date given for starting work. But in the majority work did not begin till the autumn, some four months after the date given for the start. A few houses had to wait eight or nine months before work began. Yet in no house was work completed till December 1974, the shortest period of construction being four months, but eight or nine months in other cases. Houses started later tended to benefit, and by 1975 houses were being completed in two months.

In fact the phasing of work envisaged by the rehabilitation and planned maintenance section — forty days maximum per dwelling in blocks of 13 at a time was never considered realistic by the maintenance section, even without the unforeseen snags. The effects of these delays were enormous. The carefully laid plans by residents for mutual support during disruption — the provision of meals, care of children, and so on — became unbearably overstrained as weeks lengthened to months with no sign of progress. The tenants began to feud amongst themselves. The chairman of the residents' association felt he had to offer his resignation, and was only with difficulty persuaded to stay. Workmen were also criticised for delays and bad workmanship, and there were several threats of a 'walkout'.

Another major source of delay was the changes in the programme required by the intervention of the DOE. The grant which the housing department applied for was under section 18 of the 1969 Housing Act. The grant was a special case as the relevant section of the work exceeded £1000 per dwelling. It was not until 27th April 1974, a month after work had begun, that the Housing Department received a letter from the DOE stating that the scheme was excessive at the cost of £5256 per dwelling and not one they would be prepared to approve for contribution. Residents were immediately told there would have to be cuts.

A crucial meeting took place in early May between representatives of the Housing Department, the city architects and the DOE. No residents were present. The DOE pointed out that the nominal figure considered reasonable was £4000 per dwelling. Housing argued that the houses were particularly old and had more problems to correct. The city architects however tended to support the DOE view that the scheme was too expensive, and a number of economies were agreed. For residents these cuts included many of their favourite items — sliding doors in the kitchen, redecoration, and most of all the simplified drainage scheme would mean that all outside WCs would now have to be removed.

On the 17th May the city architect reported to the Housing Department that the cost of the scheme could be reduced to £5000 if all the suggested cuts were implemented. A few days later the Housing Department received the DOE's formal approval in principle for the Bevington/Summer Seat scheme subject to the cuts being made, and the new pared-down scheme was agreed by mid June. The Housing Department had lost the battle, but not all officials regretted the outcome. There had been strong feeling that retaining outside WCs was a 'retrograde step in housing management'. Some resented the time spent in negotiating with residents when schemes in other areas were being neglected. The choice to residents had been 'enormous by usual standards' and they were the first in the city to get central heating as part of an improvement programme. For some, the residents' apparent ingratitude was hard to swallow.

For the residents however the bubble had burst. On the 18th June a sub-committee of the residents' association learnt of the extent of the cuts, and the next day an angry meeting demanded that the Housing Department stick to its pledges. A letter was sent to the director of housing —

> 'our Association is very proud that full participation between both housing and residents is proving successful. Plans were made and all tenants were fully aware of what was to take place and the whole scheme looked set to run smoothly without any hassles whatsoever. . . . . We tenants are adamant that this refusal by the Department of the Environment will not affect what had already been agreed to us by the housing department.'

Residents eventually put the matter in the hands of the neighbourhood solicitor whose advice was that when work had not started, individual contracts should be drawn up between residents and the Housing Department; a guaranteed time schedule and penalty clauses should be included, and no work was to begin until such contracts were signed. Where work was already begun it was to be completed according to the original specifications of the city council. The solicitor also took up the issue of compensation to tenants, and payment for use by workmen of electricity for power tools. The Housing Department had not informed people that they could claim for this. The solicitor claimed that the residents had a legal right to retain the outside WCs under the terms of their existing tenancies. A residents' meeting considered these points and forwarded a strong letter to the director of housing. Compensation was demanded for residents who had by now had workmen in their houses for six months or more. Wallpaper offered to tenants was of an inferior quality to that in the original specification. There were also the questions about payment of electricity, the level of rent after improvement work was complete and compensation for damage to property. The director of housing was invited to a meeting and the letter ended:

> 'I will urge you again to accept this invitation Mr Hall because the tenants have stated very strongly that this is the last straw. If you don't meet the tenants and there is no reply to the points raised, then they will have no alternative but to take certain militant

action, legally or otherwise followed by certain extreme measures.'

The director of housing did not attend the meeting, but answered by letter. He denied inadequate supervision of the scheme had lead to damage of tenants' property. The Housing Finance Act 1972 laid down that he would be able to pay compensation for disturbances during rehabilitation up to a maximum of £2 weekly provided that the tenant was not receiving supplementary benefit and provided that the rebate did not exceed the net rent repayable. The council had decided in May 1974 not to increase rents as a result of modernisation, even though such rises were exempt from the 1974 rent freeze. He could not predict the level of rents after the rent freeze was over.

The chief executive of Liverpool was now drawn into the matter, meeting the chairman of the residents' association, and seeing some of the work at first hand. The director of housing argued that the problem was the result of tenants continuing to occupy their property during improvement and suggested some residents had been uncooperative. This overlooked the fact that the Housing Department had previously agreed to allow tenants to remain in their houses, and it was city council policy; some lack of cooperation was an understandable reaction from tenants subject to six months of disruption. The chief executive continued to debate with the Housing Department in a letter which tried to define the local authority's overall responsibility to the tenants. He underlined the importance of detailed planning of improvement schemes for the tenant – as important as getting the city-wide policy right. The implementation of the work was a crucial contact point; work on the Bevington/Summer Seat contract gave the impression of following a logical sequence of trades which was entirely appropriate for empty property, but which caused severe inconvenience, unglazed windows, badly fitted window frames, where property was inhabited. Despite this intervention the project director could not report any improvement in the way the work was going by the end of the year.

However by the end of October residents found themselves overtaken by events. All but a handful of the houses had now been started and the remainder were reluctant to hold out for better contracts as the solicitor had suggested. Workmen simply demolished the outside WCs despite tenant protests. Though the solicitor considered aspects of the department's policy to be 'actionable', the tenants preferred to try to gain compensation through political channels. Councillors were asked to procure a lump sum compensation figure for each tenant. As the secretary of Bevinton/Summer Seat wrote in a letter to the director of housing at the end of November:

'From the first day in April last when workmen entered the houses, tenants have endured first of all their own cleaning up every night after the workmen have left, broken walls and floors, holes and cracks left which have been a constant danger to the tenants walking round the house. The coldness and draughts as a result of doors left and windows with gaping holes around them. The backyard, from drains, a deathtrap with a complete crack and cavity left

Photo: Peter Leeson

Rehabilitated Housing Bevington/Summer Seat

Photos: Connie Topping

uncovered on the floor and in between all this experience, sometimes there is no light, no water and in some cases no heat. They even said that all of this would have been tolerated over six to eight weeks, the time scheduled to complete the individual houses, but now, after all this time, of the most extreme inconvenience and disturbance, the tenants have decided on the final conclusion arising out of the mess. The complete grant to each tenant, £10 compensation every week the workmen have been in the house from the time the first process started, until the last process is finished.'

A year later the tenants had accepted £50 compensation per house.

In March 1975 a short survey was undertaken to assess resident views of the whole exercise. 35 of the 51 households were interviewed. Apart from revealing the full extent of inconvenience to residents — 28 of the 35 interviewed had suffered badly from intermittent work — it emphasised the main reason, particularly the chore of clearing up after workmen every night. Complaints about standards of workmanship were ultimately far less worrying than the overall disruption suffered. With hindsight many wished that they had been moved out, but those tended to be those who had suffered the longest. 21 out of 24 households where the work was already complete said that on reflection it had been worth having the job done despite the disruption. There was much evidence of good neighbourliness for those in need, though old age pensioners and the sick came off by far the worst where work in their houses was prolonged.

Radical community activists are frequently critical of the type of community development practised by the Vauxhall project, and there were plenty of critics within Vauxhall and within the project team. Their central argument was that the structures set up by the project would draw off local energy and protest, and create a new form of community bureaucracy, controlling relationships between local people and the local authority. The formal mechanisms were extremely complex and absorbed enormous energy, leading even their principal

Photo: Peter Leeson

architect to wonder by the end of the project whether he had not created a monster.

Yet the case studies show that these structures did not stifle protest. What emerges clearly is the way local groups were able to make use of many of the developments set up by the project for their own purpose. The forum of the steering group, the existence of local resident groups, and the regular appearance of the 'Scottie Press' all provided an opportunity to launch and sustain campaigns. And in the same way the experience gained in one campaign could be passed on to another. By the end of the project, the pattern was well-established. Though success was rarely clear-cut, particularly in the major issues, some gains were undoubtedly made, and many in the local authority were more sharply confronted with the need to consider carefully the reaction of Vauxhall to any new proposals. Far from stifling local efforts, a community bureaucracy may be an essential framework for effective and sustained protest and pressure.

Chapter 11: Research

The aim of linking social science and government closely in policy development had been long-established; but setting up small-scale experimental projects where action and research combine to promote and test new policy was very much a product of the 1960s – with their hard-to-recapture optimism over the power and effectiveness of government action against poverty. The Plowden Report on primary education confidently reflected this approach. 'Research' it stated, 'should be started to discover which of the developments in educational priority areas have the most constructive effects so as to assist in planning the longer term programmes to follow'. And the EPA action-research programme was to be 'a preparation for later advance'.

The idea of action-research or 'experimental social administration' was attractively laid out in the early CDP literature. It promised a new relationship between social science and social policy – one where reform 'may be seriously conducted through social science experiment'. Rational social science enquiry would feed in to a more rational social policy; politicians and administrators alike would be freed of the need to promote or defend untested programmes; the commitment would be to experiment and enquiry. The result was the all inclusive and rational model of CDP where research was first to contribute to the identification of an area's problems, participate in developing suitable programmes, provide feedback during their operation and finally evaluate their success or failure.

In practice, the experience of CDP has been very different from the 'coolly' rational experiment in the original literature. What went wrong? One response is to point to the cumbersome organisation, the rapid turnover of staff at the centre, the lack of continuity and the steady erosion of CDP's importance nationally, particularly when similar programmes were wheeled out by other departments. Another response, sometimes favoured by researchers as they struggled to apply a text book research design, was to blame the type of person appointed to direct local action – charismatic figures not content to work through more conventional solutions or apply a programme consistently. If only action men could have been more like researchers, able to try out a programme clinically and dispassionately.

No doubt these problems contributed to the difficulty. But there are far more important reasons. First as CDP moved away from its original programme of local community work, it increasingly moved into areas of conflict where any progress had to be bargained for, and where as we have seen in Liverpool, the project with its small resources was frequently blown off course. There was no protected laboratory where ideas could be tested out under controlled conditions.

Second, it is wrong even in its original form to conceive of CDP as a precise experiment. Teams were given the very general brief of community development, local service coordination and participation, all ideas surrounded by a vague rhetoric that promises dramatic change: the assumption that experimental action and the 'superior vision' of research will somehow identify the magic ingredient of success. In practice projects like Liverpool that concentrated on action, rather than research and analysis, have set up explorations of what is possible in these areas, not precise, replicable experiments. The role of research is here to study the process – the jostling and argument at the start, the wheeling and dealing to see whether there is a race at all, rather than the elaborate machinery to record exactly who wins. It is possible at a later stage that a precise evaluation of a 'multi-services centre' could be attempted. This would depend heavily on experience gained in Vauxhall, where it took most of the project life and energy to get the centre running effectively.

The third reason is that typically CDP does not introduce one single innovation, but a whole series of developments. Research procedures of a conventional kind for effectively evaluating a single scheme are limited, and the problems hard enough to disentangle. Ways of evaluating a multiple programme are virtually non-existent, and the problems of distinguishing the effects of one programme from another almost insurmountable, without the most elaborate techniques and rigid control.

Underlying the original approach to research and evaluation in CDP was the assumption that the project would identify successful policy development – what we have elsewhere called the 'crock of gold' – that somewhere, if only we could find it, was the 'solution'. Clearly CDP experience ought to have destroyed this illusion. Though at a theoretical level it may be possible to identify the one idea or programme that will work, the practice is always far more ambiguous and confused. Instead the role of research should be to map in the costs and benefits of change, some of which will not have been predicted, and present the views of otherwise unrepresented groups. Far from providing cut and dried answers, evaluation here must in most cases serve to heighten the problems of choice; there are no 'solutions' – unless it is decided to ignore the costs resulting from a programme for one group or another.

In the uncertain situation of CDP, the pressure is on research to provide certainty, by identifying the central problems and picking out the answers. But researchers have hardly learnt to operate under these conditions, and cannot fill this role adequately. The risk is that by failing to deliver the complete solution, the role of research in action will be demoted. This would ignore the contribution research can make, in offering alternative definitions of the situation, exploring the social context of the action programme, monitoring its progress from a slightly less involved standpoint and making selective formal studies and evaluations. Much of this can only be done in close dialogue with the action team, and is not an independent technical process. The

experience of the Liverpool research team during the project underlines these dilemmas and problems.

The Liverpool research programme began with the appointment of two staff in October, 1971, some two years after the start of the action project. This limited the possible roles that research could play. The original expectation had been that research would play a part in all phases of the project, including devising a strategy and programme, though overall responsibility was clearly in the hands of the action director. At the start research staff found themselves facing the same situation as the other new staff in 1971, working to come to grips with a very complex programme that had already been largely settled before their arrival.

Indeed, the arrival of the research team after two years was something of a mixed blessing for the project. One of the main contributions research might make was to map in at this early stage the needs of the area and help formulate a strategy, but this had already been done, using local agencies to carry out surveys, and employing a local management consultant. The next important contribution was to feed information to the action team during the project's life. However, this was not an important part of the agreement between university and Home Office, nor was it central to the plans of the CDP central research team at the time, nor were the research staff content merely to 'service' an action programme developed without their participation. Whatever else, it was clearly important for the action team to keep yet one more group over whom they had no formal control away from blundering on the scene, upsetting delicate relations developed over two years. For research here is certainly not a process with no 'thickness', a silent shadow of the action, but as has been demonstrated frequently in CDP can have unintended but dramatic consequences for the action.

At the start of the Liverpool research programme action-research relationships in CDP were at a low ebb. Research teams had resigned, been pulled out by their parent body, or 'gone native', under the strains well documented in Marris and Rein's account of American poverty programmes (Marris and Rein, 1967). In the early Liverpool discussions, the main concern of the action team was that the presence of research should not disrupt progress of the action, and that research should make a contribution during the course of the project, not just surface with a final report at the end. For their part, the research team had to balance a number of competing claims – the desire to make themselves practically useful, but to retain the necessary distance to put together an overall account. The principal dilemma was that of involvement; to maintain credibility among the large number of interested parties to 'retain the overview', demanded a low key role, minimally identified with the project's activities, so that those affected by the project would be prepared to talk freely about their attitudes and be freely critical where appropriate. Yet a thorough understanding of the project's programme required very close involvement.

The position was resolved by agreement that the research team should concentrate on a long term evaluation of what were seen as the project's main activities, combined with a low key support role in more controversial short term issues, and a more explicit action role in other areas. This compromise did not disguise the tensions and difficulties at the start, though earlier experience of action-research in the EPA programme certainly increased the researchers' tolerance levels, and perhaps explains their persistence, when almost every other pilot CDP project was affected by the withdrawal or transfer of its research team. This partially detached position was maintained by the research team for most of the project – until the final year with the appointment of a further research worker who decided to take a far more active role in pushing the project in a particular direction.

The agreement meant that many different types of research work were undertaken, ranging from straight forward surveys to attempts to trace the development of particular groups by attending meetings, talking to key members. We offer a brief account of this work under three main headings – support for the action programme, general monitoring of major activities, and more structured research or evaluation.

Support Work

This mainly involved local survey work, providing background material and regular feedback for the action programme. Surveys were carried out to identify and locate old aged pensioners in the area in 1971, to investigate the need for playgroup facilities in parts of the area in 1972, to provide an information base for setting up three separate local residents groups in 1973, to find resident preferences in the modernisation programme in the walk-up flats in 1973, and to evaluate residents' views of a housing rehabilitation programme in 1974. Survey techniques were found to be a highly successful way of getting residents' groups started where there was as yet little sense of identity. But the rapidly changing action programme sometimes made even snap surveys redundant before the results were out. This applied to the playgroup survey in 1972, and work to discover unemployment levels in the area in 1973.

Other background support work included setting up a reading programme in local schools, and carrying out a study of the city voluntary agencies designed to provide the Vauxhall voluntary agencies coordinator with background information about the potential for cooperation. In this category would also come the results of the first stage of the school to work research project on school leavers, particularly their attitudes towards youth facilities in the area.

The third category of support work, feedback on progress, came largely as a by-product of monitoring the development of the major activities. By retaining a measure of detachment, yet keeping contact with a large number of levels and activities at the same time the research team was often in a strong position to offer advice on how well schemes were going or how they were perceived. In many cases this support work merged very closely with action.

General Monitoring

The research team attempted to maintain an overview of major events, despite the extensive scale of the project. Almost all meetings at the Multi-Services Centre,

of the neighbourhood workers group, the Inter-Departmental Working Party, the project committee and the steering group were attended, as well as more sporadic coverage of the frequent resident group meetings. Developments were also monitored by regular discussion with participants. One particularly effective way of tracing developments was the use of 'case studies', following the progress of an issue or campaign, trying to understand the reasons why groups involved had acted or spoken as they had. These were a successful way of gauging the real relationships and dilemmas that lay behind the often surface encounters between community and local authority in the project committee or steering group.

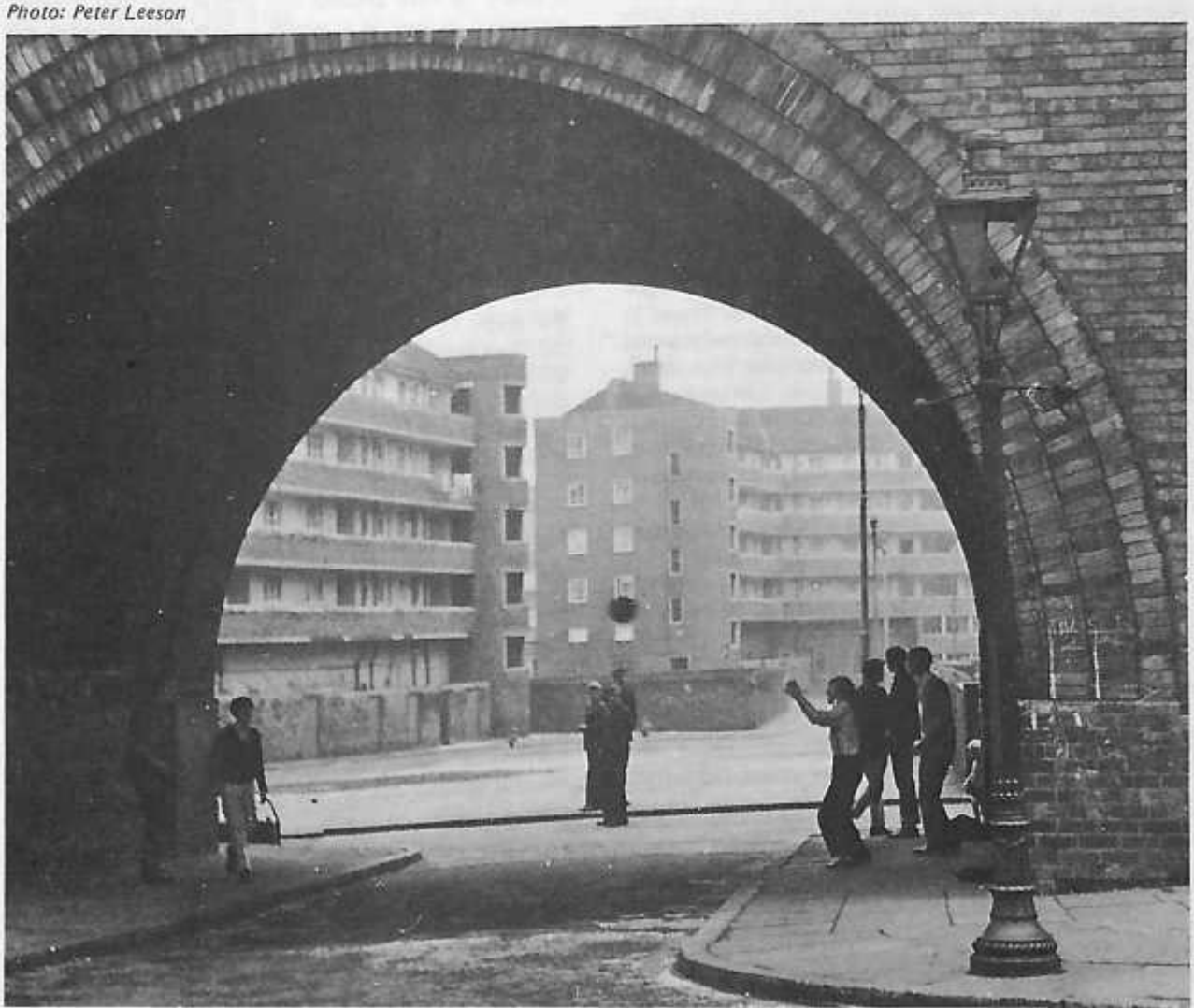
Formal Research and Evaluation

Early in the project, certain key areas were identified as those most amenable to more detailed long term evaluation. These were changes in the local authority organisation and attitudes, the impact of the schools' programme, research on school leavers, attempts to curb vandalism, and the development of the Information Centre. Of these, only the local authority research and the school leavers research programme were developed fully, and only the schools' and school leavers programme was completed. The local authority research was designed to provide a measure of organisational flexibility, intended to allow long-term monitoring of the organisational results of a more decentralised form of decision making. It required extensive interviewing of local authority staff in the major departments; but it was finally turned down by the local authority at the same time as the project's plans to proceed to a full area management were shelved.

The school leavers research project was intended to throw more light on the project area, particularly the transition from school to work, and on how far the pattern of the next generation would be similar to the old. A complete cohort of school leavers from the area was studied over a three year period; their school records, attitudes to work and school, as well as job histories were collected in two separate interviews (see Jones, Smith and Pulham, 1975). Other formal studies failed to develop; the campaign against vandalism receded in importance as the project moved on to other ideas, and the records of the Information Centre were not detailed enough to allow more than a general view of the cases handled. Overall the heavy traditional weapons of research were extremely unsuited to the rapidly changing and widely scattered action programme, and worked best for example in the school leavers study where there was in fact no project action.

Projects like CDP which operate in areas of conflict, with ideas and actions surrounded by rhetoric, must be a frustrating experience for those who expect precisely tested outcome, or for researchers anxious for a stable situation to set up their formal evaluation procedures. The dilemma for those involved in social policy research is that almost by definition, areas of social life where there is the leisure and stability to test out options in a systematic way will tend to be those of specialist rather than general importance. Where the choice of policy is crucial, there major interests are in conflict. Any testing of options must inevitably be a messy business.

Photo: Peter Leeson



Chapter 12: Community Development and Urban Deprivation

In the previous chapters we have presented a detailed account of the development and activities of the Liverpool CDP. We have adopted this method of reporting for several related reasons. First, as we have argued earlier in the report, we do not believe it possible to conclude *a priori* that the approach followed by the Vauxhall project was necessarily wrong or certain to prove ineffective. At each stage in the translation of an overall strategy into action, there is slippage and play between the parts. The same analysis can lead to several sharply different practical proposals; there is no way a particular theoretical position can uniquely prescribe or determine what should actually happen; and in CDP we have frequently seen very similar activities defended as the end product of rival or conflicting approaches. Nor does the adoption of one approach necessarily rule out alternatives. As we have argued elsewhere (Smith, Lees and Topping 1977) and illustrated in the case studies in chapter 10, the network of local groups set up by the Liverpool project within a framework of 'consensus' and local authority action, was undoubtedly made use of by those with far more militant tactics. It is thus crucially important to describe what actually happens for an effective assessment.

We have attempted to do this for the Liverpool project, in no way 'whitewashing' its faults or failures, though given the mass of activities and the informal method of research, we accept there may well be several alternative, equally valid accounts. The onus is now on other projects, particularly those that have adopted different approaches to present a similar detailed account of their experience and progress. Only in this way can we begin to move beyond the general debate about strategies, and illustrate what it means in practice to adopt one approach rather than another, whether this be based on 'conflict' or 'consensus'. The attraction and importance of CDP clearly lies in its potential to link general theory with practical outcome.

A further reason for a detailed account is the vague and indeterminate nature of CDP's objectives. It was in no sense a precise social experiment, where results could be carefully measured against predictions. Like much community development, the emphasis was on process rather than outcome; it was the journey, rather than the arrival that mattered. Even at the start the objectives were highly diffuse – nothing less than a reassertion of Western democratic ideals, commented the first national research director. And even these wide boundaries were quickly breached, as projects expanded the programmes in all directions. In the absence of clear objectives, description and analysis remain the best method of evaluation.

Finally, Liverpool provides a case study, not a conclusive test of the actions it set up. Schemes may have failed, not because the ideas were necessarily wrong, but because they did not fit the context, or were poorly mounted. Schemes may have succeeded for the opposite reasons. Again only a detailed account of how the action developed allows the reader to make his own judgements.

However we cannot avoid putting forward our own conclusions. These could have been restricted purely to the activities of the Vauxhall project, but this would miss out the most difficult and central questions raised by the CDP experiment. Liverpool stuck closely to the original conception of CDP. Yet as other projects were quick to point out there were many alternative approaches. How appropriate was the Liverpool strategy to the problems facing Vauxhall? We turn first to the detailed conclusions from the Liverpool project, and then to these broader questions of urban deprivation and community development.

Liverpool Community Development Project

As the Liverpool project comprised a number of separate developments that together made up the overall programme, two levels of conclusion can be drawn. Many of these developments were viable in their own right, and certainly did not depend for success on their position in the overall strategy. We look at these separately first, before turning to more general conclusions.

The form of descriptive evaluation used in this report is likely to have created the impression that nothing succeeded as well as it might – that every scheme was beset with problems. Of course in a way this was true, but the spotlight of research can highlight these difficulties and make them appear abnormal. Yet the project did succeed in getting under way an impressive number of schemes in a short space of time, putting almost all its efforts into the local area, in preference to making any major impact at the national level.

Many of these initiatives, whatever their scrambled beginning, have lasted to become part of the local scene – the 'Scottie Press', the Information and Law Centre, the under-13 football league, the community centres, the large number of resident and issue based groups, and the debating forum of the neighbourhood council, which succeeded the project steering group. The local authority was persuaded to continue funding most of the new appointments made by the project through the neighbourhood council, and maintain the various buildings. The area benefited from a programme of environmental improvements; derelict sites were grassed, and trees planted; several play areas were created, a swimming baths and wash-house due for closure were retained. Plans for housing modernisation were brought forward for some blocks, unfit 'walk-up' flats were demolished, and some property improved. Some of the major roads running through the area were more strictly segregated from pedestrian areas, and a traffic management system introduced within the area. Many of these are minor changes judged against the major social and economic

problems facing Vauxhall, and they may have diverted resources from other needy areas of Liverpool; but all the same they are gains for the area and should not be ignored. On the local authority side the project established the basis for an area management experiment, with the creation of a neighbourhood council, the Multi-Services Centre, and the experience of district management gained from the inter-departmental working party.

Action Programmes

(i) Local Authority

Though the project may have adopted a low key, low profile approach to changes within the local authority, its ambitions were formidable — nothing less than a transformation of local government and its relationship with local areas. In that respect it failed, particularly in the final stage of getting an area management experiment set up in the Vauxhall area. This was an almost inevitable result, following the long series of local government reorganisations, and the acceptance of an area management experiment as part of the Inner Areas Study. With the Liberal majority control from 1974, community development moved rapidly into the political arena, and as a result was carefully segregated from questions of area management and local authority organisation. By its policy of slowly building up support among local government officers through their experience on the inter-departmental working party, the project failed to cash in on the early impetus it might have gained from its status as a new experimental central government project. By the time it had laid the groundwork, newer and more high powered projects had taken the centre of the stage.

The success of the inter-departmental working party depended heavily on the support of chief officers. This was always guarded; for the development of area management is a further restriction on the independence of individual departments: a check on the big barons of local government. However as the initiative came from the chief executive it was difficult for departments not to take part in the first place. Less ambiguous support might have brought greater progress. The working party finally foundered on the problem of moving from a 'debating shop' to experimenting with an integrated programme. As usual the project's 'across the board' approach, involving all departments, meant that progress had to be at the pace of the slowest and most reluctant member. Much of the progress that was made was often on a small group basis, for example on the better coordination of cleansing services. However there was a shift in attitudes towards the local community, and an increased feeling of accountability, as the working party attempted to develop its programme.

Despite this relative failure, discussions at the working party persistently underlined the desperate need for the greater integration of individual departments' programmes at the local level. There was often only the haziest knowledge or understanding of other departments' policy. Coordination and contact at the most senior level may result in agreement over broad policy and programme statements, but it is at the point of service delivery, at the local level, where it really counts. Area management may be one way of moving towards this objective, ideally creating both a forum within which practical links can be forged between departments, as occurred to a limited extent in the working party, and a climate of coordination which encourages departments to develop more integrated local plans. But the key message of the Vauxhall project was that further development of the local authority must be matched by equivalent development in the community, or else we are in danger of creating yet another tier of unresponsive and self-sustaining bureaucracy. Area management must be matched by community organisation powerful enough to make sure that local views and priorities are at the centre of discussion.

(ii) Multi-Services Centre

The plan to involve as many fieldwork agencies as possible in the Multi-Services Centre effectively determined the point of approach to each agency. With less urgency it might have been possible to have approached both the fieldworkers who were actually to work from the centre, and senior officials who could have given approval to the idea. Though the project did approach both groups, effort was concentrated at the senior level staying local would not have secured the go-ahead for a major venture. This was particularly true of agencies forming part of the central rather than local government structure, where the approach was usually to the regional headquarters. Success in gaining approval at this level ensured that a large number of agencies was involved from the start, but commitment at the local level still had to be developed.

The project's tactics were deliberately low-key and open-ended. The principles behind the scheme were revealed in a short discussion document, but there was no detailed argument about what agencies might expect to get from the centre, nor any indication of how relationships and roles might develop. In fact the project was asking for a blank cheque, basing its approach on common acceptance of the ideas behind the centre, though these were never debated in depth. Later several workers at the centre were to point out that they knew little of the background or reasons for its development or even the role their service was expected to play.

Agencies with marginal involvement tended to fall away after a short period of token attachment to the centre. These were often agencies such as Social Security, only prepared to meet other professionals or the general public in carefully controlled encounters. However more open and accessible agencies, such as social services and probation, which had placed a specially selected team in the centre, gradually developed as a strong core of workers.

During the project several experiments to improve coordination were mounted at the centre. Many of these failed to catch on. Often they were sprung ready made into action without discussion among fieldwork staff, and it was not clear who was responsible for their progress. However they helped to generate a climate where professionals increasingly identified with the centre, and were more likely to see themselves as a group working to solve the area's problems, rather than as the

representatives of many separate departments.

Accountability to the community was far more likely to develop in this informal, self determined way than through the formal structures set up by the project. One such device, the residents advisory group, was far more concerned to gain information about how to handle individual cases for their own welfare activities, than to influence the general direction of the centre. Locally recruited workers were more likely to retain a strong individual case-work approach, and emphasise the importance of solving individual problems.

As with the working party, the project attempted to involve all local fieldwork agencies. Little attention was spent considering possible conflicts and tensions between many of these agencies, though these quickly emerged once the centre was established, for example between police and social workers, and the problem of shared record keeping among the different agencies. From one angle friction between services can be seen as evidence of inefficiency. But from another it may be an important safeguard for individual rights. When rebuffed by one agency, the individual can appeal to another, and frequently use its help to get his case reviewed. If he is now faced with a corporate and all-embracing structure, his chances of appeal are thereby reduced.

The Liverpool project failed to develop a comprehensive services centre, and an organised structure of local accountability also failed to emerge in the form intended. The organisation of local fieldwork services was not an issue that galvanised mass action, rather it attracted individuals already working in a voluntary welfare capacity anxious to develop their knowledge and skills in this field.

Perhaps the original grand design of grouping together all local services was both impractical and counter-productive. For it took no account of the tensions or the advantages of such concentration, seeing coordination as a 'good thing' in its own right. However the experience of the centre demonstrated that a select number of agencies could work together effectively on specific programmes, though it was a slow and often painful development.

Though the Multi-Services Centre does not necessarily offer a blueprint for the organisation of local fieldwork services, the questions it set out to answer remain of fundamental importance. How can local services be most effectively organised to meet local needs? How far should they be integrated or coordinated? The experience of the centre points to a number of experiments that might be mounted to test out different answers to these questions. Our research concentrated on the development of the centre; the next stage would be to measure its effectiveness and the local response to such developments. Following the recent large-scale organisational changes in the social and welfare services, and the growing level of resources involved in local fieldwork, it is time to turn again to the question of local organisation at the point of service delivery.

(iii) Voluntary Agencies.

The project initiated a scheme together with the LCSS's Welfare Organisations Committee to coordinate the voluntary and statutory agencies on a local basis from the Multi-Services Centre. The experiment foundered when the coordinator resigned after 15 months. There were problems of liaison and communication between the various agencies and the coordinator, but more important, she had no access to resources to underwrite joint schemes, and the project could offer little support. The voluntary agencies generally held a more restricted definition of her job than did the project, and different groups had very different expectations about her role. The Social Services Department failed to take any policy decision on closer cooperation with locally-based welfare agencies, despite high caseloads carried by staff. In fact neither statutory nor voluntary bodies seemed to have spare capacity to take on new cases or new lines of work. The most important underlying factor was the difficulty experienced by the large voluntary welfare organisations operating on a city-wide basis, in relating to locally-based organisations and coping with neighbourhood need.

Though the idea of strengthening links between statutory and voluntary welfare agencies was a popular theme at the start of the project, the reorganisation of social services and the emphasis on creating an integrated professional service at the beginning of the 1970s, seems to have checked this development. The emphasis shifted to the internal organisation and structure of the social services. It is perhaps now with the check to the growth of these services, that the theme of statutory and voluntary links is once again coming to prominence. Unfortunately the project chose the wrong moment to experiment, at a time when the social services were preoccupied with internal change and an emphasis on professional standards.

(iv) Community

The project's strategy was to establish an organised community structure to represent local interests to the local authority. This involved supporting local groups on a geographical and an issue basis, a series of linking institutions, such as the Information and Law Centre, or the community newspaper, and finally the steering group, later neighbourhood council, which was the main forum for encounters with the local authority.

This structure absorbed enormous amounts of project energy, particularly by the locally recruited neighbourhood community workers. Many have argued that such community bureaucracies stifle hard-hitting action groups. But this did not necessarily happen in Vauxhall. The networks developed by the project were also used by more militant groups. In fact these were often the same people active in the steering group and in resident associations. They were able to keep up steady pressure through these more formal institutions, for example the regular meetings of the steering group, or the columns of the 'Scottie Press' while mounting more aggressive short-run campaigns. This successfully insulated the project from their less constitutional activities, and the many diverse links with the local authority prevented any polarisation over a single contentious issue or a collision of the kind seen in the Batley CDP which finally resulted in its closure by the local authority. The closest call was over the tenants' campaign on the local elections, which touched a nerve at the centre of local government organisation.

A major drawback to the community work was the lack of supporting adult education. This was partly because the adult education tutors preferred to work with industrially based groups, and partly because the number of campaigns, meetings and committees left little time for reflection and assessment. At times it was almost as if the activists were being shunted round the area, taking part in every campaign, without digesting much new material, or discovering more about the workings of the local authority. This made it difficult to progress beyond a certain point when issues were contested, and the most frequent result was a stalemate. A clear dilemma was that the major issues which galvanised interest, were usually the hardest to solve; it was far more difficult to maintain pressure over the more day to day events.

However the linking institutions made an important contribution here. The community newspaper, the 'Scottie Press', which appeared monthly throughout the project, was often underrated as a part of the project's activities. It was successful in attracting local contributors, once it had been floated by the project, and quickly developed a strong 'Scottie Road' character. It was particularly important in raising local issues, and keeping them in view – with letters, comments and accounts of progress each month. Most of the major campaigns began in the 'Scottie Press', and their development can easily be traced in its columns. Even in a close-knit area like Scotland Road this helped enormously to give prominence to local events and campaigns, and was probably an important element in the relative success of the tenants' candidates in the local elections. Despite strong local readership and circulation, the paper depended on project support for its organisation. At the end of the project, this role was taken over by the neighbourhood council, though this has brought a more official tone to the newspaper.

The Information Centre, staffed by local people, has provided an individual casework service primarily concerned with welfare rights, housing allocation and housing maintenance. It has built up a detailed knowledge of the welfare benefits system, and links with the DHSS and Housing Department. It has been extensively used by local people, and its staff were important in the network of local contacts promoted by the project. Over housing, the centre often acted in an advocacy role, and helped to challenge the priorities for housing allocation. However it tended to remain a casework agency, and did not often use the information it had collected for more general action or campaigns.

The Law Centre has overwhelmingly demonstrated the need for access to legal services in Vauxhall. The first solicitor was quickly swamped with cases. The results were most dramatic in the housing field, where the Law Centre could assure clients of a speedy response from the Housing Department, once the clear threat of legal action had been established: though even this did not always prove the final answer, merely establishing a clear gap between statutory obligations and the ability of the service to respond.

The appointment of local people as neighbourhood community workers demonstrated that this was a viable alternative to more professional staff from outside the area. Though they felt under pressure to provide instant casework help to justify their position, several were able to adopt a more educational role, and provide the necessary continuity for many of the resident groups. Others found these pressures too great and withdrew. There were problems about their accountability to local people particularly when their appointments were transferred to the neighbourhood council, and problems too, about the relative position of paid and voluntary local workers. Naturally the NCWs were anxious to gain formal professional qualifications to increase their acceptance, pointing to the need for training courses and new career openings, so that those recruited by this route were not blocked from further advance. With the other local appointments – to the Information Centre, as local playleaders and receptionists at the Multi-Services Centre, the neighbourhood community workers were perhaps the most successful aspect of the project's community programme.

In areas such as Vauxhall with high levels of unemployment, where the personal and welfare services are almost the only growth industries, there would seem to be strong grounds for a far more systematic development of local opportunities of this type along the lines of the 'new careers' programmes in the United States – perhaps funded by an adult equivalent of the 'Job Creation' programme.

(v) Education

The educational programme should have been a major linking device in the Vauxhall project. For several reasons this did not happen. Most elements in the programme tended to develop a life of their own, interacting only loosely with other components. This was particularly true in education. The schools programme developed in isolation from the rest of the project, creating a resource centre for local schools, and promoting home–school links. But it is clear that this one-man effort on its own made little impact on the schools, certainly did not develop on the ideas emerging from the EPA programme, nor added to the project's overall effect.

For very different reasons the adult education work was also not closely linked in to the project's main programme. The IES team held sharply different views on community development pushing a far more radical programme than the local authority centred project was prepared to tolerate, and the link finally broke down. Other adult education work initially linked to the WEA, concentrated on industrially based groups, work with the unemployed or aspects of welfare rights. Again there were several sharp clashes over how this work should relate to the rest of the programme.

Despite these problems with education, several clear lessons emerged. First, however well implemented, a schools' programme would have been hard to integrate with the project's other work. The timescale, age groups, and direction of interest were all very different. The educational system can absorb enormous amounts of energy and manpower; the returns on this investment are generally long term. How to harness these resources effectively to short-run, locally based community projects has yet to be successfully answered. It was characteristically the case in CDP that schools pro-

grammes tended to develop into separate mini-projects on their own. In contrast adult education offers more relevant and immediate pay-off, and the ideas developed in Liverpool by the EPA and IES teams have rightly spread to projects in other areas.

Strategies and Tactics

At the level of overall strategy the project's twin programmes of community development and improved service delivery were inextricably bound together. Both were essential components. Organised community pressure would be the most important means of achieving change in local services. At a practical level, however, there were tensions between the two elements. The community programme constantly had to be held in check to maintain links with wary local authority officers; and the project had to distance itself from the more contentious forms of community action – the move to block Scotland Road during the traffic campaign, the rent strike and the tenants' candidates in the local elections. Yet they had also to avoid being cast as standard local authority officials, unreceptive to local demands. In attempting this balancing act, the project experienced both success and failure. It successfully maintained links with both groups – extending local authority responsibilities to new areas, and drawing local people into regular contacts with local services. Yet it failed to attract the whole-hearted commitment of either group, and the overall structure never really functioned as intended.

Some will see this as the inevitable failure of a 'consensus' approach. Yet it is unlikely that community pressure on its own would have brought about major changes in local authority policy. Some response was required from within the structure. As Pickvance (1975) shows in a study of recent community action campaigns, it takes two sides to achieve a successful negotiation. Community pressure was most likely to succeed where the bureaucracy was already prepared to respond. Thus the project's awkward balancing act was unavoidable if it was to bring about change.

However the way the project set about realising its overall programme was a confusing mixture of different styles of action. Many of its developments, the Multi-Services Centre, the working party and the neighbourhood council were ready made institutions, rather than tailored to local conditions. The project was anxious to set up these new structures at an early stage. This urgency was in contrast to the basic style of community work practice, where an 'organic' growth of structures and relationships, developing through experience, is held to be important. The short time scale of the project, combined with the vision of promoting organisations in the community and the local authority which could 'talk' to each other, meant that the project frequently set up structures into which people had to be moulded. This was seen not just in the way agencies moved into the centre, but also in the promotion of a federation of tenants' associations before all the constituent groups were meaningfully in existence. The results were often artificial structures, lacking a clear sense of direction and purpose. Even though this might slowly build up, the whole machine could only lumber forward at the pace of its slowest component.

Yet the project also embarked almost randomly on an enormous number of one-off schemes; the theory here was of 'critical mass' – that if enough was done, eventually something would begin to move. With limited project resources, the result was that many schemes existed in name only, or were abandoned after half-hearted action. Ultimately it is impossible to conclude whether community organisation was stimulated by this scatter effect – or whether it was the result of the more organised and long term developments. Nevertheless it was hard to accept the waste of effort and confusion at the time.

Throughout its programme the project consistently emphasised the idea of local accountability, trying to build this in as a formal component, for example in the residents advisory group for the Multi-Services Centre. Often this did not work as intended. Where there was pressure from the community on local services, the direction did not necessarily fit with professional ideas about change. Much of the pressure was for field workers to tackle more individual cases on a 'more of the same basis' rather than search for underlying causes. The local neighbourhood community workers were a particularly strong source for these individual cases. Nor was the pressure uniform. Clients of the probation service might welcome a more youth work oriented approach, but there were other groups in the community who clearly favoured more traditional 'law and order' methods. Accountability to the community raises a series of dilemmas; how is it to be reconciled with existing lines of authority and statutory responsibility? How are conflicting pressures from the community and other fieldworkers to be handled? To which groups in the community should the service be accountable? The project had no clear answer, though it was helped by the strong existing sense of community within the area which prevented this problem emerging in an acute form.

The large number of meetings and encounters between local people, project team and officials had one clear outcome. They effectively bypassed local councillors; this was admitted on all sides, though the councillors still retained final control over expenditure in the project committee. The network of organisations linking community and local authority set up by the project was intended to recognise the powerful and growing influence of the local authority over the area, in housing, environment, planning, and other local services. By comparison it underlined the tenuous and part-time links between local area and conventional local government, which were clearly inadequate to handle the growing level of business.

Perhaps it is significant that local councillors at first opposed the idea of local neighbourhood community workers, and the neighbourhood council with powers to spend money. Both struck at important elements in their own role – particularly advising individual constituents about their problems, and steering small items of expenditure to their area. And it was the more active residents who took the next step and campaigned as the tenants' candidates in the local elections, arguing that local councillors had done little for the area, and should be replaced by those who were more active locally. The growth of local authority services, and the spread of

community action placed the local councillors in an exposed and weak position. To an extent the project had mobilised those who were not part of the traditional organisations in the area, providing them with status and resources, sometimes employment. This undoubtedly presented a challenge to the traditional structure of the community, with which local councillors were often closely linked.

Throughout this account, it is clear that the project's limited resources of money, time and staff, acted as major constraints on the project's choice of action, and its ability to maintain progress over time. To some it may seem incredible that a project with these limited resources should have embarked on such a large scale programme. Yet it was always expected that changes on this scale would be attempted; and if projects like CDP do not have adequate resources, how else could they be achieved? It is unlikely that any of the services in the area would have had sufficient time, money and leverage to have attempted anything on this scale. For the experimental project can both initiate particular schemes that local authority departments might avoid – the experiment, for example, with local neighbourhood community workers. And they are not tied down to a departmental brief and can more easily explore areas of coordination. Yet there is a clear dilemma: how far should they remain an experiment outside the normal framework, moving on once their ideas are lodged, and how far should they become the real thing? The Vauxhall project quickly became trapped in a number of day to day responsibilities – servicing committees and ensuring groups met regularly. This left less and less time to mount new schemes effectively. At the end the project could do little more than maintain the extensive fabric it had created. Even this was a full time job for most of the team.

The timescale of a short experimental project strongly influences the pace of action locally. For whatever the merits of a gradual 'organic' build-up the project has to move quickly to capitalise on its extra resources and influence, as a new and unknown force in the local set-up.

Once these resources are committed, and its reputation tarnished, the power to bring about change directly declines, though the project may by now have established effective local networks. At the end of its five years the Vauxhall project clearly wielded far less influence with the local authority as it tried to set up an area management scheme. This was compounded by the arrival of newer projects with resources as yet uncommitted, and no history of links with awkward forms of community action. Yet paradoxically while its ability to bring about large scale change at this level had declined sharply, its informal influence may have increased locally. It was now a known and accepted agency in the area, and fieldworkers who had at first virtually been drafted into the centre, and other local authority officers were beginning to identify more closely with its aims and programme.

A striking and important feature of projects such as CDP, is that their activities form part of an overall strategy – they are not merely a random collection of 'good ideas'; individual programmes can be justified as part of some more general package. In this they contrast with the 'disjointed incrementalism' of much local authority development, or the single issue approach of much central government policy making. Research at the local level has repetitively demonstrated the way the same policy may have different outcomes in different areas, depending on the interaction with other policies or the varying social and economic conditions. Clearly the development of a local policy strategy with a mix of programmes is one way round this problem. Far from merely offering a way of piloting national policy developments, projects such as CDP serve to illustrate an alternative model of policy making.

Urban Deprivation and Community Development

In our description of the project area in Chapter Three, we emphasised the structural nature of the changes affecting Vauxhall. These were not recent developments, but the latest in a long series of changes that had kept Vauxhall at the bottom of the list, always an area of high unemployment, poor and overcrowded housing. Yet the project rarely confronted these problems directly, concentrating instead on change in the local authority and on building up community organisation. Only towards the end of the project was there a shift to tackle some of the housing and employment problems more directly. Other projects dismissed Vauxhall's main interest with local government and community organisation as the 'five per cent' factor, and increasingly concentrated on industrial change and job loss which they saw as the major structural factors affecting 'life chances' in their areas.

Vauxhall was among CDP areas, in many ways the extreme case of these structural problems, with unemployment levels reaching an estimated one in four workers, and one in three in the younger age groups in the autumn of 1976. But this was not the problem of Vauxhall alone, but of many areas in Liverpool and Merseyside as well. There was little that could be done at the local level. Other projects accepted the logic of this position, and their industrial work was aimed either at the trade union or Labour movement locally as a way into the national debate, or more directly at a wider audience. In this way they have clearly played a part in establishing the links between industrial change and urban deprivation which are increasingly accepted in discussions of national policy, for example in the White Paper 'Policy for the Inner Cities' (DOE, 1977), though even here the practical proposals for industrial regeneration of the inner city are still limited.

Clearly there are enough bodies calling for industrial investment and renewal in areas like Vauxhall to demonstrate that mere exhortation and a mix of general incentives are unlikely to have a dramatic influence, particularly at the present time. The evidence on the effects of regional policy provides little encouragement for the belief that the incentives announced in the Inner City White Paper will check and reverse the present trend of industrial decline in such areas. The commitment to priority for the inner city in social and economic policy, and the package of industrial incentives represent a welcome advance and an important shift of balance in policy making. Yet we should not let this blind us to a proper analysis and understanding of

the changes that are draining industry away from areas like Vauxhall. We need to make clear the choices involved if these trends are to be reversed. Here the White Paper is far less explicit, and more muffled on the question of priorities: 'some of the changes which have taken place (in the inner city) are due to social and economic forces which could be reversed only with great difficulty or at unacceptable cost.'

The CDP projects have recently described and analysed these changes (CDP, 1977) and we can only endorse their accounts with examples from Vauxhall. Here particularly the main labour intensive industries have declined, and increased mechanisation means fewer jobs. Other industries have moved out of the area to more attractive and open green field sites. Vauxhall with its cramped conditions, derelict industrial land, and a predominantly semi or unskilled workforce offers few attractions. Large-scale industrial investment is likely to accelerate many of these trends, through the closure of outdated and labour intensive plants.

One of the major problems we face is the orderly regeneration of the older industrial areas such as Vauxhall. Here the comparison with primitive agricultural methods – where areas were cleared, planted, burnt out and abandoned for new sites, is instructive. In time new methods allowed continuous use of the same areas. Yet in contrast the process of industrial change is quickening: areas are burnt out more rapidly, and social capital is wasted. Clearly we need to move away from this destructive pattern; but the problem is how to achieve this, particularly in areas like Vauxhall where the run-down has already gone so far.

In a report and project concerned essentially with local authority change and community organisation, we have no detailed set of employment proposals to offer. However we would make three limited suggestions. The first is simply for more information about the employment position at the local area level. Several CDPs have experimented with local trade union research units for this purpose. This is one response. At an administrative level it should be possible to produce regular unemployment figures for small areas from existing data, as indeed was done for Vauxhall from Department of Employment data. Unemployment rates are at present produced largely for 'travel to work' areas. Such data on a small area basis would demonstrate the enormous variations within larger districts. Though these might be dismissed as economically misleading, their social significance could not be ignored, if within regions such as Merseyside where the rates touch 11%–12% of the workforce, there were areas where up to a quarter of the working population was unemployed. This is not to suppose that mere information would galvanise action, but at least it would be harder to pretend that such areas did not exist. Regular figures would provide a basis for monitoring change and the effects of new policies.

The second point is that we have perhaps too easily equated the problem of industrial regeneration with the problems of the inner city. Though the decline of industry and the inner city may be closely linked, their revival may not. To hope for the creation of a significant number of jobs in the inner city through *industrial* investment and expansion, may in historical perspective look as forlorn an attempt as a similar move earlier in the century to check the decline in agricultural employment. To create employment on any scale we need to turn to labour intensive activities, and this is likely to lead away from industry, at least of a conventional kind.

The third point is that we tend to treat unemployment as a short term phenomenon, a problem that will quickly be alleviated by the next up-turn in the economy. Though this will have its effect on Vauxhall, it is clear that long term unemployment will still be the experience of a substantial proportion of the workforce in such areas. With the 16–19 year old group we have recently seen recognition that high levels of unemployment among this age group are not a temporary school leaving phenomenon, but a result of structural changes in the economy. In response a wide range of job creation programmes has been set up to reduce unemployment levels. The same arguments apply more widely to the employment problems of the inner city, and there are strong arguments in favour of similar job creation projects for all age-groups on an established and substantial basis – not merely short run injections of cash to finance a few construction works. Perhaps such a programme could in one of its forms support local appointments such as neighbourhood community workers or other residents along the lines of the Vauxhall project.

Against this economic and industrial backdrop, it is difficult to return to the activities of the Liverpool CDP project, and the changes it was able to bring about in the Vauxhall area. However it is important to underline that deprivation and disadvantage are not purely about jobs. Even if by some miracle, full employment and thriving industry could be returned to Vauxhall, it would still be a disadvantaged area. This is where the project's activities again become relevant. We certainly do not accept that by failing – or not even attempting – to make a direct impact on these structural and economic factors, the project was thereby powerless to bring about any significant developments in the project area. If anything the reverse was true, and by the end of the project, there were groups which were now attempting to get to grips with some of these basic problems.

As we argued in chapter three on the project area, many of the recent decisions which had affected Vauxhall – the second Mersey tunnel, the building of motorways, clearance and redevelopment – were at least theoretically within the public domain, under the control of central and local government. In Vauxhall it was far more than a 'five per cent' concern. It made sense for the project to grapple with local authority management and decision-taking, and build up a local organisation to apply long term pressure and contest Vauxhall's share of public resources. In this way the bargaining power of the area could be strengthened. It was far less likely that after the many sharp encounters and clashes between residents and officials, that any department would have lightly embarked on proposals unacceptable to residents, as they had often blithely done at the start. This may have meant that unwanted developments were placed in other less militant areas – a basic problem for local community action – but no argument against attempting to strengthen local community organisation.

Though many local authority services have a marginal

impact and relevance to the problems of Vauxhall, they constitute a major bank of professional skills, potentially available to tackle some of the area's problems more directly. How best to organise these services at the local level to increase this contribution remains an important question.

Such developments may do little to improve the position of Vauxhall in the short term; for they cannot change its stock of resources. However they can influence the quality and character of its flow of new resources. If we see deprivation and disadvantage not merely as a historically given part of the social structure, but as a set of relationships that are continually being reaffirmed by decisions and encounters which emphasise the powerlessness of one side, then such developments could be significant.

Many of the problems facing Vauxhall were the result of external change, and could in no way be solved purely by local action. But to accept this is not to conclude that no local improvements are possible. Though it is in no way a substitute for action at the national level, community development at the local level has an important contribution to make. It is a way of keeping track of the different mix of policies in operation at this level – pointing out problems and anomalies where policy is actually applied, and most importantly a means by which local views and priorities can make their impact on policy. In this it provides an important counterweight to the increasingly distant and large-scale bureaucracies – tenuously linked to local areas – from which policies emerge.

The Vauxhall project was one attempt to bring about these changes at the local level. There are other approaches, some of them found in CDP elsewhere. However the Vauxhall project stuck doggedly to its original programme, setting up a comprehensive range of local institutions linking community and local authority, which it would be hard to parallel in any other area. Such a complicated structure is unlikely to serve as an exact blueprint for community development elsewhere. But its range of experience cannot be ignored.

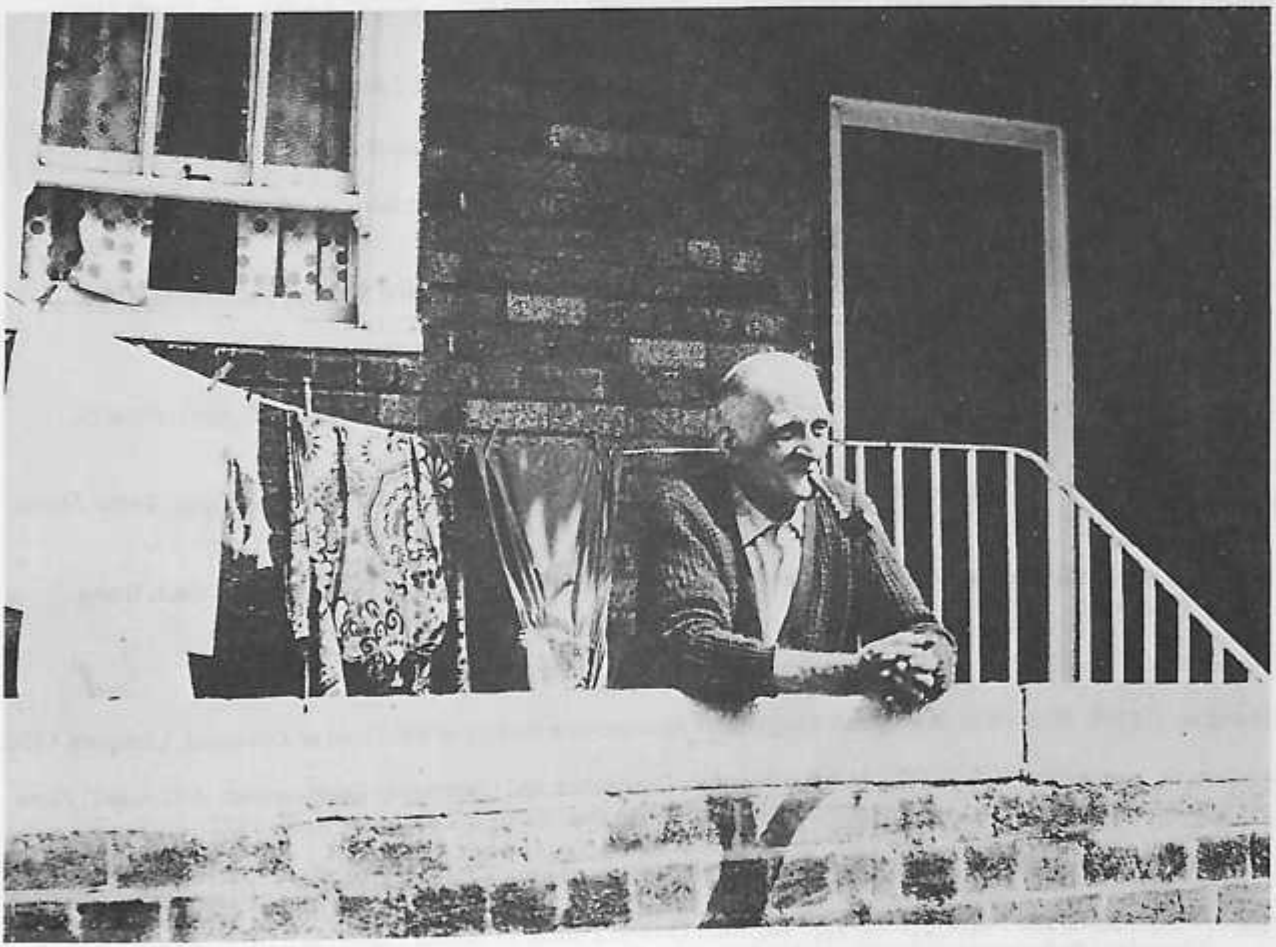


Photo: Liam Gilligan

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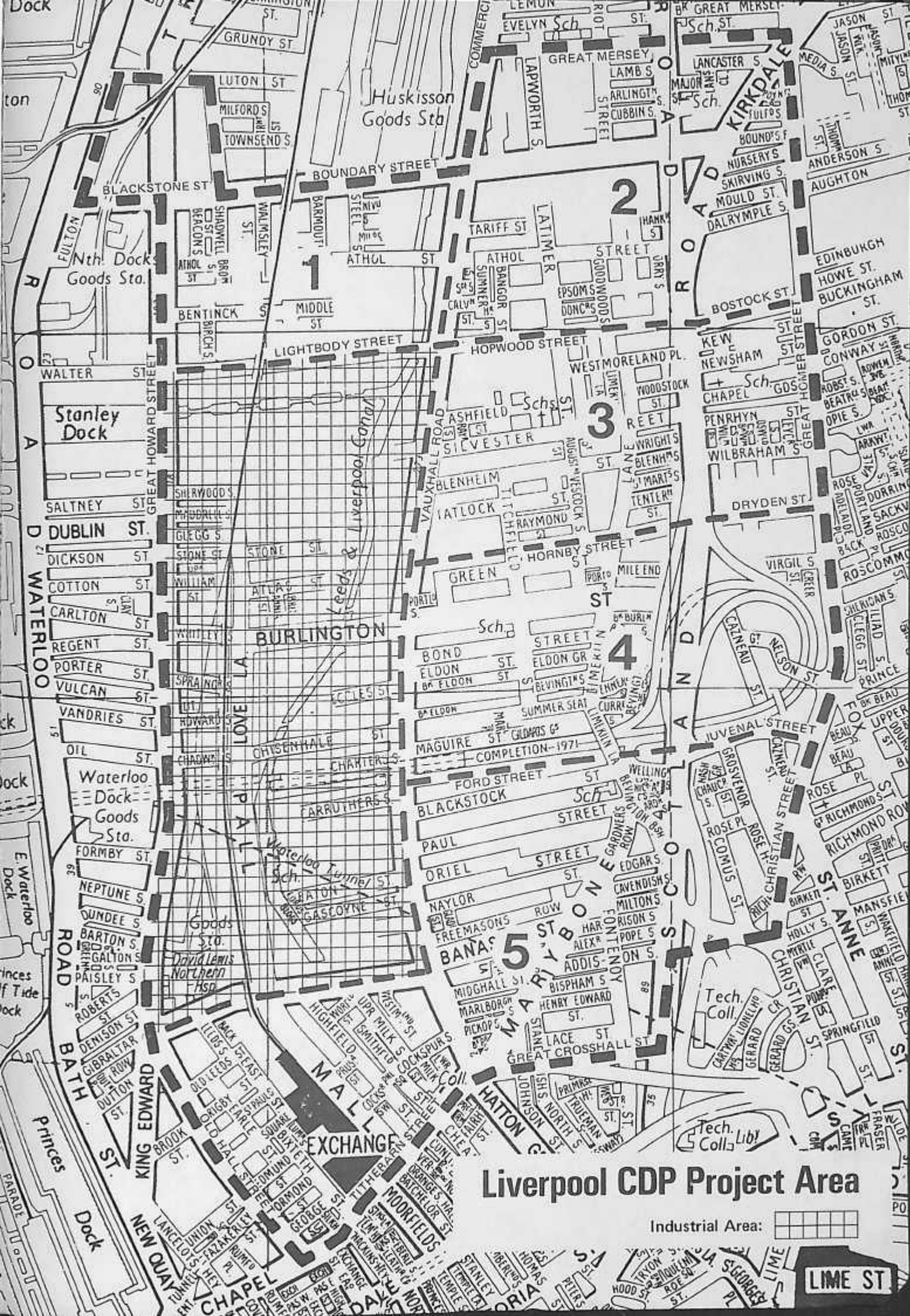
Liverpool CDP Project Area
Industrial Area:
Huskisson Goods Sta
Nth. Docks Goods Sta.
Stanley Dock
Waterloo Dock Goods Sta.
Goods Sta.
David Lewis Northern Hse.
Tech. Coll.
Tech. Coll. Lib.
EXCHANGE
MALL
BURLINGTON
MARYBONE
COLAND
ROAD
BOUNDARY STREET
GREAT HOWARD STREET
WATERLOO ROAD
KING EDWARD
BATH
STANLEY ROAD
KIRKDALE
LIME ST
1
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