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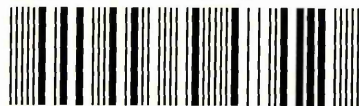
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**THE CONCEPT AND PRACTICE OF
'ENABLING'
LOCAL HOUSING AUTHORITIES**

Sundeep Aulakh

**The Concept and Practice of
'Enabling'
Local Housing Authorities**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
Sheffield Hallam University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

January 2002



ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the changing role of housing authorities within the wider context of the restructuring of the British welfare state. Between the years 1979 and 1997, four successive Conservative administrations attempted to eliminate the municipal ownership and management of the social housing sector. Central to this restructuring was the notion of 'enabling' and this crystallised the Conservatives' vision for the future role of housing authorities as non-providers. Instead, local authorities were expected to facilitate housing provision through the private or voluntary sectors. At the time this research began, it was clear that, whilst the magnitude of this reorientation of local government's traditional role generated significant discussion at the conceptual level, there remained a paucity of empirical research examining the actual practice of enabling at the local level. The research on which this thesis draws, therefore, helps to address the imbalance between the theorisation of enabling and detailed empirical work. It explores the way in which housing authorities have responded to the enabling challenge and the resultant implications this has for the delivery of housing services.

In the UK, the conceptual discussion of enabling was most clearly articulated in the enabling typology developed by Leach *et al.* (1992) and this formed the theoretical underpinnings of the present study. A two-part research strategy was adopted in which, first, a postal survey was administered to 100 housing authorities. This provided a scientific sampling framework from which three case-study housing authorities were selected for the second part of the data collection. Here, qualitative interviews were undertaken with senior policy-makers from the housing departments and their housing association and voluntary sector 'partners'.

There was variation between the three case-study authorities in their transition to the enabling role and, in this context, the prominent research findings are as follows. The analysis of the data gathered from the first case-study authority highlights the way in which resistance to change and institutional inertia prevented the housing department from shifting to the enabling role. Hence, it continued to operate according to the traditional role. In the other two case-study authorities, the research findings show: (a) the variation between central and local government in their interpretation of enabling, particularly in the context of the compulsory competitive tendering of housing management functions; (b) the shift towards partnership working and the way in which the housing authorities retained a dominant role amongst the plethora of agencies that are now involved in policy formation and service delivery; (c) the decline in direct provision was precipitating the 'reinvention' of new roles centred around 'community governance'; (d) the implications that all these developments had in relation to the internal organisational structure and management processes of the two authorities.

In examining the practice of enabling housing authorities, this thesis contributes to an understanding of the way in which the wider role and function of local government has been restructured from its position under the post-war consensus.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis has benefited from the direct and indirect support of many individuals which I would like to acknowledge here. Thanks are first due to Paul Lawless and the Centre for Regional, Economic and Social Research for giving me the opportunity to fulfil my long-standing desire to undertake a Ph.D. I would also like to thank the many organisations which completed the postal survey, as well as the three case-study authorities for participating in this study. I am, especially, indebted to those individuals who made time in their busy schedules to talk openly and extensively about the issues of the research and, as a result, provided me with some very rich data.

I am grateful to my supervisors, Robert Sykes and Paul Senior, for their constructive comments and advice on earlier drafts of this thesis. I would, however, particularly like to single out the contribution made by my Director of Studies, Robert Furbey. As well as providing me with personal support and constant encouragement, he has generously devoted many hours of his own free time to read and re-read earlier drafts of the thesis. His attention to detail, insightful observations and intellectual advice have significantly improved the overall quality and standard of this thesis. I will always look back fondly on our many ‘chats’ over cups of coffee – even when they were in the rather insalubrious setting of the Atrium! Needless to say, any errors or eccentricities of interpretation are my responsibility.

My family and friends have patiently waited for me ‘to finish’ and their unfailing support and encouragement has also been invaluable. For their constant concern for my welfare and their unwavering friendship, I am grateful to Jan, Andrea, Tina, Jane, Karl, Jim, Leeroy, Ian and Paul. I would also like to thank Malcolm Todd, whose own Ph.D. has paralleled my own, for making this isolating experience a great deal less lonely.

Unbeknown to them, my mother and father – Perminder and Santokh Aulakh – have played a crucial role in the completion of this Ph.D. They have instilled in me the qualities of perseverance and determination and without these, I would, in all likelihood, have abandoned this thesis many years ago. For this, and all the love they have always given me, I now take great pleasure in dedicating this thesis to them.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge all the support and encouragement given to me by my husband, Roland Bolton. In so doing, I find myself at a loss for words that capture all the thousand and one different ways in which he has helped me to complete this thesis. He has patiently and lovingly endured with me all the trials and traumas that are integral to an undertaking such as this.

In short, he has managed to keep me sane, lifted me from 'grump-street', made me laugh in times of adversity, given me hope when I despaired, and kept his faith in me when I had none in myself. Babe, here's to a long, successful and, most of all, a happy 'Ph.D.-free' future together!

Sundeeep Aulakh,

November 2001.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCT	Compulsory Competitive Tendering
CHP	Community Housing Partnership
DETR	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions
DoE	Department of the Environment
HAP	Housing Association Partnership
HAT	Housing Action Trust
HIP	Housing Investment Programme
LSVT	Large Scale Voluntary Transfer
NHS	National Health Service
RSI	Rough Sleepers Initiative
RTB	Right-To-Buy
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget

All history is unfinished history, and just as we have had more than one yesterday, so we can, if we choose, have more than one future.

Asa Briggs, *A Social History of England*.

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

In the UK, for most of the twentieth century, the management and ownership of non-profit or social housing has been dominated by local authority provision. In its contemporary form, council housing had its principal origins in the housing conditions and legislation of the 1920s (Lowe and Hughes, 1995: 14). Since that period, up until the 1980s, the local authority's housing role continued to evolve and expand with new powers and duties being entrusted to it at regular intervals. Much was achieved in terms of new building, slum clearance and housing renovation (Spencer, 1989: 78). In 1938, one in ten dwellings were in the council sector and by 1979, the zenith of local authority housing, just over a third of the British housing stock was in the public sector (Malpass and Murie, 1999: 43, 59). These statistics emphasise the enormous importance of state housing provision in Britain and paint a contrast with the patterns of social housing to rent that evolved in other Western European countries (see Power, 1993).

The election of the Conservative administration in 1979, however, marked a radical turning point in the history of council housing. The incoming Government was firmly committed to market provision and it initiated a chain of events that, for the first time since the 1920s, seriously questioned the role of local authorities as providers of rented housing. Specifically, the Government reconceptualised the role of housing authorities as 'enablers'. No longer were they to engage in new-build, or as reflected in later legislation, even manage their existing stock. Rather, housing authorities were expected to concentrate upon their 'strategic' role, identifying needs and enabling other actors to meet local housing requirements. This reorientation of local government's traditional role was of such fundamental magnitude that, unsurprisingly, it generated significant political controversy. This was not helped by the Government itself as it pitched the discussion of enabling 'at the level of general principle' (Cole and Goodchild, 1993: 1), rather than identifying what it entailed in practice (Goodlad, 1994: 570). Hence, alternative conceptions of enabling were advanced but, in the midst of this debate, there was remarkably little empirical research investigating how enabling was being practised at the local level. This thesis seeks to address this imbalance. Using quantitative and qualitative data, the present study explores how housing authorities have responded to the enabling challenge, how they have interpreted this new role and the resultant implications this has for the delivery of housing services.

This introductory chapter has four main sections. The first outlines the general context in which the enabling role emerged, although this is expanded upon in Chapters 2 and 3. The second discusses the multiple meanings that enabling has gained within the literature. (A more detailed

account of the Government's enabling proposals for housing authorities, however, are discussed in Chapter 4.) The third elaborates upon the aims of the present study, and the final section describes the full plan of the thesis.

1.1 The General Context

This thesis examines the changing role of housing authorities within the wider context of the restructuring of the British welfare state. The impetus for this restructuring was based on a perceived 'crisis of the welfare state.' This referred to the collapse of the post-war settlement that had sustained the development of local government as the primary vehicle for the delivery of municipally provided welfare services. Thus, the crisis of the welfare state became, to all intents and purposes, the crisis of local government (Cochrane, 1994a: 121). The Conservatives' attempt to solve this crisis was informed by the ideology of the New Right in which the concept of 'enabling' crystallised their vision for the future role of local authorities in the 'post-crisis' epoch (Mishra, 1990: xii).

1.2 Conceptualising Enabling

The reorientation of local government's role from providers to enablers generated extensive political controversy. The debate was initially led by the Right of the political spectrum that first gave prominence to this concept. Several publications by advisory bodies to the Conservative Party, such as the Institute of Economic Affairs and the Adam Smith Institute, argued for a marked reduction in the traditional role of local authorities and the expansion of private provision. These ideas were adopted enthusiastically by several Government ministers including Mrs. Thatcher herself and Nicholas Ridley, who was Minister for the Environment from 1985 to 1988 (Chandler, 1996a: 40). Indeed, it was Ridley's publication of a pamphlet, *The Local Right* (1988), that brought enabling into prominence. This pamphlet had the eye-catching sub-title of 'Enabling not Providing' and it came to be widely regarded as the Conservative Party's idealistic vision for the future role of local authorities. Key lines from this text are:

The role of the local authority will no longer be that of universal provider ... it is for local authorities to organise, secure and monitor the provision of services, without necessarily providing them themselves ... authorities will need to operate in a more pluralist way than in the past, alongside a wide variety of public, private and voluntary agencies (Ridley, 1988: 17, 22, 25).

Ridley's conceptualisation of enabling envisaged a 'narrow' role for local government. Local authorities were identified as enablers in the extremely limited sense of agencies that made arrangements for the provision of a residual number of services that the market could not provide –

ostensibly acting in a 'safety-net' capacity. Local authorities were to contract out the delivery of these services on a competitive basis, preferably to the private sector but, if not, the voluntary sector could be used as an instrument of service delivery. Local authorities would retain a regulatory and monitoring role but they would need to undertake this '... fairly, efficiently and swiftly without stifling initiative and enterprise' (Ridley, 1988: 29). At its logical extreme, this implied that the business of councils could 'be dispatched in one, two or three meetings a year' (Mather, 1989: 222). Parliamentary sovereignty was considered paramount (Ridley, 1988: 10) so that local authorities were not to be granted greater freedom to determine policies that best met local concerns. Citizen/consumer participation in 'determining the type, amount and quality' of the services to be provided (Goodlad, 1994: 577) was to be secured by local authority support for the private sector and through stronger fiscal accountability: a 'more direct relationship between payment for local services through local taxation and the services being provided' (Ridley, 1988: 8).

Ridley's conceptualisation of enabling was reflected in the Government's restructuring agenda for local government. The control of local finance, the reductions in local autonomy and the associated increase in central power, the privatisation of welfare delivery, the rhetoric of consumer choice and the importation of private-sector managerial techniques all clearly indicated that the Government's intention was to promote a 'residual' role for local authorities. As explored in Chapter 4, this was epitomised in the Government's reform package for housing where it was stated that local authorities should only concentrate upon the housing needs of 'those who are genuinely in need, and unable to get adequate housing on the open market' (quoted in Stoker, 1989: 158).

For those on the Left, the Government's proposals for local government, and its embodiment in Ridley's residual-enabling authority, were a thinly disguised euphemism for the 'end of local government' (Cochrane, 1991: 282). Indeed, some critics asserted that the Government's notion of enabling should be more accurately described as the 'disabling' role of local authorities (Malpass, 1992a; Leach, 1994; see also Leach *et al.*, 1996). Alternative interpretations of enabling were therefore advanced. Particularly prominent were the various writings of Stewart and his colleagues (see for instance, Clarke and Stewart, 1988; 1989; Stewart, 1989; 1995) in which a 'wider' conceptualisation of enabling was emphasised (Gyford, 1991a).

Stewart promoted the notion of enabling as 'community government'. This was premised on a view that a 'local authority's primary role is concern for the problems and issues faced by local communities' (Stewart, 1989: 240). He suggested that community authorities should transcend mere service provision and focus their attention upon economic and social issues

relevant to their locality. This would require local authorities having broader powers of intervention than currently exist – a direct contrast to Ridley’s emphasis of parliamentary sovereignty. In terms of service provision, direct delivery would not be ruled out but nor would it occupy a privileged position. A plurality of modes of provision with the authority working with private, public and voluntary agencies was emphasised. A fundamental aspect of Stewart’s writing’s on enabling as community government was the emphasis given to increased involvement by active citizens at the local level, and a ‘public service orientation’ that ensures that services are not provided ‘to the public, but for the public and with the public’ (Stewart, 1989: 241).

Beyond general interpretations such as those presented above, particular elaborations of the enabling role of housing authorities were also offered. One of the best known accounts was given by the Duke of Edinburgh’s *Inquiry into British Housing* (1985; c.f. Goodlad, 1993: 30) where three dimensions of enabling were detailed. First, housing authorities should have a strategic function whereby they assess local housing needs and devise plans to meet them. Second, they should have a ‘social responsibility’ to meet the needs of the most vulnerable. This may not necessarily take place through council housing, but housing authorities would need to have effective control over lettings of good quality housing. Indeed, the Report recommended that housing authorities should be given new powers to nominate tenants to other landlords. Finally, the Report proposed that housing authorities should have a role in enforcing minimum standards regarding unfitness, overcrowding or other environmental health concerns. Again, the Report recommended that authorities should be given new powers to enforce such standards of housing maintenance and management by other landlords (1985; c.f. Goodlad, 1993: 31).

Another version of the enabling role of housing authorities was delineated by Clapham. His approach is distinctive for its commitment to socialist values, but he believes that direct provision of council housing is not only unnecessary but undesirable. Instead, he proposed that housing co-operatives become the dominant tenure to replace council housing. Local authorities would therefore lose ‘what has generally been regarded as their major housing functions’ (Clapham, 1989a: 53), but they would retain a strategic role and responsibility to ensure that all have access to housing of a decent standard. The strategic role would require regulatory powers (e.g. enforcing building standards) as well as facilitatory powers (e.g. ability to distribute grants). Whilst Clapham places a restriction on the type of action open to local authorities by arguing against the idea of council housing, he still regards public expenditure as essential to fund housing for rent. He does not see the same strict division – as does the Government – between market provision for those who can provide for their own needs, and public involvement in providing for the rest. Moreover, he agrees with the *Inquiry into British Housing* that authorities should be able to control and regulate the market to ensure the achievement of social objectives, especially those

of equality, democracy, freedom and community. In this respect, he accords a greater role for citizens in assessing the type, amount and quality of the housing services to be provided than did the *Inquiry into British Housing* (Clapham, 1989a: 53–66).

As the above discussion has highlighted, enabling is a ‘slippery and highly contested’ concept (Leach, 1994: 57). It is compatible with very different policy agendas and underlying political philosophies. The Conservative interpretation of enabling was part of their continuing project to roll back the frontiers of the state, while on the Left, it was used to justify a radical local authority agenda, reaching out to meet community needs and developing effective citizen and user participation (Gyford, 1991a). Hence, at one end of the spectrum, ‘enabling’ suggests a minimal or residual role for local government, while at the other end, it implies a level of intervention well beyond the formal statutory responsibilities of local authorities. Both approaches, however, presented a challenge to the traditional role of local authorities as direct and monopolistic providers of services.

The enabling role became the new local government orthodoxy of the 1980s and beyond (Brooke, 1989; 1991). At the time this research study began, it was almost universally accepted that ‘enabling’ is what authorities were now doing or should be doing. Yet, given the multiple meanings that were attributable to the concept, it was argued that, ‘enabling begs more questions than it answers’ (Leach, 1994: 57). Specifically, there were two important questions that remained unanswered within the literature: how were local authorities interpreting the enabling role? what did it entail in practice? The literature discussed above was primarily conceptual or prescriptive in nature. It focused upon ‘what might be, rather than what is’ (Cochrane 1991: 285). Other commentators also noted that, by focusing discussion of enabling only at the conceptual level, this ‘served to detract attention from what is actually happening in practice’ (Hollis *et al.*, 1992: 29). The exception to this was a large quantitative study which was augmented with a small number of case-studies (Ennals and O’Brien, 1990). Although this provided valuable insights and highlighted several trends regarding the practice of enabling at the local level, it lacked depth, detail and convincing interpretation. Thus, there were clear grounds for undertaking detailed empirical research with the fundamental aim of exploring the practice of enabling within a wider theoretical framework. More precisely, the present research study was designed to examine the interpretation and practice of enabling *housing* authorities.

Although the concept of enabling was also applied to education and personal social services, housing offers a particularly useful example in which to examine critically this concept in greater depth. This is because housing is unique for breaking with the prevailing order from the earliest days of the first Thatcher Government, and not from the late 1980s as with other social

policy areas. It is thus possible to consider the consequences of policy change over a much longer period. Moreover, an examination of the practice of enabling in a policy arena which has been specifically singled out for retrenchment and reorientation offers valuable insights into how the role of the wider local welfare state may come to be restructured compared with its role under the post-war consensus.

1.3 The Aims of the Study

Many of the ideas and themes underpinning the enabling literature discussed above were incorporated into a theoretical typology developed by Leach *et al.* (1992). These authors identified three authorities: the first is the residual-enabling authority and it is associated with the Conservative reform agenda and Ridley's conceptualisation of enabling. The second is the community-enabling authority and resonates with the viewpoints of Stewart and his colleagues. Finally, the portrait of a traditional authority serves to caricature local authority provision under the post-war consensus. This typology of enabling authorities provides a robust theoretical framework for formulating research questions, guiding data collection and subsequent analysis. The empirical data was collected in two stages. In the first, a postal survey was administered to 100 housing authorities in November 1995. This provided a scientific sampling framework from which three case-study local authorities were selected for the second and, more substantive, stage of data collection. Here, qualitative interviews were undertaken with 'elite informants' from the Housing Departments within these authorities and their housing association and voluntary sector 'partners'. This was undertaken during the period November 1996 and July 1997. Overall, the aims of the thesis were:

- to examine interpretations of the enabling concept from a housing-authority perspective;
- to identify the practices and strategies adopted by housing authorities to implement the enabling role;
- to assess the degree to which local interpretations of enabling match or deviate from the enabling typology;
- to account for the similarities and differences between the case-study authorities in their interpretation and practice of enabling.

These research questions were, primarily, designed to be answerable during the second stage of data collection. Given the paucity of empirical data, the postal survey was to be an instrumental device through which a *broad overview* could be discerned of the way in which housing authorities were shifting towards the enabling role. The *detailed analysis* of the practice of enabling, in terms

of exploring actions, the motives underpinning them and their implications or effects upon service delivery, was to be addressed through case-study research and qualitative interviewing. Thus, the current study aims to break new ground by addressing the imbalance between the theorisation of enabling and detailed empirical work.

1.4 Plan of the Thesis

Thirteen further chapters follow this Introduction. For a full understanding of how enabling has involved a fundamental reorientation of local government's traditional role, it is first necessary to set its development within the wider context of the British welfare state. This is undertaken in Chapter 2. This Chapter begins by providing a general overview of the post-war expansion of local government as the institutional expression of the welfare state. It then focuses specifically upon the development of council housing and demonstrates its tenuous status within the welfare state. After this, the interrelated components of the post-war consensus and the reasons for its collapse are examined. This takes the position of local government up to 1979 when the Conservatives took power, and many of the radical ideas of the New Right for transforming local government's traditional role could begin to influence policy.

Chapter 3 provides a general overview of the key trends that have cumulatively undermined local government's status as the monopolistic delivery agent of the welfare state. Thus, attention is given to the reduction of local expenditure; the growth of 'government by appointment'; the privatisation/marketisation of local services; and the introduction of 'new public managerialism'. These wider trends are then explored in the particular context of council housing in Chapter 4. Here, the focus is upon those specific policy reforms that transformed the role of housing authorities from direct providers to enablers. The discussion follows the general direction of Conservative housing policy. Hence, it begins by outlining the way in which housing expenditure was restructured, and then moves on to examine the sale of council houses. When this failed to substantially reduce the municipal sector, the Government issued its 'enabling' proposals for housing authorities. The Chapter then proceeds to examine these, as well as their enactment in the 1988 Housing Act. The remaining sections of the Chapter examine the extension of competitive tendering to housing management, the amalgamation of housing renewal within wider urban regeneration initiatives, and the sponsorship of tenant participation. All the themes that are discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 have a direct bearing on the analysis of empirical data that is explored in later chapters.

Chapters 5 and 6 develop the theoretical framework and direction of the research. Chapter 5 begins by outlining the ideological frameworks underpinning the contrasting models of enabling. Hence, attention is given to the New Right which is associated with the residual-enabling

authorities, and Communitarianism which is aligned with the community-enabling authority. It then provides a more detailed description of the enabling typology developed by Leach *et al.* (1992). Whilst this was a useful starting point from which to gauge local authority interpretations of the enabling concept, in light of the (qualitative) empirical findings it was necessary to develop this typology so that the practice of enabling and its local variations could be analysed more precisely. Chapter 6, therefore, examines three specific areas which require Leach *et al.*'s contribution to be developed in more detail. It discusses the types of practices adopted by the contrasting enabling authorities in relation to partnership working; their relationship with voluntary agencies; and finally, the nature of their relationship with the public. For example, it is shown that a residual-enabling authority uses different methods to encourage tenant participation compared with the community-enabling authority.

Chapter 7 describes and explains the research design and its component methods. It deals first with the philosophical aspects of the research process and provides a rationale for combining quantitative and qualitative data collection tools. It then focuses on the application of these tools. Thus, the process for designing, administering and analysing the questionnaire is described, together with the way in which access to the case-study authorities was negotiated, how individual respondents were selected for interviews, the process of interviewing itself, and the analysis of the data gathered.

Chapter 8 is divided into three main parts. The first presents an analysis of the data that emerged from the 'enabling' postal survey. The second outlines how results from this survey provided the sampling framework from which three housing departments were selected to become the research case-studies, and the process that this entailed. The eventual case-study authorities, using pseudonyms, were North-West District, North-Met and South-City. The former authority was selected because it appeared to be conforming to the traditional role, and the latter two authorities were selected because they appeared to be practising enabling according to the community model. The final part of the Chapter, therefore, provides an economic and political profile of all three authorities and identifies their main housing problems.

Within the theoretical framework of the research, Chapters 9–13 present an analysis of the qualitative data that was collected from the three case-study authorities. They explore the experiences and practices of the housing departments' regarding their transition – and resistance – to the enabling role. However, it is necessary to draw attention to the unevenness of the research findings gathered from the three authorities. North-West District did not yield extensive data and, in consequence, became a subsidiary case-study compared with the other two authorities. Moreover, as aspects of the enabling role practised by North-Met and South-City were relatively

insignificant in North-West District, it became necessary to discuss the data gathered from this authority separately. This is undertaken in Chapter 9. It discusses the methodological difficulties encountered during the fieldwork and then examines how the Housing Department responded to some centrally imposed reforms. Some evidence of 'partnership working' is provided, but it is argued that this conformed to the 'hierarchical mode of governance'. It is concluded that institutional inertia and a lack of leadership accounted for the North-West District Housing Department still operating in its traditional role.

Chapters 10–13 focus specifically on the data collected from North-Met and South-City. There were four dimensions to the enabling role as practised by these authorities and each forms the subject of a separate chapter. Thus, Chapter 10 explores 'enabling as contracting' and the experiences of these authorities as they prepared their housing management services for compulsory competitive tendering. It examines the difficulties involved in writing the service specifications and offers insights into why both Housing Departments did not regard contracting as a viable mode of service delivery. However, despite their opposition and hostility to contracting, both Departments conceded that the competitive process had resulted in some benefits, and these are also discussed. Chapter 11 then examines the shift from direct service delivery to partnership working. It explores the similarities and differences between the two Housing Departments regarding their partnership arrangements with internal and external 'partners', the motives underpinning their formation, and the way in which these relationships did not lead to a residual role, but ensured a continuing role for them both.

Whereas Chapters 10 and 11 focus on the mode of service delivery, Chapter 12 explores the way in which North-Met and South-City Housing Departments were reinventing a new role for themselves centred around 'community governance'. The research identified three strategies which gave practical expression to this community-enabling role and each is examined in turn. The first of these was the implementation of capital investment programmes in areas of acute multiple deprivation. The second was the use of participation and consultation methods. The third was the extension of tenants' rights and responsibilities under anti-social behaviour policies. It is concluded that all of these strategies, in one form or another, helped to address the gap left by the decline in direct provision and ensured a continuing role for both Departments.

Chapter 13 takes a different turn. It focuses on some of the organisational and managerial changes impinging on the two authorities as they were shifting to their enabling role. It examines the way in which enabling practices that have been discussed in earlier chapters, such as the client/contractor split, presented a challenge to the traditional structures of the two authorities. It also considers how new ways of working were impacting upon officer roles. Finally, the Chapter

examines how the transition to the enabling role was characterised by uneven development within the two authorities.

The concluding Chapter of the thesis, Chapter 14, begins by reflecting upon the theoretical framework, the efficacy of the data collection tools, and identifies some areas for further research. It then draws together the core findings of the fieldwork and considers the extent to which 'enabling' succeeded in 'rolling back the state'. Finally, it is argued that, although the term 'enabling' may have lost some of its political currency, the empirical trends that have emerged from this research study are becoming more pronounced under New Labour.

CHAPTER 2:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The role of local government has been fundamentally reoriented by the concept of enabling. To fully understand the nature of this change, it is first necessary to set the development of local government within the wider context of the British welfare state. The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to underline some important pre-conditions for the policy developments to be discussed in Chapter 3. The discussion here is structured in four substantive sections. The first provides a general overview of the post-war expansion of local government as the monopolistic delivery agent of the welfare state. The second focuses specifically upon the development of council housing and demonstrates that, although local authorities made a considerable contribution to expanding and improving Britain's national housing stock, this tenure has occupied an equivocal position within the welfare state. The functions bestowed on local government that are discussed in these two sections were sustained by a 'post-war consensus'. Indeed, local government was 'the key site where this consensus was established and experienced on a day-to-day basis' (Goodwin, 1992: 88). Thus, the third section examines the interrelated components of the post-war consensus and the reasons for its collapse. This takes the position of local government up to 1979 when the Conservatives took power, finally broke with post-war settlement and began to pursue a radical restructuring agenda informed by the ideology of the New Right. The final section summarises the discussion and notes how the ideological environment had shifted from supporting an expansive welfare state in which local authorities were dominant players, to one in which the role of local government at the heart of the welfare state came to be seriously questioned.

2.1 The Post-War Development of Local Government Welfare Services

Housing and education emerged as major local government functions well before the Second World War. During the inter-war years, local authorities also played a key role in poor relief and in the running of the majority of hospitals (Butcher, 1995: 41). Nevertheless, it was not until the creation of the welfare state in 1948 that local government became firmly established as the 'prime vehicle' for the delivery of welfare services (Stoker, 1991: 5). New responsibilities in the 'personal group' were bestowed, while existing responsibilities were expanded (Byrne, 1990: 69). Regarding the latter, the 1944 Education Act made local authorities the sole agencies responsible for primary, secondary and further education. They also continued to play an important role in the provision of social housing (Alcock, 1996: 198). The major new responsibility bestowed on local authorities during this period was for personal social services

(Glennerster, 1990: 12). Furthermore, the 1948 Children's Act increased local authority responsibility for the welfare of children (Hill, 1993: 39).

As each new service arrived, local authorities established a new department and council committee to administer it. For example, with the spread of council housing, large housing departments were established in the main urban authorities. However, all the departments remained insulated and operated with little co-ordination or co-operation with each other (Boaden, 1982: 5). The expansion of local government functions also brought with it the introduction of several 'new' professions.¹ They monopolised their corresponding service area on the basis of 'professional expertise' and took the lead in shaping the activities of the local welfare state (Cochrane, 1994b: 144). The exception to this was housing. It did not establish itself as a profession until the late 1970s (Clapham *et al.*, 1990: 211; Rhodes, 1988: 221–2).

Whilst local government gained responsibilities from the general expansion of state intervention, it also lost control of some services to the centre. In 1934 it lost control over poor relief and in 1946, local authorities lost their hospitals to the National Health Service (NHS). Electricity and gas undertakings were lost to nationalised boards in 1947 and 1948 respectively. This process was continued by the Local Government Act 1972 which transferred the remaining local authority health responsibilities to the NHS and their water and sewage responsibilities to new regional authorities (Hampton, 1991: 62). These losses of services were not attributable to any ideological hostility to local government. Indeed, political parties were committed to service expansion. Local government expenditure grew in real terms year by year and local authorities came to be seen as the dominant service providers (Butcher *et al.*, 1990: 11; Hollis *et al.*, 1992: 15).

The period up to the early 1960s, then, was one of expansion and consolidation for local government. As discussed later, the ideological environment was dictated by the building of the 'welfare consensus'. Underlying these developments was the substantial economic growth during the period (Stoker, 1991: 6). The period between the early 1960s and the mid-1970s was characterised by attempts to modernise local government 'as part of a more extensive strategy of state-backed social and economic modernisation' (Cochrane, 1994b: 145). It was not only local government that had to be modernised – it was the rest of Britain. The administration of central government, health and other public services were all reformed. The ideological climate of the

¹ Thus, town planners, social workers, environmental health officers and educationalists emerged after 1900. Since the 1960s, other professional groups, such as housing managers, leisure/recreation managers, policy analysts and corporate planners, have emerged (Boaden, 1982: 9).

period was heavily infused with a commitment to efficiency, planning and technological progress (Stoker, 1991: 10).

In local government, key aspects of this modernisation process were attempts to reform the territorial structure and internal management processes. Numerous official reports and Royal Commissions were subsequently established. Prominent among these were Maud (1967); Mallaby (1967); Redcliffe-Maude (1969); Bains (1972) (Cochrane, 1993: 15). There was growing concern that the structure of local government – which had remained intact since its establishment during the 1835, 1888 and 1894 Acts of Parliament (Elcock, 1986) – ‘fitted awkwardly into a welfare state with pretensions to universality’ (Cochrane, 1992: 5). The prevailing structure was thought to lead to inefficient service delivery and to undermine the ability of citizens to participate in local affairs. The solution proposed was to create larger authorities which could reap economies of scale (Butcher *et al.*, 1990: 22). Accordingly, the Local Government Act 1972 established a two-tier structure throughout England and bigger authorities covering larger areas were created (Kingdom, 1991: 80). This resulted in a considerable reduction in the overall number of authorities, from around 1500 to 500 (Stoker, 1991: 9).

Accompanying structural reform, this period also witnessed the development of the corporate movement in local government. This was chiefly concerned with strengthening corporate control and co-ordination to overcome the problems of fragmentation and departmentalism (Elcock, 1993: 151). Thus, in 1967 the Maud Report recommended greater organisational integration within local authorities, together with fewer committees, sub-committees and departments (Keen and Scase, 1998: 3). The Maud Committee’s concern with corporate management began to give way to a greater emphasis on corporate planning in the late 1960s. The Bains Report argued that the departmental attitude which permeated much of local government needed to be replaced with an authority-wide outlook (Leach *et al.*, 1994: 30). Its key recommendations concerned the appointment of a chief executive, the creation of a policy and resources committee and the establishment of a senior management team (Wilson and Game, 1998: 78).

At the time, the modernisation programme seemed to involve a massive transformation of local government. In retrospect, the scale of change was exaggerated and the reforms failed to meet the aspirations of those who designed them (Gray and Jenkins, 1993: 11). Local authorities continued to provide services on the basis of ‘bureaucratic paternalism’ (Hambleton, 1992: 11). However, it is important to acknowledge that until comparatively recently, while there was plenty of criticism of the structure and internal management of local government, there was virtually no criticism over the extent of its responsibilities. Indeed, the period 1955–75 has been described as

local government's 'years of greatest affluence' (Newton and Karran, 1985: 52), in which the modernising reforms of the 1960s and early 1970s affirmed the centrality of its role within the welfare state (Cochrane, 1993: 18).

2.2 The Post-War Development of Council Housing

There are several points that need to be made to outline the overall shape of housing policy and the development of council housing since the Second World War. First, for almost 25 years after the war there was general agreement that there was a need for high levels of dwelling construction to address the housing shortage (Malpass and Murie, 1999: 53). Second, there was a general consensus that local authorities were the proper and most appropriate bodies to carry out this mammoth national task (Spencer, 1989: 78).² However, within this overall framework of common consent, council housing did not enjoy universal appeal or legitimacy in the same way as social security, health or education (Malpass, 1993: 25). The following discussion is not a comprehensive historical analysis of the origins and evolution of council housing.³ The focus here is upon key measures between 1945 and the mid-1970s that demonstrate its tenuous status within the welfare state. This discussion will help explain why housing was particularly vulnerable to the Conservative reform agenda.

After the Second World War there was a considerable housing shortage due to a massive increase in demand and a deterioration of existing stock (Short, 1980). From 1945 to 1953 the dominant objective was to increase the supply of dwellings. Moreover, on the insistence of Labour's Minister for Health, Aneurin Bevan, local authorities dominated housing construction. Between 1945–1951 over 80% of all new dwellings were built in the local authority sector. Furthermore, Bevan argued that municipal housing should provide for general needs, be built to a high standard and at rents affordable to working-class households. He was vociferously opposed to the role of the private sector. Consequently, building for private ownership was restricted by license (Lowe and Hughes, 1995: 23). During this period, council housing came as close as it ever

² This part of the consensus was, however, somewhat fragile. Kemp (1991: 50–52) demonstrates that it was not taken for granted that local authorities would necessarily be the only, or even the main, agency to receive Exchequer subsidies for house-building. It was not only the Conservatives who considered alternative providers to local authorities (namely the private sector). There was also opposition from within the Labour Cabinet. Some Labour ministers suggested that the Ministry of Works should be responsible for housing provision, some called for a greater role for housing associations and some suggested private builders. Aside from the practical and democratic reasons for giving local authorities the dominant role, Kemp suggests that Prime Minister Atlee purposefully choose Bevan as his Minister of Health because he was known to be committed to council housing. Whilst local authorities would have been an important provider of new houses after the war (whoever won the election and whoever had been made minister in charge of the housing programme), Kemp argues, 'it is unlikely that they [local authorities] would have had so dominant [a] role, ... if a different Minister or party had been in power' (Kemp, 1991: 52).

³ See Dickens (1978) and Dale (1980) for an account of the economic and social processes contributing to the emergence of council housing in 1919.

has come to being a 'universal' service like the NHS, potentially catering for the whole population (English, 1997: 92).

However, this positive endorsement of council housing did not last. When the Conservatives returned to power in 1951, they explicitly adopted a *dual strategy*, involving preference for owner-occupation with council housing relegated to a residual role (Kemp, 1991: 52). Accordingly, the housing target they promised to achieve (300,000 new dwellings per annum), was secured by reducing the building and design standards insisted on by Bevan (Forrest and Murie, 1988: 25).

The 'reluctant collectivist' approach of the Conservatives towards council housing became more evident with the restructuring of housing policy that took place from the mid-1950s. The Conservatives reaffirmed their faith in owner-occupation as the most desirable tenure and accordingly, in 1954, removed the licensing system which had constrained private building (Kemp, 1991: 52). Public sector building peaked in 1953 and 1954 and local authorities were now expected to focus on slum clearance under the Housing Repairs and Rents Act (Murie, 1985b: 192). Furthermore, the Housing Subsidies Act of 1956 withdrew subsidies for general needs council housing. This clearly signalled that private builders were expected to meet general housing need, leaving local authorities with a residual role (Forrest and Murie, 1988: 26; Houlihan, 1988: 35; Glennerster, 1990: 17).

Even the re-introduction of general needs subsidies in the Housing Act of 1961 showed that support for council-building continued to be equivocal. To demonstrate to the private investor that rented housing could be profitable, this Act also made a loan fund of £25 million available to establish cost-rented housing societies. Furthermore, the Housing Act of 1964 established the Housing Corporation with powers to borrow up to £100 million a year from the Treasury. The objective underlying this was to provide an alternative form of non-profit housing to council housing (Back and Hamnett, 1985: 395; Best, 1991: 150). Moreover, by the mid-1960s Labour had a clear vision of home ownership as a symbol of social advance and began to distance themselves from their position as the 'party of council housing' (Lowe, 1991: 9).

The age of mass council housing was over in 1968. The building programme was cut back as part of public expenditure reductions and a major reorientation of housing policy was announced in the 1968 White Paper, *Old Houses into New Homes* (Lowe and Hughes, 1995: 30). Public and private rehabilitation of the existing housing stock supplanted slum clearance and general rehousing. Hence, the Housing Act of 1969 introduced General Improvement Areas and

the Housing Act of 1974 added Housing Action Areas (Balchin, 1995: 61, 70).⁴ By the time the *Housing Green Paper* appeared in 1977, a general pattern of all-party consensus had emerged. The public sector was to continue being a supplier of rented housing, but at lower levels of output than in the past and targeted at locally identified needs, rather than large-scale national plans. A pluralistic approach incorporating housing associations and the private sector was also emphasised (Kemp, 1991: 53).

Three further points underline council housing's tenuous status within the welfare state. First, the working-class have 'never formulated an unequivocal demand' for municipal housing 'as the solution to the failure of the market' (Cole and Furbey, 1994: 3–4). Second, unlike health or education, council housing has never offered a universal service. It has always represented minority provision. Moreover, the parallel development of owner-occupation, to which middle-class interests have been intimately linked, meant that they have played little part in the defence of council housing (Forrest, 1993: 39). Finally, council housing has underwritten the profitability of the private sector, rather than presented a challenge to commercial interests (Malpass, 1992a: 12). For these reasons, the weakness of housing as a welfare service made it particularly vulnerable to the Conservative restructuring agenda during the 1980s (see Cole and Furbey, 1994 for a lengthier discussion).

Despite the discouraging post-war environment of council housing, local authorities were extremely effective at achieving the central goal of volume building – producing a massive 6.8 million units by 1980. They eliminated the worst Victorian slum areas, undertook housing renovation and improved the quality of the housing stock occupied by lower income households. Overall space and amenity standards also increased (Power, 1993: 198; Spencer, 1989: 78).

2.3 The Nature and Collapse of the Post-War Consensus

The welfare functions bestowed on local government after 1945 were sustained by a post-war consensus. It comprised four interrelated elements: a mixed economy incorporating Keynesian economic policies; a welfare state to provide care for all citizens 'from the cradle to the grave'; a political consensus (Farnham and Horton, 1993: 10) and an 'organisational' settlement (Clarke and Newman, 1997).⁵ The economic consensus entailed governments assuming prime

⁴ Thus 1968 was an important turning point for council housing. The retreat from the aspirations of 1965 and the abandonment of high-output policy can be explained by the perceived need to reduce public expenditure due to economic problems. However, see Kemp (1991: 55) for four additional developments that occurred in the late 1960s and 1970s which seemed to reduce the need for large-scale council housing.

⁵ This point needs to be qualified. The appropriate role of state intervention in welfare provision generated criticism from both the Conservative right and, to a lesser extent, the Labour left. However, at the time, the critics were not taken seriously and they remained on the periphery of both political parties (see Sullivan, 1992 73–80 for a more detailed discussion).

responsibility for managing and ‘fine-tuning’ the economy through a combination of fiscal, monetary and prices and income policies. This was to ensure that there was a high level of aggregate demand for goods and services in order to achieve the primary goal of ‘full employment’. This was further sustained by a system of tripartite cooperation (commonly referred to as ‘corporatism’) between the managers of industry, trade unions and governments (Johnson, 1997: 29; Savage and Robins, 1990: 4). The welfare state component of the post-war settlement was a legacy of the 1942 Beveridge Report. It extended the role of the state and created new citizenship rights. Governments accepted that they should play a central role in the provision of ‘welfare’. This transcended the idea of providing a ‘safety-net’ for the destitute to one in which the state would guarantee a basic entitlement to a reasonable standard of living for all (Lowe, 1999: 13).

The political consensus is described as the ‘set of commitments, assumptions and expectations, transcending party conflicts ... which provided the framework within which policy decisions were made’ (Marquand, 1988: 18; quoted in Farnham and Horton, 1993: 10–11). There was considerable unanimity about the substance of public policy, on the nature of the political system and its key institutions (Kavanagh, 1987: 7). This extended to a consensus between central and local government on the way in which local services were provided. The relationship between the two sides was one of ‘partnership’ and ‘interdependence’ (Loughlin, 1985: 139). Although local authorities were responsible for the implementation of centrally determined policies, they had a certain amount of discretion in how they did this (John, 1991: 59). Indeed, it has been noted that central government operated a *laissez-faire* attitude towards local housing authorities, leaving them to decide local needs and how far they should be met (Karn, 1985: 163). The organisational settlement institutionalised the welfare and political consensus. It entailed two aspects: bureaucratic administration and professionalism. This combination emphasised a ‘neutral state’ delivering welfare on the basis of professional expertise and the regulatory principles of rational administration (Newman and Clarke, 1994: 22–3).

By the mid-1970s, the post-war consensus began to crumble. The turning point came in 1973 with the onset of a world recession and Britain was badly hit. By 1976, the tandem increase in inflation and unemployment provoked a major sterling crisis. Britain was rescued from this by the International Monetary Fund on several conditions, the major one being a reduction in public expenditure. ‘The introduction of these measures, more than any one single act, finally knocked the props away from under the post-war certainties’ (Deakin, 1987: 72). This crisis of the British economy and the failure of Keynesian economics to sustain economic prosperity also marked the breakdown of the political consensus. There was a resurgence of ideological politics in which elements of the Conservative Party repudiated Keynesianism in favour of the economic and

political ideas of the New Right. At the same time, the left of the Labour party, or elements within it, revived the Marxist critique of social democracy (Sullivan, 1992: 120; Horton and Farnham, 1999a: 8). In terms of central-local relations, the Labour Government attempted to reduce local spending through consultation and persuasion, rather than coercion. It was not until the election of the Conservative Thatcher Government in 1979 that central-local relations dramatically changed (John, 1991: 59).

The breakdown of the economic and political consensus was mirrored in a breakdown of bi-partisan support for the welfare state (Gamble, 1991: 263). Both the New Right and Marxists levied their criticism against the welfare state on two major grounds: the fiscal crisis of the state precipitated by welfare expenditure and the failure of the welfare state to meet the objectives set for it (Self, 1993: 116; Papadakis and Taylor-Gooby, 1987: 25). The New Right argued that the UK was experiencing a fiscal crisis because the costs of providing welfare services outstripped the growth of national income and revenue – quite simply, Britain could not afford to meet its post-war welfare responsibilities (King, 1987: 64). Moreover, it was argued that the welfare state was damaging to the economy in other ways: it contributed to poor economic growth (by ‘crowding out’ profitable private sector activity, for instance) and was the major cause of inflation (c.f. Massey, 1988: 248). Marxists perceived the fiscal crisis as a direct consequence of the state’s twin and conflicting functions in a capitalist society: that of capital accumulation and legitimation. Governments assisted capital accumulation through expenditure on the economic infrastructure and by meeting the costs of reproducing labour power through, for example, state provision of council housing. A fiscal gap occurred because while governments bore the costs, the resulting profits were privately appropriated (Johnson, 1987: 39).

The second criticism was that the welfare state had failed in its objective of achieving greater equality – despite continual increases in spending (Rekart, 1993: 19). The Plowden and Newson Reports showed that equality of educational opportunity had not been achieved, whilst Abel-Smith and Townsend demonstrated the ineffectuality of welfare programmes in ameliorating poverty (Johnson, 1987: 30). Likewise, it was argued that subsidies for public housing amounted to much less per capita than the value of mortgage interest tax relief and other concessions to owner-occupiers (Self, 1993: 119). Marxists argued these findings demonstrated that far from generating any fundamental change in the distribution of power and wealth, welfare policies and institutions acted as the handmaiden to capitalism (Heywood, 1994: 253). Education policies produced technologically literate workers capable of assisting industry’s drive for profit, and the NHS was used as a restorative health service to return workers to employment as quickly as possible (Sullivan, 1992: 121). Similarly, council housing not only underwrote the profitability of sections of the capitalist class (e.g. loan financiers), but housing authority management performed

‘a form of social control of the working class in the hope that ‘order in the home’ will generate social order and respect for property in general’ (Ginsburg, 1979: 156).

The New Right ‘manipulated’ the issue of redistribution failure to suit their own ends. They argued that in failing to meet the objectives set for it by its founding architects, the welfare state was guilty of an even bigger failure. It had restricted choice, created a dependency culture and stifled enterprise (Sullivan, 1992: 124). The welfare state restricted choice because it created welfare monopolies, which in turn, created a tendency towards inefficiency and waste. For instance, with the decline of the private-rented sector, there was no real alternative to council housing and this contributed to its poor management (Cole and Furbey, 1994: 193). It was also argued that the welfare state enslaved the poor by creating a culture of dependency that produced low expectations within communities (like those found on housing estates), and weakened their potential for self-improvement and assuming responsibility for themselves and their families (Jacobs, 1996: 117). Finally, the welfare state was criticised for stifling enterprise because the taxes levied to pay for services provided disincentives to risk-taking entrepreneurs (Heywood, 1994: 251). Thus, the attack on the welfare state (and the broader assault on the post-war consensus) emerged from the Right as well as the Left. In both cases, ‘economic failure had breathed life into ... political ideologies thought buried by the politics of the 1945 settlement’ (Sullivan, 1992: 121).

At the same time, social and cultural changes were afoot. There was also growing disillusionment with the performance of welfare services and the institutions that had been created to deliver them (Deakin, 1987: 76). This was associated with the emergence of ‘new social movements’ as well as a change in the culture of the population. People were becoming more assertive and less deferential to official views and actions. They, and the interest groups representing them, argued that bureau-professional practices had made public services rigid, remote and unresponsive to the wishes and needs of their clients (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 11; Isaac-Henry, 1997: 5). For instance, the emergence of high-rise public housing during the 1950s and 1960s had been built with little or no consultation with the intended clients, and in consequence proved not only to be extremely unpopular, but contributed to giving council housing a negative image (Lowe and Hughes, 1995: 25, 30).

Thus, the interrelated components of the welfare state became destabilised in the face of economic adversity and wider social changes. It was the intersection of crises in all four settlements that produced the ‘crisis of the welfare state’ (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 13). The view from the Right and Left was that the policies based on consensus had failed and both were looking for something new (Isaac-Henry, 1997: 5). However, it was the New Right, which came to

the forefront when Thatcher led the Conservatives to victory in 1979, that dominated the debate for the next 18 years about how to solve Britain's economic and social problems.

It would be misleading to portray the Conservatives as simply vehicles for the New Right. In many instances, ideology was tempered by pragmatism and electoral calculations (Kirkpatrick and Lucio, 1996: 4). However, New Right ideas – especially those of public choice theorists – *did* have a great influence on the policies of the Thatcher-Major administrations (Farnham and Norton, 1996: 15). This was, in part, the outcome of the reconstruction of the Conservative Party that had occurred during the 1970s. In particular, their two election defeats in 1974 allowed prominent politicians, such as Mrs. Thatcher and Sir Keith Joseph, to shift the Party to the Right (Deakin 1992: 75; Riddell, 1991: 5). Consequently, on entering Parliament in 1979, Thatcher was quick to denounce previous Labour and Conservative governments for cultivating the politics of consensus (Johnson, 1997: 33). She, and other radicals in the Party, endorsed the New Right view that many of Britain's problems had their origins in the post-war consensus and accordingly, the whole Keynesian-welfare state system should be abandoned. The aim of this, and future, Conservative administrations was now to 'roll back the frontiers of the state' (Isaac-Henry, 1997: 6). In so doing, they would stress monetarism and supply-side reforms to achieve economic growth, abandon the commitment to full-employment, limit government interventions in the day-to-day management of relations between employers and employees, and 'redress' the balance of power between capital and labour (Pierson, 1994: 102). On the welfare side, they would seek to reduce the functions that local and central government performed through various privatisation strategies and reductions in expenditure, whilst simultaneously emphasising individual responsibility. Finally, they would seek to reduce professional and bureaucratic power by importing private sector managerial ideas into the operations of the public sector. The policies that all this produced in relation to local government and council housing are discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

2.4 Summary

This chapter has outlined the historical context underpinning the transformation of local government's traditional role. The first section described the creation of the 'welfare state model of local government' in the UK (Pickvance, 1991: 49). It was noted that, against the background of economic growth, although local authorities lost some responsibilities, they came to be seen, and saw themselves to be, the dominant providers of education, housing and personal social services. The second section focused upon the post-war development of council housing and noted how it moved from a dominant high-standard building role (1945–57), to a declining output and emergent residual role (1964–80) (Murie, 1985b: 196). Throughout much of this period, support for state housing was equivocal and, especially after 1951, there was considerable inter-party consensus about home-ownership. The corollary of this trend subjected council housing to a

strong residualising tendency and this made it particularly vulnerable to the Conservative restructuring agenda.

The final section described the way in which local government's role within the welfare state was sustained by a 'post-war consensus'. However, precipitated by the economic crisis and the failure of the social democratic consensus to resolve this, the centrality of local government's role within the welfare state began to be undermined. Simultaneously, the 'new social movements' expressed their growing disillusionment with 'public services which appeared to be provided by insensitive, monolithic bureaucracies in conformity with rigid and apparently unnecessary rules' (Elcock, 1993: 154). Consequently, the failure of the Left and the victory of the Conservative Party in 1979 paved the way for a successful challenge to the consensus from the New Right (Gamble, 1991: 267).

Within this context, local government became an obvious target in the Conservative's restructuring agenda. It was perceived as being at the heart of Britain's economic and social decline, partly because it was responsible for delivering a large proportion of state services, and partly because it was a challenge to the authority of central government (Pickvance, 1991: 68). Moreover, out of all the welfare services, council housing was subjected to the most severe criticism. Not only was it regarded as an inherently inferior form of provision compared to owner-occupation (Lowe and Hughes, 1995: 36), but it was mainly owned by Labour authorities and occupied by Labour voters (Jenkins, 1995: 175). Furthermore, housing authorities were regarded as paternalistic, inefficient, and perhaps most heinous of all, in 1979, virtual monopoly providers of rented housing (Kemp, 1991: 57; Power, 1993: 217). Thus, an ending of this monopoly and the reorientation of housing authorities' role as enablers became the underlying goal of the barrage of legislation that followed throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s. This was to be achieved by pursuing a range of privatisation mechanisms that curtailed municipal ownership and management of public housing. It is these policies and strategies which are the subject of Chapters 3 and 4.

CHAPTER 3:

AN OVERVIEW OF

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESTRUCTURING

Chapter 2 demonstrated that one of the key elements of the post-war settlement was the expansion of local government as the monopolistic delivery agent of the welfare state. By the 1990s, however, local government had been transformed into an enabling agency that was facilitating and regulating a wide range of non-municipal institutions in service delivery. This chapter traces the policy developments which brought this change about. It begins by explaining the reasons behind the incoming Government's hostility towards local government and identifies the central themes that characterised the Conservatives' restructuring agenda. These themes are then discussed in turn to provide a general overview of the key trends that have cumulatively eroded the traditional role of local authorities and placed the focus upon 'enabling'.

3.1 The Conservative Governments' Restructuring Agenda

The Conservative restructuring agenda for local government was a response to the structural decline of the British economy. Even though the previous Labour government had broken with the economic consensus and introduced a range of neo-monetarist policies (Glennister, 1998: 14), in 1979, Britain remained the 'sick man of Europe' (Johnson, 1997: 32). Production and investment had declined, while inflation and unemployment rates soared (Ranson and Walsh, 1985: 14). The main concern of the incoming Government, therefore, was to halt Britain's economic decline by creating a dynamic 'enterprise culture' in which the tenets of market individualism and private enterprise could thrive (Barnekov *et al.*, 1989: 5). As the policies of the post-war settlement and, in particular, public expenditure were identified as the root cause of Britain's economic problems, the issue of curtailing public expenditure became central to policy-making (Loughlin, 1986: 14, 20). Moreover, since local government expenditure was growing at a faster rate than overall public expenditure and consuming an ever-larger proportion of the Gross National Product, it became a primary target within the Conservative's broader assault on the public sector. There was a conviction that its spending was out of control and that this was a major cause of the fiscal crisis of the state. Local government also came under attack for its lack of accountability and responsiveness to consumer demand, its wastefulness, inefficiency and poor management (Horton, 1990: 172).

The Thatcher administrations, however, were not just hostile to local government on the grounds of economic efficiency – of equal importance were political and ideological factors. Due

to massive Labour gains in the local elections of the 1980s, the Conservatives wanted to prevent the use of local government by the emerging 'New Urban Left'⁶ as a platform for opposition to national policies (Pickvance, 1991: 68). Moreover, in line with New Right theory, the Government was particularly hostile to professional and trade union interests in local government. The former were accused of establishing a monopoly over service provision, and the latter were associated with full employment and held responsible for the damaging strikes in the 1978/9 'winter of discontent' (Gamble, 1991: 264). Both groups were seen as having a self-interested stake in maintaining an expansive public sector and likely to block attempts at reform. Consequently, in order to achieve its broader economic and political strategy, the Government's aim was to destroy the power base of these 'vested interests' (Pickvance, 1991: 59). Further, the Conservatives were ideologically opposed to local government because as the provider of welfare services it was associated with collectivism and post-war politics. The 'Thatcher revolution', by contrast, involved breaking with collectivism and emphasising individual responsibility (Wilding, 1992: 10).

All this signalled that the near monopoly position of local authorities as providers of services would be seriously challenged. However, the first two Conservative administrations did not have a predetermined strategy regarding what form this would take (Riddell, 1991: 5). Instead, the Government adopted a 'piecemeal, pragmatic approach' and its strategy evolved and grew from experience (Horton, 1990: 173). Policies were adapted and changed to overcome resistance or implementation failure, whilst others were perceived as successful and pursued further. Until 1987, therefore, the central thrust of the Government's concern was to reduce local spending and increase its direct control over local government (Stewart and Stoker, 1995a: 192). Although this generated significant political conflict and led to increasingly acrimonious central-local relations (Rhodes, 1992b: 64), there was 'little substantive change in local government's responsibilities' (John, 1994: 412). Thus, despite the Government's market ideology and its commitment to contract welfare provision, bar a few notable exceptions, 'the basic structure of the welfare state in 1987 was much the same as in 1979' (Le Grand, 1993: 2).

Following the Conservative's third successive victory in the 1987 General Election, however, their programme for local government entered a much more radical phase. Described by some observers as inaugurating a 'new era for social policy' (Glennerster *et al.*, 1991), the Government's 'narrow fixation' on local government spending was replaced by a much more co-ordinated and comprehensive market-oriented strategy (Rhodes, 1992a: 57). All of the three major

⁶ The New Urban Left refers to a rather diverse group that came to prominence in local government during the 1980s. Although they were not an organised political faction, they promoted a new brand of 'local socialism' that aimed to provide an alternative to Thatcherism and a challenge to the paternalism of some traditional Labour politicians (for more detail see Lansley *et al.*, 1989; King, 1989).

social services delivered by local authorities, though continuing to remain publicly funded, were now to be introduced to markets and exposed to competition (Flynn, 1993: 15). However, as discussed in Chapter 4, housing policy was an exception in the benign neglect of welfare in the early 1980s. Indeed, the sale of council houses – ‘the flagship of the Thatcherite revolution’ (Lambert and Malpass, 1998: 93) – was the only fully worked-out privatisation policy in the 1979 Conservative Manifesto (Forrest, 1993: 41). Where education, social services and health continued with business as usual, by the time of the 1983 General Election, ‘housing had declined from a major to a minor capital programme; the council housing sector had declined in proportionate and absolute terms; ... Investment and subsidy had been slashed and rents dramatically increased’ (Murie, 1985a: 185).

There were two reasons why public housing was at the forefront of the Conservative restructuring agenda. First, the differential characteristics of council housing in relation to other welfare services made it *strategically* the most appropriate welfare commodity for the privatisation drive. Since it is the one welfare service in which benefits are continuously and individually experienced (Whitehead, 1984: 116), it was a good place to begin a long-term process of structural transformation without provoking intense public resistance. Second, council housing conveniently became a symbol of the negative features of the public sector as a whole – ‘inefficient, bureaucratic, remote, mismanaged and wasteful’ (Cole and Furbey, 1994: 7). Thus, the notion of large-scale privatisation of the welfare state evolved in the context of housing policy and was applied to other social policy areas after 1986 (Linneman and Megbolugbe, 1994: 635). At the heart of the post-1987 fully-fledged privatisation drive was the aim to transform local authorities from direct providers to enablers. The following four sections examine how this objective was translated into policy and legislative reforms. Hence, attention now turns to the control of local finance, the growth of non-elected agencies, the privatisation and marketisation of local authority services and the introduction of a new managerial approach.

3.2 Controlling Local Expenditure

The Conservative’s concern with the economic costs of welfare meant that they directed their first attention to reducing local spending. Capital expenditure came under immediate attack and new controls were introduced under the 1980 Local Government, Planning and Land Act (Meadows, 1985: 154). These proved to be very successful and curtailed expenditure by 79% between 1979 and 1988 (Rhodes, 1992a: 58). However, in 1988, a further system of capital controls was introduced that not only curbed expenditure, but also extended central control even further (Travers, 1995: 20).

In terms of current expenditure, the Government had far less success. It began by introducing the controversial 'block grant' (Raine, 1985: 52), but when this failed to deliver immediate expenditure reductions, a complicated system of targets and penalties was introduced in 1981 and 1982 respectively (Gibson, 1985: 69). However, when this failed as well, the 1984 Rates Act gave the Government power to rate-cap authorities, and in 1985 the so called 'high-spending' Metropolitan County Councils and the Greater London Council were abolished (Horton, 1990: 177). Nevertheless, despite their determination and legislative action, the Thatcher Governments did not succeed in curtailing local spending. Between 1979 and 1988 current expenditure rose by 15% in real terms at 1980 prices (Rhodes, 1992a: 58). Many councils were able to 'fight a sustained rearguard action against central government' by adopting 'risk avoidance' strategies, whilst others (a limited few) resorted to legal action and high-profile public campaigns (Stoker, 1991: 177; Rhodes, 1998: 116, 121). However, although there had not been a reduction in current spending, there had been a major redistribution of resources between services. Expenditure on housing, transport, industry and trade decreased, spending on education remained constant, while health, defence, social security and police expenditure increased (Flynn, 1989: 98; see also Le Grand, 1990).

It was not until after the Community Charge debacle (see Travers, 1989), that through the 1991 Local Government Finance and Valuation Act local spending met the Government's expenditure total for the first time in 1991/2. By 1993, the constant year-on-year revisions to reform local finance came to an end with both 'central and local government keen to allow a period of stability in central-local financial relations' (John, 1994: 420–21).

Overall, financial reforms under the Conservatives resulted in local government losing what are generally regarded as its most important freedoms (Gibson, 1992: 55). Central government was able to exercise control by limiting the amount of grant given to local authorities, controlling their levels of current and capital spending, and limiting the amount of money they were able to raise via local taxation (Goodwin, 1992: 78). Consequently, the financial austerity experienced by local government reduced its ability to carry out new policies, whilst reductions in capital finance affected its traditional role as a provider, for example, of housing (John, 1991: 61).

3.3 The Growth of Non-Elected Agencies

The second area of local restructuring was the growth of appointed quasi-governmental bodies (Davis, 1996a: 1). Commonly referred to as 'quangos', they replaced local authorities for policy-making and implementation in almost every area of public policy (Skelcher, 1998: 1). There were three key changes. First, the transfer of responsibilities from local authorities to bodies appointed directly or indirectly by Ministers; second, the transfer of responsibilities from

local authorities to self-appointed (or partly self-appointed) bodies; and finally, the removal of local authority representatives from appointed bodies on which they previously sat as of right (Davis, 1996b: 16).

The growth of ‘government by appointment’ had begun before 1979, but under the Thatcher administrations the scope and variety of these bodies increased dramatically (Painter, 1997: 245). Their expansion can be identified in two broad phases. In the early 1980s, the growth of quangos was driven by the perceived need to weaken the political power of local authorities. The abolition of the Greater London Council, the Metropolitan County Councils, and their replacement with a myriad of single-purpose agencies is a particularly relevant case in point. Whilst the stated rationale was to ‘streamline the cities’, given that the parliamentary Labour opposition was in complete disarray, the abolition of these authorities was motivated by a desire to remove the most effective political opposition there was to Conservative policies in the country at the time (Blackburn, 1984: 95; Atkinson, 1990: 18; White, 1992: 16).⁷

After 1987, the extension of markets and competition in welfare delivery led to the emergence of a different type of quango. Following the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life these are more conventionally referred to as ‘Local Public Spending Bodies’. They are not-for-profit organisations ‘which are neither fully elected nor appointed by Ministers but which provide public services, often delivered at local level, which are wholly or largely publicly funded’ (Committee on Standards in Public Life, 1995: 5; quoted in Greer and Hoggett, 1999: 236). Although the creation of these quangos was still motivated by a desire to by-pass local authorities, their growth was also inspired by the search for managerial efficiency and the development of ‘new public management’ (see 3.5).

Thus, the Government believed that the structure of local public spending bodies – i.e. their small board composition, single-purpose focus and their insulation from public view and party competition – was *managerially* more efficient for policy making and implementation, compared with local authorities and their more complex operational responsibilities and longer decision-

⁷ For instance, the transport policy of the Greater London Council and Metropolitan County Councils challenged the Transport Act of 1981; their industrial and employment policies stood in direct contrast to the market-centered monetarist strategies of the Tories; and the creation of local police monitoring units and nuclear-free zones opposed national law and order and defence policies (Blackburn, 1984). Indeed, Norman Tebbit cut through all the verbiage about streamlining the cities and baldly stated that the Greater London Council was being abolished because it was ‘Labour dominated, high spending and at odds with the government’s view of the world’ (quoted in Rhodes, 1992b: 52–3). Similarly, the creation of urban development corporations was intended to eliminate the political uncertainty of local democracy which, in the Government’s view, was a major deterrent to private investment in the largely Labour-controlled cities (Parkinson and Evans, 1990: 60; 77–9).

making processes (Payne and Skelcher, 1997: 213).⁸ Overall, the ‘quango-isation’ of local services not only led to a ‘democratic deficit’ (Skelcher 1998: 18), but the central position of local authorities as the all-purpose providers of local services was cumulatively eroded (Butcher, *et al.*, 1990: 31).

3.4 The Privatisation and Marketisation of Local Government Services

The third area of restructuring was the privatisation⁹ of local government services. This was a major strategy through which the Government transformed the role of local authorities from direct providers to enablers. There were two elements to this strategy. The first involved the sale of assets, and the second involved the ‘marketisation’ of local services. This refers to the introduction of market disciplines upon local authority services and it proceeded via three distinct mechanisms: deregulation; the introduction of compulsory competitive tendering; and the fragmentation of existing monopolistic services to provide a basis for competition and choice (Stoker, 1991: 216). Each of these mechanisms is now discussed in turn.

3.4.1 The Sale of Local Authority Assets

The most important sale of local authority assets was that of council houses and this is discussed in Chapter 4. Municipal land was also privatised and although this did not generate as much political controversy as the sale of council houses, land sales were vitally important in terms of transferring ownership and control, especially over key urban development sites, to the private sector (Goodwin, 1992: 79). As well as increasing the role of the market, public assets were sold because they helped reduce the public sector borrowing requirement (Marsh, 1991: 461).

3.4.2 Deregulation

It was in the provision of bus services that deregulation had the greatest impact in local government. This policy had two aims. First, to reduce levels of public expenditure, and second, to increase efficiency within the public transport industry by introducing competition. Hence, the 1980 and 1985 Transport Acts abolished the bus licensing systems controlled by local authorities and allowed private operators to provide passenger transport. The monopoly position of public

⁸ For example, the ‘new style’ health authorities were modelled on the structure of private sector boards of directors and their ‘declared purpose was to make them into more efficient strategic decision-making bodies, operating in a more business-like way’ (Ashburner and Cairncross, 1993: 358; quoted in Payne and Skelcher, 1997: 213).

⁹ Although the literature on privatisation is extensive (see for instance Marsh, 1991; Papadakis, 1990; Le Grand and Robinson, 1984), it is a word which should be ‘heavily escorted by inverted commas as a reminder that its meaning is at best uncertain and often tendentious’ (Donnison, 1984: 45). A great deal of this confusion arises from the fact that, as the privatisation programme was applied across the public domain, it covered a multitude of initiatives ranging from the sale of nationalised industries, to the contracting out of services. Whilst the specific justifications for each privatisation initiative varied, ultimately, the aim was to ‘increase the role of the private sector’ (Ascher, 1987: 4).

operators was further undermined by requiring them to form their bus undertaking operations into companies that operated as viable businesses (Bannister, 1992: 201, 208; Stoker, 1991: 216).

3.4.3 Compulsory Competitive Tendering

Compulsory competitive tendering (CCT) was the 'central plank' of the privatisation programme and it reflected the Government's ideological belief in the benefits of competition (Ascher, 1987: 21). Supporters argued that competitive tendering would challenge the inefficiency inherent within state provision, reduce costs and achieve greater accountability for public spending (Rao, 1996: 92). More significantly, CCT was designed to counter the 'crowding out' of the private sector by opening up more sectors of the economy to private accumulation (Flynn, 1985: 120). The regulatory framework of CCT did not 'create a level playing field' between the public and private sectors regarding their ability to compete for work. This demonstrated that the Government's overriding objective was to supplant local government's 'monopoly provider' status by transferring service delivery to the private sector (Cutler and Waine, 1994: 83–6). It was envisaged that this would transform local councils into enabling organisations, responsible for ensuring that public services were delivered, rather than producing them directly itself. CCT also had a political objective – that of reducing the power of trade unions and controlling labour costs (Deakin and Walsh, 1996: 33, 45).

CCT was first introduced in the 1980 Local Government Planning and Land Act. It imposed an obligation on local authorities to introduce tendering exercises for building construction and highway maintenance work. However, the impact of this Act was limited and it failed, bar a few notable exceptions, to encourage local authorities to voluntarily contract-out other core services (Walsh, 1989: 36). Consequently, competitive tendering was extended by further compulsion in the 1988 Local Government Act for services such as building cleaning, grounds maintenance and refuse collection. In line with the 1980 legislation, local authorities were only permitted to continue carrying out such work if they won the right to do so in open competition with the private sector. If a local authority did win the tendering exercise, then it had to account for it in a separate trading account and meet a financial target: a 5% rate of return on capital (Walsh, 1995a: 32). To establish trading accounts in an accurate way and to avoid accusations of being anti-competitive, local authorities were required to introduce 'client/contractor' splits (Griffiths, 1989: 177). This referred to the separation of the planning, specification, monitoring and payment of services from its actual delivery (Walsh, 1996: 61). The last CCT statute, the Local Government Act 1992, extended competition to white-collar services such as housing management (Walsh, 1995b: 11) and this is examined in Chapter 4 (4.5).

3.4.4 Competition, Choice and Enabling in Education and Personal Social Services

The Government also exposed education and personal social services to competition. Thus, under the provisions of the 1988 Education Reform Act, the Government envisaged that an enabling role of local education authorities would ‘emerge’ in which they would ‘promote’ education policies, rather than directly provide education services (John, 1990: 37, 34). Hence, schools were given the opportunity to opt out of local authority control and become grant-maintained (McVicar, 1990: 141). The aim was to produce the conditions for competition between institutions and more choice for consumers (Ranson and Thomas, 1989: 60). The 1988 Act also delegated many powers and responsibilities to governors and head-teachers that were previously held by local education authorities (Riley, 1996: 90). Notably, schools were given the freedom to manage their own budgets through a system of ‘local management of schools’ (Taylor-Gooby, 1993: 110). The powers of central government were also enhanced, particularly over the ‘imposition of a rigid national curriculum’ (Green and Lucas, 1992: 37). Overall, the legislative changes briefly noted here shifted power to schools, parents and the centre, while the role and influence of local education authorities was considerably reduced (Ranson, 1995: 118).

The theme that local authorities should become enablers was also applied to the personal social services under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 (Hoyes, 1996: 104). Indeed, it has been suggested that it is in community care that the notion of enabling finds clearest expression (Rao, 1996: 131). This is because the Government imposed important limitations on the way in which local education and housing authorities could develop their enabling role. This point is developed more fully later in relation to housing, but even in education it has been noted that for ‘local education authorities, very little remains when school provision and management is removed’ (Goodlad, 1994: 582). By comparison, the Government reluctantly accepted the recommendations of the Griffiths Report, upon which the 1990 Act was based, that social service departments should have the ‘leading’ role in facilitating and organising community care provision. In one sense, therefore, this was a reversal of a trend to take away responsibilities from local government (John, 1991: 69).

Thus, under the provisions of the 1990 Act, local authorities were expected to design and secure the delivery of a relevant package of care services from private and voluntary providers (Rao, 1991: 13). They were also given prime responsibility for monitoring the provision of care services, and in performing their role, required to define a clear split between their purchaser and provider functions (Willis, 1995: 135). Thus, the 1990 Act entailed three elements for the enabling role of social service departments. First, supporting the development of private and voluntary sector providers; second, regulating all provider agencies through a process of service specifications and contracting; and third, the separation of purchasing and providing functions

within social service departments (Wistow *et al.*, 1992: 27). The Government argued that this would lead to an increase in the range of services on offer, create more flexibility and consumer choice, stimulate competition and overall, result in more cost effective services (Lawson, 1993: 76).

3.5 The Rise of New Public Managerialism

The Government's final area of restructuring extended to dismantling the 'organisational' settlement of the post-war consensus. The principles of bureaucracy and professionalism that had underpinned the traditional approach to service delivery were challenged by the introduction of a new set of management techniques that acquired the label of 'New Public Managerialism' (Kirkpatrick and Lucio, 1996). Even though these practices were based on competing managerial philosophies (Barberis, 1998: 454),¹⁰ they fell within a wider ideology of managerialism of which a key aspect was 'the view of management as founded on an inalienable 'right to manage'' (Newman and Clarke, 1994: 16). This was based on the overriding assumption that bureau-professional practices were inefficient, wasteful and unresponsive to consumer demand. What was required, therefore, was an increase in the efficiency and productivity of public services by 'reorganising public sector bodies to bring their management, reporting, and accounting approaches closer to business methods (Dunleavy and Hood, 1994: 9).

Before 1988, the dominant managerial philosophy was 'neo-Taylorism' and the emphasis was on achieving economy, efficiency and effectiveness (the three 'E's'). The most important mechanism by which the Government attempted to achieve management change in local government was the creation of the Audit Commission in 1983. It was responsible for auditing local authority accounts, promoting 'value for money' (Henkel, 1992: 74), as well as publishing handbooks of 'good management practice' (Elcock, 1996: 180). The Conservatives also introduced various reforms that forced local authorities to report on their performance in another effort to improve efficiency and cut costs (Burningham, 1992; see also Palmer, 1993). In 1981, the Department of the Environment (DoE) made it mandatory for councils to produce annual reports on their economy, efficiency and effectiveness (Barnett and Harrison, 1996: 142), and in 1989, housing authorities were required to publish the results of their housing management performance in the form of a list of specified indicators (Cole and Welsh, 1991: 13; see also Clapham and Satsangi, 1992).

¹⁰ Indeed, most commentators prefix their discussion on new public managerialism with the acknowledgment that this label risks giving coherence to a body of ideas which are 'imprecise' (Dunleavy and Hood, 1994: 9), 'contradictory' (Stewart, 1998: 15), 'multi-valued' (Leach and Barnett, 1997: 41) and 'internally differentiated' (Lowndes, 1997: 49).

After 1987, improvements in managerial efficiency were sought by the introduction of market disciplines. The development of CCT, already discussed, was one example of this. At the same time, the neo-Taylorist management philosophy gave way to a 'consumer' oriented management philosophy – one arising from the 'excellence' school of Peters and Waterman (1982; c.f. Clarke and Newman, 1997: 107). This philosophy continued to challenge the bureau-professional regime, but it had a different view of the management role and how organisations should achieve their objectives. Where neo-Taylorism 'focuses on intensifying the systems of control', the excellence school 'is people-centred'. It 'stresses quality, being close to the customer and the value of innovation' (Newman and Clarke, 1994: 15). The clearest embodiment of this 'customer care' orientation was the launching of John Major's 'Big Idea' – the Citizen's Charter in 1991 (Chandler, 1996b). Its aim was to raise quality, give more choice, secure better value for money and extend accountability. Consistent with the Government's New Right ideology of conceptualising the public as *individual consumers* of services (see 6.3.1), a modest set of mechanisms were introduced that were designed to empower the public as 'consumers'. This was through better means of rights to receive information on services and performance, and though enhanced powers of redress and compensation (Taylor, 1991/2: 88; Prior, 1995: 89).¹¹

The shift towards new public managerialism transformed bureau-professionals 'into managed and managers' (Newman and Clarke, 1994: 25). Public management came to be dominated by general managers, rather than professionals, as well as becoming more objective-driven (Farnham and Horton, 1999c: 43). Thus, as Reid notes in the specific context of housing, there has been a shift from democratic accountability to managerial accountability in which individuals take greater responsibility for management and operational decisions. There is also a requirement for them to employ entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills in order to respond effectively to a changing and uncertain operating environment (1999: 134). Put another way, housing, alongside other welfare professionals, have had heightened demands made upon them to demonstrate new qualities, skills and competencies that are generic to the new managerialist roles. The emergence of inter-organisational networks and the need to be 'consumer' focused have, for instance, necessitated strong interpersonal and communication skills, whilst the 'enterprise discourse', for instance, emphasised value-for-money financial management over professionally

¹¹ At the local level, it was difficult to disentangle the influence of the Citizen's Charter from trends established well beforehand (Barnett and Harrison, 1996: 146). In response to the criticism of bureaucratic paternalism, local authorities had already experimented with managerial ideas to do with customer care through their own efforts since the mid-1980s (see Fenwick and Harrop, 1990: 42–3). Moreover, some authorities, especially where the influence of the 'urban left' was strong, transcended the consumer-oriented approach to customer care by pursuing more radical experiments with decentralisation and devolution (see for instance Lowndes and Stoker, 1992; Burns *et al.*, 1994). However, even though such initiatives were criticised for failing to devolve significant power to local communities (Hambleton *et al.*, 1989: 42; Cole, 1993: 164), 'they were indicative of the ways in which consumerism was not simply a top-down imposition' (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 112).

determined 'need' criteria (Furbey *et al.*, 2001). Overall, therefore, 'managerialist solutions have come to play an important role within the housing sector' (Reid, 1999: 134).

3.6 Summary

As a direct consequence of accumulated political intervention throughout the 1980s and 1990s, local government had been transformed into an enabling agency. This was achieved by the introduction of competition and market mechanisms in almost every area of service delivery. The proliferation of local quangos also removed functions from local government and undermined its 'monopoly' status. At the same time, there was constant pressure on local authorities to reduce their spending. Underpinning the whole period of reform was the Government's constant search to increase its direct control over local government. This meant that as well as losing its direct provider role, local government also lost much of its autonomy. These trends were instilled in the way in which council housing was restructured and the following chapter focuses upon those specific policy reforms, within this broader context, that transformed housing authorities into enablers.

CHAPTER 4:

THE CHANGING HOUSING POLICY CONTEXT

From 1979, the Conservatives displayed a marked hostility towards council housing, going far beyond anything seen from previous Conservative administrations (Lowe and Hughes, 1995: 36). This hostility transcended the critique of welfare provision more generally, and drew on arguments about the failure of state provision that were specific to housing (Kirwan, 1984: 134). Primarily, council housing was identified as being inefficient, wasteful, costly, and unresponsive to consumer choice. For instance, council housing was considered inefficient because allocation policies were based on need, and were therefore impervious to the interaction of supply and demand. This was perceived as creating stagnation within the allocation system, inefficiencies in the use of stock and a deterrent to labour mobility. Moreover, council stock was considered inefficiently managed because there were no positive or negative incentives for staff to improve housing management practices (see Cole and Furbey, 1994: 188–94 for more detail).¹²

Given the above ideological assault on the credibility of municipal housing, the overall approach of Conservative housing policy shifted towards enlarging the scope of the market. This proceeded in two broad phases (Hills and Mullings, 1990: 140–42). In the first phase – from 1979 to 1987 – the key objectives were to reduce housing expenditure and expand home-ownership (Lund, 1993: 312). The second phase occurred after the 1987 General Election and, though the commitment to home ownership remained firmly at the centre of policy, the saturation of council house sales led the Government to initiate more radical proposals for dismantling the council stock. The key developments here centred upon the role of housing authorities as enablers, the promotion of housing associations as the main providers of social rented housing, and the attempt to demunicipalise council housing by dispersing large chunks of it to sitting tenants or other landlords (Lowe and Hughes, 1995: 37). A subsidiary aim was to revive the private-rented sector (see Kemp, 1997a).

The discussion that follows is in seven parts. The first section outlines the Government's reform of housing finance and the second examines the sale of council houses. Proposals for the

¹² At this point it is also worth noting that criticism of council housing also came from the Left, who argued that public sector housing management was too paternalistic, oppressive and autocratic. It was argued that the growth of monolithic housing departments had been accompanied by a centralisation of control which removed services from people they were designed to serve. The Left's solution was to devolve control to occupants in order to ensure a more efficient and effective use of resources. The belief that council housing had failed and required radical reform was, therefore, a view shared by both the Right and Left. Unsurprisingly, the consensus ended here, marked by significant differences relating to the role of the market, state funding support and the position of housing as a right rather than a commodity (Pearl, 1997: 4).

enabling role of housing authorities are discussed in section three, and their enactment in the 1988 Housing Act is examined in section four. Following this, sections five, six and seven examine the extension of compulsory competitive tendering (CCT) to housing management functions, the privatisation of housing renewal and measures to promote tenant participation.

4.1 Restructuring Housing Expenditure

Within the overall context of reductions in local authority expenditure, housing was specifically targeted as a programme area in which expenditure savings could be concentrated (Karn and Wolman, 1992: 204). Consequently, capital expenditure for housing came under immediate attack. In June 1979, three months into the financial year, the Housing Investment Programme (HIP)¹³ was reduced by 11% in real terms (Murie, 1985a: 173), and by 1988/89, net capital spending had fallen by 75%. However, within this gross total for capital investment, individual components fared very differently (Hills and Mullings, 1990: Table 5.1, 148). Reductions in capital investment were particularly reflected in falling levels of council building, so that by 1995, there were little more than 3,000 completions. By comparison, between 1982 and 1985, spending on the renovation of existing public and private sector stock increased (Malpass and Murie, 1999: 90), whilst real capital spending on housing associations increased sharply between 1988 and the mid-1990s (Williams, 1992: 181). While these changes in conventional housing expenditure and capital investment were taking place, mortgage interest tax relief also rose by 200% between 1978/9 and 1988/9 (Hills and Mullings, 1990: *ibid.*).

The reductions in HIP allocations were augmented with a new subsidy system for housing revenue accounts in 1980 (Malpass, 1992b: 60). This enabled the DoE to reduce its general housing subsidy on the assumption that the threat of penalties would force local authorities to charge higher rents in line with Government guidelines (Karn, 1985: 170). Although this led to a reduction of 60% on net current expenditure in real terms, this was offset almost entirely by an increase in housing benefit expenditure (Hills and Mullings, 1990: *ibid.*). This fully reflected the Conservative aim of shifting subsidy from 'bricks and mortar' to people (Kemp, 1992: 72).

¹³ Up to the mid-1970s, local authorities were broadly free to set their own capital programmes in housing. Consent to borrow on each scheme – called a loan sanction – had to be sought but as long as this complied with Government guidelines, it was normally readily given (Karn, 1985: 172). The loan sanction system was abolished in 1977/8 and instead, each council had to produce a Local Housing Strategy setting out the need for new council building and other capital projects in its area. On the basis of this, each council then had to draw up a HIP, showing what it planned to spend on the items covered by the strategy (Aughton and Malpass, 1994: 24). Funds were generally allocated to a formula combining a national index of housing stress with the spending record of authorities (Balchin, 1995: 16). It should also be noted that although the HIP system was initially advocated on the grounds that it would increase local autonomy, in practice it has steadily extended central control and enabled the DoE to bring about substantial cuts in investment across the country (Malpass and Murie, 1999: 72).

Further changes to local authorities' capital and revenue funding system were introduced in the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act (Lund, 1993: 213). In brief, in order to prevent the 'cascading effect',¹⁴ the Government now had control over local authority borrowing requirements instead of expenditure (Aughton and Malpass, 1994: 38). Second, a new housing subsidy replaced three separate forms of assistance. This gave central Government virtually 'complete control' of the subsidy income to housing revenue accounts, as well as increased power to determine rent increases. Finally, the housing revenue account became 'ring-fenced' so that councils could no longer keep rents low by drawing on council tax income, or vice versa (Malpass and Warburton, 1993: 96; Rao, 1990: 16).

It is necessary to emphasise three points. First, though the Treasury claimed that public expenditure on housing fell by more than a third in real terms between 1978/79 and 1988/89 (at 1987/88 prices), such figures only gave a partial picture. As shown, the fall in current spending was matched almost entirely by an increase in housing benefit, while the fall in capital spending was matched by an increase in mortgage interest relief. When these figures were taken into account, expenditure fell by only 12% (Hills and Mullings, 1990). Therefore, it is 'misleading' to view the 'pattern of housing public expenditure solely in terms of cuts'. Instead, there was a major *redistribution* of spending on housing (Malpass and Murie, 1994: 107). Second, the restructuring of housing expenditure was part of a broader package of measures that involved significant reductions in local autonomy and were 'clearly designed to reduce and residualise public housing' (Malpass, 1992a: 14–15). Third, and on a related point, the financial reforms introduced by the Government enabled it to increase its control over local housing finances. Housing authorities lost autonomy over expenditure, rent-setting and the use of local taxes for subsidies. 'In effect, housing became a much more centralised service' (Karn and Wolman, 1992: 205).

4.2 The Sale of Council Houses

Aside from reducing public expenditure on housing, the paramount housing policy objective of the Conservative administrations in their first two terms of office was to extend home-ownership and limit local authority provision (Atkinson and Durden, 1994: 183). The first aspect of the Conservative privatisation strategy was, therefore, the sale of council houses under the 'right-to-buy' (RTB) legislation (Forrest and Murie, 1988: 55). Although support for home-

¹⁴ Each year, councils could spend 20% of any capital receipts generated in the year that it received the money for 'prescribed expenditure'. 20% of the of the remaining receipts could be used the next year and so on. Hence, over a period of years, this 'cascade effect' virtually permitted the whole amount to be spent. Furthermore, councils could use receipts for 'non-prescribed' expenditure which allowed them to renovate their existing stock without having to borrow, thereby avoiding using scarce borrowing permission. The Government viewed the 'cascade effect' as a danger and hence its aim became to control borrowing. They wanted the bulk of receipts to be used to pay off existing debt, even though housing debt constituted a tiny fraction of the current value of council property (Aughton and Malpass, 1994: 38).

ownership was an established policy objective of the Conservatives, and it had been possible to sell council dwellings with ministerial consent since 1925 (Murie, 1998: 89), what was distinctive about this Government's approach was the 'single-mindedness' with which this objective was pursued (Kemp, 1992: 70). To Thatcher, council houses 'symbolised the enslavement of the individual by the state' and RTB became her personal 'political crusade' (Jenkins, 1995: 176). Hence, unlike other privatisation policies, RTB was *not* justified on the grounds of introducing competition or increasing efficiency. It was rationalised principally in terms of enhancing individual freedom and contributing towards the realisation of a property-owning democracy (Forrest, 1993: 40).

There were several other reasons why the Conservatives promoted RTB so vigorously. By 1979 housing provision had become polarised between owner-occupation and council housing: these two tenures accounted for 86% of all dwellings in Britain. With the inexorable decline of the private-rented sector, and the scope of expanding home-ownership through transfers from this tenure severely limited, the only way to increase home-ownership was to transfer stock from the public sector (Kemp, 1989: 49). Furthermore, RTB circumvented recalcitrant (usually Labour) local authorities, reduced the size of the council housing sector and delivered substantial financial benefits in the form of capital receipts (Forrest and Murie, 1988). Finally, the Conservatives were convinced that RTB contributed to their electoral success (Malpass and Murie, 1999: 82).

RTB was first enacted in the Housing Act 1980. It left tenants to initiate the sale of council houses, but gave them the clearest possible incentive to do so, in the form of the carrot and stick approach. The carrot was the offer of the statutory right to buy their homes at substantial discounts off the market value, together with a guaranteed mortgage from the local authority. The stick was the enforced imposition of higher rents as a result of the housing finance reforms discussed above (Malpass, 1993: 31). The Act was extended in 1984 and 1986 to give a maximum discount of 60% on houses and 70% on flats (Atkinson and Durden, 1990: 121). In later years, home-ownership was further encouraged through a variety of special schemes but, in numerical terms, they were of secondary importance to RTB (Doling, 1993: 583).

As reflected in the CCT legislation, the implementation of RTB involved a significant centralisation of power and the dilution of local autonomy. Not only had central Government made it compulsory for local authorities to sell council dwellings, but the powers of the Secretary of State to intervene where it appeared that authorities were taking too long to process RTB applications, were considerably enhanced (Forrest and Murie, 1988). Thus, even though some authorities (mainly Labour, but not exclusively) engaged in both overt and indirect campaigning tactics to restrict sales, RTB was extremely popular and by 1997, 2.3 million council dwellings had

been transferred to owner-occupation. Consequently, the municipal sector declined absolutely and relatively, and this exacerbated the residualisation of council housing that had been occurring since the 1960s (Forrest and Murie, 1997: 147).

In the early 1980s, therefore, the key housing policy objectives were to reduce, or rather restructure, housing expenditure and expand home-ownership. In this respect, it was through the *outcome* of these two objectives that the Conservatives realised their third objective of minimising the role of housing authorities as direct providers: the sale of council houses reduced the size of existing stock, while reductions in capital spending minimised new additions to the stock (Kemp, 1992: 67). However, after its initial legislative onslaught, the Government moved into a phase of policy drift until the mid-1980s (Malpass, 1992a: 16). In the meantime, RTB sales reached a peak by 1982 and thereafter, sales began to dwindle. Thus, although RTB was very successful, in relative terms, the number of sales were small: one million transfers up to 1986 represented only one-sixth of the entire public sector stock (Doling, 1993: 584). It was evident, therefore, that RTB would not of itself comprehensively reduce the council housing sector (Forrest, 1993: 43; Lund, 1994: 328).

To smooth the way for the second phase of privatisation, the Government intensified its ideological assault on council housing (Kemp, 1989: 52). This was reinforced by two critical reports from the Audit Commission and a significant degree of influential academic criticism (c.f. Malpass, 1992a: 15). Accordingly, paralleling developments in other parts of the welfare state, the strategy for council housing shifted from one form of privatisation to another: from asset sales towards a stronger market ethos in the management and delivery of public housing (Stoker, 1991: 215). On the grounds of introducing competition, increasing efficiency and enhancing consumer choice, the Government attempted to further erode the role of housing authorities as direct providers through a 'complete dismantling of the council house sector' (Forrest and Murie, 1988: 5). If council tenants could not or did not want to buy their homes, then other buyers would have to be found. In January 1987, for example, the then Minister for Housing, John Patten, argued that 'we should get rid of these monoliths' and transfer council estates to agencies 'who will be in closer touch with the needs and aspirations of individual tenants' (quoted in Kemp, 1989: 52). The shift to selling tenanted estates was therefore a 'logical next step' to maintain the privatisation momentum in housing (Kemp, 1992: 68). It was in this context that the Government first articulated its enabling proposals for housing authorities.

4.3 Enabling Housing Authorities: the Government's Proposals

The Government's first statement regarding the enabling role of housing authorities was contained in the 1987 White Paper, *Housing: The Government's Proposals*. It stated that, rather than act as landlords, the 'future role' of housing authorities:

... will essentially be a strategic one identifying housing needs and demands, encouraging innovative methods of provision by other bodies to meet such needs, maximising the use of private finance, and encouraging the new interest in the revival of the independent rented sector.

(Cm 214: 14; quoted in Goodlad, 1993: 25–6).

The strategic role was further underlined in the Citizen's Charter and clarified in terms of setting priorities, determining standards of service and finding the best ways of meeting them (Butcher, 1995: 104). State provision was to be kept to a minimum so that council housing was relegated to a 'residual and ever diminishing role' (Goodlad, 1993: 28). Instead, even though housing associations were to move 'centre-stage' and become the main providers of social housing (Langstaff, 1992), the Government emphasised greater reliance upon the private sector. Thus, when the DoE elaborated upon its enabling proposals in several departmental circulars (issued to housing authorities when inviting their annual HIP submissions), it identified various ways in which councils could facilitate the efforts of house-builders, private landlords and housing associations to meet local needs. These included the use of planning powers; assessing housing needs and conditions, offering improvement grants; providing assistance to encourage private renting; sponsoring housing associations to build new homes or to encourage stock transfers, and providing incentives to tenants to vacate council housing (Bramley, 1993a: 129–30). Moreover, to ensure that authorities were developing these relationships, in 1991 and 1992 additional guidance notes stated that, in future, the criterion for distributing HIP allocations would be based on the 'extent to which the authority is likely to use its allocation to develop its enabling role in co-operation with housing associations or other parts of the private sector' (DoE, 1991, quoted in Lund, 1994: 330).

The Government argued that its enabling proposals required councils 'to take a broader view of their responsibilities than they have in the past' (c.f. Butcher, 1995: 105). This indicated that they perceived councils as having a 'strong' rather than a 'weak' enabling role (Warburton, 1996). However, most commentators argued that such sentiments were somewhat disingenuous. Malpass (1992a) and Warburton (1996), for instance, identified several ways in which housing

authorities were constrained in their ability to act effectively as enablers.¹⁵ First, the controls on the size of capital allocations and on the use of receipts from sales constrained their ability to finance other bodies to provide housing. Second, although the Government indicated that authorities should enter into agreements with private developers, this was undermined by the need to obtain central consent. Similarly, the sponsorship of housing associations was undermined by complications introduced in the 1989 Housing Act. Here, the granting of nomination rights was considered to generate a notional capital receipt, so that the authority was virtually forced to pay for these rights with money it may not have had. Consequently, both authors argued that the legislation of 1988 and 1989 represented a negation of the enabling objective, and that as such, it 'continued an established trend in housing policy which amounts to the *disabling* of local authorities' (Malpass 1992a: 10, emphasis added).

Thus, the Government's enabling proposals extended the strategy of privatisation in housing. At the same time, however, by failing to give housing authorities extra powers and resources to develop a strong enabling role (Clapham, 1989b: 9), the 1987 White Paper was primarily concerned with '*demunicipalising* rented housing and reducing the power of local authorities' (Kemp, 1989: 63).¹⁶

4.4 The Demunicipalisation of Council Housing

Proposals for the enabling role of housing authorities were enacted in the 1988 Housing Act and these are discussed here. Attention is given to Housing Action Trusts, Tenant's Choice, Large-Scale Voluntary Transfers and the enhanced role of housing associations. All can be construed as initiatives designed to achieve the demunicipalisation of council housing.

¹⁵ The possible exception to this analysis is made by Bramley. In relation to new-build specifically, he argued, 'the range of powers open to local authorities has on balance been widened' (1993a: 133). The four levers of finance, land ownership, land-use planning and the local community that are available to local authorities 'allow a considerable amount of scope for enabling in a number of different ways' (1993a: 147). Yet, even for Bramley, this assessment was confined at the 'theoretical' level. In actual practice, he conceded that, 'there is little indication that the ... gap between recent levels of social housing provision and the ... estimates of need ... can be bridged by output by enabling in all its forms' (142–3). Thus, for Bramley, the enabling role may offer housing authorities the chance to act in 'wide-ranging fashion' (1993a: 130), but it remained restrictive in the sense that the new-build schemes that could be facilitated were not likely to be commensurate with aggregate housing need estimates.

¹⁶ Although the 1987 White Paper and the guidance notes discussed in the text provided the clearest account of the Government's proposals for enabling housing authorities, see Goodlad (1993) Chapters 4 and 5 respectively regarding additional guidance notes relating to specific aspects of the enabling role, such as the use of the planning system to create affordable housing; and the improvement and renewal provisions of the 1989 Act.

4.4.1 Housing Action Trusts

The first attempt to minimise the role of housing authorities as direct providers, was the Government's failed attempt to establish Housing Action Trusts (HATs) in six inner-city areas (Karn, 1993: 75). These were a prime example of the growth of non-elected agencies discussed in Chapter 3.¹⁷ Areas of public housing were to be removed from local authority control, and renovated through public-private partnerships and after a limited period, passed on to other forms of ownership and management (Reid, 1995: 141). Furthermore, though local authorities and tenants were to be consulted, there was to be no tenant ballot and no local authority veto (Karn, 1993: 74). However, the fear of privatisation, the loss of democratic accountability and the confrontational way in which this policy was presented made the original six HATs unacceptable to both local authorities and tenants (Karn, 1993: 76). Consequently, the concept of HATs was 'redesigned' and by the summer of 1994, six local authorities had set up 'voluntary' HATs on estates in their areas. The terms of these new HATs were very different from those initially laid down. Tenants were granted a ballot to decide whether or not to establish a HAT, representation on HAT boards, and the right to choose to return to municipal control after the estates had been improved. The incentive for local authorities was that as well as a significantly enhanced financial package, they would be working in partnership with the private sector, rather than excluded from the renewal process (Rao, 1996: 61).

4.4.2 Tenants' Choice

A further scheme for reorienting the role of housing authorities, was the introduction of Tenants' Choice. This gave tenants the right to choose their landlord in which they could either approach alternative landlords or be approached by them (Spencer, 1995: 152). Transfer proposals had to be subject to a ballot amongst tenants, but the rules had an in-built bias against the local authority: abstentions were regarded as being in favour of a transfer proceeding (Forrest, 1993:44). Once again though, this initiative was not successful. Despite their failings, many tenants felt a degree of control over local authorities. Moreover, the advantages of them renting from a private landlord appeared limited, but the disadvantages – much reduced security of tenure, a more punitive approach to rent arrears and the prospect of higher rents – seemed significant (Kemp, 1992: 74). Nor was the idea financially attractive to private developers and in the event, very few came forward to purchase estates (Ginsburg, 1996: 151). By 1992, there had been only two

¹⁷ The Chair and members of the HAT board were to be appointed and directly accountable to the Secretary of State. As well as adopting the landlord functions of the housing authority, where it was deemed necessary, they would also assume planning and environmental health powers. In short, they were to be 'local authorities without the elected councillors' (Kemp, 1989: 56).

successful transfers to housing associations under Tenants' Choice arrangements (Foley and Evans, 1994: 397).

Although HATs and Tenants' Choice were not successful in demunicipalising rented housing, they did act as a catalyst in changing housing management practices. The threat of potential competition 'galvanised' many housing authorities into developing more responsive services (Bramley, 1993b: 159). Consequently, housing management in many councils was 'reformed from within' (Cole and Furbey, 1994: 217), involving, in particular, the decentralisation of housing services (see Cole, 1993) and the development of more customer-oriented approaches.

4.4.3 Large-Scale Voluntary Transfers

One unplanned outcome of the demunicipalisation drive was the emergence of large-scale voluntary transfers (LSVTs). They refer to voluntary stock transfers initiated by councils themselves, normally to a housing association specifically established for the purpose. The main impetus was to counter the threat of Tenants' Choice, HATs and the financial regime introduced in 1989. Consequently, LSVTs offered two key advantages to the local authority: first, they generated a large capital receipt which could be used to pay existing debts and a surplus to be spent on other items; second, they were identified as an effective means of excluding new tenancies from RTB, thereby curtailing the rate of depletion of municipal housing (Kleinman, 1993: 167). Thus, LSVTs made a significant contribution to demunicipalisation and the expansion of the housing association sector. Between 1988 and 1997, stock transfers under LSVTs were equivalent to about 40% of the stock sold under RTB. For the first time since the First World War, 55 districts no longer had housing stocks owned and managed by local authorities (Mullins, 1998: 129). It was suggested, therefore, that LSVTs could mean the death of municipal housing 'by a self-administered suicide pill' rather than Government sponsored attempts to demunicipalise council housing (Mullins *et al.*, 1993: 182–3).

At one level, LSVTs appeared to be firmly in tune with Government policy: they led to local authorities becoming enablers and ceasing to be providers (Kleinman, 1993: 169). Yet, there were several reasons why the Government was 'lukewarm' to the idea (Ginsburg, 1996: 152). First, LSVTs offered tenants lower rents (at least for three years) than if they remained in the municipal sector. Second, all transfers were made to housing associations, so that not one single unit was added to the private-rented sector. Third, LSVTs did not break local monopolies of rented housing. In practice, they involved the exchange of one monopoly landlord with another, with the new landlord appropriating most of the municipal housing department staff (Kleinman, 1993: 169). It was precisely because one monopoly was being replaced by another that the Government's guidelines in 1992 stipulated that transfers should not be made to only one

purchaser. This was an attempt to create competition and transfer stock to several housing associations in the same locality (Cairncross *et al.*, 1997: 16).

4.4.4 The Promotion of Housing Associations

Under Conservative housing policy, housing associations became a prime example of local public spending bodies discussed in Chapter 3. The transformation of their role that took place since the 1988 Housing Act was motivated by a concern that local authorities should be confined to an enabling role.¹⁸ As noted, they were to acquire an increasing proportion of municipal housing through Tenants' Choice and HATs, but they were also to become the main providers of social rented housing through a greatly expanded development programme (Randolph, 1993: 40). Consequently, the aggregate level of capital expenditure channelled through the Housing Corporation doubled between 1989/1990 and 1992/3 (Malpass, 1997: 83). This led to a rapid increase in new build activity so that by 1996, housing associations' share of the national housing stock had risen from less than 1% to 4% (Blake, 1996: 175). However, despite the favourable status bestowed upon housing associations, they did not escape from the Conservative's market-led philosophy. To lower public subsidy and 'maximise efficiency', the 1988 Act introduced a new financial regime for housing associations which had the effect of exposing them to greater risk and increased competition (Best, 1997: 110).

In 1995, the Housing Corporation began to urge housing associations to broaden their remit in order to tackle problems of poverty, deprivation and other social problems associated with polarisation and residualisation on social housing estates. Essentially, it urged housing associations to make housing investment more sustainable by combining investment in bricks and mortar with wider social and economic initiatives. This was termed as 'Housing Plus' and defined along three dimensions: 'the creation and maintenance of sustainable social housing, obtaining added value from housing management and investment, and building partnerships with stakeholders in communities' (Housing Corporation, 1997; c.f. Walker, 2000: 292). The Corporation also introduced financial sticks and carrots to ensure that housing associations could not 'regard housing plus as an optional extra'. Access to capital funding became increasingly confined to schemes which promised to deliver wider benefits through housing investment. The types of initiatives that incorporate housing plus could vary from core concerns that achieved wider benefits – such as tenant participation, nominations, housing and estate design – to projects

¹⁸ Although there had been considerable conflict between housing associations and central Government in the early years of the 1980s (Best, 1997: 109), in hindsight, where much else was changing in this policy area, housing associations 'went through a period of benign neglect' up until 1987 (Langstaff, 1992: 32). Indeed, the more 'conflict-ridden' Thatcher's relations became with local government, the 'more cosy they became with this alternative sector'. The 1987 White Paper lavished praise on housing associations, and the Housing Corporation took 'pride of place' in the DoE's annual housing reports (Jenkins, 1995: 182, 183).

directly addressing and meeting wider objectives – such as reducing skills gaps, breaking the link between homelessness and joblessness, improving social infrastructure and the prevention of crime (Evans, 1998: 717; see also Fordham *et al.*, 1997; Power and Richardson, 1996).

4.5 Extending CCT to Housing Management

By the time proposals were made to extend CCT to housing management, John Major had succeeded Thatcher as Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative Party. Whilst public policy under Major marked a change in style, ‘there were no serious reversals of the previous administration’s social policy or attitudes towards the public sector’ (Flynn, 1993: 35). This was made clear in the way in which the Government continued to denigrate housing authorities as inefficient managers. For instance, the 1992 DoE consultation paper, *Competing for Quality in Housing*, stated ‘there is still scope for greater efficiency and cost savings in many authorities. The quality of housing management in some authorities is still depressingly poor’ (DoE 1992b: 2; c.f. Pearl 1997: 142).

The rationale for introducing CCT to housing management, therefore, echoed the rhetoric of a decade earlier. It was argued that exposure to competition would stimulate efficiency, enhance value for money and thereby help reduce public spending. It was also argued that tenants would benefit from the competitive process since it would provide them with better services in the future (Spencer, 1995: 160). The overriding objective, however, was the desire to transfer housing management to non-municipal providers, in this instance either the private sector or housing associations (Pearl, 1997: 156). Finally, paralleling the criticisms of trade unions, CCT for white-collar services was also designed to reduce the power of professional groups (Cutler and Waine 1994: 14).

The Government set out its proposals for the extension of CCT to housing management in several publications in 1992 and 1993. These outlined the functions to be put out to tender, the framework for competition, and the time-scale for its introduction (Cope, 1999: 248). At the minimum, all housing management services that were funded through the housing revenue account were required to be put out to tender, but the strategic/enabling function of housing authorities was not expected to be tendered (Rao, 1996: 106). Local authorities who had housing management costs of less than £500,000 per annum were exempt from the competitive process and designated *de minimis* status. In April 1996, however, the *de minimis* level changed to a ‘stock number’ basis. Eventually, any authority with at least 500 properties had to expose housing management services to competition (Steel and Liddle 1993: 4–5).

Local authorities were expected to package contracts on an area, rather than functional, basis. This was intended to preserve the ethos of the comprehensive housing service, as well as to retain developments in decentralised management and tenant participation. Detailed guidance was also issued as to the style and content of contracts, and the expectations placed on authorities if they were to avoid accusations of anti-competitive behaviour. As with blue-collar services, CCT required housing departments to restructure to create a client side which specified, tendered, awarded, and monitored contracts, in addition to continuing to provide other central strategic and enabling services. Where in-house teams won, housing authorities were required to structure a contractor side and achieve a rate of return on capital of 6% (Rao, 1996: 106).

The extension of CCT to housing management was another privatisation strategy to transform housing authorities into enablers (Reid, 1995: 142). It has been considered by many to be the most far-reaching change to housing management since public housing was first established. It prompted the wide-spread re-evaluation of key operational areas, such as organisational culture, the style and content of services, and the orientation of the housing profession itself (Pearl, 1997: 132).

4.6 The Privatisation of Housing Renewal

In response to the growing evidence of disrepair from the mid-1980s, the Thatcher Governments developed a strategy for the privatisation of housing renewal in both the municipal and private sectors. Key elements of this strategy entailed the containment of public expenditure; the concentration of resources on the worst problems; and attempts to incorporate business interests in both policy-making and implementation (Brindley and Stoker, 1988: 48). The strategy for housing renewal in the private sector was articulated in the 1985 Green Paper and enacted in the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act. In brief, general improvement and housing action areas were abolished. Instead, local authorities could designate Renewal Areas if they met the strict criteria laid down by the DoE (Marks and Couch, 1991: 2). Simultaneously, improvement and repair grants were replaced by a single renovation grant which covered a much more basic standard of fitness, and for the first time, became means-tested (Leather and Mackintosh, 1997: 143; 1993: 116).

Housing renewal in the public sector was also motivated by a desire to concentrate resources on the worst problems and engage the private sector (Pinto, 1993: 38–9). Consequently, the Government adopted a policy of large-scale estate privatisation (Balchin, 1995: 181–2). The introduction of HATs has already been discussed, but this was preceded by the introduction of Estate Action in 1985. Councils had to bid to the DoE to access the earmarked resources and, to be successful, they had to demonstrate private sector leverage and/or partnerships with housing

associations. In particular, a key objective of this programme was to reduce municipal control by transferring refurbished housing stock into owner-occupation or housing association management (Blackman, 1995: 96, 156).

In the 1990s, housing renewal became subsumed in urban regeneration initiatives that reflected a wider agenda than that traditionally associated with housing policy. 'The conventional wisdom moved towards a view that the approach to housing and other urban problems should be a holistic one which involved different levels of government, different agencies in the public, private and voluntary sector and different programmes, departments and disciplines' (Malpass and Murie, 1999: 102–103). In light of this analysis, the Government launched City Challenge in 1991, and later superseded it by the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) in 1994 (Robson and Shaw, 1994: 227, 229). In contrast to the property-led regeneration of the 1980s (see Berry *et al.*, 1993), these initiatives encouraged integrated area strategies that combined housing renewal with other economic, social and environmental objectives (Cameron, 1997: 4, 13). Expenditure on improving the housing stock was not considered to be sufficient unless it was part of a more broadly-based regeneration strategy (Malpass and Murie, 1999: 103).

Although City Challenge and SRB represented a 'paradigm shift' from the 1980s in terms of both the substantive aims of urban policy, and the processes of policy formulation and delivery (Oatley and Lambert, 1998: 109), the Government's market-led philosophy continued to underpin the new regeneration programmes in several ways. Funds were allocated on a competitive basis in which winners and losers were decided on the basis of the quality of bids, rather than on the scale of deprivation to be addressed (Stanton, 1996: 195). Moreover, after 12 years of anti-local authority rhetoric and the use of quangos driven by business interests to manage regeneration, both initiatives accorded a leading role to local authorities in assuming civic leadership and strategy development (Harding and Garside, 1995: 173). Reinforcing the enabling role, however, local authorities were obliged to form multi-sector partnerships to assist with policy formulation and implementation (Oatley, 1998a: 14). The involvement of the private sector was a key prerequisite for successful bids (De Groot, 1992: 201), but there was also a new emphasis on community involvement (Nevin and Shiner, 1995: 206; see also Colenutt and Cutten, 1994). At the same time, local authorities were expected to contract-out the delivery of individual schemes within the regeneration strategy, and hence not expected to exercise their direct delivery functions (Oatley, 1998b: 148: 152).

One further point needs to be clarified. The leading role that local authorities were expected to play in regeneration activities was undermined by a significant degree of central control (John, 1994: 424–5). Resources were conditional on the extent to which authorities

demonstrated their conformity with Government objectives and ultimately, there was no increase in autonomous local decision-making (Stewart, 1994: 144; 1997: 148). Indeed, it has been argued that moving away from the confrontational tactics of the 1980s, City Challenge and SRB represented a more *subtle* attempt by the Government to achieve its political aims, namely, the continued dilution of local government powers; the promotion of a more commercial culture via competitive bidding; and the explicit involvement of the private sector (Oatley and Lambert 1998: 124). All this reinforces the point made earlier that the Government's enabling proposals were concerned with promoting a residual role, rather than granting local authorities either additional powers, resources or freedom to develop an effective enabling role.

4.7 The Sponsorship of Tenant Participation

Tenant participation falls into two distinct types. One is led by tenants as a form of protest against landlord decisions, and the other is sponsored by landlords (Riseborough 1998: 225). Of the two types, organised tenant protest has a longer history, but this section examines the latter. In this respect, tenant participation (at the most general level) has been defined as 'a two-way process involving sharing of information and ideas, where tenants are able to influence decisions and take part in what is happening (Institute of Housing and TPAS, 1989: 19). Since 1980, the Conservatives promoted tenant involvement in various ways. The form that this took was not directed towards giving tenants a greater collective 'voice' or altering the balance of power between them and the landlord (Birchall, 1992).¹⁹ Instead, within the general framework of exposing councils to greater competition, and the conceptualisation of the public as 'consumers', the Government directed tenant involvement towards 'exit' options in the following ways.

First, as noted, tenants were offered a variety of choices to 'exit' council housing. This included voting rights to choose alternative landlords under Tenants' Choice, HATs and LSVT schemes, as well as the initial RTB provisions (Goodlad, 1991: 115). Second, tenant involvement was vigorously encouraged in Government initiatives to transfer municipal housing into Tenant Management Organisations. Tenants were given increased opportunities to establish Estate Management Boards or Tenant Management Co-operatives (Sommerville, 1998: 246, 248). Third, rather than extending collective rights, the Government enhanced tenants' individual rights. The launching of the Tenants' Charter in 1980 – consolidated in measures in the 1985 Housing Act – granted tenants a range of rights which centred upon improved security of tenure, access to information (including arrangements for consultation) and the right to be consulted on proposals

¹⁹ For instance, the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act undermined tenants' ability to play an active role in a council's formal decision-making process by removing their right to vote on committees and sub-committees (Pearl, 1997: 97). Further, a key issue to many tenants – that of rents – was explicitly excluded as a topic to be discussed between council and tenant under the provisions of the 1980 Housing Act (Cairncross *et al.*, 1994: 195).

for changes in housing management (Pearl, 1997: 96). Following the introduction of the 1991 Citizen's Charter, tenants' rights were also underlined in the Council Tenants' Charter. However, this merely reinforced, rather than extended, existing rights (Goodlad, 1997: 42).

This chapter has reviewed the key policy and legislative reforms by which the Conservative administrations reoriented the role of housing authorities from direct providers to enablers. The themes that have been discussed here form the foundation for the interpretation and practice of enabling that is explored in the analysis of empirical data in later chapters.

CHAPTER 5:

THEORIES OF ENABLING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

As discussed in Chapter 1, the introduction of enabling has been subject to considerable controversy in which multiple meanings have been attributable to this concept from both the Right and Left of the political spectrum. These competing interpretations have been applied either to the role of local government in general, or within the specific context of housing. Thus, the narrow' role for local government advanced by Ridley, the 'wider' role advocated by Stewart and Clarke, alongside the specific elaborations presented by Clapham and the *Duke of Edinburgh's Inquiry into British Housing*, are in disagreement over their visions of the purpose of local/housing authorities and the meaning of enabling. However, they also share two similarities. There is general agreement over the condemnation of the traditional local authority role and its mode of operation. For the present purposes, however, the most important similarity relates to the normative and prescriptive nature of these visions. To reiterate, none of these models present an analysis of change that has taken place and, in a sense, what is likely to place in the future. In this respect, their normative status could have been adopted and utilised to form the theoretical underpinnings of this research study. However, this study selected the enabling typology developed by Leach *et al.* (1992) as its theoretical framework. A key strength of this typology was that it encapsulated many of the competing ideas and themes presented by the above authors into *one* framework. This, in turn, made it easier to 'operationalise' the theoretical models of enabling and their various dimensions into concrete research questions. Another strength of the enabling typology was that, it was possible to locate the contrasting enabling models within a wider ideological and philosophical context. Together, therefore, these two aspects of Leach *et al.*'s typology provided a very useful framework for formulating research questions, organising the data collection and initial analysis.

This Chapter now moves on to describe the theoretical framework and direction of the research study in greater detail. Within the framework of Leach *et al.*'s typology, the 'residual' and 'community' models of enabling, together with the idealistic caricature of the traditional authority, are all premised upon opposing ideological frameworks regarding the role, purpose and functions of local government. The first part of this Chapter, therefore, briefly outlines the ideological beliefs underpinning the two enabling models. Attention is first given to the New Right which is associated with the residual-enabling authority. This is followed by a brief outline of Communitarianism which is aligned with the community-enabling authority. The traditional authority is associated with the social democratic consensus and this was discussed in Chapter 2.

The second part of the Chapter then gives a description of the enabling typology developed by Leach *et al.* (1992).

5.1 The Ideological Context of Enabling

The 'New Right' covers a wide and heterogeneous range of philosophical traditions.²⁰ The discussion here, however, concentrates on public choice theory because its policy prescriptions regarding how the state should discharge its minimal welfare responsibilities underpin the residual-enabling authority. From this perspective, therefore, the optimal mechanism for allocating goods and making decisions is the market. In comparison, public bureaucracies and representative democracy are both seen as seriously flawed. Due to the operation of the 'political market', it is argued that there is an in-built tendency for public bureaucracies to over-supply (Dunleavy and O'Leary, 1987: 98). Thus, politicians are viewed as rational actors with the primary aim of maximising votes, whilst the primary objective of bureaucrats is the aggrandisement of their department, budget and personal prestige. Given the absence of the profit criteria in the public sector, the interaction between politicians and bureaucrats leads to an over-supply of public goods and services, especially when compared to the optimum according to citizens' preferences (King, 1987: 103). The 'solutions' proposed, therefore, are based on the premise that, if public provision is required, this should not automatically translate into the state assuming monopolistic responsibility for service delivery. Instead, governments should stimulate competition and create the conditions in which market forces can efficiently allocate resources within the public sector (Parsons, 1995: 51). Accordingly, contracting-out in local government is identified as a key solution (Boyne, 1998a: 697).

Contracting-out is considered to be superior to direct provision on three counts. The first is a service-cost criterion – competition and economies of scale will enable and/or force contractors to produce services at a lower cost compared to direct provision. The second is a service performance criterion – competition will compel in-house providers to meet the performance standards of the contracting government, rather than to pursue self-interested objectives characteristic of bureaucratic production (Lowery, 1982: 518). Finally, as contracting-out challenges the monopoly position of in-house providers, the restrictive practices of trade unions and professionals can be weakened (Dunleavy, 1986: 16).

The discussion now turns towards Communitarianism which is associated with the community-enabling authority. This ideology is based upon a commitment to revitalising civil society and promoting community activism. It seeks a 'middle-way' between the excesses of state

regulation and control on the one hand, and the reliance on pure market forces on the other (Parsons, 1995: 53). Communitarians acknowledge the importance of individual enterprise and market competition. They accept the New Right critique that the state is inappropriately interventionist: it does things to people, rather than facilitating them to act for themselves. Nevertheless, Communitarians also suggest that the free market has its limitations. Excessive individualism is perceived as a threat to social cohesion. They argue that modern societies have lost a sense of community and social solidarity. The vital fabric linking the state and the individual – everything from voluntary associations to schools, families, churches and trade unions – has withered under the impact of rampant market individualism (Furedi, 1997: 139). Moreover, consumerist individualism not only erodes mutual aid and co-operative relationships between people, it encourages political apathy and discourages community commitment (Hill, 2000: 57).

To counteract the effects of social fragmentation and individualism, Communitarians are especially concerned with promoting community activism. Communities are identified as a mobilising force for collective action. Great value is placed on direct political participation. Indeed, participation in public affairs is celebrated as the highest role to which the individual can aspire (Butcher and Mullard, 1993: 221). Hence the appropriate role for the state is to act as an ‘empowerer’ (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 134), using its resources to establish participatory structures in which individuals and communities actively share in a ‘commitment to the resolution of problems of collective choice through public reasoning’ (Cohen 1990; quoted in Butcher and Mullard, 1993: 221). Political decentralisation is strongly advocated. It is argued that by providing members with opportunities for participative activity, the individual benefits from a shared sense of involvement in realising common goals and contributing to the collective life of the group (Butcher, 1993: 16). Although, therefore, the original idea of enabling was rooted in New Right views about a minimalist role for local government, Communitarian ideology, as applied to local government, offers a more expansive conception of enabling, centred around ‘community governance’. Establishing a wider role for local authorities, the focus is not on the delivery of a discrete set of services, but on a concern with the well-being of the locality for which they are responsible. The key issue becomes not how to deliver services, but rather, how to maximise the well-being of the citizens of the area (Stoker, 1999b: 15) and revive collective public action (Parsons, 1995: 53).

²⁰ The literature on the economic and social doctrines of the New Right is considerable. For a more detailed discussion see Dunleavy (1986; 1991), Dunleavy and O’Leary (1987), King (1987; 1989; 1995).

5.2 The Enabling Typology

Having identified the ideological frameworks underpinning the enabling authorities, this section proceeds to describe Leach *et al.*'s (1992) typology in greater detail.

The traditional authority emphasises direct service provision. Statutory duties are perceived as the main justification for the council's activities. It does not spend any significant time looking for opportunities to identify community needs which do not fit with the existing pattern of service provision. Professional disciplines form the basis of departmental and committee organisation. Representative democracy is viewed as the major vehicle for local democracy and local accountability, whilst participatory democracy is not particularly endorsed.

The residual-enabling authority is a provider of last resort. It is responsible for a limited set of services that cannot be met through the private market or other appropriate mechanisms (for example, quangos, development corporations, the voluntary sector). Even where the authority does retain responsibility for service provision, this is not delivered directly, but contracted-out to the private sector (or exceptionally an in-house contracting agency). Moreover, since the market is regarded as the most effective mechanism for providing goods and services, the residual-enabler does not consider it necessary to regulate the activities of the private sector. Nor does it form any external relationships aside from those with contractors. The basis of internal organisation is contract specification and management with the role of local politicians limited. All that is required is a small management board of councillors, meeting two or three times a year to let contracts and receive monitoring reports. In situations where the authority cannot contract the service externally, a clear separation of client and contractor roles is retained. Moreover, since the residual-enabler is largely reactive to the market in its operations, it considers authority-wide strategic planning and individual service planning to be unnecessary. Beyond the purchasing of a set of services, there is only a minimal level of service co-ordination. The idea that the local authority should play any wider role in defining and meeting community needs is considered inappropriate. The key accountability relationship is between the individual local tax payer and the local authority: as close an approximation as possible to a market transaction between customer and a commercial organisation.

Turning now to the community-enabling authority, this authority exists to meet the varied needs of its resident, working and visitor populations by using a plurality of modes of operation, such as direct provision, contracting and partnership arrangements. Local communities are also expected to play an active role in service provision wherever possible. In short, this authority seeks an outward, networking type of role through which it can exert its influence. Hence, unlike the traditional or residual-enabling authorities, there are extremely wide networks of external

relationships built around the central enabling role of the local authority itself. Collective and individual needs are all considered important and especially the idea of 'communities'. Accordingly, community strategies are an essential element of authority-wide strategic planning. Service planning is decentralised and based on local needs which are interpreted within broad, centrally defined guidelines established within the authority. The structure of the authority is based on matrix management, decentralisation, area-based departments and a small, but influential, strategic centre. This authority also has a two-tier political management system: a central executive responsible for overall policy formulation and implementation, and a set of area committees with considerable devolved powers. Considerable emphasis is given to participatory democracy, but not necessarily as an alternative to representative democracy. Community accountability is emphasised, rather than accountability to the market or the wider political party. This is achieved primarily through the direct representation and participation of local people in area committees, as well as in service provision itself. The voluntary sector is also highly valued and accorded special prominence on the grounds that it can facilitate community participation and development.

5.3 Summary

This Chapter has described the enabling typology and outlined the ideological beliefs underpinning them. Thus, public choice theorists argue that, in the absence of market disciplines, the state cannot deliver services efficiently and is vulnerable to producer capture and bureaucratic empire building. The policy implications are clear: public monopolies should be reduced to a minimum and contracting-out should be increased within local government. This is the ideological framework underpinning the residual-enabling authority. By contrast, Communitarians argue that excessive free market individualism is a threat to social cohesion and encourages political apathy. It is principally concerned with promoting community activism. Accordingly, Communitarians suggest that the state should establish participatory structures in which people can act collectively. This ideological framework underpins the community-enabling authority.

The enabling typology developed by Leach *et al.* (1992) was a useful starting point from which local authority interpretations of the enabling concept could be gauged. However, in light of the later empirical findings, it was necessary to develop this typology so that the practice of enabling and its local variations could be analysed more precisely. This is undertaken in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6:

THE ENABLING TYPOLOGY, PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

Chapter 5 described the enabling typology developed by Leach *et al.* (1992). In light of the empirical data gathered, it was necessary to augment this typology with additional theoretical ideas and practices. These are examined here in three sections. The first examines the theory of ‘partnerships’ and aligns the conceptual framework of governance theory to the enabling typology. Beyond this general exploration of ‘partnerships’, the second section outlines the differing relationship that the enabling authorities have with the voluntary sector. Both of these frameworks are applied in Chapters 9 and 11 when examining the extent to which partnership arrangements developed by the three Housing Departments correspond to a traditional, residual or community-enabling model. The final section is sub-divided into two parts. The first examines the concept of ‘citizenship’ from the perspective of the rival political ideologies discussed in Chapter 5. The second part applies these ideas to a typology of tenant participation developed by Cairncross *et al.* (1994; 1997). This identifies the way in which tenant participation is sponsored by the contrasting models of enabling. This typology is then applied in Chapters 9 and 12 to assess the degree to which tenant participation facilitated by the three Housing Departments conformed to the traditional, residual, or community-enabling authorities.

6.1 Partnerships: Definition, Theory and Modes of Governance

Given that the term ‘partnership’ contains a ‘high level of ambiguity’ (Mackintosh, 1992: 210; see also Bailey *et al.*, 1995: 28), it is first necessary to clarify its meaning. This study follows Lowndes and Skelcher and defines ‘partnerships’, within which local authorities are participants, as ‘formalised collaborative relationships with business, voluntary (or non governmental) organisations and community associations’. The authors state:

These relationships are formalised by an agreement by the parties which is given concrete expression through the creation of an organisational structure – a partnership board or forum. Here, strategy is developed and decisions are made which may have implications for the policies, resources and actions of individual agencies involved. (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998: 314).

The theory of partnerships is broadly based on two organising principles: competition and collaboration. Resource-dependency theory suggests that organisations which are unable to generate all the resources they need enter into a series of transactions with other bodies to obtain

what they require (Rochester, 1996: 26). Benson argues that public sector organisations seeking alliances are oriented to the protection – or ideally enhancement – of scarce and valued resources, predominant amongst which are ‘money’ and ‘authority’ (1975; c.f. Leach *et al.*, 1994: 210). Thus, local authorities will strive to enhance the flow of financial resources available to them, as well as attempt to retain control of, or extend, their domains of responsibility. By contrast, collaboration theory is characterised by a notion of ‘synergistic gain’ arising from the sharing of resources, risks, rewards, and the prioritisation of *collaborative* rather than *competitive* advantage. The concept of ‘synergy’ refers to ‘when something ... is produced ... that no organisation could have produced on its own and when each organisation, through the collaboration, is able to achieve its own objectives better than it could alone’ (Huxham, 1993: 22).

Although the competition/collaboration dichotomy is helpful, the problem with the term ‘partnerships’ is that it has connotations of co-operation and sharing which may not always be translated in practice (Hutchinson, 1992: 336). Hence, it is important to ‘avoid simplistic assumptions about partnerships as self-evidently a ‘good thing’. It is necessary to ask who is collaborating with whom, why and on what terms’ (Malpass, 1994: 304). Governance theory addresses these questions. It provides a useful framework for understanding policy co-ordination and implementation in an interorganisational context. Accordingly, the three modes of governance – hierarchies, market and networks – are now aligned to the enabling typology.

The hierarchical mode of governance is associated with the traditional authority. As a co-ordinating mechanism, a hierarchy is based on a system of command and control which ensures that specific tasks are carried out to a particular standard. It is characterised by a clear definition of roles, responsibilities and functions, and vertical forms of communication and reporting (Reid, 1995: 135). Thus, in terms of its relationship with other participants in the partnership, the traditional authority establishes a formal, bureaucratic tone in which administrative routines are the means of communication between them (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998: 318).

The market mode of governance is associated with the residual-enabling authority. The key co-ordinating principle concerns the relationship between competition and increases in efficiency, and the way in which these efficiencies are reflected in lower prices for goods or services. Thus, price becomes the key mechanism governing the relationship between partnership participants. Fundamental to this approach is a system of ‘management through contracts’, rather than ‘control by hierarchy’. Actors prefer to remain independent and they only choose to collaborate when they see particular advantages to themselves. Where conflicts emerge, there may be a recourse to law to determine the liabilities of the parties involved (Lowndes and Skelcher,

1998: 318; Prior, 1996: 93). Within the general context of restraining public spending, partnerships of this nature are oriented towards consumer responsiveness (Stoker, 1999b: 3).

The network mode of governance is aligned to the community-enabling authority. Exchanges between participants are not based on market transactions or hierarchical authority. Interdependent relationships are governed by trust, loyalty and reciprocity (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998: 319). This reflects the advantages to be gained from pooling resources and mutually supportive actions (Painter *et al.*, 1997: 228). Emphasis is placed on empowering both providers and users so that they can work effectively to deliver high-quality services. Participants in the partnership are also committed to maintaining a long-term relationship between themselves (Stoker, 1999b: 4).

6.2 The Enabling Typology and Local Authority–Voluntary Sector Relationships

Attention now turns to the way in which the different enabling authorities support an active voluntary sector. This study follows Leach and Wilson and defines voluntary groups as organisations ‘established to meet a perceived need in the community on a non-commercial, non-statutory basis’ (1998: 4).

The traditional authority views the voluntary sector as marginal to mainstream local services. Support is given to a limited range of voluntary groups on the basis of tradition and precedence, rather than as an expression of a more explicit view of their value. Such authorities typically allocate a specific sum of money, largely in the form of grants, in an *ad hoc* manner, with patterns of available expenditure as the dominant reason for support or non-support (Ross and Osborne, 1999: 55). Grants are usually regarded as a ‘gift’ and organisations are largely free to determine how they spend them. There is little attempt to monitor recipient agencies (Waine, 1992: 80).

The residual-enabling authority views the voluntary sector as innovative, flexible and potentially cost effective. Support for the sector is premised upon its general ideological position of anti-statism and a preference for decentralised, non-bureaucratic alternatives to state provision (Waine, 1992: 84). Voluntary organisations are, thus, supported to provide services for which the authority has a statutory responsibility. They are valued in so far as they can deliver more cost-efficient public services than the authority itself. These authorities utilise contracts, service level agreements and performance measures as instruments of negotiation and regulation of the voluntary sector (Leach and Wilson, 1998: 8, 10).

The community-enabling authority values the very existence of voluntary organisations because they are seen as an essential element of the kind of participative ethos the council is trying to encourage. Thus, voluntary groups are supported because the council values their community representation or development work. In this context, the capacity to provide services, although it may also be of concern to the authority, is likely to be a secondary consideration (Leach and Wilson, 1998: 8). Indeed, this authority envisages voluntary groups as having a 'broad' role and one which involves 'advising local authorities on their policy and practice and *acting as a conduit for community view*' (NCVO, 1994: 3).

6.3 The Enabling Typology, Citizenship and Tenant Participation

In its simplest form, a 'citizen' is a member of a political community who is endowed with a series of rights and a set of obligations. Citizenship, therefore, represents a relationship between the individual and the state in which the two are bound together by reciprocal rights and obligations (Heywood, 1994: 155). It is the nature of the citizen's rights and obligations, and the balance between the two, that is contentious in the current debate. Attention is now given to the way in which citizens are conceptualised from the perspective of the social democratic consensus, the New Right and Communitarianism.

6.3.1 The Public as Clients, Consumers and Citizens

Under the post-war consensus, 'citizenship' entailed universal economic and social rights that became embodied within the welfare state. The state was obliged to uphold such rights on the assumption that citizens require freedom from poverty and despair if they are to participate fully in the affairs of their community (Heywood, 1994: 160). A duty was placed on citizens to pay taxes to meet the costs of social rights, but aside from this, citizenship as a set of social entitlements made limited demands on the individual (Prior *et al.*, 1995: 10; Hill, 1994: 16). The translation of social entitlements into welfare provision led to a particular form of relationship between public-sector bureaucracies and the individual. In their roles as voters and tax payers, the public provided the state with political authorisation and financial resources for the provision of welfare services. In carrying out those activities, public bureaucracies dealt with the public as recipients of services and in that context, the public came to be perceived as occupying the role of the *client*. As 'clients', the experience of citizenship emerged as 'passive' rather than 'active'. The distinction between a passive and active public is the difference between a public whose role is simply that of service recipient in which professionals exercise choice on behalf of individuals, and a public which has at least some role in determining the nature of that provision (Gyford 1991b: 17).

In recent years, however, the concept of citizenship as involving an entitlement to social rights has been challenged by the New Right and Communitarians (Plant, 1992: 16). There is

common ground between them in this context and it centres on the passive relationship between the public and state bureaucracy. Neo-liberals perceive passive citizens as over-protected by the institutions of welfare and unable to achieve self-sufficiency because of their dependence on the state. For Communitarians, passive citizens are excluded from the process of government and unable to influence the content and delivery of public services (Prior *et al.*, 1995: 14). Thus the experience of *passivity* rendered traditional understandings of citizenship as ineffective and stimulated re-definitions of the meaning of citizenship.

The New Right reinvented the concept of 'citizenship' in the notion of 'consumerism'. Consumerism is based on the neo-liberal principle that the defining activity of the citizen is *choice* and the institutions of citizenship, pre-eminently the market, should exist to facilitate this activity. Advocates emphasise the necessity of introducing choice, competition and markets within the public services. This transforms the relationship between the state and the individual from one in which citizens are passive recipients of services, to one in which they are *consumers*. Thus, citizens are empowered as consumers by being given choices between competing providers with the emphasis clearly placed on the 'power of exit': if consumers do not like what they are receiving from one service provider, they can take their business elsewhere. Where this ideal remains unachievable, perhaps because a range of suppliers for a particular public service does not exist, the consumer is able to deploy various rights in pursuit of satisfaction. This includes the right to receive information on standards and performance of services, to have effective complaint procedures and the right to receive redress when services fail. From this perspective, therefore, the practice of citizenship is reduced to the practice of the consumer in which individuals react to the decisions of public bodies, rather than participate in the formulation of those decisions. Nor are there many duties placed on individuals. Aside from behaving in a civilised fashion by respecting the right of others, the individual has no other obligations to society or fellow citizens. Individuals only owe an obligation to a community, in the form of charitable giving, if they *voluntarily* place themselves under such obligations (Heywood, 1994: 162; Prior *et al.*, 1995: 16; Hambleton, 1998: 67).

From the Communitarian position, the core activity which defines a citizen is participation in collective purposes, rather than choice of individual purposes (Prior *et al.*, 1995: 17). The practice of community participation is based on co-operation and sharing with the aim of enabling people to contribute to the public good. Thus, the emphasis is placed upon citizen access to political decision-making, and not the individual consumer in the market. The goal is not a passive citizenry, but an actively participative one. However, proponents of the Left have also accepted the need for more 'consumer' oriented service provision (Gyford, 1991b). The concept of participative citizenship is thus combined with consumerism to form a 'public service orientation'

that emphasises greater responsiveness to the public as customers of local services. For example, it is argued that local authorities should become closer to the customer by seeking views on services, maximising customer choice, as well as making services more accessible (Stewart and Clarke, 1986; 1987: 167; see also Rhodes, 1987). This combination of engaging the public as both customers and participative citizens, however, is different in five ways from the consumerism of the New Right. First, proponents believe that the views of both citizens in general and those of service-users should be considered. Second, collective and individual involvement is emphasised. Third, public-sector bureaucracies are obliged to treat service users as both customers and citizens. Fourth, customer and citizen rights and obligations are emphasised, in addition to customer choice. Finally, emphasis is given to transcending a market-type relationship between producers and consumers of services, in favour of greater dialogue. This entails negotiation and compromises for both parties (Cairncross *et al.*, 1997: 32).

6.3.2 A Typology of Tenant Participation

The above discussion has outlined crucial differences regarding the way in which the contrasting ideologies encompass the notion of citizenship. These ideas are now applied to a typology of tenant participation by drawing on the work of Cairncross *et al.* (1994; 1997).²¹ This identifies how tenant participation is facilitated by the contrasting models of enabling.

In the traditional authority, there will be few, if any, tenants' associations and little or no assistance given in establishing them. Participation is generally concerned with the provision of written information to tenants and apart from possible satisfaction surveys, the authority does not generally seek information from tenants. Indeed, aside from the most detailed and practical issues, the authority normally reserves the right to make all decisions. The exception to this is when the landlord requires the co-operation of tenants. For instance, when implementing modernisation programmes, the housing department may hold public and/or individual meetings with tenants to explain the details of the programme. Even here, though, the process of tenant participation is confined to information exchange and limited individual choice. The other major exception may occur in difficult-to-let-estates where structures of participation may be more extensive. The department may provide assistance in establishing tenants' associations and hold regular meetings with them to ascertain how the area's problems can be solved. Overall, the emphasis here is on creating high tenant satisfaction – primarily to ensure that tenants do not transfer to another landlord. A subsidiary aim is to ease the problems that housing managers face and legitimise

²¹ It should be noted that Cairncross *et al.* (1994) name their typology as 'traditional', 'consumerist', and 'citizenship'. However, their framework can still be applied to the enabling models developed by Leach *et al.* without the risk of theoretical inconsistency.

existing policies, particularly in difficult-to-let estates. Aside from a belief in traditional structures of representative democracy and of professional expertise, there is little ideological basis to the attitudes adopted in a traditional authority (Cairncross *et al.*, 1997: 37–9).

Within the overall ideological commitment to the free market, the residual-enabling authority perceives the landlord-tenant relationship as a commercial one. Hence, an individualist form of tenant participation is pursued in which tenant ‘empowerment’ is defined as giving tenants the role of consumers who are able to exercise market choice. There is little or no place for tenants to act collectively and indeed, tenants’ associations are likely to be seen as illegitimate. Instead, attention is primarily focused on meeting individual tenants and providing them with information, for example, through leaflets, newsletters and handbooks. ‘Market research’ is also conducted to ascertain tenants’ views on the service provided. Participation is primarily limited to topics which affect tenants individually and there is little or no participation over general policy issues. This is because it is thought that the landlord should make decisions in the light of information gained about consumer preferences through surveys and from consumer behaviour. The key objectives underpinning participation are to improve housing management and to create tenant satisfaction (Cairncross *et al.*, 1997: 40–42).

The community-enabling authority is ideologically committed to promoting community activism and accordingly, it will use an extensive range of participation structures and methods. These are likely to range from the provision and seeking of information, to tenant representation on decision-making bodies. Indeed, tenants’ associations are actively encouraged and there is likely to be a system of tenant representation on both estate and local authority-wide levels. The authority will provide support to tenant organisations, usually in the form of financial help, meeting rooms and/or access to office facilities. Participation may cover a wide range of topics from day-to-day issues affecting individuals, to policy issues which have an impact on all tenants. The landlord may engage tenants in negotiation and dialogue before a decision is made. In this authority, there is an emphasis on collective as well as individual participation. Accordingly, many of the features of the individualist approach are seen as complements to, or prerequisites of, a collective approach. For instance, individual tenants require information before they can participate in representative participation structures. The objective underpinning participation is to create tenant satisfaction, better housing management, community development and tenant ‘empowerment’. However, the objectives of participation can serve to legitimise policies as well as to re-negotiate them (Cairncross *et al.*, 1994: 42–5).

6.4 Summary

This chapter developed the theoretical framework of the research. The first section defined 'partnerships' and aligned three modes of governance to the enabling typology. This indicated the different ways in which local authorities may achieve policy co-ordination and implementation in joint-working arrangements. Failure to distinguish between dominant modes of social co-ordination within partnerships would obscure understanding of the enabling model practised in the case-study authorities. The second section examined how support for the voluntary sector can encompass a variety of different type of relationships. The third section outlined important differences between social democrats, the New Right and Communitarians regarding citizenship. The ideas were then applied to a typology of tenant participation. Again, Leach *et al.*'s original contribution required development in both these latter areas so that the actual practice of enabling and its local variations could be examined more accurately. A table of the enabling typology in which its key features are summarised is presented overleaf.

Table 6: Key Features of the Enabling Typology			
Features	Traditional-Authority	Residual-Enabling Authority	Community-Enabling Authority
Ideology	Post-War consensus	New Right	Communitarianism
Primary Role	Statutory responsibility for a wide range of services	Provider of last resort	Comprehensive identification of community needs and responsibility for meeting them
Mode of Service Provision	Direct provision	Contract specification and monitoring, with limited regulation of the private sector	Plurality of modes of service provision with local community input wherever possible
Mode of Governance in Partnerships	Hierarchical, based on command and control in which bureaucratic routines are means of communication between participants.	Market in which price is the key means of communication between participants; partnerships developed for instrumental reasons	Network in which trust and loyalty are the basis of communication; partnerships developed for mutually reinforcing collaborative purposes
Voluntary Sector Support	Support based on tradition and available funds	Supported if agencies can deliver statutory services more cost effectively than the authority	Valued for their community development work
Conceptualisation of Public	Client in which professionals exercise choice on behalf of individuals	Consumer in which attempts are made to establish commercial relationship between producers and individuals	Customer and citizen in which emphasis given to community activism and customer responsiveness in service provision
Approach to Tenant Participation	Information given to tenants; focus on general issues relating to tenants as a whole	Market research to ascertain consumer views; focus on issues relating to individual tenants;	Constant two-way dialogue; focus on individual and collective issues
Structure	Hierarchical and bureaucratic	Contract specification and management; internal client/contractor splits	Central executive for policy formulation; area committees with devolved powers
Accountability	Representative democracy	Market accountability	Community accountability

CHAPTER 7:

THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This Chapter describes the study's overall research design and the methods utilised to examine the practice of 'enabling' authorities. A postal survey was administered to 100 housing authorities in November 1995. This was followed by an in-depth investigation into three case-study authorities between November 1996 and July 1997. Within these authorities' Housing Departments, semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 'elite informants' (Hornsby-Smith, 1993: 55). Advantage was also taken of documentary sources of data.

This Chapter is divided into four main parts in which the first two focus upon the philosophical and theoretical aspects of the research process. Thus, part one examines the 'epistemological' and 'technical' explanations surrounding the nature and potential of different research methods. There is an on-going debate within the methodological literature between those commentators who argue that quantitative and qualitative research methods cannot be combined, and others, who claim that there are few impediments to a research design that integrates them. It is important to acknowledge this debate because this study combined both of these data collection techniques. The second part of the Chapter then moves on to provide a rationale for adopting a case-study research strategy utilising qualitative interviewing. After this, parts three and four focus on the application of the data collection tools. Part three describes the process for designing, administering and analysing the questionnaire. Part four describes how access was negotiated to the case-studies, how individual respondents were selected for interviews, the process of interviewing itself and analysis of the data gathered.

7.1 Research Methods: a Question of Epistemology or Technique?

Quantitative research is typically taken to be exemplified by the social survey and experimental investigations. Qualitative research tends to be associated with participant observation and unstructured interviewing (Jones, 1993: 128, 138). For some commentators, the two approaches to data collection are seen as resting upon diverging ontological and epistemological paradigms as illustrated in the following statement:

Quantitative and qualitative methods are more than just differences between ... data collection procedures. These approaches represent fundamentally different epistemological frameworks for conceptualising the nature of knowing social reality, and procedures for comprehending these phenomena.
(Filstead, 1979: 45; quoted in Bryman, 1988: 95).

It is generally argued that adoption of quantitative methods implies a *positivist* epistemology and adoption of qualitative methods implies an *anti-positivist*²² epistemology (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 5). The positivist approach is based on a 'realist'²³ ontology where it is believed that the methods and procedures of the natural sciences are applicable to the social sciences. 'Hypothetico-Deductive' research designs are used to provide explanations and predictions about what happens in the social world by searching for empirical regularities and causal relationships. Only factors which can be directly observed and objectively measured form acceptable data. Thus, the motives, feelings and mental states of individuals – factors which cannot be observed – are inadmissible (Hollis, 1994; Hughes 1984; Giddens 1974; Ryan 1970). By contrast, the principal concern of anti-positivism is with an understanding of the way in which the individual creates, modifies and interprets the world in which he/she finds him/herself. There is not one reality out there to be measured: objects and events are understood by different people differently and those perceptions are the reality – or realities – that social science should focus upon. This emphasis upon researching the meanings and interpretations of actors has led to inductive research designs which incorporate participant observation, unstructured interviewing or conversational analysis (Hammersley, 1989; Johnson *et al.*, 1984).

The perception that different methods emerge from different philosophies has important implications. Proponents of this viewpoint argue that it would be wholly inappropriate to use a survey to conduct research grounded within the anti-positivist paradigm and vice versa. It is further argued that there can be no successful combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Guba, for instance, declares that 'we are dealing with an either-or proposition, in which one must pledge allegiance to one paradigm or the other' (1985: 80; c.f. Bryman, 1988: 107). As Bryman notes, the problem with this view is that it is unclear whether its proponents are arguing that there *is* a link between epistemology and methods of data collection or whether there *ought* to be such a connection. Both these propositions are questionable.

The former proposition fails to recognise the mutual technical problems faced by practitioners working within both traditions. Consequently, the differences between quantitative and qualitative methods become exaggerated. Furthermore, there is an assumption that researchers are aware of a link between epistemology and methods, and hence, choose their instruments

²² The term 'anti-positivist' subsumes a range of intellectual disciplines – such as phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, verstehen, naturalism and ethnogenics – underpinning qualitative research. For the present discussion they are sufficiently similar to be grouped together. They all fundamentally refer to an approach to the study of the social world which seeks to describe and analyse the culture and behaviour of individuals from the perspective of those being studied.

²³ In the philosophical literature regarding the nature of scientific inquiry, terms often assume conflicting meanings. In this instance, 'realism' should be differentiated from the approach adopted by Sayer (1984), Keat and Urry (1975) or Layder (1990).

accordingly. This is not necessarily the case. Not all social scientists accept the bond between ethnographic research and an anti-positivist epistemology. Bryman refers to several participant observation studies rooted within a positivistic paradigm (1988: 119). Equally, it is not just qualitative research which attempts to view the social world from the perspective of the actor. Marsh (1982: 104–24) draws attention to the capacity of social surveys to provide insights into questions of meaning from the perspective of the people being studied.²⁴ If it is argued that there ought to be a connection between epistemology and data collection, then the implication is that researchers should be much more sensitive to the wider ontological and epistemological context of research methods. Choosing to conduct a survey or to undertake a participant observation study would mean researchers having to accept a package of views about social reality and how it should be studied. The problem with the ‘ought’ perspective is that ‘it fails to recognise that a whole cluster of considerations are likely to impinge on decisions about data collection’ (Bryman, 1988: 125).

The belief that quantitative and qualitative research represent different epistemological considerations is not a notion held by all writers. Hartley (1994: 210) argues that techniques are not of themselves positivist or anti-positivist – it is how they are used and how the data are interpreted that defines the epistemological assumptions on which they are based. Other commentators suggest that quantitative and qualitative methods are appropriate to different kinds of research problems, implying that ‘the problem under investigation properly dictates the methods of investigation’ (Trow, 1957; c.f. Sieber, 1973: 1366). From this perspective, the choice of research methods should be based on ‘technical’ issues regarding the suitability of a given instrument to a research problem. Thus, the different characteristics of quantitative and qualitative research are interpreted as strengths and weaknesses. Indeed, it is not uncommon for textbooks on research methods to draw attention to such issues. As Warwick and Lininger state, ‘Each [method] is useful for some purposes and useless for others’ (1975: 12; c.f. Bryman, 1988: 109).

The technical approach to the debate provides few obstacles to the possibility of a research strategy which integrates quantitative and qualitative methods, ‘other than the usual reasons of time, money and possibly inclination’ (Bryman, 1988: 107). Indeed, during the second half of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, systematic attempts were made to bring the conflict between positivism and anti-positivism to an end. This had important consequences for the relationship

²⁴ In his textbook, O’Donnell (1988) provides six extracts covering the range of sociological methods from the large scale survey to the most sensitive qualitative method – participant observation. In his introduction to the extracts he notes that none of the authors appears to consider themselves exclusively committed to one or other type of method, nor indeed to the epistemology underlying them. They all suggest that they would, if necessary, use both quantitative and qualitative methods. Hence, ‘for many modern sociologists, the choice of a particular method depends on its appropriateness to a particular research project and not on any rigid commitment to either a positivist or an interpretist approach’ (1988: 34).

between theory and method. A growing body of literature began to emerge which actively advocated combining research methods within a single study (Jones, 1993: 160). This process came to be known as *triangulation* (Macdonald and Tipton, 1993: 199) and is defined as ‘... the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour’ (Cohen and Manion 1989: 269; c.f. Burton 2000b: 298). Indeed, both Sieber (1973) and Bryman (1988) have outlined various ways in which quantitative and qualitative methods can be combined. They are as follows:

- a) Quantitative and qualitative methods may be combined in case-study research.
- b) The two approaches may be combined in order to give a more complete picture of the social group being studied.
- c) Qualitative research can be used to produce hypotheses which can be checked using quantitative methods.
- d) Quantitative research can be used to identify individuals for qualitative study and to assess representative and unrepresentative cases

Since this study used quantitative research as a precursor to qualitative data collection, it is useful to give examples of other studies in this tradition. One study, examining the viability of meeting housing need through the planning framework, conducted a postal survey of all local authorities in England and 53 voluntary transfer housing associations. From the survey, 20 semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with local authorities and housing associations. Finally, five in-depth case-studies were selected from the telephone survey (Kleinman *et al.*, 1999: 56). Another study, examining access to social rights within local authority housing advice centres and those within the voluntary sector, also used surveys as a precursor to conducting qualitative case-studies (Dean *et al.*, 2000: 230). Similarly, Osborne was investigating the ‘innovative’ capacity of voluntary organisations in public services. He combined survey data with qualitative material drawn from three case-study localities (1996: 54).

In sum, it has been argued that methods do not necessarily have to correspond to a distinct epistemological position. All methods have strengths and weaknesses and thus, they are applicable to different research problems and questions. ‘Each method should be appreciated for what it is: a means of gathering problem-relevant data’ (Bryman, 1989: 254). Therefore, the arguments about the epistemological distinctiveness of quantitative and qualitative research should not be viewed as a barrier to their integration.

7.2 The Role of Case-Study Research

A rationale for adopting a case-study research strategy using qualitative interviewing is now given. The discussion is sub-divided into two sections. The first considers features of a case-study and the appropriate circumstances for its utilisation. The second examines the types of research questions suitable for qualitative interviewing, the nature of the data gathered through this method and its advantages. Before proceeding, however, it is necessary to clarify what is meant by the term ‘case-study’ since it assumes various meanings (Burton, 2000a: 215). The source of confusion arises from the debate about whether it is a specific method or a research strategy (Hamel, 1992). This is because, traditionally, case-studies were seen as synonymous with qualitative methods such as ethnographies, participant observation or other forms of fieldwork (Orum *et al.*, 1991: 4). Recently, though, a number of methodologists have stressed that case-study research should not be defined through its method of data collection. Instead they view it as, ‘a logic of design ... a strategy to be preferred when circumstances and research problems are appropriate’ (Platt, 1992: 46). Yin, for instance, defines the case-study as:

an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; ...[it] relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and ... benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis (1994: 13).

In other words, the case-study is not considered a research method but a comprehensive research strategy where the researcher is free to use which and however many data collection techniques he/she likes.²⁵ A research strategy of this kind lends itself to ‘insight, discovery, and interpretation’ (Merriam, 1988: 10).

7.2.1 A Rationale for Using Case-Studies

Case-studies address ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about a contemporary set of events (Yin, 1994: 9). They are tailor-made for exploring new processes and behaviours or ones which are little understood (Hartley, 1994: 213). Furthermore, they are appropriate for topics that are complex and involve too many actors to be addressed by surveys alone (Hakim, 1987: 63). This makes them particularly suited for organisational research. They can capture the emergent and immanent properties of life in organisations; as well as the ebb and flow of organisational activity – especially where it is changing fast (Hartley, 1994: 213). Indeed, in the examination of the

²⁵ The data collected may be quantitative or qualitative, that distinction is not important. Yin, for example, argues that, depending on the topic being studied, it is possible to undertake a valid and high-quality case-study without leaving the library, (Yin, 1994: 10).

impact of policy, case-studies are increasingly recognised as having an important role because they can illuminate the effects of implementation on everyday activities (Bryman, 1989: 172).

Case-studies have been described as 'heuristic'. This means that they illuminate the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under study by explaining the reasons for the problem, the background of a situation, what happened and why. Furthermore, they can explain why an innovation worked or failed, as well as discuss alternatives not chosen (e.g. why one model of enabling was pursued and not another) (Merriam, 1988: 13). Relatedly, another feature of case-studies is their holistic approach. They permit researchers to gather data on any number of aspects of the setting under study in order to piece together a complete picture of the phenomena being investigated. This provides a frame of reference for both the researcher and reader to interpret events. The interconnections of events can also be traced so that processes can be inferred (Bryman, 1989: 172).

Case-studies are also useful where it is important to understand social processes in their organisational and environmental context. Behaviour may only be fully understandable in the context of the wider forces operating within the organisation, whether these are contemporary or historical (Hartley, 1994: 212). Indeed, Cassell and Symon argue, 'in organisational research particularly, considerations of context should be paramount – the field itself is defined by the context of organisational life' (1994: 5). Similarly, when examining the nature and extent of change within organisations (such as the shift from the traditional to the enabling role), it is necessary for the researcher to be aware of multiple perspectives on what has occurred. As these perspectives may not be identical, case-studies illustrate differences of opinion on the same issue. Moreover, since organisations cannot be interpreted adequately without taking account of human agents, case-studies reveal the influence of personalities on the issue. This strategy also recognises that members of bureaucratic structures do not all share equal knowledge (Sjoberg *et al.*, 1991: 56). A final virtue of case-study research is that it lends itself to theoretical development, either suggesting new concepts and interpretations, or permitting the re-examination of earlier ones. Thus, a previously developed theory can be used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the study (Yin, 1994: 31). This was pertinent for the present research; local authority practices were used to gauge the degree to which they conformed to the enabling typology examined earlier.

The most frequently cited objection to the use of case-studies is the issue of representiveness. In other words, the extent to which the research findings can be generalised to a wider population beyond the case-study (Foreman, 1948: 415; Kennedy, 1979: 663). A defence of this position can be made on two grounds. First, the researcher can choose to study more than one

case – as this study did. Evidence from multiple case-studies is often more compelling and robust than single case-studies. It enables results of the studies to be compared and contrasted and some tentative generalisations to be made (Burton, 2000a: 224). Second, case-studies should be evaluated in terms of the adequacy of the theoretical inferences that are generated. They are not designed for producing statistical inferences, but to suggest patterns and linkages of theoretical importance (Bryman, 1989: 172). Attempts to make statistical inferences from case-studies is inappropriate and uses the research design in a way for which it was not intended (Burton 2000a: 224).

7.2.2 A Rationale for Qualitative Interviewing

There are three types of interviews. These are structured, semi-structured or unstructured. The key difference between them is the extent to which questions are determined and standardised before an interview occurs (Fielding, 1993a: 135). The unstructured interview relies entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction. The structured interview, by contrast, consists of a set of questions carefully worded and arranged which are asked of all respondents (Patton, 1980: 196). In between these approaches is the semi-structured interview – which this research project adopted. This involves the creation of interview guides which serve as a ‘conceptual map’ (Gorden, 1987: 410) to ensure that all relevant topics are covered during the interview. King lists several ‘guide-lines’ which specify the appropriate circumstances for adopting semi-structured interviews:

- a) Where a quantitative study has been carried out and qualitative data are required to validate particular measures or to clarify and illustrate the meanings of findings;
- b) Where a study focuses on the meaning of a particular phenomena to the participants;
- c) Where a descriptive account of a topic is required without formal hypothesis testing;
- d) Where factual information is to be collected, but there is uncertainty about what and how much information participants will be able to provide;
- e) Where the nature and range of participant’s likely opinions about the research topic are not well known in advance and cannot easily be quantified (1994: 16).

Qualitative interviewing has an express commitment to viewing actions, norms and values from the perspective of the people/organisations who are being studied. Moreover, the open-ended nature of data-gathering allows for social processes occurring within organisations to be examined in considerable depth. By contrast, quantitative research tends to deal less well with the processual aspects of organisational reality. Although associations may be found between variables, it is harder to tease out what processes lie behind the correlations. This means it is difficult to understand organisational change using quantitative methods (Bryman, 1989: 140).

Moreover, qualitative methods allow flexibility in the research process (Arnold, 1982: 57). This can be crucial for organisational research. Because researchers are investigating complex situations, it is not always possible for them to define their research interests exactly or how they intend to explore the issue at the outset (Cassell and Symon, 1994: 4). Furthermore, the proximity of the qualitative researcher to organisational phenomena means he/she can develop a fairly strong sense of how it operates (Bryman, 1989: 141).

Qualitative data produces a rich, 'thick', literal description of the phenomena under study. The purpose of description is to take the reader into the setting under investigation. It is not intended to order or predict (Van Maanen, 1983: 256). Descriptive detail also acts as a precursor for the production of analyses and explanations which illustrate the complexities of the phenomena under investigation (Merriam, 1988: 14). Finally, the qualitative interview is a method which most research participants accept readily. This is partly due to their familiarity with interviews in general. However, just as important, is the fact that most people like talking about their work 'but rarely do they have the opportunity to do so with interested outsiders' (King, 1994: 33).

In sum, a case-study research design based on in-depth fieldwork, augmented with documentary data, has an integrity of its own. It permits a holistic study of complex social phenomena where too many actors are involved to be addressed by survey research alone. Furthermore, it offers a researcher empirical and theoretical insights into areas of organisational functioning that are not well documented.

7.3 The Survey Design and Administration

This part of the chapter describes the process involved in designing and administering the 'enabling' postal survey. It is sub-divided into four sections. The first outlines the objectives of the survey and the second delineates the sampling technique adopted. The third describes the process involved in constructing the survey, and the final section provides a brief outline of the data analysis stage.

7.3.1 Objectives of the 'Enabling' Local Authority Postal Survey

Given the paucity of pre-existing empirical data on the enabling role of local authorities, the thesis required a scientific and logical method for selecting three case-study localities. One method available to researchers is to administer 'ad-hoc sample surveys'. These are carried out on a 'one-off' basis (i.e. they are not repeated at regular intervals or carried out on a continuous basis) and 'are easily linked to qualitative research'. They provide an excellent sampling framework for the selection of particular respondents for depth interviews and case-studies (Hakim, 1987: 57). This is especially advantageous when there is little existing research on the phenomenon under

study. As Hakim notes, surveys allow, ‘... associations between factors to be mapped and measured ... Even without going into causal analysis to ascertain the reason for such relationships, the bare fact of such associations ... can be useful information’ (1987: 47). In other words, surveys do not have to incorporate causal or other forms of sophisticated statistical analysis. They can be used to provide descriptive information on trends taking place. Thus, results from the ‘enabling’ survey helped to identify housing authorities which appeared to be aligned to either the residual or community model of enabling, and those which seemed to be operating to the traditional role. This provided a sampling framework from which to select three case-study authorities.

It is important, however, for researchers to realise the disadvantages of their particular research method. The principal weakness of surveys is that they generally involve the use of structured questions. This yields less depth and quality of information compared to qualitative interviews. Furthermore, postal questionnaires do not allow the researcher to give direction to respondents regarding the interpretation of questions. However much care is taken with question-wording, respondents may interpret them differently, either in terms of what the researcher intended or between themselves. This means that different answers to the same question may not always reflect real differences between respondents, and people who chose the same response may not mean the same thing. Probing beyond the answers given is also not possible (Bryman, 1989: 43). Whilst this is an intrinsic weakness, it is even more problematic for responses which are incomplete, illegible or incomprehensible (Newell, 1993: 96). The validity of the data may also be reduced by the inability or unwillingness of respondents to give full and accurate replies (Haralambos and Holborn, 1991: 733). Another flaw is that, ultimately, there is little control over who answers the questionnaire. Finally, one of the greatest problems with postal questionnaires is the potentially low response rates (Morrison, 1986: 41).

7.3.2 The Sampling Framework

The first stage of sampling involves obtaining or producing a ‘sampling framework’. It is from this group that the sample is actually selected (Arber, 1993: 70). Within the present study, the Municipal Housing Year-Book (1995) constituted the ‘sampling framework’. This listed the names and addresses of 318 housing authorities across England. The next stage was to decide the type of sampling method to use.²⁶ This study used *proportionate stratified sampling* (Moser and

²⁶ There are two broad types of sampling method: probability and non-probability. A probability sample is one in which each person in the population has an equal, or at least a known, chance of being selected. In a non-probability sample, some people have a greater but unknown chance than others of selection (de Vaus, 1991: 60). Probability and non-probability sampling are appropriate for different circumstances. Within the present study, probability sampling was used for the quantitative data collection stage, whilst non-probability sampling was used for the qualitative data collection stage.

Kalton, 1985: 85). Stratification means that before any selection takes place, the researcher specifies features of the sampling frame which need to be reproduced within the sample. The sampling frame is then divided according to these strata or categories. This study divided the sample according to an authority's status. Thus, out of the 318 housing authorities, there were 283 district councils and 35 metropolitan borough councils. For a total sample size of 100, this meant the sample had to consist of 89 district councils and 11 metropolitan councils.

Once the sampling frame was organised according to the stratifying variable, *systematic sampling* (Moser and Kalton, 1985: 83) with a fixed *sampling interval* (Arber, 1993: 79) was used to select the appropriate proportion of authorities within each strata. To obtain a systematic sample, a sampling fraction is required. This is achieved by dividing the population size by the desired sample size. Hence, to select 100 authorities from a population of 318, the nearest sampling fraction is 1/3 and the sampling interval is three. After a random start between one and three, every third authority was chosen from the proportionate sampling frame. In other words, every third authority was chosen from the district council list and every third authority was chosen from the metropolitan list.

7.3.3 Devising the Questionnaire

The research applied a method developed by Lazarsfeld (1958) to design the questionnaire. This technique translates theoretical concepts into observable entities which can be measured. Whilst Lazarsfeld's procedure involves four stages, in practice, stages three and four were combined. These are outlined in table 7.3 presented overleaf.

A primary issue within survey construction is question format. Question types fall into two categories: open and closed. In the former, respondents are allowed to decide the aspect, detail, form and length of the answer. In the latter, respondents are asked to choose from a range of possible answers already provided (Kumar, 1999: 118). The choice of open or closed questions depends on many factors and there is no wrong or right approach. In the 'enabling' survey, a combination of both types were utilised. Closed questions were used for filtering purposes and 'factual' information. Open questions were used to ascertain reasons and examples of behaviour and actions. Both formats have advantages and disadvantages.

The merit of open questions lies in the freedom given to respondents to develop their answer in full. Moreover, they elicit a wide range of responses and provide a background for interpreting the answers to other questions. A major disadvantage with them is that they can produce responses which are ambiguous, wide-ranging and difficult to categorise. By contrast, fixed-choice questions require less time and effort on behalf of the respondent. Furthermore,

because they limit the range of possible answers, comparisons with other respondents are easier. However, the problem with closed questions is that they force respondents to choose between given alternatives which may not always be appropriate (Payne, 1951: 248). To overcome this disadvantage, lists for closed questions always included a category of 'other'. Nevertheless, it is accepted that closed questions lose contextual detail within the answers respondents tick (de Vaus, 1991: 86). This carries the danger of making results open to misinterpretation.²⁷

Table 7.3: Stages Involved in Devising the 'Enabling' Postal Survey	
1. <i>Imagery:</i>	The first stage requires reflection upon a theoretical domain and imagery about a particular facet of that domain is developed. Thus, the enabling typology provided the 'images' required for this stage.
2. <i>Dimensions:</i>	<p>The second stage requires specification of the imagery developed in stage one. This involves breaking the concept down into various 'dimensions' (Lazarsfeld, 1958: 101). Thus, the imagery of different enabling roles was specified into the following dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service delivery • information about housing needs' assessment • consumer information • liaison with external agencies • interpretation of the 'enabling role'.
3. <i>Indicators and Formation of Indices:</i>	Stages three and four were combined to translate the dimensions developed above into a series of questions. This provided quantifiable data for measuring each dimension. For instance, the 'service delivery' dimension elicited information on LSVT, the contracting out of services and whether authorities had experienced a decline in the direct service function.

²⁷ For instance, stock transfer does not automatically indicate rejection of municipal housing. Some authorities have been forced to transfer all or part of their stock through lack of resources to undertake repair and maintenance work. Indeed, one respondent noted in the margins of the questionnaire that the proposal to transfer stock was pragmatic, and did not conform to the privatisation ideology.

Before the final questionnaire was administered, a pilot study was undertaken with two housing officers from Sheffield City Council. Respondents were given the questionnaire to complete and interviews were scheduled at a later date. Here, opinions on the design, length, phrasing and sequencing of questions were explored and incorporated into the final design. For instance, an ambiguous question was altered and a hypothetical question disregarded. Moreover, following the advice of Hoinville and Jowell, three additional steps were undertaken to maximise the response rate to the survey. First, recipients need to be persuaded to open the envelope. Hence, good quality envelopes and neat labelling were used. To minimise the effort of returning the survey, pre-paid, addressed envelopes were also enclosed. Second, questionnaires were posted on a Monday because this 'seems to increase and hasten response from organisations' (1978: 132). Third, no deadline was imposed for the completion of the questionnaire. This was because recipients who missed a deadline date may throw away a completed questionnaire rather than return it late. Fourth, using the 'Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research' letterhead paper, a covering letter was included to explain the aims of the survey and provide assurances of confidentiality. Finally, reminders were sent to authorities who had failed to reply. These contained further copies of the questionnaire and return envelopes in case the originals failed to arrive, were mislaid, or thrown away. The final response rate of the 'enabling' survey was 66% and a copy of this can be found in Appendix 1. The next stage was to analyse the replies returned.

7.3.4 Analysing Quantitative Data

The completed questionnaires were analysed using the SPSS computer package. Computer analysis requires answers to questionnaires to be converted into numbers. The conversion process is called 'coding' and entails four steps: developing a coding frame; producing a code-book; coding answers to each question and transferring it to a computer; and checking the codes (Fielding, 1993b: 220). The research followed the general rules of coding outlined by Fielding (1993b: 225). First, codes were mutually exclusive. An authority could not have experienced an increase and decrease in the overall service provision at the same time. Second, codes were 'exhaustive' in the sense that all possible coding options were covered. Hence, for some open-ended questions a 'miscellaneous' category was assigned for responses which were unconventional, peculiar or ambiguous. Third, codes were applied consistently throughout. For instance, all 'yes' responses were coded with the value 1; and all 'no' responses with the value 2. Finally, all non-responses were coded as '999'. Closed questions which produced multiple responses were coded using the *multiple dichotomy* technique, whilst open questions which produced multiple responses were coded using the *multiple response* technique (de Vaus, 1991: 236–40).

The multiple dichotomy can be illustrated using question 8 from the questionnaire. Since respondents were allowed to tick more than one response to the question, a separate variable for each category of the question was created. A respondent was given a 'yes' code for variables they ticked and a 'no' code for variables they did not select.

The multiple response technique can be illustrated using question 7b.²⁸ This question asked respondents to give three reasons for undertaking an assessment of housing problems and needs. First, three variables were created called REASON1; REASON2; REASON3. From the replies, a list of reasons was ascertained which were assigned a corresponding code. Thus, 'prioritising expenditure' was given a code of 1; 'identifying needs' was assigned a code of 2 and so forth. The same codes were used for each variable (REASON1 to REASON3). If an authority only listed one reason, say 'prioritising expenditure', it was assigned code 1 on REASON1 and 999 for the remaining two variables. Another authority may have given three reasons: 'facilitate capital investment decisions'; 'statutory requirements'; 'evaluate strategies'. This case would receive a code of 9 on REASON1; code 3 on REASON2; and code 5 on REASON3. Having completed the coding frame, a *code-book* was created and a copy of this is presented in Appendix 3. This recorded all the coding decisions made and included the following information:

- A summary of the question asked.
- The name of each variable used in the computer programme.
- Column location of the variable.
- Values that the variables took and what they represented.
- Missing values.
- Range of valid values.

Transferring coded responses on to the computer allowed frequency tables to be constructed for each question. The second and more substantive stage of the analysis attempted to identify local authorities which could be classified to one of the ideal models of enabling. This was achieved using the 'Filter' command on SPSS. The process entailed in selecting three authorities from these results is described in Chapter 8.

²⁸ The multiple dichotomy method was not chosen for open-ended questions, even though it is a viable technique. This was because the number of variables were too great. Each possible response would require a separate variable, and would have to be allocated a separate column on the computer. This would eventually lead to a very large and cumbersome number of dichotomous variables.

7.4 The Process of Interviewing

The process entailed in preparing and carrying out semi-structured interviews with senior policy-makers is now described. These individuals were the key actors involved in managing the transition of the housing department from being a direct provider to an enabler. They were asked to provide interpretations of the enabling role and how they thought it differed from that of central government. Additional questions were aimed at eliciting how these interpretations were being incorporated into specific practices regarding the delivery of housing services. Finally, questions concerning problems or benefits arising from the implementation of these changes were also asked.

As Chapter 10 discusses in detail, inter-organisational collaboration was perceived to be a key dimension of enabling by two housing authorities. Prominent partners identified were housing associations and voluntary sector organisations. Thus, interviews with 'elite' informants from these organisations were also undertaken to verify the accounts supplied by the housing department. These 'partners' were also asked about their perceptions on how the housing departments' had changed. This permitted a representative picture of interactions between the organisations. Difficulties of access did not permit the interviewing of elected members.

In total, 40 interviews were conducted across the case-study localities; these are summarised in Appendix 5. Reflecting the degree of access permitted to the researcher, the Appendix also illustrates the 'unevenness' between the numbers of interviews conducted in each locality.²⁹ The interviews lasted about an hour, but a significant number continued for an hour and a half, and only a handful of interviews lasted about 45 minutes.

The discussion that follows is structured in four sections. First, an account is given of the way in which access was negotiated to the case-study authorities and how individual respondents were selected for interviews. Second, the process involved in creating the 'interview guide' is described. Third, the interviewing techniques employed by the researcher are summarised. Finally, the steps involved in analysing the data gathered from these interviews are outlined.

7.4.1 Gaining Access and Selecting Respondents

Having selected three case-study housing authorities (see Chapter 8), the next step was to gain 'access' to these departments. This means gaining permission to do a piece of research in a particular social setting or institution (Burgess, 1993: 38; Hornsby-Smith, 1993: 53). In the North-

²⁹ This appears to be a fairly typical experience of researchers conducting qualitative case-studies. For instance, Asquith (1997) undertook detailed research into eight case-study local authorities to assess the Chief Executive's role in implementing and managing change. He also experienced differing levels of access within the sample authorities. In one London authority 20 interviews took place, whilst in another (albeit a much smaller) shire district, only 4 interviews were conducted.

West District and North-Met authorities, 'cold contact' was made by writing to the Directors of Housing. The letters specified details of the study's aims and what was required of the Department. A follow-up call was made a few days later to find out whether the organisations were willing to participate. Both Departments agreed to do so. In the case of South-City, contact was made via a third party – Professor Peter Malpass. He approached the Housing Director and summarised the aims of the research. His links with the Department gave legitimacy to the research and ensured access was granted, but the author was only given permission to conduct ten interviews.

Once access has been granted, field researchers need to narrow the focus of their work because not everyone can be interviewed (Honigmann, 1982: 79). Thus, the next problem was to select 'focused key informants' (Tremblay, 1982: 99). This means searching for respondents who will have specialised information on particular topics within a given cultural setting – in this case the Housing Departments – rather than searching for respondents who add to the understanding of the whole local authority. Focused key informants were then selected using the *snowball sampling* technique (Burgess, 1982: 77) since, without detailed knowledge of each housing department, it was not known who would be the most appropriate to answer the research questions. The Housing Directors provided an initial contact within each Department to conduct 'exploratory' interviews. In North-West District this was the Senior Housing Manager; in North-Met the Assistant Director of Housing (Client Side); and in South-City the Strategic Services Manager (Enabling Division). Prior to the interview, letters were sent to these contacts specifying further details of the research and the aims of the interview. This gave respondents time to prepare. These exploratory interviews were broad-ranging and did not focus on a specific aspect of enabling in great detail. The primary objective was to gain an overview about how the department was interpreting the enabling role and how this was manifest in specific areas of practice. On this basis, each respondent supplied the author with names and contact numbers of individuals who were 'specialising' in implementing key aspects of the enabling role.

Snowball sampling was also used to select housing association and voluntary sector organisations. For example, in the North-Met authority, an interview was undertaken with the Senior Research and Development Officer who was responsible for initiating the 'North-Met Community Housing Partnership' with housing associations. This officer then supplied the researcher with names and contact numbers of housing associations within the partnership. The risk with snowball sampling, however, is that researchers inherit the decisions of each individual on the next suitable interviewee. This may lead them to collect data that reflects a particular perspective, thereby omitting the opinions of actors who are not part of a given network (May,

1993: 100). However, the author found that certain names cropped up time and again suggesting that access to focused informants was generally achieved.

7.4.2 Creating the Interview Guide

Like much of the fieldwork process, interviews are a ‘messy’ and idiosyncratic business (Stroh, 2000: 206). To give order to this ‘messiness’ and to provide a structure for the study, interview guides were prepared for all interviews conducted. These contained a list of topics to be covered during the interview, a tentative sequence for covering them, notes indicating where contexts and transitions should be made and an informal wording of questions. Topics included in the interview schedule were guided by the following sources: the literature review; results from the postal survey; background information on each locality derived from the housing strategy statements and advice from academic colleagues. Common questions were asked at the start and end of interviews. Beyond that, however, it was necessary to tailor the interview guide to individual respondents and the information they could supply on a specific aspect of the enabling role.³⁰ Similarly, it was necessary to design different guides when conducting interviews with housing associations and voluntary sector organisations.

7.4.3 Interviewing Techniques

Researchers seeking advice on how to conduct interviews find an overwhelming array of instructions, suggestions and prescriptions. Within this massive literature (see for instance, Patton, 1980; Gorden, 1987; Rubin and Rubin, 1995) it is normal to find contradictions and conflicting advice.³¹ This means that researchers need to judge the social setting they are in, the objectives of their research, the type of respondents they are interviewing and, as a result, apply the appropriate techniques. The techniques used within the present study are now described.

The first issue to consider is the format of the questions asked. Following the advice of Rubin and Rubin (1995: 197), background reading was undertaken in advance of conducting the interviews. The main sources were academic literature and Housing Strategy Statements. This provided a base on which to structure and formulate questions. Respondents realised they could talk about the complexity of shifting to an enabling role without first having to explain the policy context of changes. Moreover, Rubin and Rubin (1995: 198) claim that when respondents are

³⁰ For instance, a different guide was required when interviewing respondents regarding experiences of CCT for housing management, compared to interviews eliciting data concerning the enabling role in tenant participation.

³¹ To give just one example of ‘conflicting’ advice, Patton (1980) suggests it is not appropriate to ask leading questions. This is generally good advice. However, Schatzman and Strauss (1973; c.f. Goetz and LeCompte 1984) suggest that in some situations it is useful to ask ‘devil’s advocate’ questions to provoke a complex or elaborate response.

aware that the interviewer is informed about an issue, they are less likely to talk in generalisations or to distort information.

On some occasions, the flow of the interview made it imperative that direct, follow-up, questions be asked without preface. At other times, it was useful to make 'prefatory' statements (Patton, 1980: 234) about the content of a question before it was asked. Three types of prefatory statements were used. First, the *transition format* announced that one section of the interview had been completed and a new section was about to begin. Second, *direct announcements* were simple statements telling the respondent what was going to be asked next. Finally, *attention-getting* prefaces made a comment about the question that was going to be asked. Comments concerned the openness of a question or respondents' experiences. For example:

Researcher: Some people have said it is difficult to reconcile working collaboratively in partnerships with organisations they are also in competition with for funding. What have been your experiences ?

By combining the three different formats, prefatory statements made the interview more interesting and conversational. This was reinforced by the use of 'presupposition' questions. This question format by-passed asking about whether a phenomenon had actually occurred and moved directly to description. For example:

Researcher: I can see the partnership has worked really well, and it looks like it will continue to so, but what have been some of the problems you've encountered ?

'There is often naturalness about the use of presuppositions that makes more comfortable what might otherwise be embarrassing questions' (Patton, 1980: 221). There is an assumption that what is presupposed is the natural way things occur: it is natural for there to be conflict in partnership arrangements or for problems to be encountered by participating organisations. Another component of the interviewing process was the use of probes and prompts. Elaboration, clarification and detail-oriented probes were used to obtain as complete a picture of the enabling role as possible:

Researcher: Do you, just to clarify, you said the enabling role was something that local authorities should have been doing anyway, does that mean you welcome it?

It was not necessary to probe all respondents to the same extent. As an interview progressed, some respondents volunteered detailed information automatically.

The second major issue concerns the various techniques that were used to facilitate 'rapport' (Whyte, 1982: 113). This refers to the 'basic sense of trust' between interviewer and interviewee 'that allows for the free flow of information' (Spradley, 1979, c.f. May, 1993: 98). Thus, on entering the interview-setting, the author engaged respondents in 'small talk'. As Hammersley and Atkinson suggest, 'it may be advantageous to find more 'ordinary' topics of conversation with a view to establishing one's identity as a 'normal', 'regular', 'decent' person' (1989: 82). The author then proceeded to give some basic information about herself, the aims of the project and assurances of confidentiality. Respondents were also given the opportunity to ask any questions they had. Some wanted to know why their authority had been selected as a case-study or why they had been chosen for an interview. The latter question was often a sign that respondents were apprehensive. Consequently, respondents were assured that it was *their* experiences and opinions which were going to 'frame' the interview. It was also mentioned that other people had identified them as knowledgeable people. These assurances conveyed to the respondent that they were competent to complete the interview. After this, the interview commenced with 'grand tour' (May, 1993: 99) questions concerning the respondent's job title, their role and how it had changed. These non-threatening questions also helped respondents relax. More difficult, thought-provoking questions were held back until the interview had sufficiently progressed (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975: 111).

The author kept the interview in a 'conversational' mode (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984: 131) and, on some occasions, allowed respondents to 'ramble' (Bryman, 1988: 46). It was not considered appropriate to show indifference to topics that were important to the respondent but irrelevant to the research, because respondents had given their time to participate in the interview. Moreover, rambling facilitated rapport, with respondents proceeding to disclose something more relevant.³² However, contrary to feminist advice on interviewing (see Oakley, 1981; Epstein *et al.*, 1991; Webb, 2000), the author remained 'disengaged' during the interviews, but did attempt to empathise with respondents:

Researcher: It sounds horrendous – not a very good climate to work under.

This served as a good strategy and made respondents feel comfortable.

³² For example, one voluntary sector respondent (in North-Met) talked about how he had taken two young people to the Commons Select Committee in London during the previous week. The young people were able to put questions to the Minister regarding the Welfare to Work Programme and the implications that it had for them personally. By allowing him a few minutes to speak about this, later on in the interview he revealed more 'sensitive' information (regarding difficulties of working with the local authority, and the problems he encountered trying to gain access to partnership 'networks'). He may, or may not, have done this if he had been interrupted.

Whilst 'interviewer effects' (Arnold, 1982: 58) can have negative effects on a research, the author's age, sex and working-class status worked in her favour. The vast majority of respondents were men, mostly middle-aged and middle class. Hence she did not come across as being 'intimidating' or 'threatening'. Those respondents who appeared apprehensive at the beginning, generally relaxed after a few minutes into the interview. Respondents also conveyed their ease by disclosing sensitive information – albeit this was prefixed with statements such as, 'This is confidential, isn't it?', or 'I wouldn't say this outside this room but ...,' or words to that effect. This conveyed to the researcher that rapport had been achieved.

Overwhelmingly, the interviews were a positive experience, proceeded smoothly and gave the researcher the opportunity to learn directly about how other people perceived their world. Many respondents volunteered 'feedback' at the end of the interview in which they indicated that they had found the experience enjoyable and stimulating. Indeed, some respondents even offered to be re-interviewed. There were only two interviews where the author left feeling upset and dismayed. These were in North-West District and the problems encountered are discussed in Chapter 9.

The final issue concerns the recording of interviews and this was achieved using a tape recorder and microphone. Initially, the author attempted to take comprehensive notes as an additional way of recording the interviews. However, this was soon abandoned because it was not conducive to creating a conversational atmosphere. First, as Whyte (1982: 119) remarks, the interviewer is always a little behind the respondent in his/her note-taking. The author found respondents watching her take notes, pausing until they were sure she had finished writing what they had said and only then did they continue speaking. Second, she found it difficult to take notes and simultaneously reflect on what was being said. It hindered her from picking up productive leads and encouraging the respondent to elaborate upon certain items. Hence, notes were only made of key-words and follow-up questions to ask later on in the interview. The major disadvantage with tape recording, however, was that, on the two occasions where the tape recorder malfunctioned, there was no information other than what could be remembered.

7.4.3 Analysing Qualitative Data

Material collected through qualitative methods is invariably unstructured and unwieldy (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994: 176). Writing up the results of such work is as much a discovery process as it is a summary of what has already been discovered. As Van Maanen notes, 'researchers often do not know exactly what they have studied until they have written it up and passed it around' (1983: 253). The steps involved in interpreting, analysing and imposing a structure upon the data gathered are now described.

First, all interviews were rigorously transcribed including areas of speech which were 'repetitive, slangy or ungrammatical' (Riley, 1990: 25). This was an extremely laborious and time-consuming task. A one-hour interview took at least nine hours to transcribe and sometimes longer. This was because observational notes or 'action plans' were often written below paragraphs (and boxed to demarcate them from the respondent's text) which sparked 'brainstorming' ideas and analysis. However, this had significant later advantages. The constant re-winding of the tape to ensure responses were recorded verbatim also enabled the author to become 'familiar' with the data. This was particularly useful in the writing-up stage when themes became modified and the coded categories were not always the easiest way of locating specific pieces of data. Because the researcher had an awareness of substantive topics covered by respondents, she was able to use the 'Find' command on the word-processor, turn to the original transcript and locate the specific piece of text required.

Copies were made of every single transcript ready for coding. Hence, the next stage was to develop a thematic coding framework. Broad categories were specified before coding, but additional themes emerged through the coding process itself. Thus, the coding framework was informed by the original research aims and introduced into the interviews via the topic guide, emergent issues raised by the respondents themselves and analytical themes arising from the recurrence of particular responses. Each transcript was subsequently coded and this was also time-consuming. Each coded passage was referenced by respondent and page number of the original transcript. Judgements had to be made regarding the meaning of the text and single passages often contained several different themes. These were coded twice. Thus, there were now two copies of the transcripts: a 'clean copy' and a 'coded copy'. Using the 'copy' command, coded categories were copied to other documents and classified thematically. Sixty-one files were created in total. These were further classified according to the research finding chapters.

Finally, when all the data had been coded, the detailed analysis began. Taking all the files relevant for a particular research finding chapter, each was systematically analysed in turn. This was achieved by re-reading the data and framing questions according to the data. This allowed the author to look at all the evidence, to compare and contrast accounts on the same issue, identify conflicting points, formulate deeper questions and think about possible explanations. Once the 'question and answer' exercise had been completed on a specific topic, the next stage was to begin imposing some form of structure on these analysed notes. As also found by Arnold (1982: 68), sometimes the observations appeared so varied that no order seemed present. At other times, everything seemed so commonsensical that analysis and ordering seemed unnecessary. These periods were depressing and disheartening. However, continued re-reading and rearranging of the

notes eventually produced an organised analysis of the enabling role in the three case-study authorities.

In sum, this chapter has described the research design and its component methods. Some of the problems and challenges encountered on route were also highlighted. The following chapters now move on to discuss the findings that emerged from the data gathered. Chapter 8 reports on the results of the survey and gives a more detailed account of how the case-study authorities were chosen. It ends with a profile of each authority to provide some contextual detail before Chapters 9 to 13 discuss the substantive research findings.

CHAPTER 8:

THE ‘ENABLING’ SURVEY RESULTS AND CASE-STUDY SELECTION

Within the overall description of the research design, Chapter 7 specified the process entailed in administering the enabling survey. This Chapter moves on to discuss the data that emerged from this survey, and on the basis of these results, how three case-study authorities were selected to examine the practice of enabling in greater depth. Thus, the discussion that follows is structured in three main parts. The first presents an analysis of the survey findings. The second describes the process entailed in selecting the three case-study authorities. The final part provides an economic and political profile of each district and identifies the main housing problems faced by the respective authorities.

8.1 The ‘Enabling’ Local Authority Survey Results

Analysis of the survey findings are sub-divided here into three sections: the first considers the extent to which respondents reported that there had been a decline in direct provision; the second outlines the types of methods utilised by them to facilitate user-participation; and the third explores their qualitative definitions of the ‘enabling’ role. Appendix 2 provides a detailed breakdown of responses for each question.

8.1.1 Service Delivery

At the time the survey was administered, the majority of local authorities were directly providing housing services. From the whole sample, 27% of respondents had contracted out services that were previously provided in-house, whilst only 17% of respondents had transferred part, or all, of their stock to another provider. Moreover, approximately 50% of the sample experienced no change in the amount of services directly provided. Although this gave the impression of strong continuity with the traditional role, other findings revealed changes in service delivery practices consistent with the shift to an enabling role. Thus, evidence of increased dialogue and collaboration with external agencies indicated that local authorities no longer perceived themselves able to operate self-sufficiently. For example, in Question 2, 25% of all respondents mentioned ‘enabling’ as part of their housing function, and 18% specifically referred to working with housing associations. Similarly, in Question 8c, at least 75% of all respondents reported having regular meetings with external agencies from the private, public and voluntary sectors. Moreover, as illustrated in the following quotations, 12% of respondents reported that a

primary reason for undertaking an assessment of housing needs in their area (Question 7b) was to facilitate provision by other agencies:

To enable other organisations to understand and respond to local problems more effectively (14).³³

To help us advise housing associations in the process of making bids so we know which to support (69).

To provide a strategic context for other agencies (79).

Furthermore, although Question 11 was designed to elicit responses regarding any structures in place for service users to influence decision-making processes, it revealed additional evidence of inter-organisational communication. Several authorities gave examples of forums for external service providers and four authorities made explicit reference to forums which incorporated private landlords. It was reported that the purpose of these forums was to discuss local needs and to encourage external agencies to influence the content of housing strategies.

Whilst the majority of respondents reported being in regular dialogue with external agencies from each economic sector (Question 8c), there was a propensity towards prioritising housing associations for joint working. This can be seen in several ways. First, 100% of all authorities who made a proposal for stock transfer identified housing associations as the preferred landlord to procure council homes. Second, they emerged as the most likely agency to which authorities contracted out their services. Third, local authorities demonstrated that they acted in ways which took account of the increased role of housing associations in social housing. For instance, respondents reported that they undertook needs analysis to support bids made to the Housing Corporation.

The pressures of providing services in a climate of resource constraints emerged as another dominant finding. For example, 36% of all respondents reported that they had experienced a reduction in service delivery (Question 3), and a fifth of them cited limited resources as the major reason for this (Question 4). Moreover, the dominant reason for local authorities undertaking an assessment of local housing needs (Question 7b) was to ‘target resources effectively’. The following quotations illustrate the issue more clearly:

To assist in determining priorities for action and the allocation of *scarce resources* (03).

To enable priorities to be determined better in the *context of reduced resource constraints* (22).

To prioritise *diminishing* resources (55).

Another reason given for undertaking needs assessment further illustrated the preoccupation with funding levels. It was found that 17% of authorities undertook this to provide evidence of, and thus justify, requests for additional resources:

To support the case for more resources (14).

To provide evidence for additional resources (48).

... used to substantiate debates with central government in terms of finance and policy issues (67).

Finally, anecdotal evidence suggested that partial stock transfer (in some cases) was a pragmatic response to an unfavourable funding environment, rather than an ideological commitment to replace statutory provision of social housing.³⁴

8.1.2 Consumer Information

The vast majority of respondents reported having some form of user consultation in the context of service provision. Nearly 80% of respondents reported that their authority undertook market research about their services (Question 8a); 48% reported that more general market research was undertaken about the needs and preferences of people in their locality (Question 8b); whilst just over 86% of all respondents reported that they had regular meetings with local tenants' groups or general users of housing services (Question 8c). When asked whether there were additional ways in which the views of service users were ascertained (Question 9a), 58% of all respondents replied in the affirmative. It transpired that the most popular consultation methods used here (Question 9b) were surveys, either in general or those relating to a specific service (68%). Although 77% of respondents reported that there was a forum for tenants/residents to influence policy-making (Question 11a), only 16% of respondents allowed tenants to sit on the housing committee (Question 11b).³⁵ Instead, customer/tenant panels – either in general or those relating to a specific service – emerged as a more popular participation forum (39%). Capital improvement programmes, CCT, followed by consultation over housing strategies, were the most frequently cited examples of how tenants' views were taken into account (Question 10b). A much smaller proportion mentioned consultation over policy issues. In line with findings from earlier research, therefore, tenant and user involvement activities appeared to be fairly prevalent (Cairncross *et al.*, 1990; c.f. Cairncross *et al.*, 1997: 19).

³³ Numbers in bracket denote the identity number of the authority.

³⁴ For instance, one authority noted in the margins of the questionnaire that partial stock transfer was not a 'policy' decision, but a practical way of releasing 'defective' dwellings from council control.

³⁵ Whilst not all respondents gave additional detail, of those that did, all reported that tenants did not have voting rights on the committees.

8.1.3 Definitions of Enabling

With a few notable exceptions, there was little variation in the definitions given to ‘enabling’ at the end of the questionnaire (Question 13). Nor did any authority base its interpretation on an ideological perspective or an underlying philosophy. Instead, most respondents gave examples of general objectives or specific activities as components of the enabling role. Further, it was difficult to detect a positive or negative disposition towards enabling from the majority of responses. There were two exceptions to this and from these replies, it was possible to discern a negative view of enabling:

enabling ... is used to provide a smoke-screen for reducing resources and, therefore, the ability of authorities to respond to situations they would have managed themselves in the past (02).

[enabling means] to have partnerships with housing associations for developments which the *council is stopped from doing itself* (52).

Interestingly, there was an implicit assumption in many authorities that direct provision was incompatible with the enabling role.³⁶ The following extracts illustrate this view:

... services or actions facilitated but not directly provided by the local authority (03).

... local authority should not directly provide services, but it should act as an honest broker to co-ordinate and negotiate the provision of services by external agencies (28).

... orchestrating to meet needs without direct provision... (60).

Instead of direct provision, most respondents defined their enabling role to entail undertaking current and future needs assessments and/or providing a strategic direction for other agencies to respond. Actual service delivery was to be achieved by ‘working in partnership’. Accordingly, ‘facilitating’, ‘co-ordinating’, acting as a ‘catalyst’, or a variation of those definitions/descriptions were frequently cited as the main functions of the enabling role. The main ‘partners’ identified were housing associations, private developers and the voluntary sector. As well as ensuring an appropriate strategic environment for other agencies to deliver services, authorities also stressed the importance of direct intervention to meet housing need through the following activities:

³⁶ Only one authority explicitly stated that in conjunction to working with, and through, other agencies to deliver services, enabling also involved some form of direct provision.

- provision of discounted local authority land;
- financial assistance through local authority Housing Association Grant;
- identification of sites and areas for affordable housing development;
- the use of planning powers, predominately through Section 106 agreements, although one rural authority mentioned 'exception site' policies.

The overwhelming consensus amongst respondents was that local authorities were no longer able to act self-sufficiently to provide services. Joint-working, therefore, was identified as an essential component of enabling. It cannot be stated categorically whether this was pursued 'collaboratively' or 'instrumentally', but the language of 'contracting', 'commissioning' and 'purchasing' was conspicuous by its absence in the definitions given.

There were, however, several definitions of enabling that stood out. One authority, for example, reported that the enabling role was irrelevant in the North East – as demonstrated in the quotation below. This was particularly salient because all other replies believed enabling to be a current and future reality.

In the North East, very little progress has been made in the area of enabling other agencies to provide services to supplement the local authority housing service. This is, of course, a political situation and is unlikely to change as local authorities in this part of the world are also usually the largest provider of services. The local authority, therefore, needs to balance the enabling role against the political view of providing and protecting jobs (36).

Most respondents emphasised working with agencies from all the economic sectors, but one authority emphasised private sector provision:

Identifying housing needs and demands, encouraging innovative housing methods and provision by other bodies to meet such needs, maximising the use of private finance. Ensuring where possible that *housing needs are met by the private sector* with public sector subsidy where possible. Assist, maintain and monitor the *provision of services by others in the private sector* (75).

This authority made no proposal to transfer its stock, but in Question 5, it did provide three examples of contracting out to the private sector.

Even though 77% of respondents had formal structures for service users to influence decision making, there was no attempt to define enabling along a 'community governance'

dimension. Indeed, most respondents did not mention tenants as part of their definition, with the exception of the following authority:

X Borough Council are committed to working closely in partnership with approved housing associations, the Housing Corporation, the private sector and tenants, to enable them to deliver high quality services at value for money. The Council achieves the enabling role in a number of ways including a Joint Consultative Committee, Customer Panels, and the Private Sector Forums and Special Needs Forum (71).

The 'Joint Consultative Committee' and 'Customer Panels' refer to forums where tenants were able to discuss a 'range of policy and management issues'. Clearly, it is difficult to state the degree to which power was devolved to service users in practice, but this was the only authority which mentioned 'achieving' enabling through the formal structures of user participation.

Finally, reference given to the internal organisational culture distinguished another local authority for its definition:

[enabling]...is also about an organisational culture which encourages enterprise and creativity and innovation in its widest sense. It embraces a completely different type of local government to the traditional bureaucracy (83).

No other authority identified the need for a different organisational culture to give expression to the enabling role.

In sum, many authorities were reporting difficulties in maintaining service provision levels due to reductions in housing investment. Most local authorities were still directly providing services, but they were beginning to liaise more extensively with other agencies, especially housing associations. The survey also suggested that the majority of authorities were encouraging some form of user-consultation. This was predominantly over capital improvement programmes and the CCT process. The majority of respondents defined enabling as entailing service provision by external agencies with the authority acting in a facilitating capacity. Instead of direct provision, local authorities perceived their task to lie in providing up-to-date analysis of current and future needs and setting the strategic framework.

8.2 Case-Study Selection

This section moves on to discuss how results from the enabling survey formed the basis for selecting the case-study authorities. The first task was to identify the appropriate sampling technique. Thus, whilst probability sampling was used to select the 100 authorities to whom the

questionnaire was sent, for qualitative research, it is non-probability sampling techniques which are appropriate. These require the researcher to establish, in advance, a set of criteria or list of attributes that the units for study must possess. The investigator then searches for exemplars that match the specified array of characteristics (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984: 73). For instance, in trying to capture the nature of conflict in partnership arrangements, Mackintosh (1992) specified a list of essential characteristics which joint venture schemes had to possess for them to be included in the study. The logic of non-probability sampling is thus based on the assumption that, 'the fieldworker expects mainly to use his data not to answer questions like 'how much' and 'how often' but to solve *qualitative* problems, such as discovering what occurs, the implications of what occurs, and the relationships linking occurrences' (Honigmann, 1982: 84; quoted in Merriam, 1988: 48).

There are several non-probability sampling techniques (for further detail see Patton, 1980; Goetz and LeCompte, 1984). This study applied the 'ideal' sampling technique to the postal survey. This requires the researcher to specify a profile of the unit under investigation that 'would be the best, most efficient, most effective, or most desirable of some population and then find a real-world case that closely matches the profile' (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984: 82). Having identified the appropriate sampling strategy, the next stage was to apply it to the research project.

Based upon the typology constructed by Leach *et al.* (1992), the questionnaire was designed to detect whether local authorities were still practising the traditional role, or whether they were shifting to either a residual or community-enabling role. In line with the ideal-typical method of Goetz and LeCompte (1984), a set of criteria was drawn up which constituted a 'portrait' of each ideal local authority. This set was composed of 'perfect' responses to every question (including open-ended questions) from the perspective of each enabling authority and these 'portraits' are presented overleaf in Table 8.2.1. For closed questions, the criteria was known in advance. For open-end questions where respondents were asked to give examples or provide reasons for actions/behaviour, the criteria emerged through the process of data analysis. Thus, as indicated in Table 8.2.1, in relation to question 2, whilst respondents gave examples of activities expected in most housing departments, the data revealed examples of services provided that would not be expected to be undertaken by a 'traditional' authority. These services were classified as 'innovative' and they refer to the following:

- enabling
- working with housing associations
- strategic.

Table 8.2.1: This table presents the set of ideal responses to each question of the ‘enabling’ postal survey from the perspective of each model of enabling.

Question	Traditional	Residual	Community
1a: Has a proposal been made to transfer all or part of the housing stock?	No	Yes	Yes
1b: If Yes, did the authority transfer all or part of the stock?	Not applicable	All	All or Part
1c: Who did the authority propose to transfer its stock?	Not applicable	Private sector	Probably a housing association, but could be anybody
1d: Has the authority actually transferred its housing stock?	Not applicable	Yes	Yes
1e: If Yes, who was the stock transferred to?	Not applicable	Private sector	Probably a housing association, but could be anybody
2: Examples of five major services that are directly provided by the authority.	Unlikely to give examples of ‘innovative’ services	Examples of ‘innovative’ services expected, and no capital programmes	Examples of ‘innovative’ services expected
3: Has the overall amount of direct service delivery increased or decreased?	Decreased or No Change	Decreased	Decreased or No Change
4: Reasons given if there has been a reduction in service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of resources • Money directed to housing associations • Lower levels of modernisation or repairs undertaken • No new build 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary Transfer • Contracting out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with other agencies
5a: Does the authority contract out any services?	No	Yes	Yes or No

5b: If Yes, to whom is the service contracted out to?	Not applicable	Private sector	Anybody, but likely to be a housing association
5c: Examples of contracted out service	Not applicable	Likely to be all of the service and to the private sector	Varied
6: Statements describing attitude of local authority to delivering service	Statement (d)	Statement (c)	Statement (a)
7: Does the authority undertake an assessment of housing needs and problems through different methods?	Does three or less	Undertakes none	Undertakes all
7b: Reasons provided for undertaking assessment of housing needs and problems through different methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise expenditure • Facilitate capital investment decisions • Evidence of need to support resources • Statutory requirements 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise expenditure • Policy / strategy preparation • Identifying needs • Enabling other organisations
8a and b: Does the authority undertake market research?	No	No	Yes to both
8c: Does the authority undertake planned consultative meetings?	None	With business organisations or bodies representing them	With all
9a: Are there any other structured ways the authority attempts to find out user views?	No	No	Yes
10a: Does the authority consider the user views when formulating strategies to meet demand?	Unlikely, but if yes, see 10b.	Unlikely, but if yes, see 10b.	Yes

10b: Examples of instances where service user views taken into account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital programmes CCT process (statutory) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCT process LSVT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any reason including general policies of the department
11a: Are there any forums where residents are involved in decision-making processes?	Unlikely	No	Yes
12a: Does the authority make reference to the enabling role?	No	Yes	Yes

Similarly, it was expected that an authority with a residual orientation would be unlikely to mention the implementation of 'capital programmes' as a service it provides. Analogously, in relation to question 10b, for example, where authorities were asked to supply examples of how they took the views of service-users into account, there were some responses that indicated a predisposition towards one of the three enabling models. Thus, an authority with a traditional orientation would be more likely to mention the implementation of capital programmes, minor programmes or the statutory requirements of the CCT process as examples of how it takes the views of service-users into account. An authority with a residual orientation would be inclined to mention voluntary transfers or the contracting out of services. Finally, an authority with a community-enabling outlook could give almost any example, including rent reviews, allocation policy or the overall housing strategy.

The next stage was to identify the housing authorities that corresponded to each of these portraits the closest. In order to do this, the first step (after inputting all the coded data onto the 'Excel' spreadsheet) entailed producing simple frequency tables for each question such as those presented in Appendix 2. When producing these frequency tables, the 'Filter' command on Excel was also used to compile a list of answers by authorities. In relation to question four, for example, a list was obtained of all those authorities that had experienced a reduction in direct service delivery, those that had not, and those that had experienced no change. It is important to note that this was undertaken for every single question, including responses to open-ended questions. For example, Table 8.2.2 illustrates this in relation to the three most frequently mentioned reasons given for experiencing a reduction in services. In the original analysis, the list contained both the ID number of the authority and its name. Here, though, in the interests of confidentiality, the ID numbers are not followed by the name of the authority. This first step in the selection of the case-study authorities, therefore, not only produced frequency tables and a descriptive analysis of the questionnaire, but (simple) subsets of authorities in relation to each question and their response. The second step took each enabling model in turn and, on the basis of the simple filtered subsets of authorities, created more complex subsets in order to arrive at the 'portraits' delineated in Table 8.2.1. A breakdown of the filters that were used to select each type of authority is presented in Appendix 4.

Table 8.2.2: An example of the way in which a filtered list of authorities was complied to produce subsets in relation to each question of the ‘enabling’ postal survey.

Filter20	Filter21	Filter22	Filter23
ID	ID	ID	ID
02	15	02	04
04	34	04	42
15	41	17	58
17	48	41	63
34	57	42	83
37	77	63	
41	83	72	
42	88	82	
48	94		
57	95		
58			
63			
70			
72			
75			
77			
79			
82			
83			
88			
91			
93			
94			
95			

N.B. Filter 20 denotes the list of *all* authorities who had experienced a reduction in direct service delivery. Filter 21 denotes the list of authorities who stated that one of the reasons for their reduction in direct service delivery was LSVTs. Filter 22 lists those authorities who stated that RTB was a reason for a reduction in direct service delivery and, Filter 23 is a list of those authorities who stated that a reduction in resources was accountable for a reduction in service delivery.

Once the complex and intricate task of creating filters in relation to each ‘portrait’ had been completed, a list of emerging possible case-study authorities began to emerge. The third step then, was to create three different tables illustrating the responses of the authorities that corresponded to their respective ‘portraits’. Taking the community-enabling authority as an example, a table was created that identified eight possible authorities who could be selected to represent this model of enabling. However, since these ‘portraits’ were ideal types, few local authorities matched them in their ‘pure’ form. As result, these tables delineated the responses that not only made them suitable as case-study examples, but factors which mitigated against their selection. A copy of these tables can also be found in Appendix 4. Copies of these tables were then sent to the academic supervisors and a meeting was arranged with them for their assistance and input into the process of making a definitive selection. At this meeting and through

considerable discussion, it was decided not to investigate an authority that appeared to be practising the residual role. In all probability, residual authorities were unlikely to have a long-standing history of a commitment to social housing. Further, it was assumed that since their interpretations of enabling would be similar to that of the Conservative Governments, they would be unable to reveal information about alternative interpretations. Hence, selection was to be limited to traditional and community-enabling authorities. Exploring a traditional authority would throw some light on the reasons as to why and how it had been able to resist change. By concentrating on two community-enabling authorities, the study could identify the practices being developed which gave a different expression to the enabling role from the residual model. This would provide invaluable qualitative data on an issue little researched hitherto. Finally, practical issues such as time, travel and accessibility to key informants were also considered (Burgess, 1993: 61). Thus, in taking all these factors into account, the eventual case-study authorities were as follows: North-West District was selected to illustrate a 'traditional' authority, and both North-Met and South-City were selected as 'community-enabling' authorities.

8.3 Case-Study Profiles

An economic and political profile of the three case-study authorities is now outlined. The main housing problems faced by them are also identified.

8.3.1 A Profile of North-Met

North-Met Borough Council was created in the local government reorganisation of 1974. It is located in the Greater Manchester conurbation and has a population of 258,584 (1991 Census). Whilst much of the Borough is situated in attractive countryside, many of the core urban areas suffer from extensive economic and social deprivation. Deindustrialisation has left a legacy of decaying buildings, poor infrastructure, derelict land and environmental eyesores. Although North-Met has benefited from a range of urban policy initiatives, beginning with the 1978 Inner Urban Areas Act where it was granted 'Programme Area' status (Atkinson and Moon, 1994: 76), in 1993, the All Ages Social Index³⁷ identified it as being the 48th poorest district out of 366 across England.

North-Met is a Labour controlled council. Since the 1980 local elections, the Labour group has steadily increased its overall majority. In 1980, the Liberals had one seat on the council, the Conservatives held 20 seats, while Labour held 39 seats. By 1996, the Labour group had a majority of 48 members on the council. Both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats had 6 members. Stoker has identified three types of groupings which characterise local Labour politics.

These are the ‘traditionalists’, ‘Urban Left’ and the ‘urban managerialists’ (1991: 43–9). Evidence from the interviews suggested that, in North-Met, the Labour group were closest to the ‘urban managerialist’ grouping.³⁸

Historically, North-Met was at the forefront of the industrial revolution. This led to the area developing a strong manufacturing base, particularly in textiles and engineering. Over the past two decades, North-Met’s economy has undergone major restructuring due to national economic changes. The manufacturing industry, in particular, has experienced large-scale redundancies and industrial closures. For instance, between 1981 and 1991, the textiles industry declined by 59.1%, leaving employment at only 1,800. However, deindustrialisation has been accompanied by a growth in the service sector of 19.1%. Banking, finance and insurance industries experienced the fastest growth, where the number of employees almost doubled between 1981 and 1991. Nevertheless, the proportion of service sector employment in North-Met, at 64.4% in 1991, was significantly lower compared to regional (69%) and national (70.1%) averages. Moreover, compared to national averages, North-Met still had a greater proportion of employment in the manufacturing sector.³⁹ Thus, despite the increases in service sector employment, North-Met remains over-reliant on declining industries.

Until recently, unemployment rates in North-Met have been well above the national average. For instance, in January 1985, 14.4% of North-Met’s workforce was unemployed, compared to 11.8% nationally.⁴⁰ However, the recession of the early 1990s affected other parts of the UK more seriously than the North West. Consequently, the rise in national rates of unemployment were greater than in North-Met. In October 1997, the unemployment rate was 4.1%, lower than the regional and national averages (5.5% and 5.0% respectively). Total unemployment rates for North-Met, however, disguise its impact in the poorest districts of the borough. In 1996, 5 of the 20 wards had an unemployment rate higher than the national average

³⁷ The official league table of poverty and deprivation published by the DoE (North-Met Housing Strategy Statement 1997–2000: 5).

³⁸ Like the Urban Left, urban managerialists believe that local government should be concerned with the overall ‘well-being’ of their communities rather than just deliver welfare services. They wish local government to play an integral role in economic development, or tackling issues such as poverty. They also favour less paternalistic and more ‘customer-friendly’ styles of service delivery. Defending public services from retrenchment is a crucial concern, but what distinguishes the urban managerialists from the Urban Left is their more modest political agenda. ‘Changes in service delivery and the role of local government is seen as a matter of piecemeal and gradual reform and presented as reflecting good management practice rather than as a means of challenging power structures within or beyond, the authority’ (Stoker, 1991: 48; see also Lansley *et al*, 1989: 196–206).

³⁹ (Deprivation in North-Met, 1994: 25–6).

⁴⁰ (Deprivation in North-Met, 1994: 32).

and the worst wards had unemployment at 11.7% and 10.5%.⁴¹ These wards remain those which comprised all or part of the previous Inner Urban Area.⁴²

The proportion of North-Met's households living in owner occupied accommodation rose from 66% to 69.8% between 1981 and 1991, whilst the proportion renting from the council fell from 26.8% to 21.9% (1991 Census). Despite this, the proportion of council stock remains significantly higher in North-Met compared to regional and national levels. A key housing problem facing the borough concerns the high levels of unfit private sector stock. As 30% of the total stock was built before 1919, the extent of this problem is considerable. There are 21,000 unfit dwellings of which 5,800 are irredeemably unfit and it has been estimated that £600 million would be required to improve the poorest housing conditions in the private sector. To improve the conditions of some of these private properties, under the Local Government Act 1989, North-Met declared two renewal areas in 1991 and several interviews were conducted here to explore the practice of enabling in relation to housing renewal.

8.3.2 A Profile of South-City

South-City Council is a unitary authority. It lies about 120 miles west of London and has a population of 374,146.⁴³ It is a major manufacturing and commercial centre and has been one of the fastest growing regions in Britain. Until the mid-1980s, South-City had a buoyant local economy. This was reinforced by the location of major high-tech and insurance companies in the city, leading to comparisons being made with California's Silicon Valley (Boddy, 1987: 44). However, an emerging pattern of polarisation and segregation between different parts of the city and different social groups illustrated that economic success had not been equally distributed (Oatley, 1993: 139). Indeed, it has been argued that the urban unrest that the city witnessed during 1980 and then in 1985 was partly a manifestation of the multiple deprivation experienced by some of the poorest local communities (Hall, 1987; Benyon and Solomos, 1987). Consequently, to counteract the possibility of further social disorder, South-City was targeted for a range of urban initiatives. In 1986, the DoE established a Task Force and invited the council to apply for Inner Area Programme funding. It also benefited from Derelict Land Grant, City Grant and Estate Action.

⁴¹ (North-Met and Murry Labour Market Assessment, 1996/7: 50-52).

⁴² (Deprivation in North-Met, 1994: 31).

⁴³ (South-City Ward Report, 1991: 3).

In 1990, central government established a Training and Enterprise Council and, most controversially of all, an urban development corporation was designated in 1987.⁴⁴

South-City is a Labour controlled council. In 1996, the political composition of the council was as follows: the Conservatives held 6 seats, the Liberal Democrats held 10 seats and Labour had a majority of 36 with 52 seats. During the mid-1980s, the ruling Labour group were involved in acrimonious disputes with central government over local financial discretion, opposition to the South-City Development Corporation and more recently, City Challenge. However, when the Conservatives returned for a fourth term in office in 1991, South-City Council 'grudgingly and pragmatically began to abandon its municipal socialist stance' (Oatley and May, 1999: 199). Instead, like North-Met, the Labour group can now be characterised as 'urban managerialists'.

Historically, South-City's economy was based upon intercontinental trade generated from the conversion of imported raw material into finished manufactured goods for home consumption and export (Stewart, 1996: 127). More recently, South-City's manufacturing base was concentrated in the mass consumer markets of food, drink and tobacco, and paper, printing and packaging. These declined considerably during the 1970s. However, the development of a strong engineering base attenuated the overall fall in manufacturing employment during this period. Consequently, South-City flourished in the 1970s and was one of the few urban areas in which employment was greater in 1981 than in 1951. Moreover, the job losses in its dominant manufacturing sectors were countered by an expansion of service employment. Insurance, banking, and finance expanded at twice the national rate, and miscellaneous services also outpaced national growth (Boddy, 1987: 50).

By the end of the 1980s, however, South-City found itself facing an uncertain economic future. The impact of the late 1980s recession 'sent a series of shock waves' throughout the local economy and shattered the 'complacency' that had existed in South-City about the area's economic future (Oatley and May, 1999: 200). In particular, the aerospace and related industries experienced a 23% reduction in employment between 1989 and 1991, whilst finance and business services shed 4% of their employment over the same period. Thus, by 1993, unemployment rates

⁴⁴ The other reason why South-City was targeted for urban policy attention after 1986 was that, during the mid 1980s, the Council had attempted to promote a range of 'radical' policy initiatives under a new Employment and Community Development Committee. The introduction of national urban initiatives was, therefore, a way of influencing this policy agenda (Oatley, 1993: 139). Interestingly, the 'radical' agenda pursued by the City Council led it to being placed on a list issued by Norman Tebbit as an example of 'crazy campaigns of Left-wing councils' (Gyford *et al.*, 1989: 311).

in South-City exceeded 13% (Oatley and May, 1993: 200), with unemployment in the six worst areas of the city averaging 24% (Stewart, 1996: 128).

South-City has 14 decentralised area offices that provide a comprehensive range of housing services. In 1991, the proportion of South-City's households living in owner occupied accommodation rose to 63.5%, whilst the proportion renting council properties fell to 22.1%.⁴⁵ The City faces three serious housing problems. First, there is a severe housing shortage and demand for affordable housing far exceeds the available supply. Furthermore, since the early 1990s, there has been an increasing problem of homelessness, with the numbers of people sleeping rough on the streets also high. This prompted an invitation from the DoE to form the first Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) outside London. Second, South-City's own council stock suffers from serious disrepair and is in need of considerable improvement. Pre-1919 housing that was acquired from the private sector during the 1960s, in particular, has a backlog of repair and improvement needs. It has been estimated that at 1994 prices, there is a:

- £17.9m backlog of required repairs to purpose built stock;
- £142.7m backlog of renewal and replacement of property elements in pre-1945 stock;
- £14.6m disrepair in 3,000 council acquired dwellings.⁴⁶

Much of the renewal and renovation of the council stock has occurred through Estate Action. However, since this was superseded by SRB, many households face an indefinite waiting period for renovation and improvement. The third housing problem concerns the large and ageing stock in the private sector. Of 123,615 private dwellings, over 50,000 were built before 1919 and 37,000 were built between the wars. Again, many of these properties require urgent repair and improvement. The 1991 English House Condition Survey reported that 10.3% of private sector homes (17,000) were unfit for human habitation. This was the seventh highest figure in England and Wales and compares with a national figure of around 7.6%. In addition to renovation grants, South-City declared two renewal areas to address the problems of private stock conditions. Again, several interviews were conducted in these areas to explore the practice of enabling in relation to housing renewal.

8.3.3 A Profile of North-West District

Set in the Lancashire Pennines, North-West District Council is the most rural borough in Lancashire with a population of 51,000 (1991 Census). Much of the area is designated European Union Objective 5b status. This was established to assist declining agricultural communities to

⁴⁵ (South-City Ward Report, 1991: 24).

⁴⁶ (South-City Housing Strategy Statement, 1995–1998: 67).

diversify and find alternative means of creating employment. A small part of the district is a priority area for the Rural Development Commission. The historic market town of Trimroe is the commercial and administrative centre of the Borough.

Historically, North-West District has been a Conservative controlled council. In the 1991 local elections, the Conservatives held 31 seats, the Liberals held 2 seats, and Labour and an Independent each had 1 seat. The Conservative group can be described as 'traditionalists',⁴⁷ rather than 'suburban managerialists' or 'urban ideologues' (see Stoker, 1991: 40). However, in the 1995 local elections, North-West District became a 'hung' council. Again, Labour and an Independent held 1 seat each, but the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives held 19 seats on the council.⁴⁸

North-West District has a mixed economy with manufacturing, agriculture and a growing tourism sector. There is a high proportion of self-employment in farming. Income is mainly derived from dairy and beef cattle, as well as extensive sheep farming. During the fieldwork, the full impact of the BSE crisis had not yet materialised. Nevertheless, serious concern was expressed regarding the volume of animals which would have to be slaughtered and the resultant effects upon the district's livestock markets, abattoirs, hauliers and food processing plants. Overall, the decline in agriculture means fewer direct and indirect employment opportunities. By contrast, tourism is one of North-West District's most rapidly expanding industries. Figures from the North West Tourist Board put tourism spending on accommodation alone at £14 million in 1994 – an increase of £3 million over the 1991 figure.⁴⁹ Manufacturing is also vital to the local economy and major 'blue chip' companies such as British Aerospace and ICI Chemicals are located within the district. The decline of the defence and aerospace industries has been halted, but the loss of manufacturing floor-space has generated considerable concern. This occurred because of the high potential value of industrial sites for residential use.

⁴⁷ Conservative traditionalists identify their role in terms of defending their area and interests. This includes 'the paternalistic care of those locals less well-off than themselves, for whom they feel responsible' (Stoker, 1991: 40). They are motivated by a desire to protect local democracy against increased central intervention – even if it comes from a national government under their own party's control. Policy-making takes place in the context of a perceived need to restrain spending and lower local rates. However, they tend not to intervene in the internal decision-making of the council significantly, preferring instead to rely on officers. Hence, rather than broad strategic-policy issues, these councillors are motivated by a concern to represent their particular ward and to solve local problems on behalf of their constituents (*ibid.*). See also Holliday (2000: 166–80) for a summary of Conservative Party experiences in county and district councils between 1979–1997.

⁴⁸ Since the 1980s, there has been an increase in the number of 'hung councils' where no party has overall control. Leach and Stewart (1994) identified three types of administration that were formed in the 26 hung councils they analysed. These alternatives comprise 'minority administrations', 'shared chairs' and 'no administration'. Although 'shared chairs' were the most prevalent form of administration, the Conservative Party tend not to become involved in power-sharing arrangements. This study was unable to identify the type of administration that was prevalent in North-West District.

⁴⁹ (North-West District Economic Development Strategy, 1996–1999: 8).

The tenure profile in North-West District is heavily dominated by owner occupation. In 1991, over 80% of the District's households were living in owner occupied accommodation and 7.8% were renting council (1991 Census). The primary housing problem is the lack of housing supply to meet demand. The Council's Housing Needs Survey (1996) indicated significant levels of need, particularly for affordable housing for young people. This was compounded by the decline of the farming industry. People displaced from farming employment were seeking assistance from the Council for housing problems.⁵⁰ Moreover, as North-West District is a pleasant countryside location, demand for housing land is considerable. Consequently, the growing interest from private developers to build high-quality owner-occupation homes generated considerable concern. It was feared that land prices may increase beyond the reach of housing associations to build affordable homes and, therefore, meet local need. Poor housing conditions are also a major problem. A House Condition Survey of local authority and private sector stock was undertaken in 1995. Of the 1,523 council dwellings, 931 required substantial work with an estimated cost of £6,978,480.⁵¹ In the private sector, 409 dwellings were identified as unfit for human habitation. The Council's stated policy towards private housing renewal has shifted from that of the 1970s and 1980s. During that period, general improvement areas were used to upgrade sub-standard dwellings, secure the improvement of back-to-back houses and demolish unfit dwellings. Since the late 1980s, priority has shifted to improving individual unfit houses using discretionary grants.

This chapter has analysed the survey from which the three case-study locations were selected. A brief outline of their social and economic make-up has been provided to contextualise the research findings discussed in the following chapters.

⁵⁰ (North-West District Housing Strategy, 1996/7: 11).

⁵¹ (North-West District Housing Strategy 1997/8, 28).

CHAPTER 9:

NORTH-WEST DISTRICT:

THE TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY

This Chapter explores the extent to which the enabling role had made an impact upon North-West District. It is necessary, however, to acknowledge the unevenness of the research findings gathered from this case-study authority and the North-Met and South-City authorities. North-West District did not yield extensive data, partly because it was a small, rural authority that had a Housing Department with only four members, and partly because access to key informants was denied. Hence, without intention, North-West District became a subsidiary case-study compared with the other two case-study authorities. The discussion that follows is structured into four main sections. The first outlines the methodological difficulties encountered during the fieldwork. The second examines responses to centrally imposed reforms, namely, the introduction of performance monitoring, the tenants' charter and the sponsorship of tenants' associations. The third section provides evidence of partnership working, although this largely conformed to the hierarchical mode of governance. The final section illustrates the inertia of the Housing Department compared with the Economic Development Unit, which was the only part of the organisation attempting to embrace change pro-actively.

9.1 Methodological Difficulties

In total, six interviews were conducted in North-West District. Three of these were with officers from the Housing Department (the Senior Housing Manager and two junior housing officers). Two interviews were conducted with the Economic Development Officer and one interview was undertaken with the Chief Planning Officer. Apart from the interviews with the junior housing officers, the other respondents, in different ways, all adopted a 'defensive' stance when interviewed. Nevertheless, despite their more positive attitude towards being interviewed, meetings with the junior housing officers did not provide extensive data. As they were not key policy-makers, they were unable to discuss the Housing Department's response to enabling in any significant detail. Similarly, the first interview in North-West District, that with the Senior Housing Manager, also proved to be relatively unproductive. Having worked in the Housing Department since the 1970s, he was clearly demoralised by the impact of Conservative policies. However, what differentiated him from other respondents, in particular, was his disengagement from the whole enabling and restructuring process. He conveyed the impression of trying to maintain housing policy and practice until his retirement in the most 'hassle-free' way. The Planning Officer proved to be the most difficult person to interview, mainly because he adopted a

fairly confrontational attitude throughout the interview. Below are two excerpts from the transcript. Whilst unable to capture the intonation, or tone of voice, they serve to illustrate the manner in which the interview progressed.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| <i>Researcher</i> | Can you talk to me about how, as an authority, you came to work with housing associations ? |
| <i>Planning Officer</i> | Can you be a bit more specific about that, I can't construct an essay in my head. |
| <i>Researcher</i> | Can you tell me what you understand to be the enabling role? |
| <i>Planning Officer</i> | What sort of enabling are we talking about, do you want to define what you mean to be enabling ? |
| <i>Researcher</i> | I'm interested in how you would define enabling. |
| <i>Planning Officer</i> | Well I've not used the phrase, you've used the phrase, so define what you mean. |

These questions had been posed to other interviewees who did not respond in the same way.⁵² By contrast, the Economic Development Officer was interviewed twice because this appeared to be the only part of the authority that was attempting to shift to an enabling role pro-actively. Moreover, compared with other respondents (within the authority), this Officer appeared to be the most knowledgeable about the changing operating environment of local authorities. Hence, it seemed logical to try and obtain as much information here as possible, and accordingly, questions were also asked about how the Housing Department had changed. However, lack of knowledge prevented the respondent from answering these types of questions:

Its no good asking me questions on housing because it's not my field at all.
(North-West Economic Development Officer).

This was interesting in itself. Experience from the other two case-studies showed that most respondents possessed some information about other departments. In North-West District, with staff numbers so small and all the offices located in one building, it was reasonable to expect officers to have some general knowledge of activities in other departments. That this was not the case in the North-West authority suggested that there was little communication between

⁵² As discussed in Chapter 7 (The Research Design and Methods), the interview commenced with a brief introduction about the study's aims and respondents were told that it was *their* interpretations which would frame the discussion. Thus, in terms of the way in which the interview was conducted by the author, this response appeared to be unwarranted.

departments or corporate decision-making. These problems are generally associated with a traditional authority.

The Director of Housing was continually identified by respondents as the person who knew most about the issues of the research. Despite several attempts, an interview could not be arranged. This was partly because during the fieldwork, the Chief Executive of the authority left and was replaced by the Director of Housing. Consequently, with two roles to fulfil, the Director was unable to grant an interview session. However, there is one interesting observation to note. Whilst the interviews imply that the Director was trying to move the Housing Department forward, the respondents' lack of knowledge about what this entailed, or the implications it had for the long-term direction of the Department, suggested that he had not communicated this to the rest of his staff.

To summarise, access to the Director of Housing, in all likelihood the most knowledgeable and influential actor regarding the future role of the Housing Department, was denied. Other interviews did not yield extensive data for the reasons outlined above. Nevertheless, some general observations can be made and these are explored in the following sections.

9.2 A Reactive Response to Conservative Reforms

This section examines North-West District's response to performance monitoring, the introduction of a tenants' charter and the emergence of the first tenants' association. Before proceeding, it is important to acknowledge that North-West District held *de minimis* status which made it exempt from CCT for housing management. The exception to this was the contracting-out of housing maintenance and the Housing Department, therefore, no longer had its own Works Division. This occurred not through any merit attached to contracting, but as a response to limited resources. As housing maintenance workers left, they were not replaced. However, during the fieldwork, central Government was considering lowering the threshold to qualify for *de minimis* status. This raised uncertainty within the authority and officers expressed concern over the possibility that they too, might need to put their housing services out to tender. The anxiety generated by the possibility of CCT was informative in itself. It illustrated that contracting was not regarded as an appropriate mode of service delivery and, by implication, was a rejection of the residual model of enabling.

9.2.1 Performance Monitoring

Circular 19/90 placed a duty on local housing authorities to publish the results of prescribed performance indicators to tenants. Superficially, the introduction of performance monitoring represented an erosion of traditional housing management practices. In reality,

performance monitoring was not identified as a mechanism through which a more responsive or efficient housing service could be provided. Instead, it was viewed as a hindrance:

There's performance indicators and targets: three weeks or less on letting properties. It puts an awful lot of pressure on us because we weren't an authority that wasn't performing. It was obviously aimed at the ones that weren't performing and we've been hit with that. (North-West District Housing Management Officer: Estates and Lettings).

Furthermore, there was no evidence of the Department using this as an opportunity to adopt a different understanding of its traditional role. Nor was there evidence of the Department producing its own monitoring targets from different ideological origins such as those identified by Tichelar (1998) or Leach and Barnett (1997). This suggests performance monitoring was introduced because the Department was compelled to do so and that it was 'superimposed' upon traditional housing management practices.

9.2.2 The Tenants' Charter

The tenants' charter was also introduced in response to central Government stimuli. Accordingly, its implementation should not be interpreted as a reflection of a 'consumerist' or 'customer-oriented' ideology. Indeed, the charter was perceived as another Conservative strategy to privatise council housing:

We're issuing the tenants charter, this sort of thing. ... I don't disagree with the principle of giving a good, efficient, effective, economic service. But then they [central government] tell you, you're not getting the certain amount of money. So you've committed yourself [to the charter], but the finances are cut back, you're capped on the rents you can charge, but you've already told people how we're going to respond to repairs in three weeks so you've got yourself in problem ... and then when you can't deliver on the tenants' charter, the tenants will vote and say, 'North-West District's no good'. So my view is, it's their aim of getting rid of us.

(North-West District Senior Housing Manager).

As suggested in the above quotation, the Department felt compromised between competing pressures from central government on the one hand and tenants on the other. The charter was viewed as encouraging tenants to expect higher service delivery, but without corresponding resources from central government to meet those expectations. Moreover, anxiety was expressed over the possibility of tenants opting for another landlord if they perceived the Department as inefficient. Thus, whilst charters could be used as a mechanism to shift towards an enabling role,

in this authority, the tenants' charter represented 'surface' level change. This means it was embedded into a culture and ethos resonant with the traditional role of local authorities.

9.2.3 An Emerging Tenants' Association

A tenants' association was established in 1996. Hitherto, the Department had little experience of facilitating tenant participation. However, meetings had not been well attended, despite being located in different places with transport provided by the Council. The following response captures the rationale underlining the Department's attempt to encourage tenant participation: 'Government policy, we've had to do it' (North-West District Senior Housing Manager). The second main reason was to ensure that tenants did not transfer to another landlord. Thus, rather than displaying a commitment to facilitate greater tenant choice or empowerment, the emergence of tenant participation processes was motivated, primarily, to serve the interests of the Housing Department. Indeed, this analysis is reinforced by reporting upon the negative perception of tenants that was evident. There was a strong feeling that RTB had left the Council with less desirable tenants claiming benefits, some of whom 'cost a fortune' (Senior Housing Manager). Tenants were also criticised for adopting an instrumentalist attitude towards tenant participation:

But you find a lot of people only go to these tenants' meetings if they want something.
Once they've got their roof repaired or something, well then, you don't see them again.
(North-West District Senior Housing Manager).

Thus, tenant participation in the North-West Housing Department predominately conformed to the traditional authority.

9.3 A Hierarchical Approach to Partnerships

Direct provision continued to be the dominant mode of service delivery for housing management and other services. There was evidence, however, that in the provision of new social housing, the Housing Department was entering into partnership arrangements with housing associations, whilst the Planning Department was entering into relationships with private developers. The resource-dependency approach was the principal motivation underpinning inter-organisational collaboration:

Well, we can't do it on our own. We don't have the resources to do it. So without working with other organisations we wouldn't be providing for social needs housing.
It's as basic as that. (North-West District Chief Planning Officer).

There was no evidence to suggest that, once formed, partnerships evolved into more collaborative relationships. Instead, they were equated with an erosion of the authority's role. The following quotation captures North-West District's overall disposition towards partnerships:

The enabling role is a diminutive role. It's a reduction in responsibility in that I would consider being a direct provider a more responsible position than the position of enabling others to make that provision – unless you say that to keep various organisations that you've no control over in active work can be considered a 'responsibility'. Sometimes that seems as though that's an important element.
(North-West District Chief Planning Officer).

The instrumental approach to partnerships was further reflected in the quality of the relationships between the authority and its partners. For instance, the Planning Department obtained Section 106 agreements to generate social housing from private developers. The underlying tension between the authority seeking to maximise the number of social housing units and the developer seeking to maximise market units was resolved according to the hierarchical mode of governance. Concern to ensure both parties met their objectives was not expressed. Indeed, it was reported that the Planning Department left 'as little room for negotiation as possible really' (Chief Planning Officer). This indicated that, in accordance with the hierarchical mode of governance, the Planning Department relied upon its authority and power when liaising with private developers

Before proceeding to discuss the relationship between the Housing Department and housing associations, it is important to note that the voluntary sector played a minor role in service provision. There were only two voluntary agencies in the district: Age Concern and Help the Aged. The only joint initiative between them and the Housing Department was a security scheme for elderly people. Moreover, although officers and councillors attended meetings at a voluntary sector forum run by the Council for Voluntary Services, it was reported that, beyond this liaison, voluntary groups 'don't have an input into what we do' (Housing Management Officer). Therefore, the relationship between the authority and voluntary agencies was predominately 'traditional' as described by Leach and Wilson (1998).

Partnerships with housing associations were adopted somewhat reluctantly and an ambiguous attitude towards them was evident. At one level, partnerships were considered beneficial because they provided a solution to housing need. More accurately, though, the Housing Department felt threatened by housing associations, perceiving them to be usurpers of its traditional role and purpose. This unfavourable disposition was compounded by the belief that, as the preferred agents of central government, not only did associations have greater financial

resources, but they had no obligation to house the homeless, nor did they suffer from a residualised housing stock.

There were two ways in which housing associations had made an impact within the North-West District. First, it was reported that a lack of resources to rehabilitate council stock necessitated a small stock transfer – through a formal competitive tendering exercise – to Victoria Housing Association in June 1996. Second, housing associations were also engaged in new-build activity. However, the important point to acknowledge here concerns the Housing Department's lack of initiative and control. Thus, it was housing associations who approached the Department to undertake new-build in exchange for nomination rights, rather than the other way round. Nor did the Housing Department appear to be able to exert much influence over housing associations. For example, there were no monitoring processes in place through which the Department could monitor how many nominations it received. Indeed, it was housing associations who were criticised for not informing the Department when vacancies arose:

We can nominate, but we don't have 100% nominations on most of the schemes. So a lot of the time, we don't really know what they're up to. If they come to us when they've got vacancies all well and good, but we don't always know when they've got one. (North-West District Housing Management Officer: Estates and Lettings).

Overall, the Housing Department's relationship with housing association conformed to the hierarchical mode of governance. The competitive tendering exercise was indicative of the market mode of governance, but since it was not monitoring how many nominations it received from housing associations, this mode of governance was limited. Evidence of trust and loyalty between the Department and associations was also absent – suggesting that the network mode of governance was not practised here.

9.4 The Inertia of the Housing Department

It was stated earlier that the Economic Development Unit was the only part of the local authority which appeared to be shifting to the enabling role. This was manifested through its involvement in the 'North-West Lancashire Partnership'. North-West District was one partner with five other local authorities in the Lancashire sub-region, together with the Training and Enterprise Council and the Chambers of Commerce. The remit of this partnership was to improve and promote the status of Lancashire in order to attract inward investment from businesses. Hence, it was not a service delivery partnership. The most interesting point to acknowledge here concerns the different attitudes and roles adopted by the three case-study Housing Departments. As subsequent chapters illustrate, in the other two authorities, Housing was often at the forefront

of many local changes and other departments were slower to embrace the enabling role. By contrast, the unevenness of change in North-West District was conspicuous by the fact that it did not emanate from the Housing Department. Instead, it was the Economic Development Unit which discussed the importance of building alliances with external agencies. It was reported by the Economic Development Officer that such alliances were especially important given that local authorities could no longer operate self-sufficiently. Thus, where the Economic Development Unit appeared to be adopting a pragmatic approach to enabling, both the Housing and Planning Departments were assuming a more passive role as illustrated in the following quotation:

We've moved back to a position *where we're going to say, 'look we're going to approach anything that's put towards us in a reactive sense. The pro-active way's difficult. ...* Really, I would think to some extent, we've become more cautious. We've moved into more cautious policies relating to the enabling role and to social needs housing. That's where I think the biggest change has been in the last three or four years. (North-West District Chief Planning Officer).

Thus, the *raison d'être* of the authority was still centred around direct provision of statutory duties. Reforms which challenged and undermined this role left a vacuum which had not been filled. Without this core identity, North-West District could only see a marginal role for itself.

9.5 Conclusions

Institutional inertia prevented North-West District from shifting to the enabling role in any significant sense. Changes in service delivery practices were not the outcome of pro-action or control. Rather, they were a response to top-down legislation and an unfavourable resource environment. Furthermore, new changes were 'superimposed' upon traditional housing management practices and its commensurate culture and ethos. Finally, the role of agency was important, not for implementing change, but as an expression of passivity. Although the interviews imply that the Director of Housing was trying to move the authority forward, there was little evidence to indicate that the rest of the Department were informed about the nature of this change or how it would be achieved. Support to implement any changes therefore seemed questionable. Thus, the fieldwork confirmed North-West District's responses to the 'enabling' survey and it is concluded that this authority still operated to the traditional role.

CHAPTER 10:

ENABLING AS CONTRACTING

This is the first of four chapters which analyse the fieldwork data gathered from the North-Met and South-City authorities. This analysis begins by examining the extent to which contracting was considered to be a viable mode of service delivery in the transition to the enabling role. Thus, the experience of CCT of the housing management functions in these authorities is now examined. It must be noted, however, that during the fieldwork the two authorities were at different stages of the contracting process. By the time of the last interview in South-City, the Housing Department was due to receive bids for 5 of the 14 housing contracts which were out to tender. There was a high expectation amongst officers that the contracts would be won by the in-house teams. North-Met, on the other hand, had already been operating under the CCT regime for a year, with their five contracts being won by the in-house teams.

This Chapter is divided into four main parts. The first concentrates upon the process entailed in preparing the housing services for CCT and in so doing, it identifies several strategies that were used by the authorities to mediate the impact of this policy. The second part examines the reasons why the private sector and housing associations failed to present themselves as serious contenders in the competitive tendering process. The third part focuses upon the way in which CCT was perceived in the two Housing Departments and the reasons underlining their hostility to this mode of service delivery. At the same time, however, both Departments conceded that the contracting process had generated some benefits in the organisation and management of service delivery. Thus, the final part of the Chapter examines these benefits and the way in which they were eroding traditional management practices.

10.1 The Preparation Process of Contracting Housing Management

The discussion here is sub-divided into three sections. Taking each authority in turn, the first section examines the processes involved in preparing the housing services for CCT. The second outlines the type of contract that was written, and the third examines the client/contractor split and the nature of governance between these two roles.

10.1.1 Preparation for CCT

Taking the North-Met authority first, there was extensive client/contractor collaboration in writing the contract specification. To some extent this was unavoidable because staff who would eventually become the contractors knew most about the day-to-day delivery of the services. However, the key motivation underpinning this collaboration was to ensure that the in-house

contractors won the housing contracts. Moreover, there was a commitment to enhance services and maintain employment terms and conditions for existing staff. A comparison was drawn with the experience of CCT for blue-collar services where the in-house contractor had been under-cut, but the external contractor was 'still making a profit'. It was reported that the private sector adopted a 'draconian' approach in which cost-savings were achieved at the expense of job losses and a deterioration of employment conditions. Similarly, it was felt that if a commercial company had won any of the housing management contracts, they would initially:

... have had to take staff on with their existing terms and conditions. But we would suspect that after 6 months they would have disappeared...the trend appears to be [that] they [private company] would look at restructuring and reorganising people. That's where they make the savings. (North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

This supports the findings of research undertaken by Painter (1991: 207) who examined the results of the first round of CCT under the Local Government Act 1988.⁵³ This research extends Painter's contribution because it focuses upon responses to *white-collar services* and suggests that there can be a continuation of pre-existing political attitudes and responses to CCT.

Turning now to South-City, the first step in the preparation process was to conduct a detailed service review of the pre-tendered housing service. Each area office was allocated a specific housing management function and required to specify the operational and administrative procedures involved in delivering it. For instance, one area office was required to specify the procedures for collecting rents, another for dealing with empty properties and so on. This process allowed the designated client to draw up draft service specifications from which area offices were then required to work. The contractors were also obliged to outline the problems involved in working to the draft specifications and to identify aspects which required amending. This allowed the client to test the quantity of work, associated costs and any gaps in the service specification. Similarly, the contractor was able to test the profitability and efficiency of the services under the

⁵³ Painter (1991) identified four different types of local authorities according to their political attitudes and the way in which they implemented CCT for blue-collar services. One type of authority referred to was *in-house commitment without cuts*. Their approach was similar to that of North-Met's i.e. committed to retaining in-house provision and employment levels. (By 'cuts' Painter refers to reductions in staffing or wages, or a deterioration in conditions of employment or levels of services.) The other three types of authorities identified were, first, the *New Right*, who were overwhelmingly Conservative controlled and enthusiastic supporters of CCT. Second, the *non-committal* authorities who did not have an ideological predilection towards privatisation, but nor were they determined to retain in-house provision. These tended to be Conservative rural district councils. Third, the *in-house commitment* authorities made an explicit commitment to retain services in-house, but were prepared to cut wages, conditions or jobs, if that was what it took to win the tenders. These contained both Conservative and Labour controlled authorities. See also Shaw *et al.* (1994) for a similar categorisation of local authorities in the *north* of England and their responses to the 1988 Local Government Act.

draft specification. The quotation below highlights the utility of working to pilot service specifications and demonstrates the collaboration between the client and contractor:

... if you're working with an in-house team then you're in a much better position because the in-house team can help you with the specification. They can say to you, 'Well you know if we'd met the specification that you'd actually written, we'd have ended up with a really bad service and what you should have written is X, Y and Z'. I mean, I might be on the client side theoretically, and people delivering the services in the area offices might be on the contractor side, but the reality is we work for the same City Council and we try and achieve the same aims. And basically if you're doing any work and you want any information, the people who know the answers are the people who are delivering the service. So there's still quite a lot of liaison between the two sides.

(South-City Service Development Officer).

In writing draft specifications, however, the client found describing the characteristics and costs of the housing services to be a complex and onerous task. In addition, up-dated guidelines⁵⁴ made it anti-competitive for local authorities to produce detailed descriptions of the way a service was to be performed. Rather, the expectation placed upon them was to ensure that contract documentation focused on outputs. However, the client found making a distinction between the outputs of the service and the written procedures a difficult exercise:

... we had to take out all the written procedures and say what the outputs are. And for some of the services it was really difficult to do, because it wasn't obvious what was procedure, you know, 'this is how you do this', and what you achieve at the end of it.

(South-City Service Development Officer).

Even when distinctions were made between outputs and procedures, the client found it difficult to strike a balance between defining essential components of a service which it was felt should not be excluded, but simultaneously allowing sufficient freedom and innovation for the contractor to deliver the service. The source of this conflicting tension was anxiety about a private firm winning the contracts, rather than a lack of faith in the in-house teams. Hence, the client felt torn between providing detailed procedures to protect 'customers' from receiving poor quality services should a private firm win, and acting within the parameters of what was considered to be 'good tendering practice'.

⁵⁴ Circular 5/96 was issued on 2 April 1996 and it consolidated previous Statutory Instruments regarding anti-competitive behaviour in relation to the conduct of CCT (see Steel and Liddle, 1996 for further detail).

Further complications arose when calculating the provisional cost of services before they were tendered. It was important for the in-house contractor to delineate the costs between tendered and non-tendered activities because, if the latter became included in the costs of the contract, it was likely to make the in-house bid uncompetitive. Herein lay a major difficulty:

What we calculated about a year ago is sort of the provisional cost of the service from the tendered side – the bit that’s going in the contract. We look[ed] at the overall cost of the service for the Contractor and the Client. The trouble is that there’s also other bits of the service that are neither Client nor Contractor. They’re non-tendered stuff like, say, the Environmental Health side, or the Policy Development side, or the Homelessness Housing Advice. All that sort of stuff, it all goes into one big bucket and it does get quite difficult to specify which costs go with that, which costs go with that bit, and which costs are milling around. (South-City Service Development Officer).

As indicated in this quotation, costs needed to be calculated for non-contracted items which the in-house teams were expected to undertake as part of their duties. The time spent on these activities then needed to be subtracted from the overall cost of the contract. Moreover, as the in-house teams utilised central support services such as personnel and payroll, those costs had to be added on to the overall cost of the contract. These experiences were just a ‘sample’ of the difficulties faced by staff. They do, however, provide an insight into the complexities of producing service specifications and contracts for white-collar services. This did not encourage a positive outlook towards CCT.

10.1.2 The Contract

The Local Government Act 1992 required housing authorities to expose 95% of their housing management activities to competition at any one time, leaving a competition-free element of 5% throughout the life of the contract. Reflecting its antipathy towards CCT, North-Met used the 5% threshold to retain services under municipal control, even though they could be subject to competition. This represented another tactic to circumvent the impact of CCT. By contrast, South-City chose to contract out a higher percentage of housing services than was legally required. As the 14 decentralised area offices already provided a comprehensive housing service, it was felt that it was more prudent to have a package of services under one contract for each area office. However, services delivered from the centre, such as housing advice and homeless applications, were not subjected to the tendering process.

Both Housing Departments wrote the contract in a flexible way to take account of the performance of the contractor and changing local circumstances. Both contracts were in operation

for three years in the first instance, with an option to renew them for a further two years. However, the key motive behind this flexibility was to allow for changing political circumstances:

... if the [Labour] Government abandons CCT, we will probably opt out in two years time. (North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

Even though North-Met had been operating the CCT regime for a year, and as discussed later, expressed some of its merits, it still wished to abandon CCT. This position was also echoed by South-City. Hence, in the view of these Departments, contracting was not considered to be an appropriate mode of service delivery.

10.1.3 The Client/Contractor Split

The structural arrangements associated with CCT provide one of the clearest examples of how the case-study authorities were attempting to mediate the impact of this policy. Unlike the residual-enabling authority which advocates a 'hard-split', North-Met opted for a 'soft-split':

We have direct labour and direct service organisation boards made up of Members, and we have a Client and General sub-committee which provides support. But members of that Client and General sub-committee also sit on the board. So there's a real mixture there – so there's no split there at all ... Where the Chair of the direct service organisation board – the Housing Management Contractor – would not be able to vote on a certain issue, he'd be present during the debate ... I can only think of two or three occasions when they've been unable to vote, otherwise they take part in a fully integrated debate. I think that's important, *we don't want to get into splits*. It's a Government enforced thing which we didn't want to get involved with in the first place. And we see no benefits for customer service at all, or our Members have seen no benefits in doing that split, so why do it ?

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

This was also the arrangement expected to occur in South-City once the contracts had been let. The rationale in both case-study areas for avoiding a hard-split was to counter the effects of fragmentation implicit in the separation of policy-making and delivery functions:

It allows that sort of comprehensive housing service, no doubt about it, ... I don't think the housing direct service organisation would have the same values if it was located somewhere else. (North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

Thus, both authorities reported that the danger of a hard-split was that it could undermine the common purpose of the Housing Departments. Relatedly, there was an implicit assumption within

both authorities that a hard-split might lead to a conflictual client/contractor relationship and an 'us and them' mentality could be fostered.⁵⁵ Finally, it was reported that a hard-split would be confusing to service-users. It would hamper the efforts being made to develop a more responsive and 'customer-oriented' housing service (see 10.4).

Although both departments opted for a soft-split, by drawing upon the work of Vincent-Jones and Harries (1996), it is suggested that the parameters of transaction governance between the client/contractor in the two Departments were varied. To use the terminology of these authors, it is suggested that contract governance in North-Met was *trilateral*, and in the case of South-City, would have been likely to be *bilateral*. This distinction refers to the extent of integrating client and contractor *operational management* functions within *common* hierarchical processes. North-Met is described as trilateral because the Director of Housing was performing a 'twin-hatted' role. Accordingly, all aspects of the CCT process, from initial planning to implementation of the contract, monitoring and problem solving, occurred within a strongly hierarchical context, even though the client and contractor functions were accounted for separately. This retained strong continuities with past ways of working:

...so we tend to carry on what we did before in terms of working. So, for example, we contract [out] the housing management, but our main contractors are very much involved with policy development and not just housing management.
(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

Moreover, the evidence suggests that not only was the contract used 'co-operatively' to regulate the behaviour of the client and contractor, it was also supplemented with informal working practices. For instance, any problems were initially solved face-to-face between the client and contractor managers. If they could not resolve the problem, then the issue was discussed by the departmental management team. Therefore, the governance of client/contractor transactions was effected not just by the terms of the contract, but also through the persistence of formal and informal hierarchical norms and working practices.

Since the contracts had not yet been let in South-City during the fieldwork stage, it is difficult to comment categorically upon the nature of client/contractor governance. However, from

⁵⁵ This was not an unwarranted fear. Several commentators have noted that the experience of CCT for blue-collar services shows that the propensity for antagonistic client/contractor relationships is increased by hard-splits. For instance, Vincent-Jones and Harries provide a detailed case-study example of a Conservative council which adopted a hard split. This separation 'was highly disruptive of pre-existing loyalties and working relationships. Colleagues became rivals; friends became strangers. Trust based on personal face-to-face encounters and a sense of common purpose was replaced by mutual suspicion ...' 1996: 195). See also Griffiths (1989: 179–80) on some of the problems that can result from a hard client-contractor split.

the overall observations made about CCT in South-City, there are two reasons why contract governance would have been likely to be *bilateral*. First, because the 14 area offices were decentralised prior to CCT, area managers had significantly devolved managerial and financial autonomy. Hence, hierarchical involvement in operational management was already weak. Second, the interviews indicated that if the in-house teams won, the co-operative client/contractor relationship would continue. As in the case of North-Met, this suggested that the contract would be supplemented with informal customs and conventions and values of trust and co-operation.

The preceding discussion has highlighted several strategies adopted by the two case-study authorities to mediate the impact of CCT. For instance, the North-Met authority only tendered the required minimum percentage of the housing service. More significant, perhaps, was the extensive client/collaboration in both Housing Departments. This was primarily motivated by a desire to ensure that the in-house contractors would win the tendering exercise and, thereby, circumvent a key objective of this policy – that is, prevent a commercial company from delivering the services. Similarly, a soft-split was retained to ensure that the culture, values and objectives of the Housing Departments would not be undermined.

10.2 The Lack of Marketisation in North-Met and South-City

In contrast to many other authorities in the UK, North-Met and South-City did receive some expressions of interest from private companies who wished to be placed on the short-list for the tendering of housing management functions. These companies were a mixture of existing building firms, several new companies established specifically to tender for housing management bids, and management consultancies that had already established a specific housing expertise by recruiting staff previously employed by other local authorities. However, as the experience of North-Met shows, receiving expressions of interest did not guarantee serious market competition. Whilst seven companies received all the contract documentation, only one external competitor actually placed a bid. According to respondents in North-Met, this was unusual for the whole region – other authorities in Greater Manchester did not receive any bids from external competitors. Thus, one of the major reasons for contracts remaining in-house was the lack of interest shown by the commercial sector. As one respondent from South-City commented, competition could not be generated because the private sector did not consider managing social housing to be a lucrative business venture:

I mean in a lot of cases, nobody has bid because people think it's too difficult. You know, they've [the private sector] thought, 'I don't want to take on these services'. ... Because they've just looked at it and thought, 'sixty tower blocks in the middle of

Sheffield, I don't know, do I want this ?' It may not be that much of an exciting business concept to people. (South-City Service Development Officer).

Given that tendering for even one bid takes considerable time and effort, an external contractor in larger authorities, such as North-Met and South-City, would have had to tender for multiple bids. Although the core of the contracts would remain the same, there were significant differences between districts in the same locality. This was also cited as a reason deterring potential private companies from placing a bid. However, even companies which made a serious effort often failed because they competed to undertake housing management in several authorities simultaneously and, therefore, could not demonstrate that they had adequate staff numbers to undertake all the work:

And what happened was that that the competitors spread themselves too thinly and they didn't win many contracts because they couldn't put the amount of effort in. It's a very time consuming and difficult job to even put in a bid ... So the handful of companies who set themselves up for Housing CCT, ... ended up doing poor bids and they lost on that basis, ... And in hindsight, they have said themselves that they should just have focused on half a dozen and gone out to win them – they would have had more chance. (North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

There was another reason given by respondents as to why bids from external competitors were often of a poorer quality. Whilst private companies have experience of letting and managing residential rented properties, they lacked the knowledge and experience of managing *social* housing estates:

But the service we provide includes things like tackling nuisance on the estate, dealing with domestic violence cases, dealing with racial harassment cases ... I mean, we own estates the size of small towns, ... you do actually become responsible for a lot of things that don't actually have a direct relationship with managing houses. You know, you start *managing the communities more or less, as well as managing the houses, and I don't think there are any private organisations who have any understanding of those issues let alone experience of dealing with them.*

... the quality aspect has come through quite clearly. There simply aren't people who have got the experience, or the knowledge to say, 'Well yeah, we'll come along and we'll deal with nuisance cases in this way, this way and this way'. And you go, 'Oh marvellous! That's much better than we do it, what a super idea.' They just aren't there. (South-City Service Development Officer).

There was a strong feeling that the private sector was poorly equipped to deal with issues which go beyond the basic management of properties. For officers this was an extremely salient issue and it is reflected in the sarcasm expressed in the quotation above. Many officers were annoyed by the fact that the complexity of providing white-collar services, such as housing, had not been recognised by central government. Rather, by indicating that the private sector could come in at the drop of a hat to appropriate these functions and perform them better made local actors feel their duties and responsibilities were considerably demeaned. Thus, the context in which CCT was extended and the rhetoric used to justify the policy clearly disenchanted many local actors responsible for implementing it.⁵⁶

Housing associations were also considered by central Government as possible challengers to an authority's housing management contract. However, as the two Housing Departments were developing partnership arrangements with housing associations (see Chapter 11), associations were reluctant to take over the management of council estates:

Large housing associations are potential tenderers, but in the main, they haven't done it. It's predatory action. It doesn't do you much good if you want to work in partnership with the local authority and you try and bid to take over *their* services.
(South-City Service Development Officer).

Moreover, since housing associations were perceived as having little experience of dealing with 'problem estates', even they were not considered as having the same level of expertise as local authorities. Ultimately, it was concluded that:

... there isn't anybody who has got better experience than local authorities.
(South-City Service: Development Officer).

This discussion has shown that the lack of interest shown by the commercial sector and housing associations was a major reason why service provision was retained in-house in North-Met and likely to have been retained in South-City. Thus, in addition to attempts to mediate the impact of CCT by the case-study authorities, the residual-enabling authority failed to materialise owing to its own inherent shortcomings.

⁵⁶ The lack of serious commercial interest shown in tendering for housing management was not unique to this study's case-study authorities. Research undertaken by Harries and Vincent-Jones (2001) also showed that in their three case-study authorities (which included two Conservative councils), housing management contracts were won in-house. This position was also common to other professional services, such as social care (see for instance, Wistow *et al.*, 1992; Charlesworth *et al.*, 1996; Lewis, 1996; Common and Flynn, 1992; Rao, 1991).

10.3 The Perception of CCT

CCT was perceived by the North-Met and South-City authorities as a very clear political attack on the role of local government. They believed that the Government's motivation was to transfer service responsibilities to the private sector and that improving the efficiency of local services was of secondary concern. Moreover, it was felt that using private companies – even if they were most cost-effective – undermined local democracy:

So there is possibly money to be saved, but at what price? It's the quality, and local democratic control and so forth.

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

It was also reported that CCT undermined the traditional welfare ethos of local government. Instead of meeting social need, CCT encouraged a 'business-oriented culture'. As discussed later, on the one hand this was considered beneficial, but on the other hand:

We're a 'people' service, and sometimes if you're just looking at costs and the money saving things, you can forget people – the customer side of things ... [and obtaining] the best value things for customers. (North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

Furthermore, there was an expressed concern that CCT encouraged the performance of local authorities to be judged primarily upon costs, rather than quality of service.

A key criticism made of CCT was that if an external competitor won the contract, this would transfer resources away from the public sector since any surpluses would be distributed to shareholders or directors of private firms. By contrast, profits accrued by in-house contractors could be reinvested to meet local housing needs. This reflected a broader concern about the divergent motives of the private and public sectors as exemplified in the following quotation:

... the motivation is different in local government because ... politicians ... [are] more concerned with social issues. So it's not all about providing the cheapest possible service, it's about providing a caring service which you wouldn't get from a private company. Their motivation is the shareholders and profit making, whereas the motivation for the local Councillors is to provide a caring service to the communities they represent. (North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

The reference to providing a 'caring' service resonates with Rhodes' (1987: 65) discussion on the three elements of a public service orientation, of which 'caring' is a core component. For Rhodes, a 'caring' service increases either the overall amount of want-satisfaction or the opportunities for

satisfying wants. It is difficult to report whether, in practice, North-Met and South-City delivered services which adhered to Rhodes' 'want-regarding principle', but the important point is the desire expressed to provide services that people value. This is compatible with the community-enabling authority and incompatible with the residual-enabling authority and its emphasis on cost control.

Despite emphasising the collaborative client/contractor relationship, respondents from North-Met also criticised CCT for creating a 'divisive' culture within the Housing Department:

... people do say, 'Oh, that's not my job, I'm a contractor, it's the client's job'.
Whereas before we were all one Department and everybody did different things.
(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

This may have been due to the fact that, in order to survive, contractors had to ensure that they made the 6% rate of return. Therefore, they were likely to resist undertaking non-contracted work if it impeded their ability to make a profit. On a related point, given that the Government believed CCT would generate savings, it is somewhat ironic that another major criticism made of contracting was the high costs of the preparation process:

X bandies around a figure of how much we've *wasted* on CCT. I think it was something like £700,000 it actually cost in terms of staff time and resources to get ready for CCT and it ended up with the same people doing the job. And it wasn't just that money spent, it was time not spent on developing our services and improving our services. *It was grossly wasteful*. (North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

A similar point was also made by respondents from South-City. As Chapter 11 demonstrates, partnership arrangements were more developed in North-Met compared with South-City. One reason for this was that the Housing Department concentrated on the preparation process of CCT and did not develop other aspects of the enabling role:

I think in some ways people have not concentrated on enabling. Because everybody's been concentrating on getting the service fit for CCT, bits of the service that aren't put out to tender have lost out and been neglected ...
(South-City Service Development Officer).

Interestingly, this draws attention to the way in which the Housing Departments did not perceive CCT to be a dimension of the enabling role as *they* interpreted it.

CCT also created considerable uncertainty regarding the employment prospects of existing staff in South-City and this generated very low staff morale. Although it was expected that the in-

house teams would win the housing contracts, this could not be guaranteed. Consequently, staff were working under constant pressure and insecurity. Even if the contracts were won in-house, on-going service and job reviews during the contract would mean a change in employment terms and conditions. Indeed, the preparation process had already involved a major restructuring of the area offices, with mid-management officers, in particular, displaced to other jobs. Although some officers would transfer onto the client side to form part of the monitoring team, it was expected that whatever the outcome of the tendering process, job losses were probable:

But eventually there is going to be a fall-out at the end. ... the reality is it means job losses. ... You can't – its very difficult to continue to provide services and to try and improve services if your staff morale is very low.

(South-City Service Development Officer).

Similarly, respondents from North-Met also reported considerable 'work related stress' within the Housing Department. However, one respondent found it difficult to assess whether this was solely due to CCT or the product of other changes within local government:

I can't say it's purely CCT. Maybe it would have happened without CCT because of the financial restrictions we're expected to work to. We're expected to do more for less and it could be just purely that. But it's running at the same time as CCT.

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

Finally, as discussed below, both authorities conceded that there were some beneficial aspects of the contracting process. Whilst this led to changes in service delivery practices, it did not detract from the overall hostility towards CCT. The quotation below captures the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments' overall assessment of CCT:

I think if you took a longer view, it [CCT] has had some good effects at a cost. *It's taken a sledgehammer to crack a nut situation.* Yes, we should have looked at how much things were costing us, and yes, we should have reviewed things, but maybe not in the way this made us do. (South-City Service Development Officer).

Thus, CCT was viewed as a costly, heavy-handed and demoralising mechanism for pushing through changes which could have been encouraged more effectively through greater voluntary emphasis on promoting quality services.

10.4 The Benefits of CCT and the Shift Towards New Public Managerialism

There were aspects of the contracting process which the North-Met and South-City authorities found to be beneficial. However, the *specific* impact of CCT is more difficult to isolate, because many of the perceived benefits of CCT were also influenced by other changes in local government. Most notably, these were continual financial constraints and the threat of tenants' choice. The combination of these factors triggered shifts in the organisation and management of the housing service. Thus, attention is now given to how CCT, alongside these other factors, stimulated the search for 'efficiency', the growth of performance measurement and, finally, the development of a 'public service orientation'. Like contracting, these themes are also associated with the new public management paradigm. Although, therefore, North-Met and South-City were opposed to contracting as a mode of service delivery, other aspects of new public managerialism were being actively endorsed.

10.4.1 The Search for 'Efficiency' and 'Value for Money'

Respondents from the North-Met authority reported that the preparation process for CCT increased awareness of the costs of individual services and motivated them to think more commercially as illustrated in the following quotation:

It's [CCT] made local authorities focus on the business side of providing services which is a double edged sword. ... But overall it has made us sharper in the way we look at best value for money ... [because] before CCT, a lot of authorities didn't actually look at basic costs of things. If you asked them how much it costs to deal with an empty property, ... [and] how much it costs to get somebody else in, they wouldn't know. It's not until you start looking at figures like that, and sometimes they're quite shocking, and you think, 'Wow'. It makes you sit back and think maybe we should be doing something a bit different to deal with that.

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

Very similar views were also expressed by respondents from South-City. Thus, in both authorities, improved knowledge of the costs of the housing services stimulated the search for cost-savings in other areas of the Housing Departments and not just in relation to the contracted services. For instance, the following chapter demonstrates that North-Met were about to integrate the procurement of services, such as landscaping and caretaking, with housing associations to achieve economies of scale, thereby generating greater cost-savings. Similarly, in South-City, one of the reasons for monitoring voluntary groups who received funding from the Department was to ensure

the Council achieved 'value for money'. Clearly, the continual reduction in housing investment cannot be isolated from this process.

10.4.2 Performance Monitoring

CCT encouraged the growth of performance monitoring and this was another manifestation of changing management practices in the transition to the enabling role. In South-City, for instance, the in-house teams had been working to performance targets even before the contracts were formally in operation. The general consensus within both Housing Departments was that:

... monitoring is a very healthy part of CCT because it's those things that you monitor that you can improve on. And we believe that. We think the information we get is all pertinent and relevant, so we do pay a lot of time and attention to it.

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

As noted earlier, in the North-Met Housing Department, the contract was supplemented with informal working practices. This was also evident in the way in which monitoring was carried out. Hence, regular meetings between the client and contractor were scheduled to discuss emerging difficulties and ways these could be resolved. Again, a similar approach was evident in the South-City Housing Department:

... performance monitoring ... has been reasonably collaborative. ... I mean the ultimate thing is both the contractor and the client should be aiming to improve the service, ... so its not in our best interests to just say, 'Well you've done really badly, so we'll penalise you' and that's it, and not speak to them about how ... we can work together to improve it. Because that's what the ultimate aim is – it's not just to have a go at the contractor.

(South-City Service Development Officer).

Furthermore, it was suggested that, when the contracts were eventually let, if the in-house teams did win, they would be subject to less monitoring than a private firm. Three reasons were given for this. First, there was a perception that 'the private sector will want to cut corners' in order to reduce costs. Second, there was a belief that, given that in-house teams had a long history of managing council properties, they were less likely to make mistakes compared with private agencies with little experience of managing welfare housing. Third, it was assumed that the in-house teams would adhere to Council policies. This would be unlikely to lead to any deliberate actions which would oppose or contradict the Council's objectives. This indicates that a more formal relationship would exist with a private firm, but as in the case of North-Met, the contract would be supplemented with informal practices and conventions with in-house teams.

There were, however, disadvantages with performance monitoring. North-Met reported that:

I think CCT has made the Contractor behave in an erratic way in that if they're not meeting their required performance which we agreed before hand on a particular area, for example, managing void properties, we take this issue up with them and say, 'What are you doing about it ?'

They will throw everybody into sorting that out, and then suddenly arrears start creeping up ... I wouldn't go so far as saying it's crisis management, because it isn't, but it's less balanced than it used to be. It's harmful in that respect. ... Therefore, ... I feel they're not being as effective as they would be without the pressure of CCT.

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

South-City reported that the disadvantage with performance monitoring was the costs it generated. The savings achieved by improving the effectiveness of service delivery were 'offset through the amount of monitoring' that was required to ensure 'that the service is being delivered properly' (South-City Service Development Officer). As in the case of searching for greater cost-efficiencies, monitoring the performance of contracted services stimulated a wider performance oriented culture. Thus, performance targets were also extended to measure the performance of the Housing Departments as a whole. This is discussed more fully in Chapter 13. Performance monitoring was also extended to the Housing Departments' external 'partners' and this is discussed in Chapter 11.

10.4.3 The Public Service Orientation

CCT contributed to a 'public service orientation', although the threat of tenants' choice, citizens' charters and vocal tenant groups were also important factors. There were several ways in which this ethos was evident in the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments. First, there was a change in culture. The discussion so far has implicitly drawn attention to a positive espousal of the public service ethic. This ethos was used to justify, or underpinned, many of the views expressed by both authorities: for instance, a desire to retain housing services in-house; the adoption of a soft-split; the opposition to private firms delivering services, the danger with being too commercially driven and so forth. There was also a clear shift in the language adopted to refer to the public: tenants were predominately referred to as 'customers' in both Departments. Second, CCT enabled the Housing Departments to become 'closer' to service users:

[CCT] makes it more like a business environment and it brings them [contractors] closer to their tenants, ... [because] it should make them justify what they do, more than they

currently do rather than just sort of doing things, it's looking at why we do that and should we be doing something else. (South-City Service Development Officer).

Beyond their tenancy agreements, tenants in both authorities had information delineating what services they could expect and the speed at which they should be delivered. It was noted that they 'didn't always have this [information] before'. Third, the preparation process created opportunities to examine policies, review procedures, and up-date policy manuals. This was considered to be one of the major gains emanating from CCT because it led to improvements in service delivery. For instance, in South-City, it was reported that the process of re-writing procedure manuals and undertaking service reviews identified area offices who were delivering services 'badly'. Further, considerable inconsistency became apparent between area offices in the ways in which they delivered the same service. Service reviews also identified 'best practices', which, hitherto, had not been incorporated across the city. The following quotation summarises how 'good' and 'bad' service delivery practices were disseminated between the area offices:

And so, some of it was like, *none* of you were doing this very well. And the other was more about sharing good practice and picking up the things that were working well in this office and giving them to those [that weren't]; picking up the things that were being done badly in that office and saying, 'Don't you dare do this!'.

(South-City Service Development Officer).

Thus, both Housing Departments reported that the CCT preparation process increased the quality and efficacy of the services provided, and thus contributed to developing a more customer-responsive outlook.

Another way that the public service orientation was evident under CCT was, in conformity with guidelines, the involvement of tenants in the CCT process. Moreover, both authorities were also incorporating service users in monitoring contractors' performance. Indeed, the North-Met Housing Department considered this so important that it was also about to establish a panel of tenants who would be trained to understand the monitoring requirements and standards of CCT in detail. These 'experts' would be able to meet with the contractors at designated intervals to discuss the services provided:

So you've got expert tenants who can stand up for themselves, know the business, can make the right challenges, won't take any fobbing off, won't be conned and the Client's there to facilitate that, make sure that happens

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

This indicates an attempt to develop performance indicators from the perspective of the service-user. It supports Tichelar's finding (1998) that many councils were developing 'home-grown' performance indicators which measured the quality and effectiveness of services, rather than just concentrating primarily on economy. Again, the public service orientation transcended the contracted services and became embedded within the overall culture of both Housing Departments. Thus, both Departments developed additional initiatives to become customer responsive. This included eliciting views on the services received, for example, through satisfaction surveys; providing 'information packs' on the services that they provided; translating leaflets and other information into ethnic minority languages; introducing formal complaints procedures; and improving reception arrangements to create a more welcoming atmosphere for service users.

10.5 Conclusions

CCT is compatible with all the enabling authorities, but it is most closely associated with the residual-enabling authority and the Conservative reform agenda. At one level, the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments' interpretation of enabling, in the context of service contracting, was 'narrow' in comparable terms to the Conservative vision of enabling. Theoretically, the community-enabling authority judges the role of the market on its capacity to contribute to wider objectives. The two Departments did not judge contracting in these terms, but instead dismissed it as a mode of service delivery under most circumstances. This was comparable to the way in which the residual-enabling authority dismisses direct provision. Hence, in line with the traditional authority, support for direct provision remained strong. Moreover, there were other continuities with the traditional role. This was most notable around the persistence of hierarchical working practices, despite the client/contractor split.

In other respects, however, fundamental shifts in the organisation and management of the housing services were evident. Particularly important was the development of new public management techniques and there are two points to be made here. First, although new public managerialism is often regarded as centrally imposed, North-Met and South-City provide examples of local authorities internally generating changes in service management. Hoggett's (1991: 248) observation that there has been a 'process of management learning which moves backwards and forwards between local and central levels of government' is pertinent here. Second, whilst much of new public management is derived from public choice theory, other initiatives in local government which appear to be compatible with this paradigm exemplified a different ideological inspiration. The public service orientation and the desire expressed by both Housing Departments to maintain/enhance quality services are compatible with what Lowndes (1997: 52-3) has identified as the 'community-based' element of new public managerialism. So at another level, the

community dimension to providing services suggests the practice of the community-enabling authority.

In short, this chapter has shown the disparity between local interpretations of enabling and the residual-enabling authority favoured by the Conservatives. However, this did not translate into the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments adopting the community-enabling role in its pure form. In practice, a mixture of the traditional and community-enabling authorities was evident.

CHAPTER 11:

ENABLING AS PARTNERSHIPS

This chapter examines the shift from direct service delivery to partnership working within the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments. This took two forms: bilateral and multilateral. Multilateral partnerships were composed of representatives from the public, quasi-public, private and voluntary sectors. They operated at 'arms-length' from the local authorities and were confined to the sphere of urban regeneration. Importantly, these partnerships were 'mandatory' in the sense that such structures were a necessary precondition for success in central Government's urban policy funding regimes. Bilateral partnerships, by contrast, refer to relationships that the Housing Departments had with only one economic sector, even though there was often more than one agency in dialogue with the case-study authorities at any one time. For instance, the South-City Housing Association Partnership was composed of 37 housing associations and the Housing Department.

This Chapter is divided into six main parts. The first considers the context within which partnership arrangements were formed. The second and third parts of the Chapter examine the rather less well-developed relationships that the two Housing Departments had with other service departments and the private sector respectively. Parts four and five of the Chapter then discuss their more substantive relationships with the voluntary sector and housing associations. Having discussed the nature of bilateral partnerships, the final part of the Chapter moves on to examine multi-lateral partnerships in the sphere of urban regeneration. Here, North-Met and South-City's differing responses to City Challenge are outlined and the way in which this shaped the subsequent delivery arrangements for the implementation of housing renewal programmes.

11.1 The Context of Partnership Working

The data from the fieldwork revealed two main themes here and each is now considered in turn. The first related to the erosion of the paternalist ethos and this was identified by respondents as a necessary precursor for shifting the direct mode of service delivery to enabling others. The second related to the motives underpinning the formation of partnership arrangements and the way in which these changed as the partnerships evolved.

Respondents from both case-study authorities reported that in shifting to the enabling role, the ethos of paternalism was no longer relevant in their respective Housing Departments. Their commitment to developing the public service orientation, as discussed in Chapter 10, was identified as one manifestation of this. The other way in which paternalism was perceived to have

been eroded was the willingness to work with other agencies. This was viewed as an acceptance that local authorities were not always the best organisations to deliver services directly. These views were only implicitly made clear in the South-City authority, but, as the quotations below exemplify, they were much more explicitly articulated in North-Met:

... this Department has taken a fairly proactive role about enabling ... I think there's an acceptance now that local authorities cannot do everything and shouldn't do everything. That's a rather traditional, paternalistic attitude of local authorities ... So we generally embrace this [enabling] as an authority, ... and so we're increasingly trying to look at new initiatives which involve working with others.

(North-Met Senior Research and Development Manager).

If we'd still had this archaic view of the monolithic organisation knowing everything, then we would be dead. Enabling involves a recognition that we haven't got the answers, it's a recognition that people out there have a lot to contribute and we can learn from them and work in partnership. And if we're ever going to address the issues of the Borough, we have to do that. We might be the drivers in some ways, but we're not the service providers, we're the fixers.

(North-Met Project Manager for 3Bs Regeneration Area).

Respondents stressed that local authorities needed to learn from other agencies, either about new forms of service delivery, or about different types of need. For instance, in South-City, it was reported that the Housing Department required the voluntary sector's knowledge about supported housing issues so that appropriate service provision could be made.

Turning now to examine the motives underpinning the formation of partnerships, respondents from both authorities reported that they were initially formed to meet the DoE's performance criteria stipulated in the 1991 guidance notes (see Chapter 4). As one respondent explained:

In a way, enabling is very much the way we've been pushed through finance and governing and the fact that we actually score points with the DoE. So it's to our own advantage to enable because we get more financial support ... Whether or not all this would have happened had Government legislation not forced it that way – probably not.

(South-City Enabling Team Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

Beyond the annual HIP allocations, respondents from both Departments also reported that by working in partnership they could access other funding sources. This was corroborated by external partners in both authorities who reported that the Housing Departments had entered into joint-

working relationships for financial motives. To take just one example of this viewpoint from an external ‘partner’, one housing association respondent reported that the North-Met Housing Department:

... could see that the Housing Corporation are holding a lot of money in the Approved Development Programme, and with diminishing HIP, they needed to tap into that and harness it as much as they could.

(North-Met Greenwood Housing Association: Chief Executive).

These quotations are consistent with the ‘resource-dependency’ theory of partnerships which suggests that inter-organisational relationships are developed for opportunistic motives. Officers in both authorities, however, stressed that as the partnerships evolved and successful relationships had been established with external agencies, both in terms of personal relationships and in terms of successful outputs, financial motives were no longer so salient. Instead, they emphasised the ‘additionality’ and ‘synergy’ that was derived from working collaboratively. This referred to the belief that more could be achieved by two or more sectors working together, rather than separately. This was consistent with the ‘collaborative’ theory of partnerships:

I think for many local authorities, certainly in South-City, collaborative working hasn’t been driven by some kind of deep, philosophical belief – although I think that’s perhaps come along afterwards. (South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division).

Despite acknowledging the positive benefits that were accrued from working collaboratively, officers from both authorities also reported that there was still a role for local authorities as direct service providers, where possible and appropriate. Both of the issues that have been discussed in this section are consistent with the practice of the community-enabling authority.

11.2 Enabling as Inter-Departmental Working

The enabling role is generally associated with councils facilitating service provision through external agencies. Respondents from North-Met and South-City, however, also identified enabling as working collaboratively with other departments within their respective authorities:

... enabling isn’t just enabling with the external agencies and customers, it’s enabling with us own departments ... So, I and other officers from this section work on inter-departmental, external, multi-agency groups to develop projects. That sort of thing didn’t really happen eight years ago. So that’s another facet of how the enabling role is bringing change. (North-Met Project Manager for 3Bs Regeneration Area).

Respondents identified urban regeneration as a key focal point for various departments to collaborate and develop integrated area programmes. Legislation was also cited as an impetus for encouraging greater cross-departmental collaboration. For instance, the NHS and Community Care Act required the housing departments and social services to liaise more effectively than hitherto.

Beyond the stimulus of central government requirements, there were other ways in which inter-departmental working was evident. For example, South-City's Housing Department was committed to encouraging greater tenant participation, especially with social groups that were considered to be 'under-represented' within the existing structures (see also Chapter 12). As 'conventional' participation strategies were considered to be ineffective, an officer from the community development section was due to run a training course for housing officers on how to mobilise local participation. This was explicitly identified as being very 'innovative' and a reflection of new patterns of working under the enabling role. In the North-Met authority, production of the *Framework* document, a borough-wide prospectus modelled on City Pride, illustrated inter-departmental working at the corporate level (see Chapter 13).

Whilst inter-departmental working was considered important, there were limitations to this in practice. Respondents from both authorities admitted that the Housing Departments had stronger relationships with external agencies than with their own internal departments. In South-City, this was primarily because of the long-standing hostility between Estée County Council and South-City Council. Hence, its history of working with departments, such as social services and education, in the old county council were 'barely existent'⁵⁷ and transition to a unitary status had not fully overcome these divisions. In North-Met, it was reported that the authority had a 'long history of having very strong service departments'⁵⁸ so that a 'clash of cultures' and 'professional jealousies' were cited as sources of inter-departmental rivalry. The most important factor undermining collaborative working, however, appeared to be 'bureaucratic rivalry':

... social services aren't willing to put money into something they might see as a housing project, even though it has a social services element, and equally we're not willing, if social services are looking at something, to necessarily use our money there, even though there's a housing element. There's suspicion, is it another department trying to get their hands on 'our money' to provide something that they should have provided anyway? It's that sort of feeling.

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

⁵⁷ South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division.

⁵⁸ North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal Division.

The limitations of inter-departmental working suggested that, whilst there had been a clear decline in direct provision, the tradition of departmentalism remained strong within both case-study authorities.

11.3 Enabling Partnerships with the Private Sector

Joint-working arrangements between the two Housing Departments and the private sector are now examined. The discussion is sub-divided into two sections. The first examines partnerships with private developers engaged in the provision of new-build. The second examines partnerships with private landlords engaged in the provision of rented accommodation.

11.3.1 Partnerships with Private Developers

Municipal housing is now marked by the inability of local councils to undertake new-build directly. As Goodlad explains, in their enabling role, housing departments can achieve affordable housing by working in partnership with private developers using a range of options from the planning system. Out of the nine policy options discussed by Goodlad (1993: 63–74), the main mechanisms for achieving affordable housing that the respondents identified were the use of Section 106 planning agreements and cross-subsidy. The former refers to a situation when planning permission is only granted in exchange for a negotiated provision of affordable homes built by the developer and sold to the local authority or a housing association. The latter refers to the sale of discounted land to the planning authority or a housing association and for them to build social housing.

In the present study, despite evidence of planning agreements and cross-subsidy schemes, in practice, relationships between the Housing Departments and private developers were limited for three reasons. First, joint-working agreements with private developers only emerged when a planning application had been made. Consequently, a relationship was established between the planning department and the private developer, and not with the Housing Departments. Second, despite the obvious overlap they have in this area, the planning and housing departments appeared to operate in isolation from each other. This undermined the scope for the Housing Departments to interact with private developers. Third, partnerships with private developers were reduced by the inadequacies of the planning system itself. It was found that neither of the two Housing Departments considered the planning system to be a reliable mechanism by which to enable new-build on any significant scale to meet local needs. Therefore, they did not seek alliances with private developers. Finally, it should also be noted that local authority and private developer relationships appeared to conform to the practice of the residual-enabling authority. They were limited to ‘one-off’ deals and there was no attempt to incorporate developers into wider debates regarding local housing needs.

11.3.2 Partnerships with Private Landlords

Respondents from both Housing Departments reported that past relationships with private landlords had been restricted to regulating the latter's activities. In recent years, however, there had been a shift in attitude towards them in which attempts had been made to move beyond an enforcement approach:

I think 5 years ago, certainly 10 years ago in South-City ,... a punitive approach [was adopted] to the private sector. I think there's been a shift, there's greater recognition of the need to embrace the private sector in a positive and creative way.
(South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division).

I think that we've learned quite a lot from the voluntary sector which we're now trying to employ with private landlords ... the voluntary sector's given us a nice easy way of learning techniques of involving people before you actually go out and deal with people like private landlords who'd be a different kettle of fish.
(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

The rationale for working with private landlords was similar in both Departments. Given that some of the poorest housing conditions were generally found in private stock, respondents reported that a 'collaborative' approach would be conducive to improving standards of accommodation. Furthermore, since many landlords housed people in receipt of housing benefit, it was argued that:

... you can either ignore them [private landlords] in which case you're doing the customers a disservice, or you can try to improve standards by bringing them on board, getting a true picture, and together working out the problems ...
(North-Met Bond Board: Project Co-ordinator: voluntary group).

Both Housing Departments also had similar initiatives involving private landlords. For instance, they both had some form of deposit bond scheme, several projects to bring empty properties back into use (which also included housing associations), and they were both planning a landlord registration scheme that would eventually become incorporated into the newly established common housing registers (see 11.5.3).

The methods that were being developed by the two Housing Departments to engage private landlords transcended their (traditional) regulatory role and invoked a more 'collaborative' relationship. For instance, North-Met had been using the North West Landlords' Forum to communicate with private landlords on a collective basis and bi-monthly newsletters were sent to individual landlords. Attempts were also being made to incorporate them into wider policy

debates; for instance, the latest Homeless Seminar included landlord representatives. Plans were also underway to establish a local Landlords' Forum to 'raise awareness, explore training, information, resources and focus on the needs of landlords and tenants'.⁵⁹ Similarly, in 1996/7, South-City ran a *Landlords' Fair* in order to:

- share information and develop consultation with landlords;
- update landlords on their 'duty of care' to their tenants;
- present the services provided by South-City Housing Department as helpful to landlords to assist them to fulfil their responsibilities and;
- encourage the improvement and maintenance of housing standards.

Nearly 300 private landlords attended the event and it was hoped that the contact developed through the fair would lead to more formal links. Furthermore, in 1993, South-City developed a 'self-certification' scheme for landlords responsible for Houses in Multiple Occupation. Whilst this was considered to be 'an informal or partnership approach', enforcement powers continued to be used where it was felt landlords had failed 'to meet minimum legal standards'.⁶⁰

The North-Met and South-City Housing Departments' approach to private landlords had shifted in two ways from their traditional role. First, there was a greater acceptance of the role of private landlords in providing accommodation than hitherto. Second, in light of this pragmatic acceptance, there was an attempt to foster a co-operative alliance that transcended the regulatory approach associated with the traditional role, and the instrumentalist relationship associated with the residual-enabling model. However, as demonstrated in South-City, this did not result in a relaxation of enforcement powers and duties. The regulatory role, therefore, became intertwined with a collaborative approach.

10.4 Enabling Partnerships with the Voluntary Sector

There was a dramatic increase in 'specialist' housing services provided by voluntary agencies in partnership with the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments. It is these arrangements which are now examined. The discussion is sub-divided into seven sections. The first differentiates the approach of both these Departments to the voluntary sector from the practice of the residual-enabling authority. The second examines the role of designated housing officers who, in their respective authorities, acted as the main link between the Housing Departments and the voluntary sector. The relationship between councillors and the voluntary sector is also briefly explored. The commitment to work collaboratively with this sector was most clearly embodied in

⁵⁹ (North-Met Housing Strategy, 1997–2000: 18).

the establishment of joint local authority and voluntary sector forums. These were referred to as the 'North-Met Voluntary-Sector-Consortium' and the 'South-City Supported-Housing-Forum' and they are examined in section three. Sections four and five examine the way in which the two Departments funded and monitored those voluntary groups that were engaged in housing provision. Section six then identifies some revealing criticisms made by the voluntary groups regarding the enabling role of the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments. Following on from this, the final section examines the unbalanced relationship between the two Departments and the voluntary sector.

11.4.1 Valuing Distinctive Qualities of the Voluntary Sector

Local authorities adopting a market-based perspective value the voluntary sector because of its potential to *replace* statutory provision. By comparison, the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments reported that they valued the voluntary sector's intrinsic characteristics which made it particularly well suited to *complement* statutory services. For instance, both Departments valued the sector's ability to provide specialist services not available elsewhere. It was reported that this gave the voluntary sector expert knowledge:

When you come down to pure specialist support, that's where the voluntary sector really comes into its own. If we wanted to discuss supported issues or mental health, for instance, and we got together what we thought was a representative group of experts to give us their opinions on it, they would predominantly be what I would call the voluntary sector. (South-City Enabling Team Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

Due to their interaction with clients on a more informal basis and through their outreach work, it was argued that voluntary groups also played a valuable role in providing services to individuals who were unwilling to access statutory services. Furthermore, the sector was also valued for being able to design and deliver services tailored to specific needs, rather than providing them on a uniform basis. The quotation from North-Met captures the general sentiment expressed by both councils regarding the utility of working with the voluntary sector:

... the advantages are really the diversity and the flexibility of the service. I mean forget that you're the local authority and just look at the overall housing service including everybody, [all the voluntary agencies]. I think the flexibility that you've got in that is good, it's really good.

I think the sort of synergy that you get from looking at issues with people coming from different perspectives – it's something that you wouldn't get without a healthy voluntary sector. (North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

⁶⁰ (South-City Housing Strategy, 1998–2001: 48).

The voluntary sector's value base was considered an additional asset by both Departments. Its ability to empower people through self-help, its role in facilitating user-participation and its philanthropic ideals, were all qualities held in high esteem. In this context, voluntary organisations were supported because they were perceived to be engaged in community development. Thus, the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments viewed the voluntary sector as a considerable asset to complement statutory services because of its inherent characteristics and its potential to facilitate community development. This view is consistent with that of a community-enabling authority.

11.4.2 The Role of Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinators and Councillors

To reflect their commitment to developing collaborative relationships with voluntary groups, both Housing Departments each designated one housing officer who acted as the main link between them and the voluntary sector. These officers were responsible for co-ordinating voluntary sector activity within their respective localities, allocating grants, monitoring voluntary groups and servicing the voluntary sector forums. Furthermore, in North-Met, the voluntary sector co-ordinator also saw his role as an advocate for voluntary groups. For example, he successfully prevented the amalgamation of two voluntary agencies that provided accommodation to young people, despite recommendations from the Director of Housing and councillors who believed that this would have reduced the Department's expenditure. The designation of officers with a significant amount of time to devote to voluntary sector issues was indicative of the community-enabling authority in practice.⁶¹

The role that councillors played in relation to the voluntary sector differed in the two case-study authorities. In South-City, political support for voluntary organisations did not translate into direct contact with elected members. By comparison, there was considerable dialogue between councillors and voluntary groups in North-Met. This was because voluntary groups specifically requested councillor representation on their management committees. The quotation below identifies the practical ways in which councillors were engaged with voluntary organisations:

There are two elected members on the Board who were nominated through the Council procedure and they are committed to the projects ... we had a sort of away day which elected members were involved in. They're actually part of looking at where the

⁶¹ Research undertaken by Bemrose and MacKeith regarding local authority and voluntary sector relationships differentiated between those authorities displaying 'good practice' and those which viewed the sector as a threat to be controlled or as a source of low cost service provision (1996: 34). North-Met and South-City's designation of housing officers corresponds to authorities displaying the 'good practice' identified by the authors.

business plan for the project's going and how that's being formulated, what to apply for in terms of lottery grants, where other funding can be obtained. So I think their role is going to be developing more. (North-Met FASE Project Manager: voluntary group).

11.4.3 The Role of Voluntary Sector Forums

Before proceeding to discuss the role of the voluntary sector forums, it is useful to briefly outline their origins and membership. The North-Met Voluntary-Sector-Consortium was formed in the early 1990s by council officers in order to co-ordinate the plethora of voluntary organisations and schemes that were beginning to emerge within the district:

... there was a great big sort of splurge of new organisations and schemes, and there was a real need to co-ordinate what was going on, share information, have some focal point for training, finding out what other people are doing, good practice, bad practice, getting some sort of consistency around referrals to different schemes and all that sort of stuff. So the Voluntary-Sector-Consortium was established and it's just grown and mushroomed.

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

By 1997, the Consortium represented approximately 30 organisations. It had a steering group which set the agenda and managed the Consortium's work. It was composed of two council officers and three representatives from the voluntary sector. Alongside the main Consortium, sub-groups were established in response to an arising issue (such as how to advertise services to young people) and dissolved when appropriate.

The South-City Supported-Housing-Forum was formed by supported housing associations who were managing agents for the developing associations registered with the Housing Corporation. Initially, these voluntary groups were also part of the South-City Housing Association Partnership (see 11.5), but they felt that supported housing issues were being marginalised by the larger housing associations. Consequently, they wanted to initiate their own forum because:

[we] wanted to give ourselves a collective voice to respond to other agencies, to strengthen our partnership relationship with local authorities, and to support agencies in developing good practice ... So ... a forum was set up, like a sister to the South-City Housing Association Partnership and it's been very, very effective.

(South-City First Step: Director: Ex-Chair of Supported-Housing-Forum).

By 1997, the Forum comprised 42 voluntary agencies. It met every quarter to discuss management issues, implications of any new legislation and strategic responses to special needs housing. It also

had a steering group which met every six weeks to manage the Forum's work. This was composed of the Housing Department's voluntary sector co-ordinator, four nominated representatives from the voluntary agencies and one representative each from social services and the Health Authority.

The Forums promoted a formal mechanism for dialogue between the two Housing Departments and the voluntary sector. They played a significant role in influencing the Departments' housing policies. This worked in two ways. Either the Housing Departments consulted Forum members on policies that they were introducing, or the Forums could lobby the Departments on issues they viewed as important. For instance, the South-City Forum persuaded the Housing Committee to change its mind about having a decentralised strategy for supported housing needs. Instead, the Forum produced its own supported strategy, presented it to the Housing Committee and it eventually became incorporated into the overall housing strategy.⁶² By engaging voluntary agencies in local policy-making, the North-Met and South-City authorities demonstrated that the network mode governed the relationship between the two sectors. This was reinforced by the way in which the Forums were perceived in the case-study localities as important places for building personal relationships and generating trust. This allowed network-style relationships to operate alongside more formal ways of working. The following quotation from North-Met captures the sentiment expressed by respondents from both areas and sectors:

Now, what the Voluntary-Sector-Consortium does – the most important thing it does which we don't recognise in the formal sense – is the bit about making the thing work ... You have an opportunity by-monthly where you can meet everybody on the forum ... We start with mingling, which is very middle-class, but its about people talking and having a coffee. *And that's when I would say a lot of business is done, but not recognised.* It's like you know, 'I've got a problem with this, will you solve this etc.' ... So, those sorts of networks are vital. That's what the Voluntary-Sector-Consortium has done consistently.

(North-Met Accommodation Officer, Ex-Chair of Voluntary-Sector-Consortium).

Overall, both authorities perceived the Forums as leading to a stronger, more informed and vocal voluntary sector and this was also corroborated by voluntary groups. One respondent from South-City acknowledged that, individually, they had an unbalanced relationship with the Housing Department but, collectively through the Forum, the voluntary sector was a strong body:

Housing Services needs the Supported-Housing-Forum's approval in some way. As a forum we're a powerful group. I think what has been good is that we've shown

ourselves to be effective, so although individual organisations may have difficulties, if we wanted to as a group, we have got the political will to say ‘we don’t agree with this’ and collectively, if it ever happened that we fell out with the local authority, you know, questions would be asked.

(South-City First Step: Director: Ex-Chair of Supported-Housing-Forum).

So far, the discussion has shown that the relationships between the two Housing Departments and the voluntary sector were governed by the network mode. Yet, simultaneously, there was also evidence of the hierarchical and market modes of governance. For example, as voluntary organisations were becoming increasingly integral to service provision, both Departments emphasised the importance of raising standards within the sector. The Forums facilitated this by identifying and disseminating good and bad practice. As the quotation below indicates, there was a concern that voluntary agencies did not have the appropriate structures in place to operate effectively:

We recognised that some of the management practices of some of the members may be a bit doubtful so we developed a group good practice guide. That covers performance monitoring, constitution, objectives etc. We put it into a very simple document which just talks general principles in all those areas which voluntary groups should be doing.

Things like that help the voluntary sector to pull themselves together, ...

(South-City Enabling Team Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

The North-Met Housing Department also disseminated good practice guides, but it also provided training to Consortium members as an additional way of raising standards. Practices such as these have been interpreted as the ‘formalisation’ of the voluntary sector (Lewis, 1994) and they are indicative of the hierarchical mode of governance. Moreover, the Department also utilised the Consortium to co-ordinate the services provided by the voluntary sector in order to become more cost-effective:

... the need for that sort of [co-ordinated] approach stems first of all from the financial climate, which means that you’ve actually got to work better together to get more for less basically, and cut out all duplication. I mean, when I came into this job I found it extremely bizarre that North-Met-AP would be looking into a direct access for beds for young people, as would be FASE, and as would be YAP – all independently and separately from each other. And it’s that sort of thing that we’re trying to cut out really.

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

⁶² The Forum had also lobbied other council departments beyond the Housing Department. For instance it persuaded Social Services to incorporate supported housing issues in its Community Care Plan which it had failed to do beforehand.

This was a continuation of the search for financial efficiency identified in Chapter 10 and it is characteristic of the market mode of governance.

11.4.4 The Practice of Funding Voluntary Groups

Although the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments aspired to supporting a diverse voluntary sector as an end in itself, officers in both authorities were under explicit political instruction to fund those organisations that helped meet the Departments' strategic aims and objectives. Aside from this similarity, the actual practice of funding individual agencies differed between the authorities and each is now examined.

In North-Met, officers and respondents from the voluntary sector reported that individual voluntary organisations were often in competition with each other for funding and that this had the potential of undermining collaborative relationships within the Voluntary-Sector-Consortium. As the authority did not wish to exacerbate this any further, it did not establish competitive tendering exercises for proposed initiatives that it was seeking to fund. Instead, such initiatives were discussed at the Consortium to ascertain whether any of the voluntary groups expressed an interest in delivering them. Officers were under political instruction to limit competition between agencies as far as possible:

Councillors have a clear policy that things should be collaborative rather than competitive. They're firmly against CCT, firmly against local housing companies and the same sort of ethos comes into the voluntary sector ... Councillors have also realised that there's no need to get into that [competitive tendering] because there is enough need out there that we need the broad range of agencies doing slightly different things.

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

On the other hand, councillors also emphasised the necessity to ensure that the authority was obtaining 'value for money'. Hence, it was reported that voluntary organisations were providing a higher level of service without an increase in funding:

... it's usually the case of, 'Right, if we agree to continue to keep the scheme running and provide some of the money, what are we going to get for it?', which is what the councillors want to see ever more, ... this year certainly, we're going to get a lot more out of the voluntary sector for the same money we paid last year. We haven't upped the grant, but we're going to get a lot more benefit from it.

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

Thus, whilst North-Met adopted an informal approach to funding voluntary groups that was consistent with the practice of the community-enabling authority, cost-efficiency techniques associated with the market mode of governance were also evident.

In South-City, officers reported that proposed schemes were increasingly being funded through a competitive tendering process:

... we're moving away from what was essentially a grant giving process, to being more focused on priorities and commissioning ... So that rather than, as we did in the past, give an organisation say £40,000, ... Now, however, we're looking at the strategy on homelessness, picking out particular areas, listing those for funding and then inviting applications. So, rather than people just continually getting grants because they did in the past, Members are saying we want to know what the key priorities in the City are, we want to see funding provided for specific services. So it's a much more commissioning basis. (South-City Enabling Team Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

This was corroborated by voluntary groups who stated that they frequently entered into 'beauty competitions' to qualify for funding. Hence, the South-City Housing Department's shift towards funding voluntary groups on a competitive basis indicated that, here, its approach to the voluntary sector invoked the practice of the residual-enabling authority. Interestingly, South-City's rationale for competitive tendering was to avoid duplication, but North-Met used the Voluntary-Sector-Consortium to avoid this. Thus, both authorities expressed the same objective, but used different strategies for achieving it.

11.4.5 The Practice of Monitoring Voluntary Groups

Respondents from the two Housing Departments reported that, in recent years, monitoring the performance of voluntary groups had increased in importance. This allowed them to analyse the cost-efficiency, effectiveness and quality of the service provided. Despite reporting the same rationale for performance monitoring, as it is now discussed, the way in which they carried this out was different. Possible explanations for the variation in approach are also suggested.

In North-Met, the voluntary-sector co-ordinator examined each scheme, every quarter, to identify any potential problems and to ensure that the voluntary groups were not in financial trouble. Emergent issues were then informally discussed. This was augmented with quantitative performance indicators, but again, this was generally undertaken informally. Minimum 'paperwork' was emphasised and this suggested that trust and personal relationship were important aspects of the monitoring process:

... a lot of the monitoring can be done relatively easily without any formal structures. I mean, the Homeless Manger can easily get all the statistics and highlight any problems to me, and then we have a chat about it with the voluntary sector organisation and that's it! It doesn't need to be any more than that really – we try and keep it at an informal level.

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

Hence, the North-Met Housing Department's approach to monitoring voluntary groups was aligned with the network mode of governance and invoked the practice of the community-enabling authority.

In South-City, it was reported that, compared to the past, voluntary groups were monitored much more formally and stringently. This was corroborated by voluntary groups who were critical of the emphasis given to quantitative, rather than qualitative performance indicators. It was argued that this did not give an accurate picture of the quality of the service provided, nor did it take into account any contextual information, and thus, judgements about poor performance were based upon insufficient information. Indeed, the voluntary groups suggested that the Housing Department was more concerned with retaining good relations with the Housing Corporation than listening to them. For example, under the RSI, when targets were not met by the delivering voluntary agencies, the Department threatened to withdraw their funding:

I mean, for example, under RSI, the Housing Corporation are writing heavy letters saying you're not meeting your targets in terms of spend, you're not satisfying the timetable. But there's real reasons why that isn't happening. Consequently, one of the feelings from the voluntary associations is, there should be a partnership there with Housing Services, rather than the City Council saying, 'Okay, you don't deliver [so] we're going to give your grant someone else'.

That's not the right way to do it. But certainly, it feels like they can get into a punitive kind of parental role. *That's the kind of shadow side of the enabling role, isn't it?* You know they enable, but it's like there's a contractual relationship there.

(Director of Second Step, Ex Chair of South-City Supported-Housing-Forum).

This suggests that performance monitoring in this Housing Department was aligned with the market mode of governance and invoked the practice of the residual-enabling authority.

There may have been two factors in play which accounts for the variation between the two Housing Departments' approach to monitoring voluntary groups. First, the role of the voluntary-sector co-ordinators differed. The officer in North-Met was, perhaps, more committed to the sector. He explicitly valued its non-bureaucratic status and argued that too much formal

monitoring had the danger of eroding some of the voluntary sector's defining qualities – this was not expressed in South-City. Moreover, it is also suggested that he had greater managerial autonomy and was able to decide the format in which monitoring should be undertaken. By contrast, the South-City officer appeared to have less autonomy since the approach taken to monitoring was decided elsewhere in the organisation. A second reason for the variation is that North-Met may not have actually required detailed monitoring. This is because councillors and officers were members of the management committees on all the voluntary organisations that they funded. Hence, monitoring could be carried out through informal, ongoing contact.

11.4.6 The Voluntary-Sector's Criticisms of North-Met and South-City's Enabling Role

Voluntary agencies reported that the Housing Departments within their respective localities had clearly shifted from their traditional relationship with them, but they also made some revealing criticisms which are examined here. One criticism made of North-Met concerned the proliferation of different multi-disciplinary groups. Each service department had some form of partnership arrangement that incorporated voluntary agencies. For instance, the Voluntary-Sector-Consortium specialised in housing issues and was consequently led by the Housing Department, whereas the 'Youth Strategy Group' was led by the Chief Executive's office and had a 'strong education and arts involvement'. This led to numerous meetings that were not always productive. A further criticism concerned the lack of transparency within partnerships and the limitations of accountability:

I mean, who actually decides policy, who are they [partnerships] accountable to and how do you get to them? There isn't a clear political process for that. It's very much who you know, the links that you build up and networks and all of that sort of stuff. It's not a transparent process. It doesn't mean you can't be effective in it, but it takes a long time to build up the contacts and understand the games, ...

(North-Met YAP Co-ordinator: voluntary group).

Thus, as noted by Lowndes and Skelcher (1998), the networking mode of governance may have hierarchies imposed upon it, leading to the formation of 'inner' and 'outer' networks and the exclusion of some potential partners.

Voluntary organisations in South-City expressed a wish for greater clarity on the new role that the Housing Department was developing for itself, what this entailed and the implications it had for their relationship with the Department. Overall, they reported confusion over the multiple aspects of the enabling role. On the one hand, the Housing Department had proved its desire to

work collaboratively and they valued the personal relationships that had been built up as a result. On the other hand, they reported that the Department could also adopt a ‘purchasing’ and ‘controlling’ role which, for them, seemed to undermine and contradict the collaborative approach:

... although there are many examples of collaborative working, there needs to be greater clarity on what they are doing, what their role is. Because sometimes it’s still confused ... the critical point is the confusion between them being a purchaser or a controller of resource, in balance to their role as being an enabler. If the participants on a particular group think they’re an enabler, at a critical point, if they become a controller then that causes confusion and some tension.

(South-City Link-Up: Director: Current Chair of Supported-Housing-Forum).

Furthermore, voluntary groups identified the authority’s reorganisation to a unitary status and the preparation for CCT as principal factors that had put the Housing Department under considerable stress. Despite acknowledging these pressures, they criticised the Department for not keeping them informed on how these changes would affect their relationship, and perhaps more significantly, for not enabling sufficiently:

I think South-City has got to lead much more ... It feels like the Forum has taken a lot, it’s been the lead agency, like saying ‘What do you think about this? This is what we think should happen’ ...

I suppose the Forum’s actually been enabling Housing Services to think about the best way forward, rather than the other way round.

(South-City First Step: Director: Ex-Chair of Supported-Housing-Forum).

11.4.7 The Voluntary Sector: Partner or Agent of the State ?

There was an unbalanced relationship between the Housing Departments and the voluntary sector which manifested itself in several ways. First, it was noted earlier that officers were under political instruction to only fund those agencies that helped meet the Departments’ objectives. This enabled both authorities to have considerable influence over the strategic decision-making of the voluntary sector. For instance, several agencies reported that they had deliberately re-structured their organisations to allocate staff time for ‘networking’ purposes and specifically within the context of the local authority’s enabling role. The following quotation provides one example of this:

... we deliberately re-structured two or three years ago to deal with a changing environment in which we need to be involved in lots of the network groups, ... So that as well as myself, there are two senior managers who spend a lot of time in meetings with the local authority ... And that was deliberately within the context of the local

authority being an enabler authority so that we really needed to respond and be involved with them in continual dialogue ...
(South-City Crocus Supported Housing Association: Director).

Consequently, managers of voluntary groups cannot be seen as free agents, 'but are linked in an ongoing relationship with government, which at once constrains their behaviour and provides certain incentives for managerial action' (Smith, 1994: 328; quoted in Rochester, 1996: 32). Second, respondents reported that as voluntary groups were expanding into service provision, and as they were more financially dependent upon local authorities, there had been a reciprocal decline in their advocacy and campaigning functions. Where the advocacy function did remain, not only was this no longer the defining function, but the expression this took had also shifted:

... when Crocus was first set up, it was a campaigning organisation, now it's moved into being a service provider. And although we do all kinds of campaigning, we see that more as commentating rather than campaigning, and providing education rather than protest ... We don't campaign *against*, we campaign *with*, and the 'with' includes local authorities. (South-City Crocus Supported Housing Association: Director).

Importantly, this quotation suggests that the advocacy function was no longer being carried out independently. This suggests that the independence of the voluntary sector to comment critically upon local government was being eroded:

... you can't bite the hand that feeds you, you can only nibble the hand that feeds you at best ... (South-City Crocus Supported Housing Association: Director).

Other commentators have also noted that, as voluntary agencies take on the state's delivery functions, their defining qualities such as encouraging community development and participation are threatened (Rochester, 1996: 29; Todd and Ware, 2000: 244, 247). This undermines the Communitarian idea of utilising voluntary groups as 'mediating structures' between the individual and state (Berger and Neuhaus, 1977; c.f. Parsons, 1995: 502). Hence, their critical function as a means of 'citizenship' and 'empowerment' carries the danger of being eroded. Third, as discussed earlier, the 'formalisation' of the voluntary sector has the danger of eroding many of the distinctive qualities of voluntary agencies. DiMaggio and Powell's concept of *institutional isomorphism*, whereby one unit in a population is forced to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions, is particularly relevant in this context (1983; c.f. Hoggett, 1996: 16). Voluntary organisations that are highly dependent on government funding may come to resemble the public sector providers they replace (Lewis, 1994). In consequence this may increase the control over those organisations by the state (Hoggett, 1996). Ultimately, it can be argued that as

voluntary agencies have increasingly taken on the state's delivery functions, they have 'become agents of the State' (Waine, 1992: 86).

11.5 Enabling Partnerships With Housing Associations

The North-Met and South-City Housing Departments stressed that the annual decline in HIP allocations severely constrained their ability to invest in the housing stock. Simultaneously, they were experiencing increased expectations from service users regarding the housing services provided. As both authorities were politically opposed to LSVTs, the only solution to meet local housing needs was to work in partnership with housing associations. Consequently, the North-Met Community Housing Partnership and the South-City Housing Association Partnership were formed in 1991 and 1992 respectively. It is these partnership arrangements which are now examined and the discussion is sub-divided into six sections. The first outlines the origins and membership of the two partnerships and identifies some of the similarities and differences between them. The second, third and fourth sections examine how the provision and management of mainstream housing services were being delivered through these partnership arrangements. After this, the fifth section explores the way in which individual housing associations within these partnership arrangements were selected to undertake new-build schemes, and the sixth, examines the way in which their performance was monitored. The Housing Departments were able to exert considerable influence over housing association behaviour and this is highlighted throughout the discussion. The final section provides additional evidence of this, and as with voluntary agencies, demonstrates that the relationship between the two sectors was unbalanced.

11.5.1 The Comparison between the North Met Community Housing Partnership and the South-City Housing Association Partnership

The North-Met Community Housing Partnership (CHP) was created in 1991 as a joint venture company between the Housing Department and five housing associations. It was initially established for three years (1991–1994), but an *ad hoc* agreement extended the Partnership for a further two years. Its remit was to build new social housing units that catered for general and special needs. Given its success, there was strong support from both the Council and the housing association partners to extend the partnership for a further three years.⁶³ Consequently, during the fieldwork (1997), final plans were being formalised to extend the CHP 1 to CHP 2. The core activity of CHP 2, however, had switched from new-build to the rehabilitation of existing stock. Primarily, the partnership was designed to play a leading role in urban regeneration and 'housing

⁶³ Documentary evidence reveals that both the Government Office of the North West and the regional Housing Corporation enthusiastically stated their support for North-Met CHP 2 with the latter requesting an observer role at the Board. (Proposals for North-Met CHP 2: Report of Director of Housing to Housing Committee, 14 January 1997: 7).

plus'. Accordingly, nine theme groups with corresponding objectives and initiatives had been established (for a summary of these projects see Exhibit 1, Appendix 6).

In the first phase of the partnership, the Board of Management was composed of council officers including the Deputy Director of Housing and nominated representatives from the five core, and one associate, housing association partners. The Board was responsible for ensuring the effective development, co-ordination and delivery of the Partnership's strategy. All decisions were approved by the Council through the Housing Committee. There was also an informal steering group which met twice a year to provide strategic guidance to the Management Board. This was composed of the Housing Director, Chair of the Housing Committee and Chief Executives of the core housing association partners. In light of the transition from CHP 1 to CHP 2, however, there had been a change in the partnership's composition. Core membership had increased to six housing associations and three associate members that provided special needs housing. It was envisaged that there would be additional structural changes to the Board and steering group, but these had not been approved during the fieldwork period. However, the partnership had created a new senior post to ensure the 'effective delivery of future programmes'. The post-holder was responsible to the Partnership Board and, thus, was seen as independent of the Council and housing associations.

The South-City Housing Association Partnership (HAP) was established in 1992. It was composed of representatives from the Housing Department, the regional Housing Corporation and 37 housing associations. It was primarily a discussion oriented forum, but it also exchanged 'good practices', arranged joint-training sessions and developed 'common approaches' for meeting housing needs. The Partnership had two sub-groups: the Housing Management and the Development sub-group. The former was designed to 'ensure the highest possible standards of housing management'⁶⁴ and the latter dealt with the development of new-build schemes, including issues relating to raising private finance, development standards and design issues.

There were discernible differences between the North-Met CHP and the South-City HAP. This was partly due to the way in which joint-working was initially approached by each Department. South-City only accepted the need to work in partnership after it had failed to secure City Challenge funding (see 11.6.1). Consequently, when the HAP was established, it lacked clarity of purpose. It had not been established with a view to how it could meet the Housing Department's strategic objectives or priorities. So, without a specific remit or purpose, the HAP became established as a discussion oriented forum rather than a delivery partnership. Participants

⁶⁴ (South-City Housing Strategy, 1998–2001: 68).

of the Partnership perceived it as a 'peer group' for exchanging information and, sometimes, creating an illusion of greater collaboration than there was in practice:

... we have all used HAP as a campaigning banner under which we can re-group and gather. So sometimes it's been quite useful to wave the idea of HAP at the Housing Corporation as an example of strong partnership working in South-City. And sometimes we have used it in the media, you know, in the housing press as an example of 'Isn't South-City great, and aren't we all great in South-City for doing this', without that always being totally sustainable. That's not to say its value is totally mythical. *As I say, it's a balance between the reality and the myth of HAP. And sometimes the reality is useful, but sometimes the myth is also useful.*

(South-City Faith Housing Association: Director).

Partly because of its lack of clarity of purpose, and partly because member resistance to working with housing associations was greater (see Chapter 13), collaborative projects were not as wide-reaching in scope as they were in North-Met.

The persistence of high levels of economic and social deprivation meant that the North-Met Housing Department was driven by attracting as much inward investment as possible. The CHP was thus established to secure additional HIP allocations, as well as to act as a conduit through which funding from the Housing Corporation could be procured. These motivations gave the Partnership clear objectives to achieve from its conception and these were modified to take account of new priorities. Hence, from being an essentially development driven vehicle, CHP 2, amongst other activities, was designed 'to become a major driving force in promoting urban regeneration objectives'.⁶⁵

There is another important factor which accounts for the polarity between the two Partnerships and the subsequent relationship that the Housing Departments had with the housing associations. The decentralisation of housing services in South-City was accompanied by greater devolved decision-making. This allowed Area Managers to form close working relationships with individual housing associations. Consequently, the activities of housing associations were not co-ordinated through the central Housing Department as they were in North-Met. Housing association activity in South-City was thus much more fragmented and there was greater potential for the associations to be autonomous compared with those in North-Met.

The similarity between the Partnerships was that they both operated as cartels by creating barriers to non-member associations undertaking work in the authority. North-Met provided the

clearest example of this. Without becoming a core or associate partner of the CHP, no other association was able to work in the Borough.⁶⁵ Similarly, although 37 associations were members of the South-City HAP, only 12 were eligible to undertake development schemes. This pointed to a hierarchical 'inner' and 'outer' network within the Partnership (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998). The second key similarity between them was that Partnership participants had established close, personal relationships. This was reflected in the way in which these relationships and informal networking were used to resolve any problems or obstacles encountered by the Partnerships. The quotation from South-City provides one example of this:

... there's a high degree of personal commitment, but also a high degree of respect and trust ... I've always found that if I've wanted to get things done with Housing Services ... I know who to speak to, I speak to them and it happens. That's not to say they always do what I ask them to because that's not their role, but it's always possible to gain access to people, to talk to them and to throw ideas around and to move things forward. (Director: South-City Churches Housing Association).

Indeed, even though external partners were critical of the Housing Departments in certain areas, there was a consensus in both localities that the CHP and the HAP were 'successful' partnerships, and that both Departments had shifted from their traditional perception of housing associations and were willing to work collaboratively. This demonstrates that the network mode governed the relationship between the two Housing Departments and their respective housing association partners.

In sum, the primary difference between the CHP and the HAP was that the former, as a legally constituted body, always had clear objectives to deliver, whereas the latter was a discussion oriented forum. Moreover, the activities of the CHP were co-ordinated through the Housing Department. Even though operational decision-making and implementation of projects were devolved to individual housing associations, the Department knew which association was involved in what type of activity and where. This was not true to the same extent in South-City. The primary reason for these differences appeared to be the way each authority approached working with housing associations. Where North-Met was motivated by attracting as much investment as

⁶⁵ Proposals for North-Met CHP 2: Report of Director of Housing to Housing Committee, 14 January 1997.

⁶⁶ This lack of competition meant that the costs of development projects were higher in North-Met compared with similar schemes in other boroughs. (It should be noted that this was also partly because North-Met were keen not to charge higher rents.) This did not go unnoticed by the Housing Corporation and it insisted that the Partnership review its costs.

possible, South-City only acquiesced to working with associations reluctantly.

11.5.2 Enabling New Social Housing

In its first phase, the North-Met CHP was specifically established to undertake new-build using a process known as 'HAG stretch' (Fraser, 1991). In return for nomination rights, council land was disposed to associations at nil cost. Given that their funding was not required to purchase land, housing associations used the 'surplus' Housing Association Grant from their allocation to build more homes. This is known as 'HAG stretch'. By the time CHP 1 drew to a close, the council had disposed of 60 acres of its own land in this way and gained 75% nomination rights for general needs housing and 100% nomination rights for special needs housing. By spring 1995, 346 homes had already been completed and work had commenced on a further 470 homes. HAG stretch also facilitated new-build activity in South-City. Since 1992, it was estimated that the disposal of council land worth £3.4 million had enabled the provision of over 2,200 bed-spaces of accommodation. Councillors, however, were only persuaded to dispose of land in return for 100% nomination rights.

Even though the North-Met Housing Department was not engaged in new-build directly, it retained control of its traditional domain of responsibility by directing housing associations on the nature and location of new-build schemes:

North-Met's role as the enabler, its strategic role is very apparent *and it does direct us quite significantly*. We can present development proposals to the local authority, but at the end of the day it's the local authority that will decide what is a priority for it ... any *proposals that we put forward must meet, comply and dovetail into the local authority's wider strategic aims for an area ...* So they will direct us into certain initiatives, ... but they also direct us into certain geographical areas, and they also require us to develop models which embrace training and employment schemes, that sort of thing.

(North-Met Porterloo Housing Association: Development Manger).

This **can be** interpreted as a form of control over the housing associations. In South-City, however, the **Housing** Department's control over the development process only emerged after it began to experience problems and this is explored below (see 11.5.5).

11.5.3 Enabling and the Integration of Policies, Procedures and Services

This section examines the way in which the two Housing Departments were attempting to use their respective partnership arrangements to integrate and co-ordinate a range of housing management functions. Thus, both Housing Departments were steering housing associations to adopt similar policies to themselves, for example regarding anti-social behaviour and tenant

participation. Whilst this can be interpreted as invoking a network mode of governance, it can also be interpreted as an erosion of housing association autonomy because they were not free to decide policies regarding the management of their own stock. In terms of integrating procedures, the establishment of common housing registers provides the best example of this. Given the 'fragmented' supply of social housing that now exists, the South-City Housing Department believed that it was inconvenient for 'customers' to access the separate waiting lists of all the different agencies that provided housing across the city. Subsequently, as part of its public service orientation, in August 1993, the Housing Department and 22 housing association partners from the HAP established a common housing register, known as the *South-City Housing Register*. Social housing applicants could visit any one of the 50 housing offices across the city and apply for housing with any of the 22 providers. This was perceived to be one of the clearest expressions of the enabling role in practice, and one of the most important outputs to emerge from the South-City HAP.⁶⁷ Under CHP 2, North-Met was also establishing a common housing register. Its motivation, however, was to avoid duplication of effort and reduce administrative costs. This is another example of its search for financial efficiency as outlined in Chapter 10.

Beyond the aforementioned activities, the integration of council and housing association activity was much more pronounced in North-Met than in South-City. Under CHP 2, one of the forthcoming proposals was the 'Integrated Housing Services' project which aimed to identify areas of common ground between the partnership participants in order to:

... share costs, to share resources, share offices, share procedures and to make sure that the [housing] service provided is a seamless one, is cost-effective and consistent.
(North-Met Community Housing Partnership Manager).

This related to both the delivery, and the management, of housing services. In terms of the former, a series of 'one-stop property shops' were planned to incorporate a range of housing options and services provided by the different Partnership participants, in one location. This was considered innovative in itself, but because the property shops could be managed by housing association or council staff, this was considered to be an even greater development from the traditional role of housing authorities:

[the] network of one-stop-property shops could be staffed by housing association or local authority staff – it doesn't matter as long as customers can access social housing in

⁶⁷ At the time of data collection, the South-City Housing Register was being developed to incorporate a register for specialist supported housing needs. This was to be undertaken with the voluntary sector, social services, and the Health Authority. For this purpose, South-City successfully bid for funding from the Housing Corporation in the form of an Innovation and Good Practice Grant.

a quick way. To me that wouldn't have dared happened or been thought about two years ago, let alone five or ten years ago. It's a quantum leap forward in the way individuals perceive their role. Instead of working for an organisation, my role is about delivering a service where the service is *across* organisations, not solely *by* that organisation. (North-Met Porterloo Housing Association: Development Manger).

The above quotation highlights the breadth and depth of change in the delivery of housing services under the enabling role. It also suggests the practice of a community-enabling authority because the focus was on service provision and meeting needs, rather than which organisation was providing the service. The second way in which this project was integrating Housing Department and association activity was by sharing management costs. Rather than each housing provider having a separate contractor, for example for landscaping or caretaking work, this was now to be undertaken by the Council's housing direct labour organisation. Again, this was an attempt to achieve financial savings and an extension of the 'efficiency' ethos.

The integration of services (one-stop-shops), policies (e.g. anti-social behaviour) and procedures (common housing registers) between the authorities and housing associations was consistent with the practice of the community-enabling authority. Relationships between the two providers were not contractually based and there was an attempt to incorporate housing associations into wider policy debates regarding local housing issues. Moreover, service integration is theoretically inconsistent with the residual-enabling authority because of the potential it has to limit 'consumer' choice. For instance, common housing registers reduce the ability of applicants to 'shop around' for housing from different providers (see Mullins and Niner, 1998, for a more detailed discussion on this). This section has also drawn attention to the way in which the activities of North-Met's CHP were wider in scope compared with those of the HAP in South-City. Further examples of this are provided in the following section.

11.5.4 Enabling and Housing Plus

Chapter 12 will explore how the Housing Departments were developing a new role for themselves centred around 'community governance'. This incorporated three strategies. One of these was the adoption of an 'holistic' approach to housing investment: an attempt to link housing renewal with other economic and social programmes. Overlapping with this was 'housing plus' which was the parallel housing association sector's approach to tackling social exclusion. Housing plus highlights several recurring themes regarding the nature of the North-Met Housing Department's relationship with housing associations and how this differed from South-City.

In North-Met, respondents from the council and the housing associations were unanimous that the impetus for housing plus had emerged from the Housing Department and not the housing association partners. Indeed, there was further consensus that despite the reluctance of some housing association members, the Department had *imposed* housing plus projects upon the second phase of the Partnership. This illustrated an aspect of the Department's dominance within the CHP. Moreover, council officers reported that this would enable housing associations to become the authority's 'agents':

So what we're actually helping them to, pushing them into, or persuading them to do is to take on a much wider role and actually supporting them in that. So, ... what're we're looking for them to do is to play a much wider role in terms of housing plus, urban regeneration. Looking at some of the initiatives which are spinning out from this, a much more proactive role in housing renewal *where the associations may act as agents for the local authority*, they'll bring a whole toolbox of different initiatives into improving older housing stock, improving for sale, improving for rent, making sure they link in with improvement grants, *but they're being as much catalysts, as the local authority's agent* ... (North-Met Senior Research and Development Manager).

By specifically regarding associations as 'agents', this raises the question about the equality between the Housing Department and its housing association partners.

There were three motives underlining North-Met Housing Department's encouragement of housing plus. First, it was a mechanism to secure funding from the Housing Corporation. As noted in Chapter 4 (4.4.4), the Corporation stipulated that allocations for capital grants were conditional on applicants demonstrating the 'added value' that would be achieved from the housing investment. Second, as compensation for the decline in direct provision, housing plus projects allowed the Department to extend its traditional domain of responsibility (see Chapter 12). Third, there was a commitment to retain and develop the partnership as an end in itself. Given the decline in new-build activity, if the CHP was to survive, it needed a new role and the delivery of housing plus projects provided this. Therefore, by ensuring the Partnership's survival, the Housing Department was also securing a continuing role for itself.

In contrast to the above developments, in South-City, associations were involved in housing plus through their own initiative and without the involvement of the Housing Department. Again, this draws attention to the more discussion-oriented nature of the South-City HAP compared with North-Met's CHP.

11.5.5 Allocation of Projects to Individual Housing Association Partners

In allocating projects to individual housing associations within their respective partnership arrangements, both Housing Departments rarely established competitive tendering exercises – despite acknowledging that this could be advantageous to them. Aside from this similarity, however, there were discernible differences between the two Departments in the way they selected individual housing associations for new-build schemes and the practice of each is now examined.

In North-Met, there was no written procedure or criteria by which the Housing Department allocated new-build projects to the CHP partners so that, at one level, it appeared that the process was somewhat *ad hoc*. Sometimes a site was developed by an association simply because it had the resources to do so, and other associations, for whatever reason, were unable to take advantage of the opportunity. Even housing association members did not know why they had been chosen to develop site ‘A’ rather than site ‘B’. At another level, this disorganised approach was actually rather centralised. The Development Section of the Housing Department took formal responsibility and control over designation of schemes between the CHP partners. The one criterion which did emerge was that core association members would receive a comparable development allocation over the years. The lack of evidence to indicate that individual associations played any role within this decision-making process suggested that here, the hierarchical mode of governance was evident.

In South-City, however, a formal allocation process for development schemes had evolved due to the problems experienced by the Housing Department in the early 1990s. Initially, it used to receive numerous development proposals from a whole host of associations that proved to be extremely time-consuming to read and then select (see quotation below). Furthermore, there was a divergence between the Department’s recommendations to the Housing Corporation about the proposals it wished to see developed and the actual proposals the Housing Corporation was willing to support. This was partly because the Department had failed to specify its strategic aims. Consequently, when associations applied for funding from the Housing Corporation, their proposals did not show any links with local need. Recognising the need to take more control over the situation, the Housing Department began to specify its strategic objectives much more clearly and the types of schemes that would address them. It also established a competition between the 37 housing association members of the HAP in order to select 12 associations from which the Department was willing to accept development proposals:

We had a bit of a beauty competition with all the housing associations to see who had best practice, track record, this, that and the other. We selected about 12. Before that...we used to get hundreds and hundreds of bids from all sorts of housing

associations in the City and it was completely unmanageable. We'd have to wade through stacks and stacks of stuff, so we skimmed the whole process down ... As a result, we have much more control over who develops ... I think we've got various points from the DoE for our processes in doing that.

(South-City Enabling Team Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

After selecting the 12 associations that then formed the development sub-group of the HAP, the procedure for allocating new-build schemes was as follows. The 12 associations presented bids to the Housing Corporation based on the Housing Department's strategic aims. The Housing Corporation then referred the bid back to the authority. Officers reviewed the bids, and discussed proposals with social services, health and probation to obtain their comments. This was then put to the Housing Committee for approval and, finally, returned to the Housing Corporation. This method was indicative of the market mode of governance. However, alongside this formal process, association and council officers also reported that a significant number of new-build schemes were allocated through informal networking. In this respect, Area Housing Managers exerted considerable influence regarding which housing association operated within their 'patch'. As one respondent explained, associations were selected because the Area Manager already had a close relationship with them:

On the development side, a feasible project by an association usually emerges into the arena by that association having strong links with one particular area service office in South-City ... So if a site becomes available then the Area Service Manager says, 'Faith Housing Association, oh yes, they've done something just over the road, it would make sense in housing management terms to have them working on that site as well', and discussions would take place. And it would emerge as a priority on the local authority's list, usually due to those kinds of close working relationships on the ground between the Area Managers and our development staff.

(South-City Faith Housing Association: Director).

This method was indicative of the network mode of governance. So, the designation of projects to individual associations indicated the presence of both the network and market modes of governance in South-City, but mainly the hierarchical mode in North-Met.

11.5.6 Monitoring Housing Association Performance

There was further variation between the two Housing Departments regarding the way in which they monitored the performance of housing associations and each is now examined. Interestingly, where the North-Met Department adopted an informal approach to monitoring the

voluntary sector, and South-City a more formal approach, the reverse was true regarding associations in both authorities.

In North-Met, associations were initially only monitored on 'formal' criteria, such as nominations and rent levels. Under CHP 2, however, associations were to be monitored on 'subjective' criteria as well:

... we're already measuring sort of things like how they perform in terms of development ... but we're going to be expanding that. So we will have a series of key indicators in CHP 2 ... [such as] how much money the associations have put in North-Met as part of their commitment, how the staff have been involved in different initiatives, have they been willing, co-operative, innovative, or have they missed meetings, have they not bothered turning up. If they've not, then we can challenge them about that, or if they're not playing ball then they get kicked out.

(North-Met Senior Research and Development Manager).

The informal criteria specified above clearly indicated that North-Met Housing Department expected much from housing associations. This can be interpreted as another aspect of the control they exerted over associations. The unbalanced nature of their relationship was further revealed when the above respondent mentioned that, whilst it would also be subject to performance monitoring, the 'Council wouldn't be able to get kicked off CHP'. The combination of the formal and informal criteria was indicative of both the market and hierarchical modes of governance.

The South-City Housing Department also had a range of performance criteria, but a more relaxed approach appeared to be evident, as reported by one housing association respondent:

And I know that our relationship is honest enough for anyone in the local authority, if they felt we weren't performing or we'd failed in some way, to phone me up and say, 'there's something going on here, what's the problem, you know, let's try and sort it out'. (South-City Faith Housing Association: Director).

The Department, therefore, appeared to adopt the network mode of governance and this contrasts with the stance adopted towards voluntary groups.

Overall, performance monitoring indicated the application of the market form of policy co-ordination. It also exposed the unbalanced nature of the relationship between the Housing Departments and their external partners. This was because there was often no reciprocal monitoring of the Departments, or when there was, the same sanctions were not applicable.

Furthermore, the authorities could exercise the ultimate sanction by withdrawing support and terminating the relationship.

11.5.6 Housing Associations: Partners or Agents of the State ?

The dominance over housing associations exerted by the two Housing Departments has been highlighted in several places during this discussion. This section provides additional evidence of this from the research, but it is also shown that the extent of this control was variable across the case-study locations.

It was clear that North-Met Housing Department were the leaders of the CHP from the beginning and this was corroborated by housing association respondents. Indeed, council officers were unequivocal and unapologetic about the influence they exerted over the Partnership. It was explicitly acknowledged that associations which deviated from the Department's expectations would be asked to leave the CHP:

So we retain a very strong influence over what the associations do, a very strong influence... If an association wanted to go their way, then they wouldn't be part of the Partnership, we're quite clear about that.

(North-Met Senior Research and Development Manager).

The Department's influence could be discerned in several ways. First, associations recognised that the Partnership was born out of financial necessity, rather than a genuine belief in collaborative working. Housing association respondents reported that the Housing Department had used the Partnership to attract additional funding into the Borough and engage the attention of the Government Office. This made them feel manipulated. Moreover, given their dependency on local authority support to access development funding from the Housing Corporation, the associations agreed to all the development proposals even when some of them transpired to be 'mistakes'. This was because the association partners:

... didn't want to be seen as the one to challenge or antagonise the local authority.

(North-Met Greenwood Housing Association: Chief Executive)

Second, the Department's strong influence also continued into CHP 2. Whilst the associations were **happy** with the Partnership to progress, they expressed concern that, by having to deliver upon nine theme groups, the Department was asking too much from them. This made them question the nature of the enabling role and the degree to which associations should be involved in securing 'solutions' to urban problems:

But I think this is where we get this balance between, ‘What is the local authority’s role and how much should they be fulfilling that role through their own resources and through their own efforts?’ Clearly we’re partners and very happy to be partners, but it’s a big dilemma now as to how much associations can be seen to participate in actively securing solutions. But I think that’s where you get this dilemma between how a local authority can deliver and pursue lots of alternative initiatives and obviously how it can resource that. I mean, if *they can persuade and cajole associations* then I’m sure they regard that as great. But it’s not just me saying this, I think most of the associations involved in CHP are starting to reflect and say, ‘Hang on a minute, perhaps we’ve gone into this too easily’ ...

(North-Met Greenwood Housing Association: Chief Executive)

Third, it was interesting to note the different expectations that the Housing Department and the housing associations held of the CHP Manager. Whilst the Department perceived the task of the post-holder as a co-ordinator of the nine different task groups, the associations viewed the post-holder as an advocate for their interests. It is worth quoting at length again, both to illustrate this view, and to reinforce the point about North-Met’s dominance:

... the associations themselves felt there was need to employ a manager for the Partnership. Probably in hindsight, a little belatedly. Because *there’s been a strength of feeling from the associations that the local authority has been too heavy in pushing its own interests*. Probably being honest, we’ve been too easily pushed by them. And ideally, we should’ve really had somebody at an earlier stage who was the centre of CHP but had no particular hang-ups, either from North-Met or the associations.

(North-Met Greenwood Housing Association: Chief Executive)

It should be clear, therefore, that North-Met were able to exert considerable control and influence over the associations. Working with associations did not lead to a diminished role for the Housing Department. On the contrary, CHP allowed the Department to both retain some control over its traditional domain of responsibility (i.e. directing associations over new-build activity), as well as extending it into new areas such as urban regeneration and housing plus.

The South-City Housing Department was also able to influence housing association behaviour, but to a lesser extent. There appeared to be a similar debate in South-City regarding the appropriate level of local authority influence. As one respondent reported, there were ‘cynics’ within the Partnership who believed that the Department utilised HAP to secure housing associations’ compliance without there really being a partnership:

... some cynics would say that it's [HAP] a vehicle that the local authority have used: they've created this vehicle as a way of justifying partnership working with housing associations without there really being a partnership. The cynics feel there isn't a real partnership. It's actually the local authority telling us, the housing associations, what to do. (South-City Faith Housing Association: Director).

The main way in which South-City's dominance over associations could be discerned was its ability to negotiate 100% nomination rights on lettings and subsequent re-lets. It has been argued that 100% nomination rights reduces the ability of housing associations to manage their own stock in the most flexible manner. Page argues, 'By passing over 100 percent nomination rights to local authorities, housing associations have ... become effectively agents, rather than partners, of local authorities' (1993: 51; quoted in Pearl, 1997: 191). There is a sense in which, through nomination arrangements, housing associations have lost control of their own destiny since they no longer offer an alternative vision of social housing (Rochester, 1996: 33).

11.6 Enabling Multi-Sector Partnerships

There were two ways in which the implementation of housing renewal differed under the enabling role. First, housing investment programmes were part of an integrated area strategy that comprised other social and economic projects and this is explored in Chapter 12. The focus here is upon the emergence of multi-sector partnerships and the resultant shift in the *delivery arrangements* of housing renewal programmes. The discussion is sub-divided into two sections. The first outlines the differing responses to the way in which the City Challenge funding regime was approached by the two Housing Departments. The second describes the structural arrangements that were subsequently developed to deliver housing renewal schemes.

11.6.1 North-Met and South-City's Response to City Challenge

After undertaking detailed Neighbourhood Renewal Assessments, the North-Met Housing Department designated two renewal areas in 1990: Geriwell and Tramworth. These districts were characterised by high levels of pre-1919 terraced housing that required considerable improvement and rehabilitation. The Housing Department worked with other service departments and external agencies to develop an integrated regeneration strategy for both of these areas. Management structures to implement these programmes were established and consultation with local committees had also been undertaken. The Council expected to receive additional HIP allocations and Supplementary Credit Approvals to finance the proposed schemes. However, by 1991, it became clear that the authority would not be receiving any of the resources that the Government had originally earmarked to finance renewal areas nationwide. Consequently, when invited to bid for Round 2 of City Challenge, the Department proposed that the Geriwell renewal area become

incorporated within City Challenge's boundaries. The authority was successful and many of the schemes, initially proposed under the renewal area, were implemented by City Challenge. In the meantime, with the abolition of the Inner Urban Programme and the majority of HIP allocation being invested within the City Challenge district, progress within Tramworth halted until the Housing Department successfully secured funds from SRB 2 in 1995.

Three factors explain the way in which North-Met Housing Department chose to approach City Challenge (and later SRB) and its subsequent success. First, even though it was critical of the competitive elements of the funding regimes, the Department chose pragmatically to accept the new rules for investment. This was because it was believed that the incentives which had been established by central Government made it irrational for them to do otherwise. To the Department, these funding regimes offered the only foreseeable opportunities to address the problems of poor housing.⁶⁸ Thus, there was a willingness to accept a trade-off between local autonomy and the need to secure success in the competitive process. As one respondent explained, a concerted effort was made to ensure that proposals met the Government's guidelines as far as possible:

... we introduced programmes and objectives in order to meet the Government's criteria, because the better it meets the criteria, the better the chance of success, and it's no use chasing your own priorities if you're never going to get across the starting line.

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal).

Second, the wards covering City Challenge and the SRB 2 areas were under the jurisdiction of 'some heavy-weight councillors'.⁶⁹ In the former area, for example, these wards were represented by the Leader of the Council and the Chairs of both the Housing and Social Services Committees. This was reinforced by the appointment of a new Director of Housing just before City Challenge was launched. Thus, support from key personalities played a strong role in shaping the Council's response to competitive funding. Third, the neighbourhood renewal areas had already established management structures to deliver upon the programmes. These arrangements, although modified, were translated to the funding applications relatively easily. The Housing Department did not have to seek out co-operative alliances with external agencies when funding applications were made. This was especially important given that the lead times for bids were very short. Further, these arrangements demonstrated that the Department had developed corporate working relationships with other service departments, and collaborative relationships with external agencies. Furthermore, by this stage, the CHP (1) had already been established and this body was

⁶⁸ See also Dowding *et al.* (1999) who analyse Lambeth Borough Council's response to City Challenge, which was similar to that of North-Met.

⁶⁹ North-Met Geriwell Action Team Programme Leader.

identified as a key delivery agent for the housing projects. Overall, North-Met was able to present itself as a 'progressive'⁷⁰ authority that was developing its enabling role:

North-Met is very good at putting together credible bids, ... The Government have set a game around SRB and City Challenge and there's all these buttons you have to press, and so you press the buttons and it doesn't actually mean that it exists in practice, but you've got enough people out there that you can wheel out when the DoE do a visit to sort of say, 'We're involved in this, we're involved in that', and it all looks very spectacular ...

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

Thus, motivated by the desire to attract as much funding as possible into the Borough, the Housing Department made a concerted effort to win City Challenge and the funding regimes beyond that.

The South-City Housing Department had also declared two renewal areas. The first one was established in Beckston in 1991, and the second was established in St. Magnums in 1994. However, by comparison with North-Met, South-City Council was unwilling to 'compromise basic principles' and, consequently failed to secure funding from both rounds of City Challenge. The problem for South-City lay in the nature of strings attached to the funding, the requirement to involve private, voluntary and community partner organisations and, in particular, the way that City Challenge was to be managed outside the direct control of local councillors (Malpass, 1994: 307). This failure is widely regarded as a turning point in South-City's abandonment of its 'municipalist ideology' and taking the issue of partnership more seriously than in the past (Stewart 1996; Oatley and Lambert, 1998; Oatley and May, 1999). After 1992, therefore, South-City adopted a more co-operative attitude towards joint ventures in urban regeneration and partnership working more generally. It was able to secure funding from successive rounds of SRB to finance some of the proposals within both renewal areas.

The application for urban funding regimes meant that the Housing Departments were no longer responsible for directly delivering the housing renewal programmes. The subsequent structures that emerged are examined next.

⁷⁰ For instance, many respondents reported that North-Met had been designated 'Top Performing' status by DoE.

11.6.2 Multi-Sector Partnership Delivery Structures

The South-City Regeneration Partnership was formed in 1994 to access funding from the SRB regime. It was composed of representatives from departments within South-City Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the Training and Enterprise Council, the voluntary sector and a wide range of other public agencies such as the police, the Health Authority and South-City's universities. Whilst the Council was accountable for financial probity, the Partnership operated at arm's-length from the authority. It was successful in securing funds from SRB 1, 2 and 3, but reference to the Regeneration Partnership was only made towards the end of the fieldwork period by two respondents, and then, only in passing. The first respondent, from the Community Development Section, only referred to it because he was responsible for undertaking community consultation on behalf of the Partnership. The second respondent, who was the initial contact into the Housing Department (and had provided the author with the names of key informants with whom to undertake interviews), only mentioned the Partnership in a follow-up interview. He stated:

There's something called the South-City Regeneration Partnership which the City Council set up among a number of other organisations which is intended to co-ordinate funding into the City, particularly the SRB. Our links into SRB are not well made yet, so I think there's quite a lot of work to be done on developing those.

(South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division).

The failure to mention the Partnership by council officers when discussing the enabling role suggested that either the Partnership had not developed its identity as a major body in the city at the time, or that its relationship with the Housing Department was not well developed. (Even respondents from South-City's renewal areas did not discuss or refer to the Partnership.) Nevertheless, one interview was undertaken with the Partnership's co-ordinator, but only limited information could be gained because the informant had transferred from Barnsley City Challenge and had only been working in South-City for a couple of months.

Despite the limited information gained, some general observations can be made. The Regeneration Partnership was not a delivery mechanism, but a strategic body that procured investment. This was then distributed to public, private and voluntary agencies who delivered specific schemes that met the outputs identified in the original bid documents. Thus, the special renewal teams that had been established by the Housing Department, received SRB funding from the Partnership to administer and co-ordinate the housing renewal projects. The important point to acknowledge here is that there was a clear-cut division of responsibility between the Partnership and the housing renewal teams.

In North-Met, however, such a clear-cut division of responsibility was not apparent. Detailed structures of the two renewal partnerships from this authority are provided in Exhibits 2 and 3 in Appendix 6. These show that both partnerships had Management Boards that were responsible for strategic planning and policy-making, with responsibility for project delivery devolved to specifically established bodies. In the case of City Challenge, housing renewal was implemented by the Geriwell Action Team and in the 3Bs Partnership, housing projects were delivered by the Housing Theme Group. In effect, both partnerships were responsible for policy-making and implementation – they were just undertaken by different tiers of the partnership. These structural arrangements meant that both partnerships had close links with the Housing Department. In the case of the 3Bs Partnership, this was to be expected since it was not established to operate at arm's-length from the Council. In the case of City Challenge, this was more unexpected, given that it was a separate company that *technically* operated at arm's-length from the Council. In reality, its relationship with the Housing Department made it difficult to distinguish between the multiple roles that officers were engaged in. Indeed, even officers found this difficult and they reported the confusion and potential for conflict that this generated:

See my role, I've mentioned my project group leader role, I'm also a member of the Executive Team of the [City Challenge] Company as a Programme Manager for my own client, and I'm also the Council skivvy, as well as HAT leader. So if there's money floating about in the programme, my home department director –who I am responsible to as Chief Officer to City Challenge – is also concerned about getting as many housing improvements as he can. So there's a tension there between what's best for the strategic needs of Geriwell as seen through the Company's eyes, or what's best for the housing service as seen through the Director of Housing's eyes. Now very fortunately X [Chief Executive of City Challenge], Y [Director of Housing] and myself get on very, very well and we can have these sort of role discussions and I can tell them to 'bugger off' as a junior officer sort of thing. These are the pressures of working in multiple roles.
(North-Met Geriwell Action Team Programme Leader).

Moreover, although local authorities were supposed to have minority representation on multi-sector arrangements, in reality, many council officers were 'seconded' to City Challenge and they maintained close links with their 'home' department. For instance, responsibility for the three sub-groups of the City Challenge Board were given to the Directors of Housing, Planning and Leisure. Supporting each of these Directors were 'Project Group Leaders' who were also council officers, whilst the Chief Executive of the Board had previously worked in the Planning Department.

Thus, in both authorities, multi-sector partnerships had been established in response to the Government's competitive funding regimes. A discernible difference could be seen, however, in

the roles of these partnerships in their respective localities. The South-City Regeneration Partnership operated at arm's-length from the Council to the point that its activities had not impacted, nor created any lasting impression, upon South-City's Housing Department. By comparison, City Challenge and the 3Bs Partnership were responsible for policy-making and implementation, as well as being closely connected to the Housing Department.

Some general observations should also be made regarding the local authority's role in each of the case-study localities. First, the renewal teams in South-City and the delivery bodies in North-Met (i.e. the Geriwell Action Team and the 3Bs Housing Theme Group) were involved in some direct provision. For instance, in the Tramworth SRB district, the Housing Department was responsible for delivering improvements to 300 private sector properties. Similarly, many of the group repair schemes in South-City's Beckston area were also to be undertaken by the Housing Department. However, other schemes were contracted out to external agencies. For example, a housing association was employed to administer minor work grants in the City Challenge area. This was identified as a 'good example' of other agencies undertaking 'what would have traditionally been our work'.⁷¹ Similarly, in South-City's St. Magnums area, housing associations were responsible for bringing empty properties back into use and developing new social housing. Secondly, the decline in direct provision led to a reciprocal increase in other local authority functions. The plethora of individual schemes that comprised one strategic bid, and the proliferation of the various agencies that were responsible for actual project delivery, all required co-ordination. This task was undertaken by the Housing Theme Group in North-Met's 3Bs Partnership and the renewal teams in South-City. As one respondent remarked:

... we're, if you like, the hub of the wheel because we're sort of like this co-ordinating, enabling, central focus, trying to identify all the little bits that are going on. We're looking for it to pivot around us and we channel it all in the right direction.
(South-City Special Project Co-ordinator: Beckston Renewal Area).

Thirdly, in North-Met, the Housing Department's strategic role was also considered to have become more important as it was responsible for overall strategy preparation. Even though it was reported that the strategies had been developed in 'consultation' with external agencies and local communities, the bids were applied for with the Council as the lead agency and other signatories as 'partners'.

Traditionally, housing authorities have been the sole agents delivering housing renewal. This discussion has shown the complexity that characterised the delivery of urban regeneration as

⁷¹ North-Met Geriwell Action Team Programme Leader.

the housing authorities shifted to their enabling roles. Policy-making and implementation were separated and as the experience of City Challenge shows, officers were often working in multiple roles.

11.7 Conclusions

The North-Met and South-City Housing Departments' relationships with external agencies were generally consistent with the 'collaborative' theory of partnerships, even though they were initially formed for opportunistic motives. There was a desire to develop joint-working arrangements that transcended contractual relationships based upon 'anonymous short-term price competition'. Accordingly, relationships with private landlords, the voluntary sector and housing associations were, at one level, governed by the network mode. This, therefore, invoked the practice of a community-enabling authority. At another level though, the practicalities of adopting a purely collaborative approach were challenged by an unfavourable resource environment and the search for efficiency. Moreover, it was clear in both authorities that the Housing Departments were often the dominant participants within the partnerships. Thus, underpinning the network mode, the hierarchical and market modes of governance could also be discerned. However, there are two further concluding points to be made in relation to the dominance of the Housing Departments. First, the decline in direct service delivery did not lead to a diminished role for either of the Departments under investigation. Instead, it is argued here that partnership arrangements brought new responsibilities, new resources and opportunities for them to engage in. In this way, partnership arrangements not only ensured a continuing role for them, but the role of Housing Departments in relation to other actors (such as housing associations or voluntary agencies) had magnified and not contracted. The second point relates to the difference between the case-study authorities. The North-Met Department appeared more pro-active in developing partnerships compared with South-City. For instance, it had initiated the Voluntary-Sector Consortium in contrast to the Supported Housing Forum which had been initiated by voluntary agencies in South-City. Similarly, the projects delivered by the North-Met CHP were wider in scope compared with the City HAP. Finally, following on from this, North-Met's control and dominance over housing associations appeared greater compared with South-City.

CHAPTER 12:

ENABLING AS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Chapters 10 and 11 examined how the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments gave practical expression to their enabling roles in relation to contracting and partnership working. In order to bridge the gap left by the decline in direct provision as a result of these changing modes of service delivery, this Chapter examines how the two Departments were seeking to develop a new role for themselves. The fieldwork exposed a new discourse and set of strategies centred upon the re-emergence of notions of ‘community’. This was an explicit attempt to redefine enabling from the ‘narrow’ interpretation endorsed by the Conservatives. A succinct delineation of this position is captured by North-Met Housing Department’s ‘Mission Statement’:

The over-arching principle driving all our activity is the premise that quality housing provision and service is not an end in itself but a means to an end, that end being sustainable communities.⁷²

Both Housing Departments were ‘repositioning’ housing as a focal point from which to improve the ‘quality of life’ of ‘disempowered communities’ who were deemed ‘socially excluded’. The study identified three strategies which gave practical expression to this community-enabling role. Each of these is now examined in turn within the three substantive parts of this Chapter. Thus, the first examines the implementation of capital investment programmes in areas of acute multiple deprivation. The second examines the use of participation and consultation methods, and the third examines the extension of tenants’ rights and responsibilities under anti-social behaviour policies.⁷³ It is necessary to note that both authorities defined ‘social exclusion’ primarily in terms of exclusion from the labour market. Consequently, some community engagement strategies were not restricted to council house tenants, but incorporated communities from the private sector.

12.1 Engaging the Community through Investment

There were two main ways in which housing renewal differed under the enabling role. The first of these has already been discussed in the previous chapter where attention was given to the emergence of multi-sector partnerships and the resultant shift in the *delivery arrangements* of housing renewal programmes. The focus here is upon how the *substance* of housing investment programmes had changed. Unlike the property-led regeneration initiatives during the 1980s, capital investment was targeted at ‘communities’ in a specific geographic area of the locality and

⁷² (North-Met Housing Strategy: 1999–2000: Year One Update, 1).

emphasis was given to developing a ‘holistic’ renewal strategy.⁷⁴ This was partly to meet the funding requirements set by central government, but just as importantly was the desire to advance housing as a focal point in the creation ‘sustainable communities’. Consequently, the ‘holistic’ approach was also incorporated in mainstream housing provision. The following discussion is sub-divided into two sections in which the first examines the nature of the ‘holistic’ approach, and the second provides examples of this in practice.

12.1.1 A Holistic Approach to Housing Renewal

The North-Met and South-City Housing Departments reported that their approach to housing renewal was shaped significantly by the funding requirements of SRB and City Challenge. This accounts for the similarity between the two authorities regarding the format of the bids and the types of strategies that were being implemented (see Exhibits 4 and 5 in Appendix 6). To ensure that their bids were successful, they were required to demonstrate that they had an overall ‘vision’ and corresponding objectives for the area targeted for investment. Within this broad framework, each bid was further disaggregated according to several themes that were designed to meet the strategic objectives stipulated by central Government. In turn, these themes incorporated a range of individual projects and schemes that the multi-sector partnerships had to deliver upon. A fundamental notion underpinning this process was the implementation of an ‘holistic’ approach to regeneration. Again, to meet the funding requirements, respondents from both authorities reported that they had to develop an integrated strategy which linked economic, social and environmental aims with housing renewal. In particular, they had to demonstrate the ‘added’ value derived from investment, by illustrating how individual schemes complemented and built upon impacts generated from other projects. A quotation from North-Met helps to illustrate this view:

We in this section are mainly concentrating on housing issues, but our brief is to look for housing solutions with ‘added value’. And that added value often includes us working in an enabling role, helping, for instance, landlords, helping shopkeepers. There’s a whole range of projects that we’re developing that on face value you wouldn’t say are directly housing projects. For example, things like security. We provide a project which delivers domestic security packages, we provide one that helps shopkeepers provide security ...

(North-Met Project Manager for 3Bs Regeneration Area.).

⁷³ This is not to deny that these functions did not exist under the traditional role, only that as the direct provision function of local authorities has decreased, these functions have inversely increased in importance.

⁷⁴ Investment targeted at communities of shared interest or common identities was far less common, although not completely absent. For instance, South-City were in the process of applying for SRB 4 funds to deliver schemes designed specifically for young people across the city.

It is important to emphasise that beyond conforming to central guidelines, the 'holistic' approach was actively endorsed by both Departments in which they viewed this development as 'long overdue'. Whilst the Government's intention underpinning the holistic approach appeared to be firmly rooted in the 'more for less paradigm' (Foley and Martin, 2000: 482), the two Housing Departments had different motives for endorsing this approach to housing renewal. In seeking to develop a new role for themselves, they argued that housing renewal programmes should no longer concentrate on the rehabilitation of physical dwellings. Since housing constitutes only one aspect of the domestic environment, it was argued that housing departments should look to the broader range of the needs of individuals, communities and their environment. In short, they should attempt to deliver quality of life, rather than simply accommodation. It is worth quoting at length to illustrate this viewpoint:

I said I was responsible for urban regeneration which is obviously not just about physical renewal, it's around economic and community development as well. It's also about improving social fabric and social cohesion ... We have many examples of just investing in properties and doing nothing for the quality of life for the people who live there. Quite clearly, physical investment in housing is not sufficient, although it is important ... [So we're] adopting a holistic approach to improving people's quality of life.

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal Division).

Our main functions would obviously be housing, but I think it's been accepted that just looking at housing as a unit, or giving a repair grant, doesn't do anything ... there are other things impacting on housing which need to be looked at, ... the ethos is that just focusing on housing is no longer the case. So we in the renewal area started to look at broadening that out, and looking at more of the community base and what you can actually do for the community. We're getting more and more involved with the community. So we try and be all things to all men, if you like. But you can't do it alone, the enabling side of it must come out and you must use it ... I've used this analogy before, the way to look at it is what affects a person? If a property is an important issue, is that why a child is not going to school because their health's affected, so that brings in social services, education, housing and maybe the employment services because the husband's not working, or the wife's not working. So looking at it that way, and including all those strands back in, the enabling side's got to be there.

(South-City Special Projects Co-ordinator: St. Magnums Renewal Area).

The basic premise underlying this approach was the perception that social problems, such as poor housing, unemployment, family breakdown are linked: that one can follow on from the other, or affect another. This analysis implied that local actors no longer considered it appropriate to deal

with poor housing on its own. In the light of this analysis, the next section provides examples of how improvements to the physical condition of the housing stock were complemented with a broader range of social and economic initiatives.

12.1.2 The Holistic Approach to Housing Renewal in Practice

Improvement of local authority housing, group repair schemes and the rehabilitation of older private sector properties were core components of the housing renewal programmes. However, improvements to the physical condition of the housing stock were linked to two additional initiatives. These were, first, employment and training, and second, safety and security. The City Challenge flagship FASE project was a prime example of this. Although it had yet to become operational during the fieldwork, this initiative involved a dispersed foyer for young people, combining accommodation with employment and training opportunities.⁷⁵ Similarly, in the 3Bs area, new housing development and environmental improvements were intended to ‘secure [the] creation of jobs and specific training opportunities for long term unemployed’ (SRB Appraisal Form). Aspirations to link employment and training opportunities to housing programmes were also expressed in the two renewal areas of South-City. In the St. Magnums locality, a proposal was being developed where building contractors could employ local people to carry out renovation work. This was an attempt to replicate initiatives that had been developed elsewhere in the city. For instance, a previous Estate Action project had employed 47% of its workers from the south South-City area. This initiative also included work in non-construction areas, such as provision of child-care training. South-City’s Housing Strategy (1998–2001: 41) also provided examples of other projects in the city that employed local labour on repair, renewal or new-build schemes.

It was reported that crime and the fear of crime were major issues of concern for local people. Hence, both authorities also incorporated safety and security initiatives to all housing renovation and new build schemes. A detailed example from North-Met’s 3Ds area is given in Exhibit 6, Appendix 6. It was argued that provision of such projects was not only a component of the holistic renewal strategy, but an important way of addressing local priorities and therefore, an extension of the public service orientation.

It could be argued that the holistic approach to housing renewal was merely a way of attracting Government subsidies. However, the holistic approach was not just confined to regeneration areas, it was also beginning to be incorporated into mainstream housing services. It is this which probably best exemplifies the way in which the Housing Departments were seeking to

⁷⁵ It was also designed to provide complementary services such as counseling, sports development, recreation and health education. (Draft City Challenge Five Year Action Plan: 23).

develop a new role for themselves and extend their traditional domains of responsibilities. For instance, using the CHP delivery vehicle (see Chapter 11), the North-Met Department were developing projects such as 'Local Employment Generation' and 'Improved Social Fabric' (see Exhibit 1 Appendix 6). These projects were examples of 'housing plus' and based upon the premise that 'all housing providers/managers are critical players in promoting 'Quality of Life' strategies for local communities ...'.⁷⁶ This was an explicit attempt to extend the traditional role of the Housing Department from focusing on 'basic housing provision' to one which would 'tackle a wider range of problems'.⁷⁷

A holistic approach to mainstream housing provision was also evident in South-City. For instance, attempts were being made to generate training and employment opportunities for local communities beyond urban regeneration areas. Indeed, the Housing Department was in the process of recruiting a local labour co-ordinator whose sole role was to ensure that employment of local labour was maximised. Particular attention was to be given to expenditure made on small works contracts each year. Similarly, crime and safety initiatives were also implemented outside the regeneration areas. One manifestation of this could be seen in the Department's representation on the multi-agency community safety steering group. This included representatives from all the City Council Directorates, probation, the police, the Health Authority and the voluntary sector. The steering group produced a strategy document for 1997 to 2000 and within this, the Housing Department were responsible for implementing several proposals. For instance, they were required: 'To establish measures for supporting victims of crime and accidents, especially where some vulnerable communities are subject to serious injuries and repeat victimisation ...'.⁷⁸ The holistic approach to housing provision was also targeted at vulnerable individuals such as the mentally ill and the homeless. For example, regarding the latter, the 'HUB' was opened in June 1995. This was a multi-agency approach, led by the Housing Department, which attempted to provide accommodation with a range of other services (e.g. health, social services, benefits advice, training and employment) from one location. This scheme had so far won two awards for 'its innovative approach to tackling homelessness'.⁷⁹

In sum, the substance of housing renewal programmes had changed under the enabling role. There is little doubt that this was a genuine attempt to begin not only to address the poorest housing conditions in both localities, but some of the other 'wicked issues' as well. It was hoped that capital investment would enhance local confidence and create 'sustainable communities' On the whole, this was largely consistent with the practice of the community-enabling authority.

⁷⁶ (Proposals for CHP 2: Report of Director of Housing to Housing Committee, 14 January 1997: 2).

⁷⁷ (Report of Director of Housing to Housing Committee, 14 January 1997: 3).

⁷⁸ (South-City Housing Strategy Statement, 1998–2001: 30).

⁷⁹ (South-City Housing Strategy Statement, 1998–2001: 46).

Simultaneously, however, the holistic approach allowed the Housing Departments to extend their traditional domains of responsibility, thereby attenuating the gap in the decline of the direct provision function. Further, reinforcing the analysis of Chapter 11, it is clear that a key feature of this approach was working in partnerships. These ‘partners’ were not just other housing and welfare (i.e. health and social services) providers, but included local businesses and the criminal justice professions.

12.2 Engaging the Community through Consultation

As part of their community governance identity, the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments were engaged in tenant participation, and community consultation in the renewal areas. This was seen as an extension of the public service orientation and a mechanism to overcome the criticism of paternalism. The fundamental objective underpinning these strategies, as reported by respondents, was to ‘empower’ local communities and enable them to have greater influence over policy issues affecting their homes and areas. The discussion that follows is subdivided into three sections. Taking each case-study authority in turn, the first two sections examine the practice of tenant participation. The third section then examines community consultation within the renewal areas.

12.2.1 Tenant Participation in North-Met

The fieldwork data exposed two main themes here. The first related to the way in which the core participation structures and processes, although giving the appearance of being aligned most closely with the community-enabling authority, were actually undermined by organisational constraints. Following on from this, the second theme related to how these organisational constraints were then encouraging ‘consumerist’ forms of participation. Each of these themes is now examined in turn.

To combat the criticism of a lack of service responsiveness, the Housing Department established a Consultation Team in 1987 to examine ways of encouraging tenant participation. Simultaneously, there was increasing ‘demand’ from tenants themselves who requested assistance in establishing ‘official tenants’ associations’. Since 1987, therefore, the Consultation Team had helped initiate 50 tenants’ associations across the Borough and provided on-going support to them. The Team was identified by both tenants and the rest of the Housing Department as the principal mechanism for participation. As well as seeking advice on non-housing issues, tenants viewed the Team as the primary conduit to voice their frustrations and complaints about inadequate services. The Consultation Team also provided training courses for tenant representatives on issues such as equal opportunities and ‘committee skills’. To assist with expenses, the Housing Department gave a small amount of funding for tenants’ groups, and meeting rooms were also made available.

Augmenting the role of the Consultation Team and local tenants' groups, for each of the five housing districts within North-Met, tenants' associations were represented by a federation called the 'North-Met Affiliation of Tenants' Associations'. The remit of these five groups was to assist with any problems that the tenants' groups in their areas may have been experiencing. The federation had a central committee composed of 12 tenant representatives and 3 council officers. Two of the tenant representatives were also allowed to sit on the Housing Committee, but they had no voting rights.

There are several ways in which the above participation structures were consistent with the community-enabling authority. First, they promoted regular dialogue between the Housing Department and tenants. Further, it was reported that tenants were consulted on a wide range of housing policy issues. Neither the traditional nor the residual-enabling authorities would have had tenant representatives on the housing committees. Second, unlike the traditional authority, attempts were made to consult tenants across the Borough, rather than confining participation to specific estates. Third, since tenant involvement was organised at a 'collective' rather than an individual level the practice of the residual-enabling authority appeared to be further inapplicable. Training and funding tenants associations' was also consistent with the community-enabling authority. Most importantly though, there was a belief in tenant participation as an end in itself. However, tensions within the Housing Department undermined this approach and it these which are now examined.

The Consultation Manager reported that, whilst knowledge was imperative for tenants' associations to be effective, as a Department, they were poor at providing information to tenants. This was indicative of another problem. Consultation exercises often took place *after* policy decisions were made, or when specific projects had already begun implementation. The Team argued that consultation should be incorporated into 'whatever the Department's doing', rather than:

... just coming to us after a policy change, or at the end of a project and saying, 'Oh quick! We need to consult people on it', which is quite often what happens.
(North-Met Consultation Manager).

This may be attributable to the fact that the Department's policy stance towards tenant involvement was reported (by the Consultation Manager) to be 'weak' and 'vague'. On the one hand, the Director of Housing not only supported the principle of tenant participation, but was actively trying to encourage the Consultation Team into undertaking community development activities. On the other hand, there was very real resistance to consultation from some housing

staff. They viewed their job as performing specific housing management functions, such as collecting rents and letting properties so that there was 'no will for tenant involvement'.⁸⁰ This appeared to be linked to the advent of CCT. The need to meet performance targets meant that consultation was not considered a priority, especially since there was a feeling that tenant participation would hamper those targets being met:

some officers feel ... however nice it is to go and spend a couple of hours with a tenants' group talking about whatever, that's not getting the houses let, ... people want to get things done and they don't necessarily want to involve the tenants when the tenants are going to say the opposite ... So there's quite a lot of problems between the Consultation Team and the rest of the Department because we're seen as on the tenants' side.
(North-Met Consultation Manager).

To some extent, this contradicts the developments that were discussed in Chapter 10 regarding the Department's changing culture in which the public service orientation was identified as superseding the paternalist ethos. It also appears to undermine the role of tenants in monitoring the Contractor's performance. It is suggested that, whilst the Client regarded tenant involvement as important, the Contractor may have viewed this as an unnecessary impediment. It can be surmised, therefore, that there was an absence of an agreed consensus about supporting tenant participation across the whole Department and that the public service ethos, also, had not pervaded all parts of the organisation to the same extent.

The Consultation Team found that the organisational constraints undermining tenant participation were exacerbated by another 'problem'. In the absence of a clear community development strategy for the Borough, the Director of Housing targeted the Consultation Team to develop community development activities (e.g. establishing credit unions, food co-ops, play-schemes) for tenants. These were to be undertaken in addition to their tenant participation activities. Simultaneously, there was increased pressure from tenants regarding advice on non-housing provision. The immediate effect of this was that the Team found themselves taking on these responsibilities in an *ad hoc* manner. Moreover, when assistance was asked from other departments, it was given reluctantly and was often very minimal. The quotation below describes an officer from another department giving 'assistance' to tenants' groups on how to establish a play-scheme:

What tends to happen in reality is that we'll get that person from Leisure Services, they'll come along to meet the group, sometimes kicking and screaming because it's like an evening meeting and things like that. And they'll kind of give them the information

⁸⁰ North-Met Consultation Manager.

and say, 'Look, you can apply for this grant, blah blah blah, there's all the forms, there's the application stuff, send it in to me when you've finished with it'.

They go away, and then the group go, 'Can you help us?'

(North-Met Consultation Manager).

The culmination of these competing pressures, without effective support and resources, led the Consultation Team to pressurise the Housing Department for a clarification of its role and identification of clear responsibilities. This was to avoid taking on additional work by default. Consequently, the Consultation Team were beginning to shift collective provision of non-housing services to housing management staff and other departments. The role of the Consultation Team was to change:

I mean, the groups will still be there, but we'll hopefully have a smaller role in supporting them and we'll do other things, other forms of research, whether it's surveys, or one-off meetings or focus groups or whatever ... So, it's kind of moving from one thing to another, so hopefully *the main role of our Team is getting customers' comments on housing services.*

(North-Met Consultation Manager).

Thus, the future aim of the Consultation Team was to move away from interacting with collective groups, to focusing interaction with individuals as 'customers'. However, it is unlikely that this would have shifted the overall approach of the Housing Department in relation to tenant participation along the residual-enabling authority. There remained a rhetorical emphasis upon empowering tenants as both 'customers' and 'citizens', especially from senior housing staff (e.g. Director and Assistant Directors of Housing). Moreover, it is unlikely that the Consultation Team would have ceased all interaction with tenants at a collective level – especially given the views of the Director of Housing and the other consultation initiatives that were intended to be developed in the authority, such as 'community fora'. Thus, in all likelihood, there would still be mechanisms for dialogue between the Department and tenants on a collective basis. Further, the other participation processes, such as funding tenants' groups, allowing tenants to sit on the Housing Committee, were still place. It can be concluded, therefore, that the aspiration of facilitating tenant participation along the community-enabling authority was undermined by organisational constraints and the changing role of the Consultation Team.

12.2.2 Tenant Participation in South-City

The discussion here also explores two dominant themes that emerged from the fieldwork data. Again, the first of these related to the way in which the core participation structures conveyed the impression that the Housing Department were facilitating tenant participation in

accordance with the practice of the community-enabling authority. However, it is subsequently shown that this was undermined by the way in which the Department was able actively to control the participation process.

Tenant participation in South-City was precipitated by the threat of 'tenant's choice' and the urban riots of the early 1980s. Unlike in North-Met, there was no central team responsible for developing landlord-tenant interaction. Rather, it was the area housing officers who were responsible for initiating or assisting the development of tenants' associations. By 1997, 47 residents' and tenants' associations had been established across the City. Augmenting the tenants' associations, each area office also had its own Area Housing Committee. These comprised tenants' representatives and ward councillors. The primary purpose of these committees was to act as a forum where members could formally meet to discuss housing management issues and forthcoming policy decisions of the Housing Committee. This was an attempt by the Department to ensure that Area Committees had an 'input into the formal decision-making process'.⁸¹ They were also given specific budgets (£333,000 in total for 1996/97) to spend on environmental improvements such as landscaping or traffic calming measures.⁸²

Area Housing Committees had their own city-wide forum called the 'Chairs and Secretaries Meetings'. Each month, two representatives from each of the 14 area committees met at the Council House to share ideas about events or issues taking place throughout the city. These meetings were also attended by senior housing officers, and an Area Housing Manager often gave a presentation about his/her policy brief. Moreover, the Chair of Housing attended every third meeting and sometimes spoke on a particular topic. Minutes of the meetings were given to each committee who had a responsibility to keep tenants informed. During the fieldwork, this group was in the process of producing its own newsletter to link tenants'/residents' groups across the city.

In addition to the above structures, in September 1996, the Housing Department appointed a specialist Participation Officer who was responsible for providing support to tenants' associations and area housing officers. This included devising and delivering a training programme for tenants and officers, assisting in the production of annual reports and newsletters, and helping to initiate new groups. A key aspect of this role was to review and co-ordinate the range of participation arrangements across the city. For tenants, this entailed providing an overview of what other groups had been doing and encouraging visits between groups. For

⁸¹ Area Housing Committee Constitution (3).

⁸² The proportion of funding allocated to individual Area Housing Committees was calculated according to the number of tenancies and tenants' groups there were in the locality.

officers, it was designed to ensure that 'good practice' regarding tenant participation was consistent across the city. Furthermore, it was envisaged that as the role of the Participation Officer became more developed, she would become involved with 'wider' forms of participation. Particular attention was to be given to developing links with the Community Development section in order to encourage consultation with non-council tenants.

Encouraging greater participation was a key objective of the Housing Department and endorsed by elected members. Tenant participation was defined as a 'Key Project'. Accordingly, area offices were required to meet 'Annual Action Plan Targets' to attract more members to their respective tenants' associations, and the Housing Committee requested regular progress reports on this. Due to the 1980s urban unrest, young people and ethnic minorities were specifically targeted as 'priority groups' for more involvement. Since 'conventional' strategies for encouraging participation were perceived as inadequate for both these target groups, new structures, such as the 'Youth Forum' were established. Other strategies for encouraging participation included: twice yearly meetings to explain the work of an area office or specific policies; advertising how area housing committees spent their budgets and giving support to them and tenants' associations to produce newsletters and posters.

From the available evidence, the practice of tenant participation in South-City was consistent with the community-enabling authority, primarily, because there was potential for tenants to influence policy-making. Housing Committee requests to Area Housing Committees to comment upon neighbourhood and authority-wide policy issues was one example of this. The devolution of small funds can be interpreted as another example. The provision of training for both tenants and officers also played a strong part in South-City. The appointment of a specialist Participation Officer illustrates a commitment to facilitating tenant participation beyond the consumerist approach of the residual-enabling authority. In this respect, it can be argued that even though there were limitations to facilitating tenant participation in accordance with the community-enabling authority – as detailed next – the practice of tenant participation in South-City appeared more developed compared with that in North-Met. This is because there was a consensus within the Department and, importantly, endorsed by the Housing Committee that supported the principle of tenant empowerment as 'citizens'.

The community model of enabling indicates that participation should lead to enhanced tenant control over housing management. However, it is argued here that, despite adopting community strategies of participation, the Housing Department were able actively to control the participation process and their relationship with tenants. For instance, one important way in which landlords are able to manipulate the participation process is by actively controlling the agenda.

Thus, the South-City Housing Department did at one time hold city-wide forums where tenants could ask questions of the Chair of Housing and Divisional Directors. The Participation Officer was considering how this could be reinstated in a different format, but there was reluctance from officers and members because these surgeries frequently:

... degenerated into a repair and reporting session which I would want to avoid. So I think when we do get it going ... it's going to have to take a different format, perhaps be on a particular topic, but still make sure that tenants come and say what they think about certain things. You've got to try and avoid – you don't want somebody who doesn't normally come to any form of formal structure, coming to that and just wanting to talk about repairs. We'll try and make it a bit more organised, perhaps have little workshops and break it up into smaller groups...and hopefully it will bring in people who haven't joined a group before. (South-City Participation Officer).

The above quotation raises two points. First, it suggests that some topics which are important to tenants make the landlord feel uncomfortable discussing them. Hence the reason to set a topic *before* the surgery takes place, so that tenants who ask unrelated questions will be seen as illegitimate. Second, it exemplifies the conflicting attitude towards participation: on the one hand there was a commitment to encouraging participation especially from non-participants; on the other hand, it was clear that this took place within the 'rules of the game set by the landlord' (Cairncross *et al.*, 1994). This was reinforced by the way in which the Housing Department judged the behaviour of tenants'

It's getting people to behave in the right way in the group, we put pressure on those that aren't really, ... Again that comes from training, ... people have got to have an understanding of what should come about. And we must tell groups what we expect them to do and what they must keep to, and we have a role in encouraging that and making sure that happens. (South-City Participation Officer).

Given the results of Cairncross *et al.*'s research (1994; 1997), it is likely that if tenants questioned the landlords' definition of permissible participation and wished to create new points of contact, then they would have had their legitimacy questioned and may have even been marginalised and excluded from the participation process. It is also important to note that at the Chairs and Secretaries meetings, when Area Managers or the Chair of Housing gave presentations, this was not always followed by a discussion. Nor were tenant representatives always allowed to ask questions. This casts doubt upon the efficacy of such processes in facilitating power to tenants.

In sum, it was clear that in both case-study authorities attempts were being made to empower local communities as 'citizens' rather than 'consumers'. Tenant participation was not only viewed as a way for local communities to exert greater influence over their living environments, but an important mechanism for fostering social cohesion and creating a sense of 'community spirit'. Whilst it appeared that South-City was more consistent with the community-enabling approach with tenant participation compared to North-Met, in reality the practice in both authorities failed to match the theory. Organisational constraints in North-Met, and the manipulation of the participation agenda in South-City were key factors which undermined this approach. There were, however, two additional factors that were relevant to both case-study areas which also eroded the community-enabling approach to participation. First, respondents in both authorities stressed the considerable dependence of tenants' groups either on the Consultation Team, or the area offices and the Participation Officer for support and advice:

... people think, 'Oh right, there's a tenants' group, yep, they're fine now, they can manage'. But they can't. They need an awful lot of help even if it's just personal development type of support, they need somebody there coaching them, they need confidence, they need to sound off on somebody or whatever. (North-Met Consultation Manager).

Similar remarks were also made by the Participation Officer in South-City, who accordingly said that one of her tasks lay in making groups more 'independent'. The point here is that for 'empowerment' to be realised, power should flow in a way that *increases* the independence of tenants and their freedom of action. A comparable point is made by Donnison who argues that community action developed in conjunction with the State is not empowering, rather, 'it will work in ways which ultimately reinforce the victims' exclusion, humiliation and sense of powerlessness' (1989: 218–19). Second, it is not too cynical to suggest that tenant participation was a mechanism of achieving policy legitimisation. Increased landlord-tenant dialogue allows the former to explain to tenants why it is unable to deliver services to the standards or levels they want. This can have the effect of *limiting* user expectations and mitigating council responsibility. Indeed, Somerville has noted that, on one level, greater knowledge of financial issues can be disempowering because tenants are more likely to be 'aware of how limited is the influence which they can have on key housing capital and revenue decisions' (1998: 247). This leads on to a related point, namely that, whilst the objectives of tenant participation were predominately couched in terms of the benefits it had for tenants, consultation also served the interests of the Housing Departments. Given the accentuated stigmatisation of council housing since 1979, and the threat of policies such as Tenants' Choice, tenant participation was a 'marketing' strategy for both the tenure and the

Departments.⁸³ In this respect, it was another attempt to ensure a continuing role for the Housing Departments.

12.2.3 Consultation in Housing Renewal Areas

An important part of implementing housing renewal programmes entailed greater consultation with the communities targeted for investment. This was seen as a way of empowering them to take control of the decisions affecting their area. The following discussion identifies how consultation in the renewal areas differs from tenant participation, the types of methods used and the key issues raised by respondents.

Although the stated objectives remained the same (i.e. to encourage empowerment), consultation in the renewal areas differed from tenant participation. First, it was much more intensive, took place in several phases, and generally, conducted at an individual level. Second, the process was publicity-led, with the press often invited to high-profile exhibitions. Third, consultation was perceived as 'temporary' because it was not expected to continue after the life of the investment programmes. Consequently, it was not incorporated into the main participation structures of the Housing Departments. Finally, it was not the central housing departments who were engaged in the consultation process, but was the responsibility of individual renewal teams.

Communities were consulted on the regeneration strategy, but to engage as many people as possible, respondents stressed that a variety of methods were required. These are listed in the Table below.

Table 12.2: Consultation Methods in Regeneration Areas	
North-Met	South-City
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings• Informal access to renewal teams• Videos• Consultation with local community groups• Questionnaires• Letters• Open days and exhibitions• One-to-one consultations between households and representatives from the renewal teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public meetings (including street meetings)• Public accessibility to renewal teams• The use of visual material.• Liaison with local community groups• Education programmes for local schools• Production of explanatory leaflets on a range of topics.• Extensive publicity in the media, co-ordinated through the city council's press office• Individual consultation with households

⁸³ See also Cole (1993) for a similar discussion on how decentralisation was used as 'defence' strategy by Labour councils to combat the Conservative assault on council housing.

Relations with the community in South-City's St. Magnums renewal area, and North-Met's 3Bs areas, were more positive than those in the City Challenge and Beckston renewal areas. The former two areas both reported that local communities were particularly receptive to the investment being made in the area. For example:

The consultation side of it is out there, face-to-face talking to people. It's easy to sell group repair because we could be telling people we're going to be spending up to £20,000 on their house and we'll pay 75% of the cost, and if you're on income support then you won't pay a penny – now that's not hard to sell is it?

(South-City Special Projects Co-ordinator: St. Magnums Renewal Area).

The key to a good relationship with the local community in the 3Bs area was summarised by the Manager as follows:

... in terms of the wider partnership, our partnership with the community, the key thing has been to be honest with them, to tell them what is happening and tell them why we want to do things in a certain way. And I think that's actually proved fruitful *because they realised that it's not us, we haven't got an unlimited amount of money, we'd like to improve every house in the Borough, but we can't. So in being open and honest with them, and sharing and keeping them informed, it's actually helped them to realise and to come to terms with it [i.e. lack of funding]. And it's minimised the amount of pressure.* Where we have been able to help, it's been appreciated then.

(North-Met Project Manager for 3Bs Regeneration Area).

The quotation above indicates that part of the rationale for participation was not so much 'empowerment', as getting communities 'on side'. Not only did this ease the regeneration process and make the jobs of local officers easier, but there was also a need to avoid appearing paternalistic. Indeed, the lack of community participation in Beckston was lamented for this very reason. There was a concern that:

We could well be accused of coming into the area for ten years, doing things *to* the area and going away again, rather than doing things *with* the area and with the population, and letting them, if you like, 'own it', in inverted commas, and having some role in it, and actually building on what we've done, rather than just letting it go away. So there's very much a real danger of the Council having been seen to do things to them, as opposed to assisting them and doing things with them, and just setting them on the right trail. (South-City Special Project Co-ordinator for Beckston Renewal Area).

In fact, Beckston reported that mobilising community support and maintaining its interest was the most difficult part of the regeneration process. A Beckston Community Forum was established in July 1993 to act as the representative body of the community, with whom the renewal team could consult on issues of regeneration. The first few meetings were attended by at least 20 local people, but interest soon dropped off. For example, at the most recent Forum meeting, eight people had attended: five of them were council employees, one was employed by the Forum to do secretarial work, one person worked for the Employment Service, and there was only one 'genuine' local resident.

In City Challenge, the main problem reported was the lack of consultation experience of the team. The Housing Department were criticised for offering very little support or advice on the practicalities of consultation and the team felt isolated. They were worried about potential conflict deriving from the fact that not all the houses within the area could be improved. There were 2,360 unfit homes and over the five years, City Challenge could only improve 1,200 homes.

Despite the rhetoric of empowerment, there was little evidence to suggest that participation moved beyond the 'consultation' stage, even where good relations had been built with the local community. There was no evidence, for instance, of the authorities ceding power, control of resources, decision-making and implementation processes to local communities. Indeed, the bids had often already been prepared by the case-study authorities, and local communities were consulted at a relatively late stage in the renewal process. Consequently, they played no role in 'setting the agenda' or helping to devise the regeneration strategies.

12.3 Engaging the Community through Regulation

The final part of this chapter examines the authoritarian aspect of the enabling role. The Conservatives replaced the direct provision function of Housing Departments with greater powers to regulate the behaviour of individuals. This was epitomised in the 1996 Housing Act which empowered housing authorities to apply to the courts for an injunction, or an eviction warrant, against council tenants or their visitors for 'anti-social behaviour'.⁸⁴ These powers were welcomed by both case-study authorities. Indeed, in line with many other councils (see Kelly, 1995), the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments precipitated the 1996 Act by having policies for tackling neighbour nuisance and harassment in the early 1990s. In fact, in 1993, South-City Council obtained its first injunction against alleged racial harassment and at a subsequent court hearing, a full possession order was granted.⁸⁵ The 1996 Act was augmented with the 1997 Crime

⁸⁴ See also Nixon *et al.*, (1999) for a recent study which examines the range of measures local authorities have adopted to deal with anti-social behaviour.

⁸⁵ (South-City Housing Strategy, 1995–1988).

and Disorder Bill which was introduced by the new Labour Government. Accordingly, both authorities envisaged implementing the introduction of ‘probationary tenancies’. The discussion that follows is sub-divided into two sections. The first examines the measures adopted by the case-study authorities to deal with anti-social behaviour. However, the extension of state regulation into the personal sphere was obscured, to some extent, by the form in which this development occurred. Hence, the second section examines the ‘mystification’ of anti-social behaviour policies.

12.3.1 Anti-Social Behaviour Policies and Practices

Housing departments have always had powers to evict somebody if they were deemed to be in breach of their tenancy agreement. The traditional approach has been possession proceedings, but respondents complained that, in practice, this was too long and arduous to be effective. The advent of the 1996 Act was, in the words of one respondent, ‘more helpful to us’ (North-Met Housing Manager). It was credited with making cases easier to deal with, partly because housing authorities were given wider powers, and partly because it placed more emphasis on courts responding to anti-social cases.

The definition of what constituted anti-social behaviour was wide-reaching in scope. For instance, in North-Met, the tenancy agreement stipulated the following behaviour as examples of nuisance: playing loud music, shouting, drunken behaviour, banging doors, barking dogs, dumping rubbish. It proceeded by stating: ‘These are only examples and we may take action against you if you do anything which would cause a nuisance.’⁸⁶ Similar behaviour was also identified by South-City. Accordingly, both authorities amended their tenancy agreements and clauses were inserted specifically forbidding the above behaviour. Both Housing Departments also used similar approaches to deal with anti-social behaviour. An initial development was the production of a corporate manual for officers which set out the procedures for tackling such behaviour, as well as racial and sexual harassment. Other common approaches between the authorities are listed in the table overleaf.

⁸⁶ North-Met Housing: *You and Your Home: Your Tenancy Agreement with Us*.

<p>Table 12.3:</p> <p>The Housing Departments' Approaches Addressing Anti-Social Behaviour</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of mediation services • Training staff to deal with a range of scenarios and behaviour deemed to be anti-social behaviour • Taking action to enforce the tenancy agreement, ensuring legal action taken quickly • Applying for eviction orders and injunctions if necessary • Ensuring improvement schemes included security measures • Appointing a racial harassment officer whose sole job is to investigate cases of racial harassment on council estates • Better links and support from legal services • Production of appropriate publicity material • Consultation with tenant groups, Area Housing Committees in South-City, and with the North-Met Tenants' Federation in North-Met.

A defining aspect in tackling anti-social behaviour was the emphasis given to adopting 'multi-agency' approaches. For instance, South-City's Housing Strategy states:

The new method of dealing with these problems involves a more multi-agency approach, working with Health and Environmental Services, Planning and Development Services, Leisure Services and Legal Services Directorates. Together the use of a range of powers including statutory provisions, planning controls, building regulations, bye-laws, tenancy conditions and covenants will bring pressure to bear on perpetrators.⁸⁷

Similarly, a respondent from North-Met reported:

Well, I think we spend more time now working more effectively with other agencies, for instance, the police, we co-ordinate what we're doing with environmental health and in this area, for instance, we work in a group called Brightmeight Area Action. And that includes representatives from all council departments, the police are there, all the headmasters and headmistresses from school are there, the youth service, leisure and housing. All the services get together and action is taken to prevent anti-social behaviour. (North-Met Housing Manager).

⁸⁷ (South-City Housing Strategy Statement, 1995–1998: 36).

This represents what Clarke and Newman refer to as the ‘dispersal of state power’, by not only engaging more agencies into the field of state power; but the dispersal of state power ‘across a range of locales and sites’ (1997: 126); in this instance, over the private realm of individuals.

12.3.2 The Mystification of Anti-Social Behaviour

Under anti-social behaviour policies, tenants became subjected to greater lifestyle monitoring, but this was not presented as an erosion of civil liberties. Instead, these developments were ‘mystified’ and presented as an extension of tenants’ rights. The following quotation captures the rationale underpinning the introduction of policies tackling with ‘nuisance’:

Introductory tenancies and local authorities taking out injunctions would have been unheard of 10 years ago, even though perhaps anti-social behaviour may not be significantly worse now than it was 10 years ago. It’s partly about customers’ expectations, and partly I think, it’s also about Housing Services taking a more holistic view about its role within the community.

(South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division).

This quotation raises two points. First, as indicated, anti-social behaviour measures formed part of the authorities’ ‘holistic’ approach to creating sustainable communities. They were seen as a way of reversing the poor image of estates and solving housing management problems, such as difficult-to-let properties. In turn, this was perceived as an important way of enhancing the confidence of local communities. Second, such measures were presented as a response to ‘customer’ anxieties. The Housing Departments viewed this as being part of their public service orientation:

And I think particularly in anti-social behaviour, it’s something that residents have wanted and the Department has responded to that. This is a priority for tenants, so this is also got to be a priority for the Council. (North-Met Housing Manager).

Although, therefore, tenants became subjected to greater lifestyle monitoring, this development was ‘mystified’ as an extension of tenants’ rights. For example North-Met’s Housing Chairman stated:

Tenants have the *right* to enjoy the peace and quiet of their own homes and we are doing everything we can to protect that *right*.

Similarly, South-City’s Housing Strategy states: ‘Tenants and residents want to be *protected* against anti-social behaviour’ (1998–2001: 28). Furthermore, probationary tenancies (that the

authorities were introducing) were justified in terms of protecting the rights of other tenants to enjoy a 'quiet life' (despite the fact that new tenants would effectively have no rights for a year). This relates to another feature of the new regulatory role, namely, that it was not performed surreptitiously. On the contrary, publicity material was widely circulated by the Housing Departments to inform tenants of their new 'rights'. Thus, the 'extension' of tenants' rights provided the Housing Departments with an additional responsibility to compensate for the decline in direct provision: i.e. as 'protectors' or 'enforcers' of tenants' rights.

In sum, whilst there is nothing new about local authorities as agents of social control, under the enabling role, however, increased state regulation was not presented as an erosion of civil liberties or authoritarian repression. Instead, it was justified as a response to a local priorities and in a language purporting to extend the rights of tenants. Furthermore, there was the implicit (and sometimes explicit) suggestion that tenants were either 'deserving' or 'non-deserving' of a tenancy. This represents a departure from the old social democratic consensus in which access to social housing was no longer perceived as a 'right', it had to be 'earned'. This fits with the Communitarian ideology underpinning the community-enabling authority: i.e. that individuals have responsibilities and obligations to uphold in return for 'rights' conferred by the State.

It is also argued here that social behaviour policies assisted in the reinvention of a new role for the Housing Departments by reinforcing their (perhaps declining) legitimacy. However, at the same time, it is also important to note that (as reported by respondents) these measures were also supported by tenants. The key to this apparent paradox lay in the inability of the two Departments to provide decent housing. For instance, after the Inner Urban Programme funding was withdrawn, North-Met had to go back to the Tramworth renewal area to report that there would be no more resources. In the City Challenge area, it was noted how residents complained because not all the houses could be improved, also due to a lack of resources. Similarly, South-City's Housing Strategy mentions numerous times that as a Department, they are restricted by a lack of funding, and hence, are unable to renovate or improve the housing stock in relation to the numbers that require it. Thus, the message that service-users receive is that there are not enough resources for substantial investment, making the demand for decent housing appear far removed from reality. Consequently, for tenants, inadequate housing becomes an invisible issue, but loud music pounding from next door becomes an immediate nuisance requiring measures to deal with it. For the Housing Departments, repressive measures become a way of solving social problems. By defining individuals as the problem, rather than poor housing and deprivation, anti-social behaviour policies give the Housing Departments legitimacy and a new function. By extending the 'rights' of tenants, they then have a new duty to enforce those rights. It can be concluded, therefore, that anti-social behaviour policies and measures were presented as a response to local

priorities and a way of enabling social cohesion. In the process, this bolstered the legitimacy of the Housing Departments and gave them a new function to compensate for the decline in direct provision.

12.4 Conclusions

This chapter has discussed three community governance strategies that the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments were engaged with, in which notions of ‘empowerment’, tackling social exclusion and improving the ‘quality of life’ for local communities featured dominantly. There were two key motives underpinning such strategies. The first of these was consistent with the practice of the community-enabling authority in which attempts were made to tackle problems of social disengagement with community affairs and foster a greater sense of ‘community’. Unemployment, poor housing, family break-down and the collapse of collective, associational links between the State and society were seen as a threat to social cohesion. In this respect, even though the actual practice of such strategies failed to match theory, particularly in relation to tenant participation for instance, they did fit in with the broader Communitarian ideology which states that ‘markets and contracts ... do not create any social cohesion in and of themselves ...’ (Beck, 1998: 13; quoted in Chandler, 2000: 5). Housing Departments, as part of the local State, could therefore be seen as playing a role in attempting to engage the most disaffected communities and creating new points of contact within a broader structure of a much more individualised society. The second motive underpinning the community governance identity was oriented at how it could help the Housing Departments themselves. All three strategies, in one form or another, helped to bridge the gap left by the decline in direct provision and ensured a continuing role for the Departments.

CHAPTER 13

ENABLING AND ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

Chapters 10 and 11 discussed the enabling role of the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments in relation to changing modes of service delivery. As compensation for this decline in direct provision, Chapter 12 continued the discussion by examining the way in which the two case-study authorities were reinventing a new role for themselves centred around ‘community governance’. This Chapter now examines the implications of these developments with respect to the internal organisational structure and management processes of the two authorities. The discussion is structured into four substantive parts. The first considers the emphasis placed upon ‘strategic management’ and, more specifically, the production of organisational strategies as a means of providing choices and decisions about the future direction of the Housing Departments and the local authority. The second identifies four ways in which the hierarchical structure of the two case-study authorities was being modified in light of the restructuring of their traditional service provider role. Following on from this, the third part examines the impact of new ways of working upon officer roles. Finally, given that entrenched cultures and resistance to change are an endemic feature of organisational politics, the fourth part of the Chapter examines some of the internal conflicts and factions *within* the case-study authorities.

13.1 Enabling and Strategic Management

The analysis of the fieldwork data revealed that the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments considered their ‘strategic’ function to have increased in importance as they shifted to the enabling role. This was a reference to the process of strategic management where attempts were made to think and plan in broad terms for the medium and long-term future of each organisation and the direction in which they were heading. There were four interrelated reasons for this. The first of these was concerned with ensuring corporate survival. Legislative changes in the specific context of housing policy, as well as those relating to local government more generally, the pressures of delivering services in a climate of fiscal austerity, and the higher expectations of service quality from ‘customers’, had left the Housing Departments with a sense of insecurity about their own position and anxiety about the future. In this way, strategic management was identified as means of coping with and managing change effectively in a constantly changing operating environment. The second reason related to the decline in direct provision and, as compensation for this, the need to retain at least some control and influence over the way local needs were met. As one respondent explained:

Enabling doesn't mean, well, you shove everything over to a housing association and let them get on with it. It's about work collaboration and the local authority retaining its strong strategic role. It's not letting go in the sense of 'Oh, just go and do it', it's about doing what is best for the communities out there.

(North-Met Senior Research and Development Manager).

Relatedly, therefore, the third reason underpinning strategic management was to co-ordinate the activities of other organisations involved in service delivery.

Enabling is forcing local government to see itself as a co-ordinator of everything that goes on within the Borough, but co-ordinating in some sort of strategic framework that people can sign up to. And it's about widening local government's horizons I would suggest, to be far more than service providers, ...

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal Division).

In this context, strategic management was a response to the fragmentary impact of Conservative Government policies. The two housing authorities no longer perceived themselves to be able to operate independently. Instead, it was felt that the effectiveness of their actions were, in part, contingent upon the actions of others. Finally, strategic management was identified as a component of the community governance role that the two Departments were reinventing for themselves. It was argued that the transfer of the direct service function to other agencies did not remove the Housing Departments' responsibility for identifying collective or individual needs. Indeed, there was a consensus amongst council officers and external actors that the Housing Departments held a unique status amongst the plethora of agencies involved in service delivery. The two Departments perceived themselves to be, and were identified by external agencies as, the only organisations at local level with the ability and means to undertake a broad assessment of the housing needs and priorities of their areas. This invoked the practice of the community-enabling authority and it can be contrasted to the residual-enabling authority in which neither authority-wide strategic planning nor individual service planning is considered appropriate.

A tangible expression of strategic management was the production of organisational strategies and these were developed at both the departmental and authority-wide level. Whilst there is nothing new about housing departments developing local housing plans or strategies, what was different under the enabling role was the format that this assumed. There was evidence that the housing strategies and the process entailed in their production reflected the development of new public management. Indeed, replacing the 'Corporate Planning and Budgetary System', all Council departments in North-Met now 'embraced' 'Total Performance Management'. Furthermore, in both Departments, the housing strategies were underpinned by a 'statement of

purpose', 'core values' and in the case of North-Met, a 'vision'. Emphasis was also given to contextualising housing strategies within the broader strategic direction taken by their respective councils and other service departments. For instance, the North-Met housing strategy states:

The Council's strategic planning process, ...ensures that annually each Council service produces a 3 year Strategic Plan which both meets the Council's overall strategic aims, and is closely integrated with other Departmental Strategic Plans. This ensures the preparation of this Housing Strategy has been developed through a process of joint working between Council Departments, customers, the voluntary sector and other housing agencies. Consequently, it interlocks with, and influences other, current key Council and external strategies, in particular, the *Framework* document, the Community Care Plan, the Unitary Development Plan

(North-Met Housing Strategy Statement, 1997–2000: 2).

South-City's Housing Strategy also expressed similar sentiments. This can be seen as an attempt to achieve policy-co-ordination between departments and to give direction to an emerging fragmented structure (see 13.2). Another feature of the housing strategies was the importance attached to outcomes and outputs, rather than simply concentrating upon inputs. Thus, in South-City, for example, 'Annual Action Plans' were produced for each service area, including Housing. These contained 'local relevant and deliverable targets' which were not only quantitative but in some cases qualitative as well. Further documentary evidence revealed that the annual action plan targets were reviewed and monitored quarterly with the Housing Committee receiving regular progress reports.⁸⁸ Similarly, North-Met's 'Strategic Plan' stated that 'Service Plans' were produced for various components of the overall Housing Service and these described annual operational targets. These were augmented with 'Performance Reviews' containing 'Key Performance Indicators'.⁸⁹ This can be interpreted as an attempt to provide a focus for performance-oriented management by establishing clear benchmarks. Finally, there was an emphasis upon 'quality' management. In South-City, for instance, 'customer care standards' were being applied across the whole city council. In the specific context of the Housing Department, the Housing Committee had introduced specific housing related standards, for example, response times for repairs. Again, these standards were 'regularly reviewed' and publicised in leaflets and the six-monthly 'Housing News' newsletter. A similar process of producing service standards was also evident in North-Met. However, the North-Met Housing Department had additional organisational arrangements to ensure quality in service provision. Primarily, the Department emphasised that to achieve this objective, it needed to be a 'Learning Organisation'. This was

⁸⁸ (South-City Housing Strategy, 1999–2000: 8).

⁸⁹ (North-Met Housing Department Report on Performance Context and Strategic Housing Plan 1993/96: 1).

reference to the 'Organisational Development Training Programme' that had been implemented throughout the Department and it is discussed in greater detail later on in this Chapter.

Strategic management at the corporate level in which, again, attempts were made to identify the broad long-term purpose and direction of the local authorities as whole, was also evident – albeit to varying degrees. Again, the process that this entailed exhibited key aspects of new public management as outlined above in the production of housing strategies and plans. For example, North-Met Council produced a borough-wide plan called the *Framework Prospectus* which was modelled on 'City Pride'. It was divided into eight themes, with corresponding objectives, strategies and projected outputs. Each theme was led by a different convenor and the Housing Department was responsible for the 'Communities and Neighbourhoods' theme. However, in both authorities, corporate documents had other objectives in addition to providing a vision for the future. Thus, the following quotation identifies the two main purposes of the *Framework* document:

So the *Framework* document will be a public relations thing and it will be around raising the image and enthusiasm and well-being within the borough. But behind that will be an Action Plan which will be designed to deliver. Although it's partly aspirational, what it will have done is identify projects which you can then seek to resource from a whole range of different funding regimes, you know, the Lottery, the community itself doing some of these projects and so on and so forth.

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal Division).

It can be argued that, as the *Framework* prospectus was partly targeted at local residents, it was a mechanism for legitimising regeneration and redevelopment programmes and fostering social cohesion. It was also an attempt to strengthen the position of the authority in the competition for 'state surpluses' distributed by national or supranational governments, or directed towards funding sources which have no specific urban objectives such as the National Lottery. Hence, it epitomised one of the four 'entrepreneurial' strategies in which local authorities have been engaged (Griffiths, 1998: 43).

South-City's 'City Wide Investment Strategy' focused on a limited range of issues and was less far-reaching in scope compared to North-Met's *Prospectus*. It was principally concerned with providing an overview of housing investment to counter the negative effects of area decentralisation:

... there is that feeling that actually the area dimension in some ways has gone too far and there isn't an anchor here of what the City's public requirements are as a whole.

There are some steps now to adjust that. For example the 'City Wide Investment Strategy' which says what are the needs across the whole city, which puts into context the Area Strategy. One Manager may say 'This is my highest priority'. But their highest priority may actually be lower than the next Area Manager's tenth priority! And that's always the problem with area decentralisation.

(South-City Strategic Services Manager, Enabling Division).

It is generally accepted that the traditional authority of the post-war period faced a long period in which their role and purpose as direct service providers was taken for granted. Consequently, they tended to be 'non-strategic' in the sense that they tended to be insular and paid little attention to external circumstances. The importance attached to strategic management in both authorities was, therefore, a response to an uncertain operating environment precipitated by centrally driven national changes and financial pressures. It was a means of assertively coping with change and a recognition of the fact they were no longer able to operate independently. However, the adoption of mission statements and strategic plans should be read with caution – their effective implementation is contingent upon changing organisational cultures and entrenched ways of working. Thus, given that the tradition of departmentalism remained strong in both authorities (see for example, 11.2; 13.2), this was likely to be a constraining force undermining the process of strategic management.

13.2 Enabling and Challenges to the Traditional Local Authority Structure

The internal organisation of local authority service departments has traditionally been characterised by hierarchy which, in turn, is characterised by strong vertical integration and direct control. Both of these aspects were being undermined by the restructuring of their traditional role in the two case-study authorities. Thus, strong vertical integration was being undermined by the creation of semi-autonomous business units. As noted in Chapter 10, the separation of client/contractor functions had led to the creation of separate trading accounts for the policy-making and the service delivery functions in the North-Met Housing Department. In South-City, both the decentralisation of area housing offices, as well as the advent of CCT in which the Department was effectively operating under 'pseudo' client/contractor relationships, precipitated the creation of separate trading accounts. As the Manager from the central policy making 'unit' noted:

Well, all budgets are decentralised ... I mean, I've got responsibility for my budget which I have to deliver on, including salaries, running costs and so on. Obviously some

bits are not directly controllable by me, like I've got 20 staff in the establishment and they all stay in post, I can't control how much they're paid, ...
(South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division).

Similarly, by operating at arm's length from the Housing Departments, the renewal teams in both case-study areas also functioned as semi-autonomous business units. As one respondent from North-Met explained:

The way that finances are set up here, ... I have to generate fees to pay for my staff's salaries, establishment costs. So, in effect, I've got a trading account.
(North-Met Project Manager for 3Bs Regeneration Area).

Thus, the development of semi-autonomous business units – all focusing upon particular tasks – undermined the traditional principle of hierarchy and, in effect, contributed towards a *fragmented* departmental structure. It can be argued that this exposes a tension with the emphasis given to 'holistic' service delivery discussed in Chapter 11. Furthermore, there was some evidence that, in South-City, the process of fragmentation was taking place across the authority as a whole. Again, partly as a result of CCT, and partly as a result of financial pressures and the commensurate need to ensure 'better value for money', the Housing Department was beginning to adopt a more formalised relationship with central support services through the development of 'service-level-agreements'. The fragmentation of the departmental structure was, in turn, modifying the second aspect of hierarchy, that is, direct control. Put another way, control by hierarchy was being replaced by control by management; either through the terms of the contract or 'arm's length' negotiated relationships between the managers of semi-autonomous business units.

The devolution of budgets to individual cost centres was undermining the second feature of the internal departmental structure – that of professionalism. There was evidence to support what Stoker has identified as the emergence of the 'Managerial Professional' (1993; c.f. Stewart, 2000: 207). Without exception, there was no discussion by respondents interviewed in either authority of the way that enabling had impacted upon their roles as *housing professionals*. Instead, the discussion was framed in terms of how enabling had impacted upon their roles as *managers*. It was suggested that, as managers, they had greater autonomy over operational responsibilities and decision-making. Whilst this can be interpreted as a positive development, respondents also reported upon the pressures associated with their managerial roles. Faced with constant financial pressure, they were required to be more focused upon the costs of the service provided and the management of scarce resources. They also had to meet designated targets and have the work of their units assessed by 'outputs'. Moreover, as discussed in greater detail below, joint-working

arrangements brought their own stresses and strains and, in consequence, were identified as leading to more 'difficult' managerial roles, as well as requiring different skills.

The third way in which the traditional structure was being undermined was through a shift from centralised service provision towards decentralisation. Thus, whilst local authorities have traditionally delivered services from offices in the town hall, as part of their public service orientation, both case-study authorities were devising strategies to make services more accessible to service users and, in the process, were reducing centrally delivered activities. For instance, the 'one-stop shop' principle in North-Met was an attempt to overcome the problem of service recipients being transferred from one part of the bureaucracy to another. However, the most significant challenge to the centralised structure of service delivery was found in South-City and the creation by the Housing Department of 14 decentralised area offices. Although this began in the 1980s and pre-dated the concept of 'enabling', at the time of the fieldwork, there was a commitment to decentralise additional housing services. Consequently, decentralisation undermined the traditional structure of this authority in three further ways. The movement towards even greater decentralisation was not only an attempt to ensure that services were geographically accessible, but to allow for diversity and flexibility in service provision. In this way, decentralisation presented a challenge to the principle of uniform service provision. Second, decentralisation involved an increase in power to area managers and, therefore, a weakening of direct control exercised by the departmental hierarchy. Indeed, it was reported that:

[Area managers] have very much been empowered, ... I mean the area housing managers...are the most highly paid and they're given a very significant amount of status. Although I am now paid the same as them, I know that they have a lot more authority and status than I have. Basically, if the area manager says 'Jump', then people jump! And actually, area offices are quite large, I mean, a lot of them have got 40, 50, 60, 70 staff. They're not exactly small, I mean, they're significant places.
(South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division).

Third, there was an aspiration to integrate social services with the area housing offices. Indeed, one 'pilot' area office had already been established. This challenged functional organisation based on professional specialisms.

Finally, the traditional division of local authority functions has always emphasised vertical flows of communications. However, as discussed in Chapter 11, inter-departmental working, inter-organisational relationships and, as noted above, the process of strategic management were increasing horizontal and lateral flows of communication.

Despite many of the changes noted above, there were significant continuities with the traditional structures. Thus, to counter the effects of departmental fragmentation implicit within the creation of semi-autonomous cost centres, as discussed in Chapter 10 (see 10.1.3), both authorities retained a soft client/contractor split. Furthermore, as there was evidence to suggest that hierarchical norms and working practices co-existed with contractual terms and conditions to govern client/contractor transactions, this was likely to be true of other individual cost centres. Hence, control by management was likely to be supplemented by control by hierarchy.

In South-City, decentralisation had not eradicated the principle of functional organisation due to 'professional jealousies' (Stoker, 1991: 102). The one area office which had thus far been integrated with social services could not resolve a simple issue of managing a reception area:

Like in the one shared [area] office at the moment, Social Services insisted that they had their own reception and their own reception staff. They've got a one-stop shop and two receptions! Its daft because of the way these structures work within the authority. I mean you could still have two different structures but you could have some common arrangements for when people come in.

(South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division).

Similarly, in North-Met, 'bureaucratic rivalry' (Stoker, 1991: 102) and member resistance obstructed the possibility of functional service integration. The creation of a 'Community Services Department' which would have integrated all the consultation undertaken by Housing and Social Services, introduced 'play-schemes', and services targeted at young people, was rejected. It was reported that this was:

... mainly because Councillors and Chief Exec's were very jumpy about it. People feel more comfortable with, ... you know, social workers have specialisms in social work so therefore they should be in social services department; same in housing; housing's protectionist because it has the housing revenue account and it has all the profits from various direct labour organisations. It doesn't want to be plundered by other departments ... In the end, ... Members will sit on social services committee or they will sit on housing committees, ... they have allegiances to different departments depending on where they've got their power base.

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator).

Thus, the tradition of departmentalism remained strong in both authorities. The observations that, 'Officers' loyalties are more to the department and its services and their professions than to the authority' (Leach *et al.*, 1994: 20), did not appear to have diminished.

Whilst horizontal communication in the form of inter-departmental working was undermined by departmentalism, lateral communication in the form of inter-organisational collaboration was undermined by local government's public accountability requirements. Both authorities reported that external partners became frustrated about the slowness of council decision-making and the need to take decisions to 'committee':

And I think the voluntary sector and housing associations get quite frustrated with *us* at times because we've got this bureaucratic process to go through. We thought we've agreed something and we go to an agenda conference for Committee, Members say we don't like that, so we have to go back. And then when we think we've got it right, we go back to Committee and something else comes up. The process seems to be incredibly long at times before things actually happen ...

(South-City Enabling Team Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

This part of the Chapter has identified four ways in which the traditional structure of the two case-study authorities was being undermined: the shift from departmentalism to fragmentation; from professionalism to managerialism; from centralised service provision to decentralisation; and finally, from vertical to horizontal forms of communication. At the same time, however, it was shown that each of these processes retained elements of continuity with the traditional ways of working. Change and continuity, therefore, co-existed. More precisely, new organisational arrangements were an amendment to, and superimposed upon, the traditional hierarchical and departmental structures.

13.3 Enabling and The Impact on Officer Roles

This section now examines the way in which new working practices were impacting upon officer roles. The first point to make is that the erosion of direct service provision does not necessarily equate to job losses. The North-Met and South-City Housing Departments' attempt to practice the community-enabling role in which they invested staff time in developing networking type relationships and seeking new alliances did have the potential to generate new jobs. As one respondent from North-Met explained:

We got a whole host of people in jobs now that you would never have envisaged having in the Department even five years ago ... Seven years ago we had X who was our housing association link and that was it. Now we've got a whole team of people who are working with different people ... so, you've got new jobs and then you've got a change in emphasis in existing jobs – where you're not just about service delivery, you're actually about helping others to deliver services as well, so it's changed a lot really.

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary- Sector Co-ordinator).

However, the potential for ‘new job’ generation should not be over-stated. Whilst this was evident up to a point, in reality, what was more significant was the way in which existing officer jobs were being re-designed and becoming broader. Many officers from both authorities reported that they were taking on new responsibilities, while retaining their existing duties. For instance, in addition to his departmental role, North-Met’s Assistant Director of Housing for Urban Renewal was developing a corporate role by becoming responsible for the ‘Neighbourhoods and Communities’ theme within the *Framework Prospectus*. Similarly, in South-City, the Housing Department’s Divisional Director for Enabling Services was also responsible for ‘services to older people’, ‘voluntary organisation’, ‘regeneration’ and ‘health’. This process was not confined to senior positions within the two case-study authorities. Middle-management jobs were also becoming wider in scope. For example, in addition to his previous responsibilities for managing the housing advice centre, the advice and access manager in North-Met became responsible for co-ordinating voluntary sector activity.

Unsurprisingly, in taking on new responsibilities, many officers reported that their workloads had increased – especially if they were involved in partnerships. Meetings, building relationships and delivering on partnership agreements had to take place alongside an officer’s ‘core’ workload. This often resulted in longer office hours or taking work home. Officers also reported that partnership working required new skills:

[enabling] involves good political skills because you’re being asked to act on behalf of the council ... and you also need have very strong interpersonal skills to persuade people to do what you want to, but also to be able to show the benefits they can get out of it as well. So you’ve got to be able to sell a ‘win-win’ situation working in partnership, or enabling everybody to do something you can’t do yourself.

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side).

Indeed, collaborative relationships were identified as leading to more difficult management roles and it was reported that this required developing ‘indirect’ management skills:

I have responsibilities to the Council to deliver a whole range of projects and now I have to do that working with others for whom I’m not responsible. So although I have hard management outputs to achieve, unlike the traditional management role where you deliver outputs with the people for whom you’re responsible, that’s no longer the case. It’s a far more difficult management role, it’s easy when people are responsible to you, I can tell them to go and do that, but when you’re working with other people you can’t do that. A whole new range of skills [such as] influencing, negotiating, motivating are required. (North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal Division).

Furthermore, some officers from North-Met reported that they had to reconcile competing pressures emanating from the local authority and external partners. For example, whilst elected members often pushed for as much direct provision as possible, external agencies which had become accustomed to working with the Department expected to be consulted or involved on all future issues:

... you're caught really between a rock and a hard place, because you've got the politicians ... even though they have moved towards more enabling type projects, they'd still, if they had their way, be paternalistic, ... and then you've got all the sort of unwritten commitments in a lot of cases from all the voluntary groups and private landlords who ... have grown to expect you to involve them in things. And if you don't involve them in things, or you don't do it the right way, you get hit over the head by them. So you've sort of got these two competing pressures of not involving people too much if politicians don't want you to, and the raised expectations of other organisations.
(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

Despite the problems and increased workloads, there was a general consensus in both authorities that partnership working, in particular, made existing jobs more interesting and considerable job satisfaction was derived.

13.4 Enabling and Uneven Change within Local Authorities

The discussion here is sub-divided into three sections. The first explores the uneven development of enabling within the case-study authorities in which the two Housing Departments appeared to be at the forefront of many local changes and other departments were slower to embrace the enabling role. The second section then examines the way in which some of the enabling developments, discussed in earlier chapters, took place against a background of conflict *within the Housing Departments* themselves. Following on from this, the final section considers the importance of 'change agents' in initiating and implementing change.

13.4.1 Uneven Change across Local Authority Departments

Respondents from the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments argued that transition to the enabling role was significantly slower and less developed in the other service departments within their authorities. In both authorities, receptiveness to partnership working and the commitment made to user participation were the key criteria by which 'enabling' was measured in other departments. As one respondent from North-Met articulated:

Some officers and departments are only just getting used to asking the customer what they want, I mean, that's been quite challenging for them, never mind getting involved with other partners to deliver what they think is a local authority service.

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal Division).

As the following quotations indicate, in North-Met, the Education and Planning Departments were identified as being particularly reluctant to develop joint-working arrangements, but in South-City, Social Services were singled out for retaining the traditional role:

... different people think at different speeds and ... take on enabling at different paces. I mean, a good example is the Economic Planning Development Unit which hasn't really changed the way it works in the last five years, because it hasn't really needed to. It's still got European money coming in, it's still got Challenge funding, it's the core of all the new bids that are going in, so it's been able to carry on doing things the way it used to do them. (North-Met Project Manager for City Challenge).

I think Leisure Services are very good, by force of circumstance really. They've had resources go and the only way they're going to get resources into the City for leisure activities is to work with other providers: private sector and so on. So they've got a lot of well developed partnerships around that. I think Planning are increasingly good at it ... but Social Services, I think, are still a very inward looking organisation and not really hooked into this idea of acting as a facilitator of other people.

(South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division).

Respondents perceived financial necessity as the key impetus driving change. Departments which had experienced fewer resource constraints retained continuities with their traditional working practices because there was less motivation for them to adopt the enabling role. Legislation was identified as an additional factor. For instance, the Children's Plan and the Community Care Plan were cited as the main reason for North-Met's Social Services Department developing joint-working relationships with external organisations.

The differentiated nature of change between departments was confirmed by external agencies. There was unanimous consensus amongst the voluntary sector and housing associations that the Housing Department in their respective localities had been the most receptive to partnership working, compared with other council departments. Indeed, when asked what problems had been encountered in the partnerships, the strongest criticism was levied at other local authority departments who were seen as obstructing partnership objectives. For instance, one association respondent from North-Met's Community Housing observed:

There have been particular problems with what I call 'other local authority departments' ... I think, where CHP – I'm not saying it's failed – but I think what doesn't come out is the fact that it's been very strongly led by Housing. ... But there's been no real corporate agreement and one gets the feeling that there's internal frictions between departments – I mean this happens in so many local authorities. So there's been a lot of stresses and strains and ... it's certainly led, from our point of view, to an awful lot of frustration and extra cost.

(North-Met Greenwood Housing Association: Chief Executive).

In South-City, the Social Services Department was criticised for showing a lack of commitment to joint working; for example, by not attending meetings and making decisions contrary to what had been agreed within the Supported-Housing-Forum. Thus, their commitment to partnership working was perceived as rhetorical rather than real. Overall, it can be argued that the Housing Departments in the two authorities were at the forefront of shifting to the enabling role due to the fewer resources within this sector to resist effectively Government policy. As noted in Chapters 3 and 4, not only was Housing singled-out for privatisation and retrenchment, and, thus at the forefront of welfare restructuring, but the housing profession has not been as strong or as well developed compared with Social Services or Planning. It was logical, therefore, for the two Housing Departments to seek ways in which they could compensate for their decline in direct service provision and the ideological assault on council housing in order to ensure a continuing role for themselves.

13.4.2 The Tensions within the Housing Departments

This section examines the way in which some of the key enabling practices, discussed in Chapters 11 and 12, took place against a background of significant reluctance from elected members and, in the case of North-Met, junior housing staff. Evidence is presented in relation to resistance to partnership working and community participation. However, it must be noted that, there was variation between North-Met and South-City elected members regarding which components of the enabling role they found to be objectionable.

Officers from the two Housing Departments reported that there was significant member opposition to partnership working, especially in the early 1990s. However, whilst member opposition to partnership was greater in South-City compared with North-Met, the quotation from the latter authority captures the incongruity in attitude between members and officers that was experienced in both case-study areas:

... politicians will be quite jealous of services and they will keep hold of it, ... there are some things that are up for negotiation ... because they have to be. Things like

development for new properties, we can't do it, so we're forced into that position, and I think that's the politicians' side of it. Whereas officers like the fact that you work together. I mean, I genuinely believe you get better decisions out of working with different partners. Politicians, I think, are just dragged kicking and screaming to that point.

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

In both authorities, housing associations, in particular, were subject to hostility from elected members. As one respondent from South-City explained:

... the position of members has shifted significantly, perhaps reluctantly, because they see the role of local authorities being supplanted by housing associations. And where in some authorities there's been an open and positive acceptance of housing associations and the need to work together, I think that's been less true of South-City. Our members have said, 'Okay, we see the political rules and we accept that housing associations are going to be the main deliverers of new affordable housing and therefore we have to work with them'.

So there's been some reluctance.

(South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division).

The key factor accounting for member hostility to housing associations related to the belief that housing provision should be retained under municipal control. There were three interrelated ways in which members from the two authorities here perceived housing associations as a threat to housing authorities. First, major housing investment was channelled to associations via the Housing Corporation; second, in extending CCT to housing management, associations were identified as the main bodies with both the means and motive to manage council stock; and finally, the introduction of tenants' choice. In all these ways, housing associations were identified as the councils' 'competitors'. Moreover, the desire to retain direct service provision meant that, in addition to housing associations, there was also evidence of resistance to working in partnership with the voluntary sector. This is exemplified in the following quotations:

I think politicians are very cynical about partnerships [with the voluntary sector],...I think that staff are quite cynical about it because they see the voluntary sector as 'playing' at what they do ... I think there is that feeling of competitiveness with officers and the feeling, especially with some of the older officers, that the local authority has been robbed of some of the things that it should be doing by these 'upstarts' in the voluntary sector.

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

I think South-City's had a great municipal history. From a political point of view it's very much for wanting to be a major landlord in the city in the housing area, and it's been quite sceptical in the past about shifting from a provider to an enabling role. Beyond sceptical I think, perhaps a bit resistant to that from our perspective.
(South-City Crocus Supported Housing Association: Director).

Beyond the desire to retain direct service provision, the second important reason for member resistance towards partnership working stemmed from the fact that the operating environment of local authorities was the product of *Conservative* policies. As two housing association respondents from both authorities explained:

I mean, clearly we're talking predominately about the Conservative Government, and I think there's the usual rhetoric about not wanting to play along with what was perceived to be Tory policy or ideas. So certain concepts towards encouraging ... or working with housing associations as partners for some politicians have taken a long time to sink in.
(North-Met Greenwood Housing Association: Chief Executive).

I think at Member level and local Council level there is a problem, in as much as there is still some hostility towards housing associations because of what happened under the Tory government ... (South-City Faith Housing Association: Director).

When asked how member resistance had been overcome in relation to developing collaborative relationships, officers reported that this occurred through back-stage political lobbying and persuasion.

It is also important to note that in North-Met, respondents reported that junior housing management staff also expressed hostility towards housing associations operating in the district. New-build undertaken by the CHP in its first phase had led to an over-provision of social housing and a decline in demand for council properties. Hence, in experiencing higher levels of vacancies and difficult-to-let stock, junior housing managers blamed the housing association partnership for these problems. Rather than complementing municipal provision, housing managers felt they were in 'competition' with housing associations for tenants:

People are worried about the likes of CHP and its impact, ... we've got an increasing problem of voids in our own stock, ... so some of the housing management people feel very threatened by CHP because they think it's taking 'their' tenants, and that tenants are moving out of council stock to go to housing association stock, ...
(North-Met Senior Research and Development Manager).

During the fieldwork period, much of the resistance to working in partnership had been overcome in both authorities. Officers reported that members had, generally, pragmatically accepted the need to work with other organisations to deliver services. However, a few respondents did note that even though joint-working had become more institutionalised, some members would still prefer to provide services directly.

Turning now to examine resistance to tenant participation and community consultation more widely, a different attitude could be discerned between the North-Met and South-City in relation to this. In North-Met, although there was a general commitment towards tenant participation, the extent to which members wished to see this translated into practice appeared limited (at least as reported by officers):

I have to tell you in many local authorities and North-Met is not an exception that ... community development or community involvement around decision making is sometimes seen as threat by members: a threat to their democratically elected right, a threat to their own advocacy role with the community, and I suppose in some cases, a threat to their own profile, position and power base ...

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal Division).

This indicates that tenant participation was perceived as directly in conflict with the roles of councillors and committee members. Aside from this, it was reported that community participation was also resisted because there was a fear that vocal community groups may not have been representative of the community:

But they [community groups] can be abused, they can be politically hi-jacked, they can be hi-jacked by people with single causes, they can be hi-jacked by the most active in the community who are not representative in the community. They have to be treated with some sort of caution, ...

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal Division).

It must be further noted, however, that member resistance to community participation was not shared by all politicians in North-Met. Indeed, it was reported that some members perceived community development as improving their ability to represent their ward.

In contrast to North-Met, most respondents in South-City reported that members gave whole-hearted support to tenant and community participation. For instance, the community development officer reported that at a recent meeting for discussing proposed plans for regenerating a barren park, members' response to the working paper was:

... what they [Members] said was, 'This is all very well, but where's community development in it?'

Literally, those were the words of the Councillors. So I put my hand up and said, 'Here I am and we can run a consultation programme on this'.

And they said, 'Great, do it with VOSCA'...

(South-City Community Development District Manager).

Despite the support of many members in South-City to community development, there was also evidence of some resistance. Members, and some officers, were worried about the degree and nature of consultation exercises. Consequently, the Community Development Manager felt progress in his unit had been slow because:

... giving power away is a difficult thing for a lot of people, isn't it? Not just councillors, but for officers as well ...

(South-City District Community Development Manager).

This section has demonstrated that transition to the enabling role had not been without struggle or conflict. Resistance to key changes was encountered in both case-study authorities, but to varying degrees and over different issues. In South-City, member resistance to partnership appeared greater, whereas in North-Met, member resistance to community consultation appeared greater. Having examined some of the resistance to enabling practices, attention now turns to those individuals who initiated and pioneered the shift to the enabling role in the Housing Departments.

13.4.3 The Role of Change Agents

Stewart (2000) notes that chief officers need the support of senior politicians within the authority to achieve long-lasting and effective change. This corresponds very closely to the experience in North-Met. A clear consensus emerged between officers and external partners that change within the Housing Department was driven by its Director and the Chair of Housing:

I think North-Met has got a number of key personalities ... [such as] the Director of Housing who is a great believer in enabling others and empowering people ... He's sort of the world's most fervent advocate of that sort of approach, and the Chair of Housing ... understood a lot of the concepts around enabling and empowerment and things like that – he could see the arguments for it. So I think he managed to make sure that there was political pressure for involving people and getting more widespread involvement to go along with officers.

(North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator).

The success of CHP also appeared to have strengthened the Department's role and approach:

I think the Housing Department is culturally more attuned because we've got major examples like the housing association partnership – it's paid off, it's got political 'okay' and it's given the politicians around Housing increased status – they know they've got a good department behind them. Most of that is to do with X personally – the Director of Housing. So he's created an environment where it's okay to give work away because it strategically gives some advantage, whether it's brownie points on bidding, or it really is the better way to do something.

(North-Met Geriwell Action Team: Programme Leader).

Housing associations also identified the Director and Deputy Director of Housing as being very 'active' and committed to changing the culture of the Housing Department. Furthermore, the Housing Chairman was singled out as being:

... clearly very strongly motivated, very deeply concerned about housing and the local community. And I think you could see [he] worked very well (a) within the Labour group, and (b) with his officers in forming a strategy and taking things forward. I have to say that as a Labour run Council, North-Met has always been perceived as pretty forward thinking and certainly not hard or old Labour, but fairly active if you like, from my point of view, a more modern Labour image.

(North-Met Greenwood Housing Association: Chief Executive).

The research was unable to detect key change agents in South-City to the same extent as in North-Met, but it was reported that the Director of Housing was influential in overcoming political opposition to collaborative working with housing associations. In addition, external partners identified individuals from the Housing Department whom they perceived as being 'keen', 'supportive' and receptive to partnership working.

Finally, it is necessary to note that respondents from North-Met reported that, the Housing Department prioritised staff training and development and, as mentioned earlier, the Department had completed an 'Organisational Development Training Programme':

Well, the Housing Department has been through some sort of metamorphosis over the last whatever five, six years. We've been through an organisational development training programme. We have a strong leader in terms of our Director who believes in the value of people and believes that training and personal development are the ways forward for success. And so in terms of opening people's minds, in terms of empowering them, in terms of trying to devolve power down to people, in terms of trying to be a learning, open and an empowering organisation, that's the only way.

(North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal Division).

Training was offered to all staff, from the clerical assistant, up to the Director, on understanding the political process, developing managerial skills, how to devolve power downwards and how to respond to a changing organisation. Training was considered to be a crucial way of trying to change the culture of the Department and to ensure long-term change. The Department had also introduced 'Team Development Plans' as well as 'Personal Development Plans' for all staff at all levels of the organisations. Moreover, respondents reported that they were encouraged to 'change their way of thinking' and, to ensure corporate survival, innovation was particularly valued as exemplified in the following quotation:

Enabling's got to go right through the culture of the organisation. So we're actually encouraging all staff to be involved, to go out and try things, talk to people, have a go at this, have a go at that, make the links. And we try and foster that environment. The Director uses the phrase which I think is quite good, and it's this: 'If you're going in the direction that we're all signed up to, when you make a mistake it doesn't matter, if you're going somewhere else and you make a mistake, I'll have you!'

But if you're trying and you're doing all sorts of new things, then great, take the risks, push the boundaries all the time, because that's how we keep in front of the pack if you like, come up with new ideas, innovation. That's where it all is, it's out there.

(North-Met Project Manager for 3Bs Regeneration Area).

It is generally accepted that entrenched cultures can often be a barrier in any organisation trying to introduce and initiate change. However, the emphasis given to training and development in the North-Met Housing Department is indicative of the way in which it was seeking to ensure long-term change and move beyond the rhetorical. There appeared, therefore, a commitment to informing, developing and motivating staff. Indeed, there were plans for further organisational development including the introduction of the 'Housing National Vocational Qualification' and increasing support given to staff in gaining 'on the job' competencies and qualifications.

13.5 Conclusions

In the traditional authority the organisational form was relatively simple and hierarchical, decision-making and service delivery relied on the exercise of power and authority, and decisions flowed vertically through the organisation. This Chapter has shown, however, that in shifting to the enabling role, new organisational and management issues had arisen. Overall, organisational forms became more complex as the traditional hierarchy continued to persist, but it was also challenged by new working patterns. Moreover, the process of change was characterised by uneven development, as well as significant resistance from those who felt threatened by the change process.

CHAPTER 14:

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has examined the practice of ‘enabling’ housing authorities within the wider context of the restructuring of the British welfare state and local governance. In this final chapter, the first section reflects upon the efficacy of the theoretical framework, the research methods utilised within this study, and identifies some areas for further research. The second section draws together the core findings of the fieldwork and then considers the extent to which enabling succeeded in ‘rolling back the state’. The final section argues that although the term ‘enabling’ may have lost its political currency, the trends that have emerged from this research study are becoming more *pronounced* under New Labour.

14.1 Some Theoretical and Methodological Reflections

As described in Chapter 5, the theoretical framework of this research study was based upon the enabling typology developed by Leach *et al.* (1992). This was an effective instrument for formulating the research questions, organising the data collection and initial analysis. However, once all the fieldwork had been completed and the *detailed* process of data analysis began, it became clear that, it would be more effectual to apply specific theories to the various dimensions of the enabling role that had been unearthed. As described in Chapter 6, therefore, the original enabling typology was aligned to the theory of partnerships (and modes of governance), together with Cairncross *et al.*'s typology of tenant participation and Leach and Wilson's work on local authority and voluntary sector relationships. It could be argued then, that, there were limitations to the original theoretical framework since it was necessary to elaborate upon this after collecting the data from the three case-study authorities. However, it is argued here that, as Leach *et al.*'s typology was concerned with identifying and presenting a broad range of discrete choices about the future direction of local government, it was not designed to be able to analyse the enabling role in its *detailed* practice. Attempts to do just that would not only be trying to use the typology in ways that were not intended, but it would also be inappropriate to argue that this was a weakness of the theory.

Overall, Leach *et al.*'s typology and the refinement that was made to this in Chapter 6, allowed the thesis to analyse the intricate detail of housing authority enabling practices within their wider ideological context. Indeed, the thesis did not lose theoretical clarity precisely because the different typologies were located within the same ideological contexts. For example, the residual-enabling authority is premised upon the New Right agenda, as is Cairncross *et al.*'s consumerist authority, and indeed, the market mode of governance. In short, this study found Leach *et al.*'s

typology and the refinement made to this in Chapter 6, a robust theoretical framework from which to analyse enabling and its local variations in a rigorous and methodical way.

As described in Chapter 7, this study has drawn upon quantitative and qualitative data collection tools. It was argued that, as the choice of research methods should be made upon 'technical' rather than epistemological considerations, different methods could be effectively combined without losing theoretical clarity about the object of study. In light of the eventual data gathered from both of these research traditions, it is still maintained that, all methods have strengths and weaknesses and, therefore, the epistemological distinctiveness of quantitative and qualitative research should not be viewed as a barrier to their integration. The postal survey was an effective tool in highlighting, at the time, broad trends in relation to the enabling role of housing authorities. This was an invaluable means of selecting three case-study authorities for more in-depth research, especially given the paucity of empirical data on enabling. However, on reflection, the actual design of the survey could have been improved. As well as giving attention to an authority's status, i.e. whether it was a metropolitan or district council, the study could also have stratified the sampling frame according to political control and whether it was an urban or rural authority. The question construction could also have been improved upon. For instance, Question 2, regarding the housing services directly provided by the local authority, could have been omitted. Similarly, Question 5 regarding the contracting-out of housing services could have been posed differently as it was difficult to code. Overall, perhaps more questions could have been presented in a series of statements where respondents could either tick the box they felt was most applicable to their authority, or where they could have expressed the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with them.

In relation to the role of case-study research and qualitative interviewing, again, as noted in Chapter 7, this not only proved to be an extremely enjoyable part of the research process, but perhaps more significantly, it produced some very high-quality and in-depth data. Nevertheless, there are a few noteworthy ways in which the data gathered here could have been enhanced. Whilst the North-West District produced a good 'negative' result, there are two possible alternatives that could have been pursued to bolster the data gathered here. First, a more concerted effort should have been made to interview the external housing associations operating within the locality. Second, it may have been more effective to concentrate upon an urban authority that was still operating to the traditional role, especially if it was Labour controlled and had a relatively large housing stock. This may have yielded more data and, rather than having to discuss the results gathered in a separate chapter, comparisons could have been drawn between all three case-study authorities along the various dimensions of enabling. Turning to the other two case-study authorities, the data could have been enhanced by gaining additional perspectives, most notably,

by ascertaining the views of elected members, tenants and, perhaps, front-line staff. Moreover, when analysing the data in relation to CCT, it was felt that it would have been interesting to gain the internal-contractors' perspective from both authorities. It was also felt that enabling and its impact upon the actual *process* of strategic management could have been discussed more fully with respondents. Despite these limitations, it is maintained that, overall, the research strategy was an effective one. In any case, the research process is, and should be, a learning process. Therefore, in recognising some of the limitations of the research methods, it is argued that this has not detracted from the overall validity of the data gathered, or indeed, the conclusions reached by this study.

The research findings in this study have contributed to a greater understanding of the changing role of housing authorities. However, there are gaps in knowledge that need to be considered. First, in light of the data gathered, a follow-up survey could be designed to ascertain the types of activities that housing authorities are now practising to give expression to the enabling role. Second, it would also be interesting now to examine enabling in a residual authority and the nature of its relationship with other service providers. Are there similarities as well as differences between housing departments attempting to practise the residual-enabling role and the community-enabling role and their relationship with other actors? Third, it would also be interesting to examine enabling across local authority departments in one authority. For example, again, selecting three or four case-study authorities, enabling could be examined in housing, education, social services as well as in the chief executive's department. This may indicate that different enabling models were being practised in different departments within one authority. At the same time, the election of a new government has thrown open even more areas for research. Thus, the fourth area of further study could be the transition from CCT to best value and the way in which housing authorities are interpreting 'best value'. Fifth, how will the residual-enabling type authorities respond to the 'community governance' role (see below) that has been advocated by New Labour? Finally, the collaborative discourse of New Labour, in which there are many opportunities for local authorities, is tempered by the threats also emanating from central government. How will this affect central-local relations and the balance of power between central and local government?

14.2 Enabling: Rolling-Back or Rolling-Out?

Transition to the enabling role has not been a wholly unproblematic, uncontested or homogenous process. This research study has identified three key issues. First, it should be clear from the preceding empirical chapters that there was variation between central and local government in their interpretation of enabling. The clearest illustration of this relates to the mode of service delivery. The Conservative Government perceived 'contracting-out' – epitomised in the CCT legislation – to be the most appropriate method of service provision for local authorities

under the enabling role. Each case-study authority, however, was firmly opposed to this mode of service delivery. Whilst North-West District continued to provide many housing services directly, for the North-Met and South-City authorities enabling was fundamentally interpreted as working with non-municipal agencies and delivering services with them in 'partnership'. Furthermore, there was at least a formal commitment to developing partnerships that corresponded to the network, and not the market, mode of governance. Since contracting was identified with a residual role, a key motive underpinning the formation of partnership arrangements was the potential this had for ensuring a continuing and 'wider' role for the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments. Second, there were strong continuities in the 'traditional' role of local authorities. New enabling practices were often inextricably linked to old ways of working. This is important to recognise in order to avoid over-emphasising the discontinuity between the traditional and enabling role of local authorities. In some instances, resistance to change or the persistence of hierarchical norms and practices, such as departmentalism, accounted for the continuation with past ways of working. In other cases, enabling practices were 'bolted-on' to, or combined with, traditional working practices.

Third, there have been similarities between all three case-study authorities regarding the restructuring of their traditional role. They all perceived Conservative reforms to be a central attack on their role, function and autonomy in the first instance, and to be rather less an attempt to improve the quality of public services. All three authorities expressed considerable regret at the decline of their traditional direct provider role. However, there has been variation between the case-study authorities in their actual *practice* and development of the enabling role. At one pole, North-West District serves to highlight the response of an authority resistant to change and overcome by inertia and lack of leadership. At the other, North-Met represents an authority that has pioneered and embraced change proactively. Moreover, there was a variation between the authorities in relation to which dimensions of the enabling role they developed more fully. For instance, partnership working was developed the furthest by the North-Met authority compared with the other two case-study authorities, in part, because it offered opportunities for resource procurement. In South-City, political resistance, at least initially, undermined collaborative working and thus this aspect of the enabling role was not developed to the same extent as in North-Met. In contrast, tenant participation and community consultation was accorded greater importance, partly as a result of the urban unrest that the City experienced during the 1980s and the tradition of neighbourhood decentralisation. Consequently, this dimension of the enabling role was developed the most fully here compared with the other two Housing Departments.

Thus, in the interpretation and practice of enabling, there has been variation between central and local government; there has been variation as well as similarity between the case-study authorities; and there has also been continuity with the traditional role of local government.

Turning now to the particular part played by local authorities within the wider structure of government, the conclusions of this thesis support the widely acknowledged viewpoint that there has been a shift from 'government' to 'governance' (see for instance, Bailey, 1993). Yet, within this highly-fragmented system, it is argued here that local authorities can retain an important, influential and, in some instances, a *dominant* role within the plethora of agencies that are now involved in policy formation and service delivery. This was illustrated most clearly when examining the unbalanced relationship that the North-Met and South-City authorities had with housing associations and voluntary agencies. Hence, even though the shift towards enabling has involved a reduction in local government's formal functions, this does not necessarily equate to a diminutive or residual role. The North-Met and South-City authorities demonstrated that it is possible for local government to redefine its position. These authorities did so in terms of community leadership and governance – shaping and influencing the provision of services even when they are delivered by other bodies. However, as the experience of North-West District illustrates, this cannot be taken as given. This council's passivity and inertia prevented it from adopting a departmental or council-wide approach to the types of relationships that could be developed with external agencies and accordingly, the potential this may have had to address housing or other social needs.

Thus, within the framework of centralised control, there *was* potential for local authorities to resist becoming 'residual' authorities, and instead to adopt a 'wider' interpretation of enabling – as the North-Met and South-City authorities attempted to do. However – as North-West District demonstrates – this is in part contingent upon political resolution, leadership and a commitment to change.

To what extent, then, did the Conservative restructuring agenda for local authorities, within which the residual role they attempted to impose upon them, succeed in 'rolling back the state'? It may be true that, 'Government is smaller' (Rhodes, 1994: 151), but as the chapters describing the fieldwork (Chapters 8 to 13) and the discussion above have indicated, enabling has not resulted in the 'rolling back of the state'. Rather, this study supports Clarke and Newman's thesis that there has been a 'rolling out' of state power but in new and dispersed forms (1997: 30). There are two elements to this process, both of which connect to the core of the empirical findings. First, dispersal has meant the 'simultaneous shrinking of the state and its increasing reach into civil society' by engaging 'more agencies and agents into the field of state power' (1997: 29, 30). In

this respect, though local government has been forced to withdraw from monopolistic service delivery, the delegation of this function to other agencies has necessitated a commensurate increase in both the formal and informal powers of monitoring, regulation and enforcement. The diminishing of direct service provision may stress the rhetoric of ‘partnership’ or the ‘independence’ of non-municipal providers delivering contracted-out services. However, the relationship that this produced between the North-Met and South-City authorities and their external partners involved ‘an *expansion* of state power’ (1997: 26; emphasis in the original).

Paradoxically, the reduction of state responsibility for welfare and the greater emphasis placed upon individual responsibility, also ‘produced greater state involvement in the private domain’ (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 28). Thus, local government has acquired greater powers of intervention over the individual. As discussed in Chapter 12, this was epitomised in the anti-social behaviour legislation and its translation into the policies of the North-Met and South-City Housing Departments. But there are many other examples, such as the Child Support Act. Whilst this was rhetorically defined as making parents ‘responsible’, ‘it also created an apparatus of investigation and regulation’ (1997: 28). Following Clarke and Newman (1997), it is concluded that the Conservative restructuring agenda and, more specifically, the enabling role of local authorities, did not result in ‘rolling-back’, so much as a ‘rolling-out’ of state power.

14.3 Enabling and Policy Developments under New Labour

This study commenced in September 1994 with the empirical data collected between 1995 and 1997. Since that time, it can be argued that the term ‘enabling’ has lost its political currency, particularly in view of the landslide victory of New Labour after 18 years of Conservative administration. However, it is argued here that many of the empirical trends unearthed by this study are, if anything, being *accentuated* under New Labour. The rhetoric may have shifted with ‘enabling’ a less salient term, but the discourse of ‘partnership’ and ‘community’ and ‘new public management’ displays strong continuities. Thus, this section briefly identifies some of the policies of New Labour and the way in which these represent a continuation of developments identified, primarily, from the North-Met and South-City authorities.

First, despite the reforms of the Conservative administrations, this thesis has shown that local government has proved to be resilient. In response to the erosion of their traditional role, the North-Met and South-City authorities, in particular, were able to redefine a new role for themselves centred around ‘community governance’. This trend is set to continue in two interrelated ways. First, although it would be misleading to present New Labour as merely ‘Thatcherism Mark II’ (see for instance, Kenny and Smith, 1997; Driver and Martell, 1997), its so called ‘third-way’ *does* endorse the Conservative commitment to increase individual responsibility

for welfare whilst simultaneously diminishing the state's responsibility (Dwyer, 1998: 494). This means that there will be no return to local authorities as the all-purpose providers of an expansive state welfare system with universal social rights. Second, New Labour has actively endorsed the community government role that has been developed by authorities such as North-Met and South-City. It has argued that local authorities should play a pivotal role in promoting the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas and it has emphasised the role of community leadership (Painter and Isaac-Henry, 1999: 170). This entails them taking a leading role in providing a vision and a focus not only for themselves, but for the local area as a whole (Isaac-Henry, 1999: 75).

Second, this study showed that the organisation and management of public services had shifted away from public administration to new public managerialism. There were three key dimensions of this trend impacting upon the case-study authorities – all of which are being accentuated under New Labour. First, empirical findings demonstrated that, in a climate of severe fiscal austerity, efficiency and the search for value for money had become an integral part of the culture of the North-Met and South-City authorities. Indeed, in acknowledging the improvements in the efficiency of local authorities under the Conservatives (Painter and Isaac-Henry, 1999: 167), New Labour expected public sector managers to continue to deliver cost-effective services, and stressed that it had no wish to return to high public spending. It committed itself to the inherited public expenditure plans of the Conservatives for its first two years of office and clarified its approach towards public spending in the following way:

[New Labour gives] high priority to seeing how public money can be better used ...
New Labour will be wise spenders, not big spenders ... because efficiency and value for
money are central, ... Save to invest is our approach, not tax and spend.
(Labour Party, 1997: 12; c.f. Horton and Farnham, 1999b: 252).

Thus, with New Labour continuing to seek value for money in the public services (although it has chosen to adopt the term 'best value'), local authorities will remain under pressure to deliver high-quality, user-responsive services in a framework of tight spending constraints.

Chapter 3 demonstrated that under new public managerialism, the monitoring of local authority performance had significantly increased. At the same time, empirical findings illustrated that the North-Met and South-City authorities were placing greater emphasis on measuring the performance of external 'partners'. Hence, the ethos of performance measurement has not only become deeply entrenched in local government, but it is being promoted by New Labour 'even more zealously than its predecessors' (Horton and Farnham, 1999b: 255). New investment in

public housing has been coupled with the introduction of a Housing Inspectorate (Horton and Farnham, 1999a: 22). It has the power to remove housing management functions from councils who are deemed to be 'poor performers' (Painter, 1999: 100). Similarly, where 'excellence' has not been achieved in services under the 'best value' regime (see below), there will be central intervention with a range of sanctions (Rouse, 1999: 92). Consequently, the use of performance indicators to enhance central control of local agencies that was evident under the Conservatives (see for instance Carter, 1989; Hoggett, 1996), is being reinforced by New Labour (Boyne, 1998b: 47).

The North-Met and South-City authorities' attempt to engage the public as both consumers and participative citizens – encapsulated in the 'public service orientation' – is also set to continue. For example, the Government relaunched the Citizen's Charter with *Service First* (Massey, 2001: 25). All bodies involved in public service provision are expected to develop 'service first' standards or charters, to carry out user-surveys and to have effective complaints procedures. However, although New Labour has built upon Conservative policy, it places greater emphasis upon the participation of citizens in the planning and production of services (Horton, 1999: 156, 158; Rouse, 1999: 90). For example, consultative participation is given considerable emphasis in the best value framework (Pratchett, 1999b: 11).

Third, transition to the best value regime represents a seeming discontinuity with the empirical findings because once the existing contracts have been terminated, housing management will no longer be subject to compulsory tendering. In this respect, the practice of 'enabling as contracting' will no longer be directly applicable. In other ways, however, there are areas of continuity. New Labour displays more muted enthusiasm for market transactions in the delivery of core public services (Boyne, 1998b: 47). It considers CCT to be inflexible (Painter and Isaac-Henry, 1999: 167) and has asserted that the 'contract culture' produced some 'perverse effects' (Clarence and Painter, 1997: 13). Hence, local authorities' opposition to CCT that has been identified within this research study resonates with the views expressed by the current Government. Perhaps more significantly though, best value continues to place great emphasis on competition as a basic technique for testing best value. Consequently, although there will be no compulsion to put services out to tender, competitive tendering is expected to continue on a 'voluntary' basis, as a means of ensuring that the in-house bid is competitive. It has also been argued that best value will impose a range of regulatory and monitoring constraints that are similar in effect to the formal requirements that operated under CCT. Finally, local authorities are likely to want to retain and develop contracting arrangements that allow them to retain control over service provision (like the client/contractor split) that might not be available if more radical service-providing alternatives were chosen (Vincent-Jones, 1999: 277–8).

Fourth, this study showed that under the enabling role, partnership working was the preferred mode of service delivery for the North-Met and South-City authorities. A striking development under New Labour is the extent to which collaboration, co-operation and partnerships are becoming an intentional strategy. Health, Education and Employment Action Zones, in which local authorities are given a prominent role, are examples demonstrating that 'partnership' is seen by New Labour as crucial to delivering quality local services (Painter and Clarence, 1998: 13). In Tony Blair's own words:

The days of the all-purpose authority that planned and delivered everything are gone ... it is in partnership with others – public agencies, private companies, community groups and voluntary organisations – that local government's future lies. Local authorities will still deliver some services but their distinctive leadership role will be to weave and knit together the contribution of the various local stake holders.
(Blair, 1998: 13; quoted in Clarence and Painter, 1998: 15).

Fifth, the study demonstrated that the North-Met and South-City authorities were adopting an 'holistic' approach to service delivery, particularly in the sphere of urban regeneration, in which housing programmes were linked to other social and economic initiatives. In response to criticisms of fragmented administrative structures created by the Conservatives, New Labour is promoting both vertical and horizontal co-operation between governmental bodies, the voluntary sector and private businesses (Horton and Farnham, 1999b: 253). One of its first actions was to create the Social Exclusion Unit which has the key objective of promoting 'joined-up' and preventative approaches to social policy problems (Painter, 1999: 109; Rouse, 1999: 89–90). At the local level, the Action Zone programmes are also examples which demonstrate that a multi-agency approach is seen by New Labour as integral to addressing complex social policy issues 'that defy conventional organisational and functional boundaries' (Painter and Isaac-Henry, 1999: 177).

Finally, this study has demonstrated that, in redefining a community governance role for themselves, the North-Met and South-City authorities were attempting to incorporate tenants into much more participatory and consultative decision-making processes. On the other hand, their anti-social behaviour policies demonstrated that access to social housing was now conditional upon individuals conforming to appropriate standards of behaviour. Both of these interrelated trends are continuing under New Labour and each is now briefly outlined.

Within the wider context of 'reinventing democracy' (rather than government) in which New Labour is committed to 'democratic renewal' (see for instance, Pratchett, 1999b), it has been particularly interested in encouraging public participation. This is seen as an essential

precondition of the 'community leadership' role of local authorities (Wilson, 1999: 249). Indeed, the new accolade of 'beacon council' status, which offers local authorities greater financial and operational autonomy, depends on them demonstrating a broad range of participation activities (Pratchett, 1999a: 619). Similarly, there is a statutory duty to consult local people on new political management structures in the move towards cabinets and elected mayors (Chandler, 2000). Thus, the Government has exhorted local authorities to experiment with both traditional and more innovative methods of consultation. This may include citizens' panels and juries, focus groups, community planning, visioning exercises and issue forums (Wilson, 1999: 246).

Underpinning the above reforms is New Labour's ideological (Communitarianism) belief in 'community', but one which is essentially moralistic and authoritarian (Atkinson and Savage, 2001; Driver and Martell, 1997). This connects to, and reinforces, the second aspect of the relationship between the individual and government that was uncovered in this study: that welfare rights were *conditional* on individuals meeting compulsory responsibilities. This responsibility/duty theme has become a central tenet of New Labour's thinking on the reform of the welfare state – the ideological assumption being: 'that rights offered go with responsibilities owed' (Labour Party, 1997: 11; c.f. Dwyer, 1998: 499). It is apparent in New Labour's *New Deal* welfare to work proposals, particularly for the young unemployed. Failure to take up one of the work/training options offered by the Government leads to the application of benefit sanctions. Similarly, in relation to social housing, the Government not only endorsed the 1996 Housing Act, but proposed an even stricter regime in the 1997 Crime and Disorder Bill. Only those tenants deemed to behave in a responsible manner are now tolerated in public housing (Dwyer, 1998: 499–500; 509).

This section has identified some of the ways in which trends from this research study are being accentuated under New Labour. This is applicable to:

- a) the operating environment of local authorities (i.e. continuation of tight and prescribed funding; reinforcement of central control);
- b) the role that has been advocated for them (i.e. endorsement of community government role);
- c) the way in which councils are expected to carry out their role (i.e. emphasis on partnership working and adopting holistic approaches to address the problems of disadvantaged communities); and
- d) the relationship being developed between the individual and government (engaging the public as consumers and citizens, but in a moralistic and authoritarian manner).

To some extent, this should not be surprising. Given that New Labour's values and policies are informed by the ideology of Communitarianism (see for instance, Driver and Martell, 1997), it can be argued that, for this administration, the role and function of local government in the twenty-first century is best captured by the community-enabling authority – the kind of authority that North-Met and South-City were aspiring to be. In conclusion, therefore, even though 'enabling' may have lost some of its discursive political currency and there is now a new administration in office, this thesis has made an important contribution to analysing how the role and function of local government, and the way in which it carries out its responsibilities, has changed from its position under the post-war consensus.

APPENDIX 1:

SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

SURVEY OF THE 'ENABLING' LOCAL AUTHORITY

Please answer questions as you feel able. The questionnaire will only take a short time to complete. Please tick where appropriate or provide short answers when asked.

On completion, please return in the attached pre- paid envelope as soon as possible.

Your responses will help in research that is being conducted at the Centre For Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University. This work aims to explore the changing role of local authorities, particularly addressing the issue of how housing authorities are conceptualising the notion of "enabling".

All responses will be treated in the strictest confidence. Names will not be associated with answers, nor will they be passed on to third parties.

Your time and co-operation is much appreciated.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of Organisation

Address of Organisation

Name of Respondent

Position in Organisation

Contact Number.

SERVICE DELIVERY

This section focuses upon housing service delivery within the local authority.

- 1a. Under the Housing Act 1988, has your authority at any point made a proposal for the voluntary transfer of part or all of its housing stock ?

Please tick as appropriate

- YES ☐ IF YES, Please Go To Question 1b
- NO ☐ IF No, Please Go To Question 2 pg. 4

- 1b. If Yes, did your authority propose to transfer:

Please tick as appropriate

- All of the Stock ☐
- Part of the Stock ☐ Please Go To Question 1c

- 1c Did your authority propose to transfer its housing stock to:

Please tick as appropriate

- A new housing association ☐ An existing housing association ☐
- A private landlord ☐ Other, (Please specify below) ☐

Please Go To Question 1d. pg. 4

1d. Has your authority actually transferred any of its housing stock *voluntarily* to an external organisation ?

Please tick as appropriate

YES ☐ IF YES, Please Go To Question 1e

NO ☐ IF No, Please Go To Question 2

1e. If YES, was this to:

Please tick as appropriate

A housing association ☐

Private landlord housing ☐

A housing co-operative ☐

Other, (Please specify below) ☐

--

Please Go To Question 2

2. Please give no more than 5 examples of some of the major housing services that are **directly** provided by your authority..

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Please Go To Question 3 pg. 5

3. Please indicate whether the amount of overall direct housing service delivery undertaken by the authority has increased or decreased over the last five years. In other words, has there been an increase in other agencies delivering services, or has the authority generally retained it's service provider role?

Please tick as appropriate

DECREASED ☐

IF Decreased, Please Go To Question 4

INCREASED ☐

IF Increased, Please Go To Question 5a

NO CHANGE ☐

IF No Change, Please Go To Question 5a

4. If the amount of direct housing service delivery undertaken by the authority has been **reduced**, please state the 3 most important reasons influencing this reduction.

1
2
3

Please Go To Question 5a

5a. Does your housing department contract out any housing services which were previously provided by your department ?

Please tick as appropriate

YES ☐

IF YES, Please Go To Question 5b pg. 6

NO ☐

IF No, Please Go To Question 6 pg. 8

5b. If YES, is this with:

Please tick as appropriate

Voluntary sector

☐

Private sector

☐

Other Public sector organisations

☐

Internal contracting agency

☐

Other, (Please specify below)

☐

--

Please Go To Question 5c

5c. Please give details, (of up to 3 examples) where your authority operates contractual service arrangements either with an external organisation or an internal local authority contracting agency indicating:

- i) the **service** contracted out,
- ii) the **sector**, in which the agency responsible for delivering service outputs belongs to.
- iii) the **amount** contracted out, i.e. all, or part of the service.

5c (i)

Name of Service Contracted Out	
1	
2	
3	

Please Go To Question 5c (ii) pg. 7

5c (ii)

	Service 1	Service 2	Service 3
Voluntary Sector	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private Sector	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Public Sector	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internal contracting agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please Go To Question 5c (iii)

5c (iii)

	Service 1	Service 2	Service 3
All of the service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part of the service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please Go To Question 6 pg. 8

6. Below are four **generalised** statements regarding the attitudes of local authorities to delivering services.

Please tick **one** box at the end of the statements that most closely fits your authority's position:

- a. Housing services are delivered through the agency considered most appropriate. This may not necessarily be the authority itself, but external organisations from the private, or voluntary sectors are used (or will be). The decision regarding who should be responsible for the provision of housing services is made primarily on the basis of which agency is considered the most effective in meeting local needs.
- b. Housing services are primarily delivered through the private sector. Attempts are made to negotiate contracts which maximise benefits to the local economy.
- c. Housing services are primarily delivered by external organisations, private or voluntary. The local authority specifies the level of service required, contracts out the service to a private contractor, or a local authority in-house contracting agency and then monitors the contractor's performance.
- d. The local authority delivers all, or the vast majority of services through direct provision.

Statement (a) fits my authority the closest

☐

Statement (b) fits my authority the closest

☐

Statement (c) fits my authority the closest

☐

Statement (d) fits my authority the closest

☐

Please Go To Question 7 pg. 9

INFORMATION ABOUT NEED

This section explores your authority's position regarding needs' assessment.

7. Does your authority undertake any of the following activities:

Please tick as appropriate

- House Condition Surveys

☐
- Household Surveys

☐
- Waiting List Analysis

☐
- Demographic Analysis of your authority

☐
- Targeted Social Group Needs Analysis

☐
- Other please specify below

☐

Please Go Question 7b

7b. Please state the three primary reasons for undertaking assessment of housing problems and needs

1.

2.

3.

Please Go To Question 8 pg. 10

CONSUMER INFORMATION

In this section, questions explore whether your authority compiles any information on consumer attitudes or preferences.

8. Does your authority undertake any of the following activities ?

a. Market research about your services

☐

b. More general market research about the needs and preferences of people in your area

☐

c. Regular, planned consultative meetings with:

• Other Public Sector Agencies

☐

• Voluntary Organisations

☐

• Organisations representing local business

☐

• Local Businesses / Private Sector Organisations

☐

• Pressure Groups

☐

• Tenant's Groups / General Users of Housing Services

☐

Please Go To Question 9a

9a. Are there any other structured ways in which your authority attempts to find out the views and preferences of service users

Please tick as appropriate

YES

☐

IF YES, Please Go To Question 9b pg. 11

NO

☐

IF No, Please Go To Question 10a pg. 11

9b. If, Yes Please give brief details

--

Please Go To Question 10a.

10a. Does your housing department consider the views of its service users when formulating strategies to meet need ?

Please tick as appropriate

- YES ☐ IF YES, Please Go To Question 10b
- NO ☐ IF No, Please Go To Question 11a pg. 12

10b If Yes, please give up to 3 examples how the views of consumers were taken into consideration when strategies were being formulated

1	
2	
3	

Please Go To Question 11a pg. 12

11a Are there any forums where residents are involved in the consultative or decision-making process of the housing department ?

Please tick as appropriate

YES

☐

IF YES, Please Go To Question 11b

NO

☐

IF No, Please Go To Question 12a pg. 13

11b. If, YES, Please name the forum(s) and briefly provide details

--

Please Go To Question 12 pg. 13

CONCLUSION

Questions in this section will be asking you about your interpretation of the concept of an "enabling role".

12a. Do any of your service policy statements make explicit reference to the enabling role ?

Please tick as appropriate

YES ☐ IF YES, Please Go To Question 12b

NO ☐ IF No, Please Go To Question 13 pg. 14.

12b. If, YES, Please give brief details

Please Go To Question 13 pg. 14

13. Please define briefly what you understand to be the "enabling role"

Thank-You for your help and co-operation in conducting this research. As stated, all the information will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be made available to any other person, agency or institution. Your answers will be used to produce a report. A copy of this will be made available on request.

APPENDIX 2:

Analysis of Replies to the 'Enabling' Local Authority Survey

NOTES

Percent: refers to the percentage of the whole sample.

Valid percent: refers to the percentage of those who answered, or to whom the question was applicable to.

Missing: refers to authorities which did not answer the question, or for whom the question was not applicable.

Table 1.1

1a. Under the Housing Act 1988, has your authority at any point made a proposal for the voluntary transfer of part or all of its housing stock?

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	24	36.36	36.92
No	41	62.12	63.08
Missing	1	1.52	N/A
<hr/>			
TOTAL	66	100.0	100.0

Table 1.2

1b. If Yes, did your authority propose to transfer:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
All of the stock	17	25.76	70.83
Part of the stock	7	10.61	29.17
Missing	42	63.64	
<hr/>			
TOTAL	66	100.0	100.0

Table 1.3

1c Did your authority propose to transfer its housing stock to:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
New housing association	18	27.27	75.00
Existing housing association	6	9.09	25.00
Private landlord	0	0.00	
Other	0	0.00	
Missing	42	63.64	
<hr/>			
TOTAL	66	100.00	100.00

Table 1.4

1d.Has your authority actually transferred any of its housing stock *voluntarily* to an external organisation?

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	11	16.67	45.83
No	13	19.70	54.17
Missing	42	63.64	
TOTAL	66	100.0	100.0

Table 1.5

1e. If Yes, was this to:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Housing association	11	16.67	100
Private landlord	0	0	0
Housing co-operative	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
Missing	55	83.33	0
TOTAL	66	100.0	100.0

Table 2.0

2. Please give no more than 5 examples of some of the major housing services that are **directly** provided by your authority.

Service	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Estate and housing management	43	65.15	67.19
Homeless provision	37	56.06	57.81
Repairs and maintenance	36	54.55	56.25
Allocations	28	42.42	43.75
Housing advice	20	30.30	31.25
Sheltered housing schemes	20	30.30	31.25
Rent collection	17	25.76	26.56
Improvement grants to private sector	17	25.76	26.56
Enabling	17	25.76	26.56
Housing benefit	13	19.70	20.31
Working with housing associations	12	18.18	18.75
Housing needs assessment	11	16.67	17.19
Miscellaneous	9	13.64	14.06
Special needs housing	8	12.12	12.50
Strategic / HIP	7	10.61	10.94
Capital programmes	6	9.09	9.38
Missing	2	3.03	

Table 3.0

3. Please indicate whether the amount of overall direct housing service delivery undertaken by the authority has increased or decreased over the last five years. In other words, has there been an increase in other agencies delivering services, or has the authority generally retained it's service provider role?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Decreased	24	36.36
Increased	8	12.12
No Change	34	51.52
TOTAL	66	100.00

Table 4.0

4. If the amount of direct housing service delivery undertaken by the authority has been **reduced**, please state the 3 most important reasons influencing this reduction.

Reasons for Reduction in Service	Frequency	Valid Percent
Voluntary transfer	10	41.67
RTB	8	33.33
Lack of / Reduction in resources	5	20.83
Contracting out services	4	16.67
No new build	3	12.50
Money directed to housing associations	3	12.50
Dissatisfaction with Housing Services	2	8.33
Working with other agencies	1	4.17
Lower level of modernisation carried out	1	4.17
Lower level of special repairs carried out	1	4.17
Housing direct labour organisation closed	1	4.17
Closure of Housing Revenue Account	1	4.17
Rationalisation	1	4.17

- * Although 24 authorities claimed they had experienced a reduction in services, one authority gave no reason for this.

Table 5.1

- 5a. Does your housing department contract out any housing services which were previously provided by your department?

Response	Frequency	Percent & (valid)
Yes	18	27.27
No	48	72.73
Missing	0	0.00
TOTAL	66	100.0

Table 5.2

5b. If Yes, is this with:

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Voluntary sector	0	0.00
Private sector	5	29.41
Other public sector organisations	3	17.65
Internal contracting agency	1	5.88
Other	0	0.00
Housing associations	8	47.06
TOTAL	17	100.00

- * The total does not tally with the corresponding response in table 5.1 because one authority replied 'yes' to question (5a) but reported that, a decision had not been taken as to which agency would be selected to deliver the service.

Table 5.3

5c(i). Please give details (of up to 3 examples) where your authority operates contractual service arrangements either with an external organisation or an internal local authority contracting agency indicating the service contracted-out:

Summary of Services Contracted Out	Frequency	Valid Percent
Repairs / Maintenance	10	23.81
Management / Provision of accommodation	9	21.43
Homeless administration	5	11.90
Manual services	4	9.52
Housing advice	3	7.14
General / unspecified housing management	3	7.14
Major repairs	2	4.76
Nominations	2	4.76
Concierge to multi-storey block	1	2.38
Housing survey	1	2.38
Control centre	1	2.38
Financial	1	2.38

Table 5.4

5c(ii). The **sector** in which the agency responsible for delivering service outputs belongs to:

Sector	Service 1	Service 2	Service 3	Total sector
Voluntary sector	0	0	0	0
Private sector	2	4	3	9
Other public sector organisations	3	1	1	5
Internal contracting agency	3	3	2	8
Other	0	0	0	0
Housing associations	8	4	3	15
Blank	2	6	9	17
TOTAL	18	18	18	

Table 5.5

5c(iii) The **amount** contracted out, i.e. all or part of the service.

Amount contracted	Service 1	Service 2	Service 3
All of the service	14	11	7
Part of the service	3	2	3
Blank	1	5	8
TOTAL	18	18	18

Table 6.0

6. Below are four **generalised** statements regarding the attitudes of local authorities to delivering services. Please tick **one** box at the end of the statements that most closely fits your authority's position:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Statement (a)	27	40.91	42.19
Statement (b)	0	0.00	0.00
Statement (c)	2	3.03	3.13
Statement (d)	35	53.03	54.69
Missing	2	3.03	0.00
TOTAL	66	100.00	100.00

Table 7.1

7. Does your authority undertake any of the following activities:

Analysis	Frequency	Percent
House condition surveys	59	89.39
Household surveys	49	74.24
Waiting list analysis	59	89.39
Demographic analysis	48	72.73
Targeted social group analysis	33	50.00
Other forms of analysis	17	25.76
Missing	0	0

Table 7.2

Other forms of social analysis undertaken:

Analysis	Frequency	Valid Percent
Housing needs survey	7	41.18
Special needs survey	4	23.53
Satisfaction surveys	3	17.65
Energy efficiency audit	3	17.65
Customer aspirations	1	5.88
Socio-income analysis	1	5.88
TOTAL	19	111.76

* The total number of 'other' forms of social analysis does not tally with the corresponding figure in table 7.1 because two authorities gave two responses.

Table 7.3

7b. Please state the three primary reasons for undertaking assessment of housing problems and needs:

Reasons for Conducting Needs Assessment	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Target resources effectively / Prioritise expenditure	42	63.64	70.00
Policy / strategy preparation	25	37.88	41.67
Identifying needs (current, future, general, special)	22	33.33	36.67
Facilitate capital investment decisions	14	21.21	23.33
Evaluate policies / strategies	10	15.15	16.67
Evidence of need to support more resources	10	15.15	16.67
Bid submissions	9	13.64	15.00
Enabling other organisations	7	10.61	11.67
Statutory requirements	5	7.58	8.33
Assistance in applying Town and Country Planning Powers	4	6.06	6.67
Update information	3	4.55	5.00
Implementing Community Care Policies	2	3.03	3.33
Evaluate investment	1	1.52	1.67
To maintain stock in best condition possible within the constraints	1	1.52	1.67
To conform to government policy	1	1.52	1.67
To gain 'brownie' points from DoE	1	1.52	1.67
To assess affordability	1	1.52	1.67
No other source of information on local situation, so local authority has to fulfil that gap	1	1.52	1.67
To integrate Housing within wider strategic framework e.g. 'Healthy Alliance'	1	1.52	1.67
To improve quality of housing and the environment	1	1.52	1.67
Missing / Left question blank	6	9.12	

CONSUMER INFORMATION

Table 8.1

8a. Does your authority undertake market research about your services?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	52	78.79
No	14	21.21
Missing	0	0.00
<hr/>		
TOTAL	66	100.00

Table 8.2

8b. Does your authority undertake more general market research about the needs and preferences of people in your area?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	32	48.48
No	34	51.52
Missing	0	0.00
<hr/>		
TOTAL	66	100.0

Table 8.3

8c. Does your authority undertake regular planned consultative meetings with:

Response	Frequency	Percent
Other public sector agencies	59	89.39
Voluntary organisations	56	84.85
Organisations representing local businesses	47	71.21
Local businesses / Private sector organisations	50	75.76
Pressure groups	32	48.48
Tenant's groups / General users of housing services	57	86.36
Missing	0	

Table 9.1

9a. Are there any other structured ways in which your authority attempts to find out the views and preferences of service users

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	38	57.58	58.46
No	27	40.91	41.54
Missing	1	1.52	0.00
<hr/>			
TOTAL	66	100.0	100.0

Table 9.2

9b. If Yes, Please give brief details:

Consultation Methods	Frequency	Valid percent
Questionnaires / Surveys	14	36.84
Satisfaction surveys / Satisfaction rely cards	12	31.58
Newsletters	11	28.95
Public meetings	3	7.89
Focus groups	2	5.26
Open days / Exhibitions	2	5.26
Conferences / Seminars	2	5.26
Home visits	2	5.26
Annual reports	2	5.26
Complaints system	1	2.63
Workshops held in every decentralised area office	1	2.63
Market research	1	2.63

Table 10.1

10a. Does your housing department consider the views of its service users when formulating strategies to meet need?

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	57	86.36	87.69
No	8	12.12	12.31
Missing	1	1.52	0.00
TOTAL	66	100.00	100.00

Table 10.2

10b If Yes, please give up to 3 examples how the views of consumers were taken into consideration when strategies were being formulated

Examples of service user views taken into account	Frequency	Valid percent
Capital programmes	23	40.35
CCT process	15	26.32
Housing strategy	12	21.05
Minor improvements	10	17.54
Special needs issues	8	14.04
Rent reviews	7	12.28
Allocation policy	5	8.77
Service reviews / specific strategies	4	7.02
LSVT	3	5.26
Miscellaneous	5	8.77

Table 10.3: Miscellaneous replies of how service user views taken into account.

Miscellaneous examples of service user views taken into account
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Views expressed through the local political process shapes priorities at all times. Tenants consulted about office opening hours for local offices. Specific areas requested receive priority when formulating policy To identify specific problems
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A multi-agency group, including tenants and residents have been set up in one part of the district to devise a strategy to deal with a number of community problems

Table 11.1

11a Are there any forums where residents are involved in the consultative or decision-making process of the housing department?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	51	77.27
No	15	22.73
Missing	0	0.00
TOTAL	66	100.0

Table 11.2

11b. If Yes, Please name the forum(s) and briefly provide details:

Decision making forums	Frequency	Valid percent
Tenant / Resident groups	34	66.67
Affiliation / Federation of tenant groups	9	17.65
Tenant / Customer Panels	9	17.65
Special / Service specific tenant / customer groups / panels	11	21.57
Area forums	5	9.80
Tenant / user representation on housing committee	8	15.69
Housing forum for service providers *	6	11.76
Private Landlord's Forum *	6	11.76
Miscellaneous	4	7.84

- * Although the question specified forums for service users, several authorities also gave examples of forums for service providers. For instance, one authority stated, 'X is a collective group of providers which meets to discuss ways to improve services to the public'. Similarly, another authority stated, 'Annual housing forum with providers to discuss strategy'. Furthermore, four authorities explicitly made reference to forum which incorporated private landlords. One authority stated, 'private landlords forum acts as a local mouthpiece for local owners who are in the private rented market'.

Table 11.3: Miscellaneous replies of forums where service users are involved in decision making process:

Miscellaneous forums for service users	
1.	District Housing working parties which incorporate members, staff and tenants
2.	Strategy presentation meetings
3.	Policy working party (officer, tenant / members)
4.	Tenants management co-operatives
5.	Public can attend and ask questions at housing committee
1.	Joint consultative committee (brings together representatives from federation of tenants/residents organisation and the Council to discuss range of policy and management issues)

CONCLUSION

Table 12.1

12a. Do any of your service policy statements make explicit reference to the enabling role?

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	54	80.6	83.1
No	10	16.4	16.9
Missing	2	3.0	0.0
<hr/>			
TOTAL	66	100.0	100.0

Table 12.2

12b. If, Yes, Please give brief details

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Housing Strategy	45	68.18	73.77
HIP	10	15.15	16.39
Other	6	9.09	9.84
Missing	5	7.58	0
<hr/>			
	66	100	100

APPENDIX 3:

The Code Book

Question	Variable name	Colm. Loc.	Value Labels	Value	Misng Valus	Valid Values
Identification number	ID	A				01-100
Has LA made proposal for voluntary transfer	PROPTRAN	B	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
How much stock did LA propose to transfer?	PROPQUANT	C	All of the stock Part of the stock	1 2	999	1,2
Whom did LA propose to transfer stock?	PROPWHO	D	New Housing Association Existing Housing Association Private Landlord Other	1 2 3 4	999	1-4
Did LA actually transfer stock ?	TRANSFED	E	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Who did LA transfer stock to ?	TRANWHO	F	Housing Association Housing Co-operative Private landlord Other	1 2 3 4	999	1-4
Examples of major housing services directly provided by LA.	DRCTSERSV1 DRCTSERSV2 DRCTSERSV3 DRCTSERSV4 DRCTSERSV5	G H I J K	Allocations Estate and Housing Management Rent Collection Housing Advice Housing Benefit Repairs and Maintenance Sheltered Housing Schemes Special Needs Housing Homeless Provision Enabling Working with housing associations Housing Needs Assessment Strategic / HP / HIP Capital Programmes Miscellaneous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	999	1-15
Has there been change in amount of services directly provided by LA ?	SERVCHAN	L	Decreased Increased No Change	1 2 3	999	1-3
Reasons for reduction in direct service provision	REDUCTN1 REDUCTN2 REDUCTN3	M N O	RTB LSVT Contracting Reduction in resources No new build Working with other agencies Funds Allocated to housing associations Miscellaneous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	999	1-8
Does H. Dept. contract out services	CONTRACT	P	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2

If YES, to whom is service contracted out ?	CONSECT	Q	Voluntary sector Private sector Other public sector organ. Internal contracting agency HA Other	1 2 3 4 5 6	999	1-6
Sector to which service contracted	SECTSER1 SECTSER2 SECTSER3	R S T	Voluntary sector Private sector Other public sector organ. Internal contracting agency HA Other	1 2 3 4 5 6	999	1-6
Amount of service contracted out	AMNTSER1 AMNTSER2 AMNTSER3	U V W	All of the service Part of the service	1 2	999	1,2
Attitude of local authority regarding service delivery	STATEMNT	X	Community Market Residual Traditional	1 2 3 4	999	1-4
Does LA undertake House Condition surveys ?	HCOND	Y	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA undertake Household surveys ?	HHOLD	Z	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA undertake Waiting List analysis ?	WAIT	AA	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA undertake Demographic analysis ?	DEMGRAPH	AB	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA undertake Targeted social group ?	TARGET	AC	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA undertake Other analysis / surveys	OTHERAN	AD	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Reasons for undertaking assessment of housing problems / needs analysis	REASON1 REASON2 REASON3	AE AF AG	Prioritize expenditure Identifying needs Statutory requirements Policy / Strategy preparation Evaluate policies / strategies Evaluate investment Enabling other organizations Facilitate Captl. Invest. Decision Update information Proof for more resources Bid Submissions Identify customer preferences Miscellaneous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9 10 11 12 13 14	999	1-14
Does LA conduct mkt. research re. Services ?	MKTSERV	AH	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA conduct mkt. research needs/preferences ?	MKTNEED	AI	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA conduct meetings with other public agencies ?	MEETPUB	AJ	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA conduct meetings with voluntary agencies ?	MEETVOL	AK	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2

Does LA conduct meetings with organiz. rep. Business ?	MEETBUS	AL	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA conduct meetings with private sector organiz. ?	MEETPRVT	AM	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA conduct meetings with private sector organiz. ?	MEETPRVT	AM	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA conduct meetings with pressure groups ?	MEETPIGS	AN	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA conduct meetings with tenants groups ?	MEETUSER	AO	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Does LA have other ways of finding inf. re. service users	OTHERWAY	AP	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Methods of finding inf. re. service users	METHOD1 METHOD2 METHOD3	AQ AR AS	Questionnaire / surveys Newsletters Satisfaction surveys / rely cards Focus groups Public meetings Complaints system Open days / exhibitions Conferences, seminars Home visits Annual reports Miscellaneous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	999	1-11
Are service user views considered re. H. strategy ?	VIEWSTRAT	AT	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Examples where user views considered.	EG1 EG2 EG3	AU AV AW	Capital programmes Minor improvements CCT process LSVT Housing strategy Special needs issues Allocation policy Rent reviews Service reviews / specific strategies Miscellaneous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	999	1-10
Are there forums for users in decision-making process	FORUMS	AX	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2
Names of forms	NAME1 NAME2 NAME3	AY AZ BA	Tenant / Resident groups Affiliation / Federation of tenant groups Tenant / Customer Panels Special/Service specific tenant / customer groups / panels Area forums Tenant / user representation on Housing Committee Miscellaneous	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	999	1-7
Do documents make reference to enabling role ?	ENAB	BB	YES NO	1 2	999	1,2

APPENDIX 4:

The mechanics of selecting the case-study authorities

The first part of this Appendix presents a breakdown of the ‘filters’ that were constructed in relation to each enabling ‘portrait’.

Some Key Foundation Filters

1. Filter 10 selected those authorities who made a proposal to transfer their stock.
2. Filter 11 selected those authorities who did not make proposal to transfer their stock.
3. Filter 12 selected those authorities who had made a proposal to transfer some of their stock.
4. Filter 13 selected those authorities who had made a proposal to transfer all their stock.
5. Filter 14 selected those authorities who had transferred part or all of their stock.
6. Filter 15 selected those authorities who had not transferred part or all of their stock.
7. Filter 16 selected those authorities who contracted out some of their housing services that were previously provided directly.
8. Filter 17 selected those authorities who did not contract out any services.
9. Filter 25 selected those authorities that stated they had experienced a reduction in services and attributed working with other organisations as one reason for this.

Filters Constructed for Selection of A Traditional Authority

1. Filter 51 selected those authorities that had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock and did not contract out any services. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 11 and subset filter 17.
2. Filter 52 selected those authorities that had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock, and did not make a reference to the ‘enabling role’ in any of their policy documents (question 12).
3. Filter 53 selected those authorities that had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock, who did not contract out any services, and did not make a reference to the ‘enabling role’ in any of their policy documents.
4. Filter 54 selected those authorities that did not conduct any market research regarding their services, and where they did not conduct any general market research regarding the needs and

preferences of people living in their locality. In other words, where they answered 'no' to both question 8a and question 8b.

5. Filter 55 selected those authorities that did not conduct any market research regarding their services, where they did not conduct any general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality; and where they had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 54 and subset filter 11.
6. Filter 56 selected those authorities that stated they did not meet with other **public** organisations, organisations representing local businesses, they did not meet pressure groups, they did not meet individual local business or private sector organisations, they did not meet with tenant groups or general users of housing services. In other words, authorities who said 'no' to meeting all organisations in question 8.
7. Filter 57 selected those authorities that stated they did not meet with organisations representing local businesses, they did not meet pressure groups, they did not meet individual local business or private sector organisations, they did not meet with tenant groups or general users of housing services, they did not meet with voluntary organisations. In other words, authorities who said 'no' to all of the above.
8. Filter 58 selected those authorities that did not meet with organisations representing local businesses, they did not meet pressure groups, they did not meet individual local business or private sector organisations.
9. Filter 59 those authorities that did not meet with organisations representing local businesses, they did not meet pressure groups, they did not meet individual local business or private sector organisations; and they did not conduct any market research regarding their services or any general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality. In other words the intersection of subset filter 58 and subset filter 54.
10. Filter 60 selected those authorities that said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality. In other words, they undertook one form of market research in question 8a and 8b.
11. Filter 61 selected those authorities that had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock, who did not contract out any services, did not make a reference to the 'enabling role' in any of

their policy documents; and where they said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality. In other words the intersection of subset filter 53 and subset filter 60.

12. Filter 62 selected those authorities that said no to undertaking a demographic analysis.
 13. Filter 63 selected those authorities that said no to undertaking house condition surveys.
 14. Filter 64 selected those authorities that said no to undertaking household surveys.
 15. Filter 65 selected those authorities that said no to undertaking other forms of analysis.
 16. Filter 66 selected those authorities that said no to undertaking targeted social group analysis.
 17. Filter 67 selected those authorities that said no to undertaking waiting list analysis.
-
1. Filter 68 selected those authorities that said no to one of the following three ways of considering the views of service users: either no to having forums where residents are involved in decision-making processes (question 11a); no to having any other structured ways of finding out the views and preferences of service users (question 9a); or no to considering the views of service users when formulating strategies to meet housing need (question 10a).
 2. Filter 69 selected those authorities that said no to all three of the following ways of considering the views of service users: no to having forums where residents are involved in decision-making processes (question 11a); no to having any other structured ways of finding out the views and preferences of service users (question 9a); and no to considering the views of service users when formulating strategies to meet housing need (question 10a).
 3. Question 2 asked respondents to provide five examples of services provided directly by the housing department. Filter 71 selected those authorities that gave the example of an ‘innovative’ service (i.e. enabling; strategic; working with housing associations) as their first example.
 4. Filter 72 selected those authorities that gave the example of an ‘innovative’ service (i.e. enabling; strategic; working with housing associations) as their second example.
 5. Filter 73 selected those authorities that gave the example of an ‘innovative’ service as their third example.
 6. Filter 74 selected those authorities that gave the example of an ‘innovative’ service as their fourth example.
 7. Filter 75 selected those authorities that gave the example of an ‘innovative’ service as their fifth example.

1. Filter 76 selected those authorities that did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples.
2. Filter 77 selected those authorities that gave the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the union of subset filters 71, 72, 73, 74, 75.
3. Filter 84 selected those authorities that did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples; and had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock and did not contract out any services. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 76 and subset filter 51.
4. Filter 85 selected those authorities that said no to having forums where residents are involved in decision-making processes (question 11a); and no to having any other structured ways of finding out the views and preferences of service users (question 9a). In other words, said no to both of these ways of considering the views of service users.
5. Filter 86 selected those authorities that had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock, did not make a reference to the ‘enabling role’ in any of their policy documents; and where they did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 52 and subset filter 76.
6. Filter 87 selected those authorities that did not conduct any market research regarding their services, and where they did not conduct any general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality; and where they did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 54 and subset filter 76.
7. Filter 88 selected those authorities that had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock, who did not contract out any services, did not make a reference to the ‘enabling role’ in any of their policy documents; and where they did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 53 and subset filter 76.
8. Filter 89 selected those authorities that did not meet with organisations representing local businesses, they did not meet pressure groups, they did not meet individual local business or private sector organisations; and where they did not give the example of providing any

innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 58 and subset filter 76.

9. Filter 90 selected those authorities that did not meet with organisations representing local businesses, they did not meet pressure groups, they did not meet individual local business or private sector organisations; where they had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock and did not contract out any services; and where they did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the intersection of subset filters 58, 51 and 76.
10. Filter 91 selected those authorities that had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock and did not contract out any services; where they did not meet with organisations representing local businesses, they did not meet pressure groups, they did not meet individual local business or private sector organisations; where they only undertook one form of market research in question 8a and 8b; where they said no to one of the following three ways of considering the views of service users: either no to having forums where residents are involved in decision-making processes (question 11a); no to having any other structured ways of finding out the views and preferences of service users (question 9a); or no to considering the views of **service** users when formulating strategies to meet housing need (question 10a); and where they did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the intersection of subset filters 51, 58, 60, 68 and 76.
11. Filter 92 selected those authorities that had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock, did not make a reference to the 'enabling role' in any of their policy documents; and where they did not meet with organisations representing local businesses, they did not meet pressure groups, they did not meet individual local business or private sector organisations, where they did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 52 and subset filter 89.
12. Filter 93 selected those authorities that undertook one form of market research in question 8a and 8b; and where they made no proposal to transfer their housing stock, did not **make** a reference to the 'enabling role' in any of their policy documents, where they did not meet with organisations representing local businesses, they did not meet pressure groups, they did not meet individual local business or private sector organisations, where they did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 60 and subset filter 92.

13. Filter 94 selected those authorities that did not meet with organisations representing local businesses, they did not meet pressure groups, they did not meet individual local business or private sector organisations; and where they had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock, they did not contract out any services, did not make a reference to the ‘enabling role’ in any of their policy documents, they did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 58 and subset filter 88.
14. Filter 95 selected those authorities that said no to all three of the following ways of considering the views of service users: no to having forums where residents are involved in decision-making processes (question 11a); no to having any other structured ways of finding out the views and preferences of service users (question 9a); and no to considering the views of service users when formulating strategies to meet housing need (question 10a); and where they did not conduct any market research regarding their services, or any general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality, and where they had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 69 and subset filter 55.
15. Filter 96 selected those authorities that said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality; and that said no to all three of the following ways of considering the views of service users: no to having forums where residents are involved in decision-making processes (question 11a); no to having any other structured ways of finding out the views and preferences of service users (question 9a); and no to considering the views of service users when formulating strategies to meet housing need (question 10a). In other words the intersection of subset filter 60 and filter 69.
16. Filter 97 selected those authorities that had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock and did not contract out any services; that said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality; and said no to one of the following three ways of considering the views of service users: either no to having forums where residents are involved in decision-making processes (question 11a); no to having any other structured ways of finding out the views and preferences of service users (question 9a); or no to considering the views of service users when formulating strategies to meet housing need (question 10a); and where they did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the intersection of subset filters 51, 60, 68 and 76.

17. Filter 98 selected those authorities that had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock, who did not contract out any services, did not make a reference to the 'enabling role' in any of their policy documents; that said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality; and said no to one of the following three ways of considering the views of service users: either no to having forums where residents are involved in decision-making processes (question 11a); no to having any other structured ways of finding out the views and preferences of service users (question 9a); or no to considering the views of service users when formulating strategies to meet housing need (question 10a); and where they did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples. In other words, the intersection of subset filters 53, 60, 68 and 76.
18. Filter 99 selected those authorities that did not meet organisations reprocessing businesses or individual private sector organisations.
19. Filter 100 selected those authorities that had made no proposal to transfer their housing stock, who did not contract out any services, did not make a reference to the 'enabling role' in any of their policy documents; that said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality; said no to one of the following three ways of considering the views of service users: either no to having forums where residents are involved in decision-making processes (question 11a); no to having any other structured ways of finding out the views and preferences of service users (question 9a); or no to considering the views of service users when formulating strategies to meet housing need (question 10a); did not give the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples; and did not meet organisations reprocessing businesses or individual private sector organisations. In other words, the intersection of filters 53, 60, 68, 76 and 99.

Filters Constructed for Selection of A Residual-Enabling Authority

1. Filter 108 selected those authorities that had made a proposal to transfer their stock and where they contracted out their services. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 10 and subset filter 16.
2. Filter 109 selected those authorities that had actually transferred part or all of their stock, and where they contracted out any of their services. In other words the intersection of subset filter 14 and subset filter 16.
3. Filter 110 selected those authorities that had made a proposal to transfer all of their stock; where they had actually transferred their stock; and where they contracted out their services. In other words, the intersection of subset filters 13, 14 and 16.
4. Question 5 (ii) asked authorities to identify the sector to whom they contracted out their services and they were asked to provide three examples of this. Filter 111 selected those authorities that contracted out their services to the private sector. This could have been in service 1, 2 or 3, or all three. In other words, any authority that contracted out to the private sector was selected.
5. Question 5 (iii) asked authorities whether they contracted out all or part of the service. Filter 112 selected any authorities which contracted out all of their services either in service 1, 2 or 3. In other words, any authority that contracted out at least all of one service was selected.
6. Filter 113 selected those authorities which contracted out ALL of the THREE services. In other words, all those authorities that stated they had contracted out all of service, 1, 2 and 3.
7. Filter 114 selected those authorities that stated they had contracted out all of service, 1, 2 or 3; and where they had transferred some or all of their housing stock. In other words the intersection of subset filter 112 and filter 14.
8. Filter 115 selected those authorities that had contracted out all service 1.
9. Filter 116 selected those authorities that had contracted out all service 2.
10. Filter 117 selected those authorities that had contracted out all service 3.
11. Filter 118 selected those authorities that had either transferred all or part of their housing, or contracted out their services; and had experienced a decrease in service provision.

12. Filter 119 selected all those authorities that contracted out all of the three services; and where they had also transferred some of their stock. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 113 and subset filter 14.
13. Filter 120 selected those authorities that made a proposal to transfer all of their stock; and if they contracted out some of their services. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 13 and subset filter 16.
14. Filter 121 selected those authorities that had experienced a decline in direct provision.
15. Filter 122 selected those authorities that contracted out all of the three services, where they had transferred some of their stock; and had experienced a decline in direct provision. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 119 and subset filter 121.
16. Given that there was only one authority in filter 122, the selection of authorities was broadened out slightly. Filter 123 selected those authorities that had contracted out all of service, 1, 2 or 3, where they had transferred some or all of their housing stock; and had experienced a decline in direct service provision. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 114 and subset filter 121.
17. Filter 125 selected all those authorities that had made a proposal to transfer their stock and where they contracted out their services; and where they also gave examples innovative housing services (i.e. enabling; strategic; working with housing associations). In other words, the intersection of subset filter 108 and subset filter 77.
18. Filter 126 selected all those authorities that had actually transferred part or all of their stock, and where they contracted out any of their services; and where they also gave examples innovative housing services. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 109 and subset filter 77.
19. Filter 127 selected all those authorities that had made a proposal to transfer all of their stock, where they had actually transferred all of their stock, and where they contracted out their services; and where they also gave examples innovative housing services. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 110 and subset filter 77.

20. Filter 128 selected those authorities that contracted out all of their services either in service 1, 2 or 3; and where they also gave examples innovative housing services. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 112 and subset filter 77.
21. Filter 129 selected those authorities which contracted out ALL of the THREE services; and where they also gave examples innovative housing services. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 113 and subset filter 77.
22. Filter 130 selected those authorities that had transferred their stock, contracted out all of at least one service; and where they also gave examples of innovative housing services. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 114 and subset filter 77.
23. Filter 131 selected all those authorities that contracted out ALL of the three services, and where they had also transferred some of their stock; and where they also gave examples innovative housing services. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 119 and subset filter 77.
24. Filter 132 selected those authorities that contracted out all the three services; and if any of these were contracted out to the private sector. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 113 and subset filter 111.
25. Filter 133 selected those authorities that had contracted out all of their services either in service 1, 2 or 3; and if any of these were contracted out to the private sector. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 112 and subset filter 111.
26. Filter 134 selected those authorities that described themselves as residual in question 6, i.e. where they stated that statement (c) best described their attitude towards delivering services.
27. Filter 135 selected those authorities that had actually transferred part or all of their stock, and where they contracted out any of their services, and where they also gave examples innovative housing services (filter 126); and if they viewed themselves community-enablers, (i.e. where they stated that statement (a) best described their attitude towards delivering services.
28. Filter 137 selected those authorities that viewed themselves as community-enablers; and where they contracted out all of service 1, 2 and 3, and if any of these were contracted out to the private sector (i.e. filter 132).

29. Filter 138 selected those authorities that had made a proposal to transfer all their housing stock; and where they contracted out all of their services either in service 1, 2 or 3. In other words, the intersection between subset filter 13 and subset filter 112.
30. Filter 139 selected those authorities that had had made a proposal to transfer all their housing stock; and where they contracted out all of their services either in service 1, 2 or 3; and where they gave examples of delivering innovative housing services. In other words, the intersection between filters 13, 112 and 77.
31. Filter 140 selected those authorities that contracted out all of service 1, 2 and 3, and if any of these were contracted out to the private sector; said no to one of the following three ways of considering the views of service users: question 11a, question 9a, or no to question 10a; said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality. In other words, the intersection of subset filters 132, 68 and 60.
32. Filter 141 selected those authorities that had contracted out all the three services, and if **any** of these were contracted out to the private sector; said no to all three of the following **ways** of considering the views of service users: question 11a, question 9a, and no to question 10a; and said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality. In other words, the intersection of subsets filters 132, 69 and 60.
33. Filter 142 selected those authorities that had transferred their stock, contracted out all of at least one service, gave examples innovative housing services; said no to one of the following three ways of considering the views of service users: question 11a, question 9a, or no to question 10a; and said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality. In other words, the intersection of subsets filters 130, 68 and 60.
34. Filter 143 selected those authorities that had transferred their stock, contracted out all of at least one service, gave examples of innovative housing services; said no to all three of the following ways of considering the views of service users: question 11a, question 9a, and no to question 10a; and said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality. In other words, the intersection of subsets filters 130, 69 and 60.

35. Filter 144 selected those authorities that had had made a proposal to transfer all their housing stock, where they contracted out all of their services either in service 1, 2 or 3, gave examples of delivering innovative housing services; said no to one of the following three ways of considering the views of service users: question 11a, question 9a, or no to question 10a; and said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality.. In other words, the intersection of subsets filters 139, 69 and 60.
36. Filter 146 selected those authorities that had contracted out all the three services, and if any of these were contracted out to the private sector, said no to all three of the following ways of considering the views of service users: question 11a, question 9a, and no to question 10a, and said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality; and said 'no' to meeting all organisations in question 8. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 141 and filter 56.
37. Filter 147 is those authorities that said 'no' to meeting user groups, voluntary organisation and pressure groups. In other words, said 'no' to all three groups.
38. Filter 148 selected those authorities that stated they had regular meetings with organisations representing local businesses and they also met with individual local business or private sector organisations.
39. Filter 149 selected those authorities that had transferred their stock, contracted out all of at least one service, gave examples innovative housing services, said no to one of the following three ways of considering the views of service users: question 11a, question 9a, or no to question 10a, and said no to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality; and stated that they had regular meetings with organisations representing local businesses and they also met with individual local business or private sector organisations. In other words the intersection of subset filter 142 and subset filter 148.
40. Filter 150 selected those authorities that contracted out all of service 1, 2 and 3, and if any of these were contracted out to the private sector, said no to one of the following three ways of considering the views of service users: question 11a, question 9a, or no to question 10a, said **no** to either, conducting market research regarding their services, or conducting general market research regarding the needs and preferences of people living in their locality; and stated that

they had regular meetings with organisations representing local businesses and they also met with individual local business or private sector organisations. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 140 and subset 148.

Filters Constructed for Selection of A Community-Enabling Authority

1. Filter 155 selected those authorities that said yes to undertaking house condition surveys; yes to undertaking household surveys; yes to undertaking targeted social group analysis; yes to undertaking waiting list analysis; and yes to undertaking other forms of analysis. In other words, said yes to undertaking all forms of analysis in question 7 and, is therefore, the complement of subset filters 62–67.
2. Filter 156 selected those authorities that said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c, that is, meeting with other public organisations, meeting with organisations representing local businesses, meeting with individual local business or private sector organisations, meeting with tenant groups or general users of housing services. In other words, this filter is the complement of subset filter 56.
3. Filter 157 selected those authorities that said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b.
4. Filter 158 selected those authorities that yes to undertaking all forms of analysis in question 7; and said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 155 and subset filter 157.
5. Filter 159 selected those authorities that gave the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples; and said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 77 and subset filter 157.
6. Filter 160 selected those authorities that said yes to making reference to the enabling role in any of their policy documents; said yes to having forums where service-users are involved in decision-making processes; said yes to considering the views of service-users when formulating strategies; and said yes to having other structured ways of finding out about the views and preferences of service-users.

7. Filter 161 selected those authorities that said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b; and said yes to making reference to the enabling role in any of their policy documents, said yes to having forums where service-users are involved in decision-making processes, said yes to considering the views of service-users when formulating strategies, and said yes to having other structured ways of finding out about the views and preferences of service-users. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 157 and subset filter 160.
8. Filter 162 selected those authorities that said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b, and said yes to making reference to the enabling role in any of their policy documents, said yes to having forums where service-users are involved in decision-making processes, said yes to considering the views of service-users when formulating strategies, and said yes to having other structured ways of finding out about the views and preferences of service-users; and they stated that they had experienced a reduction in services and attributed working with other organisations as one reason for this. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 161 and subset filter 25.
9. Filter 164 selected those authorities who made a proposal to transfer their stock; and said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 10 and subset filter 156.
10. Filter 165 selected those authorities who made a proposal to transfer their stock; and said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 10 and subset filter 157.
11. Filter 166 selected those authorities that said yes to making reference to the enabling role in any of their policy documents, said yes to having forums where service-users are involved in decision-making processes, said yes to considering the views of service-users when formulating strategies, and said yes to having other structured ways of finding out about the views and preferences of service-users; and had made a proposal to transfer their stock, and said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 160 and subset filter 165.
12. Filter 167 selected those authorities that had transferred part or all of their stock; and said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c and yes to undertaking both forms of market

research in question 8a and 8b. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 14 and subset filter 157.

13. Filter 168 selected those authorities that said yes to making reference to the enabling role in any of their policy documents, said yes to having forums where service-users are involved in decision-making processes, said yes to considering the views of service-users when formulating strategies, and said yes to having other structured ways of finding out about the views and preferences of service-users; and had transferred part or all of their stock, **and said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b.** In other words, the intersection of subset filter 160 and filter 167.
14. Filter 169 selected those authorities that said yes to meeting all the organisations in **question 8c and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b, and said yes to making reference to the enabling role in any of their policy documents, said yes to having forums where service-users are involved in decision-making processes, said yes to considering the views of service-users when formulating strategies, and said yes to having other structured ways of finding out about the views and preferences of service-users; and those authorities who contracted out some of their housing services that were previously provided directly.** In other words, the intersection of subset filter 161 and subset filter 16.
15. Filter 170 selected those authorities that gave at least one of the following reasons for undertaking needs assessment in question 7: to prioritise expenditure; for policy or **strategy** preparation; enabling other organisations; identify customer preferences.
16. Filter 171 selected those authorities that had experienced a reduction in service delivery and attributed this to at least one of the following reasons: RTB, LSVT or working with other organisations.
17. Filter 172 selected those authorities who had experienced a reduction in service delivery because they were working with other organisation.
18. Filter 173 selected those authorities that gave the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples; and said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b, and said yes to making reference to the enabling role in any of their policy documents, said yes to having forums where service-users are involved in decision-making processes, said yes to considering the

views of service-users when formulating strategies, and said yes to having other structured ways of finding out about the views and preferences of service-users, and contracted out some of their housing services that were previously provided directly. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 77 and subset filter 169.

19. Filter 174 selected those authorities who had either experienced no change or an increase in service provision.
20. Filter 175 selected those authorities that said yes to meeting all the organisations in **question 8c** and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b, and said **yes** to making reference to the enabling role in any of their policy documents, said yes to having forums where service-users are involved in decision-making processes, said yes to considering the views of service-users when formulating strategies, and said yes to having other structured ways of finding out about the views and preferences of service-users, who contracted out some of their housing services that were previously provided directly; and had either experienced no change or an increase in service provision. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 169 and subset filter 174.
21. Filter 176 selected those authorities that gave the example of providing any innovative service in any of their five examples; said yes to meeting all the organisations in question 8c and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b, and said yes to making reference to the enabling role in any of their policy documents, said yes to having forums where service-users are involved in decision-making processes, said yes to considering the views of service-users when formulating strategies, and said yes to having other structured ways of finding out about the views and preferences of service-users, contracted out some of their housing services that were previously provided directly; and who had either experienced no change or an increase in service provision. In other words, the intersection of subset filters 77, 169 and 174.
22. Filter 177 selected those authorities that said yes to meeting all the organisations in **question 8c** and yes to undertaking both forms of market research in question 8a and 8b, and said **yes** to making reference to the enabling role in any of their policy documents, said yes to having forums where service-users are involved in decision-making processes, said yes to considering the views of service-users when formulating strategies, and said yes to having other structured ways of finding out about the views and preferences of service-users, who contracted out some of their housing services that were previously provided directly; and stated they had

experienced a reduction in services and attributed working with other organisations as one reason for this. In other words, the intersection of subset filter 169 and filter 25.

The construction of the above filters allowed the research to identify the authorities that matched the 'portraits' of the enabling models the closest. The tables below summarise their responses to the survey that made them suitable to represent one of the three enabling models, as well as their responses which did not conform to the ideal 'portraits'.

Possible Case-Study Choices for a For A 'Residual' Authority

Authority (95)	Authority (16)	Authority (82)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transferred housing stock 2. Delivers innovative services 3. Seen a decrease in service provision 4. 5. Contracts out all of 3 services 6. 7. Said no to 4 out of 6 types of analysis for quest. 7 8. Does 1 type of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not meet ANY organisations in 8c. 9. Does not have other structured ways of finding information about user views or preferences 10. Does not consider views of users when formulating strategies 11. Does not have forums where users involved in decision making process 12. Makes reference to the 'enabling role' 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transferred housing stock 2. Delivers innovative services 3. 4. 5. Contracts out 3 services & 2 of these are all contracted out 6. 7. 8. Does 1 type of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets pvt sector; meets organisations representing business 9. Does not have other structured ways of finding information about user views or preferences 10. Does not consider views of users when formulating strategies 11. Does not have forums where users involved in decision making process 12. Makes reference to the 'enabling role' 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. Seen a decrease in service provision 4. 5. Contracts out 3 services & all of these are contracted out; also contracts to the private sector 6. 7. 8. Does 1 type of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets pvt sector; meets organisations representing business 9. Does not have other structured ways of finding information about user views or preferences 10. Does not consider views of users when formulating strategies 11. Does not have forums where users involved in decision making process 12. Makes reference to the 'enabling role'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not make a proposal to transfer <u>all</u> of housing stock • Does not contract out to pvt sector • Sees itself as a community enabler 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not make a proposal to transfer <u>all</u> of housing stock • Not seen a decrease in service provision • Does not contract out to pvt sector • Sees itself as a community enabler • Does 4 types of analysis for quest 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not transferred housing stock and made no proposal to transfer • Does not mention innovative services • Does not see itself as residual authority • Does 4 types of analysis for quest 7 • Meets user groups; PiGs and Voluntary groups

Possible Case-Study Choices for A For a 'Residual' Authority Continued

Authority (63)	Authority (57)	Authority (44)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Made a proposal to transfer ALL housing stock Delivers innovative services Contracts out 3 services & all of these are contracted out Said no to 3 types of analysis in quest 7 Does 1 type of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets pvt sector; meets organisations represent. business Does not have other structured ways of finding information about user views or preferences Does not consider views of users when formulating strategies Does not have forums where users involved in decision making process Makes reference to the 'enabling role' Made a proposal to transfer BUT has not transferred. Does not contract out to pvt sector Sees itself as a community enabler Meets user groups; PiGs and Voluntary groups 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Transferred housing stock and made a proposal to transfer all housing stock Delivers innovative services Seen a decrease in service provision Contracts out 3 services Does 1 type of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets pvt sector; meets organisations represent. business BUT does not meet user groups; volnt. sect. or PiGs mentions enabling role only 1 service all contracted out Does not contract out to pvt sector Does 4 of the 6 types of analysis in question 7 Said yes to quest. 9 Said yes to quest. 10 Said yes to quest 11 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Made a proposal to transfer housing stock Contracts out 2 services Mentions enabling services identified in filters 77-81 Does 1 type of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not meet ANY other orgs. in 8c. apart form 'other public orgs. Does not have other structured ways of finding information about user views or preferences Does not consider views of users when formulating strategies Does not have forums where users involved in decision making process Makes reference to the 'enabling role' Not seen a decrease in service provision Only contracts out PART of the service and does not contract out to pvt sector Does not see itself as residual authority Does 4 of the 6 types of analysis in question 7

Possible Case-Study Choices for a 'Residual' Authority Continued

Authority (93)	Authority (94)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transferred housing stock and made a proposal to transfer ALL housing stock 2. 3. Seen a decrease in service provision 4. 5. Contracts out 2 services & contracts out all of these services 6. 7. 8. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets pvt. sector; meets organisations represent. business 9. Does not have other structured ways of finding information about user views or preferences 10. Does not consider views of users when formulating strategies 11. Does not have forums where users involved in decision making process 12. Makes reference to the 'enabling role' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not contract out to pvt sector • Does not deliver innovative services • Does not see itself as a residual enabler • Does 4 types of analysis for quest 7 • Meets user groups; PiGs and Voluntary groups 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transferred housing stock and made a proposal to transfer ALL housing stock 2. Delivers innovative services 3. Seen a decrease in service provision 4. 5. Contracts out 2 services 6. 7. 8. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets pvt. sector; meets organisations represent. business 9. Does not have other structured ways of finding information about user views or preferences 10. Does not consider views of users when formulating strategies 11. Does not have forums where users involved in decision making process 12. Makes reference to the 'enabling role' 13. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only contracts out PART of the service • Does not contract out to pvt sector • Does not see itself as a residual enabler • Does 5 types of analysis for quest 7 • Meets user groups; PiGs and Voluntary groups • does not mention enabling role

Possible Case-Study Choices for a Community Enabling Authority

Authority (01)	Authority (28)	Authority (53)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. Experienced increase in service delivery 4. N/A 5. 6. Sees itself as a community enabler 7. Does all the analysis in quest. 7 8. (a & b) Does both types of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets all the organisations identified in 8c 9. Yes to having other structured ways of finding info. about consumers 10. Considers user views when formulating strategies. 11. Has forums where residents involved in consultative /decision making process. 12. Makes reference to the enabling role. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made no proposal to transfer stock • Does not mention innovative services • Does not contract out 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. Experienced no change in service delivery 4. N/A 5. 6. 7. Does all the analysis in quest. 7 8. (a & b) Does both types of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets all the organisations identified in 8c 9. Yes to having other structured ways of finding info. about consumers 10. Considers user views when formulating strategies. 11. 12. Makes reference to the enabling role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made no proposal to transfer s • Does not mention innovative services • Does not contract out • Sees itself as a traditional authority • No forums where residents involved in decision making process 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. Experienced no change in service delivery 4. N/A 5. 6. 7. Does all the analysis in quest. 7 8. (a & b) Does both types of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets all the organisations identified in 8c 9. Yes to having other structured ways of finding info. about consumers 10. Considers user views when formulating strategies. 11. Has forums where residents involved in consultative /decision making process. 12. Makes reference to the enabling role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made no proposal to transfer s • Does not mention innovative services • Does not contract out • Sees itself as a traditional authority

Possible Case-Study Choices for a Community Enabling Authority Continued

Authority (04)	Authority (23)	Authority (24)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. Experienced decrease in services 4. Attributes this to RTB & reduced grant availability 5. 6. Sees itself as a community enabler 7. Undertakes 5 types of analysis for question 7 8. (a & b) Does both types of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets all the organisations identified in 8c 9. Yes to having other structured ways of finding info. about consumers 10. Considers user views when formulating strategies. 11. Has forums where residents involved in consultative /decision making process. 12. Makes reference to the enabling role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made no proposal to transfer stock • Does not mention innovative services • Does not contract out 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. Experienced no change in service delivery 4. N/A 5. Contracts out 6. 7. Undertakes 5 types of analysis for question 7 8. (a & b) Does both types of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets all the organisations identified in 8c 9. Yes to having other structured ways of finding info. about consumers 10. Considers user views when formulating strategies. 11. Has forums where residents involved in consultative /decision making process. 12. Makes reference to the enabling role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made no proposal to transfer stock • Does not mention innovative services • Sees itself as a traditional authority 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. Delivers innovative services 3. Experienced no change in service delivery 4. N/A 5. Contracts out 6. 7. Undertakes 5 types of analysis for question 7 8. (a & b) Does both types of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets all the organisations identified in 8c 9. Yes to having other structured ways of finding info. about consumers 10. Considers user views when formulating strategies. 11. Has forums where residents involved in consultative /decision making process. 12. Makes reference to the enabling role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made no proposal to transfer stock • Sees itself as a traditional authority

Possible Case-Study Choices for a Community Enabling Authority Continued

Authority (61)	Authority (77)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. Experienced no change in service delivery 4. N/A 5. Contracts out 6. Sees itself as a community enabler 7. 8. (a & b) Does both types of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets all the organisations identified in 8c 9. Yes to having other structured ways of finding info. about consumers 10. Considers user views when formulating strategies. 11. Has forums where residents involved in consultative /decision making process. 12. Makes reference to the enabling role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made no proposal to transfer stock • Does not mention innovative services • Undertakes 4 types of analysis for question 7. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. Delivers innovative services 3. Experienced decrease in services 4. Attributes this to working with other orgs. & Voluntary Transfer 5. Contracts out 6. 7. Undertakes 5 types of analysis for question 7 8. (a & b) Does both types of market research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets all the organisations identified in 8c 9. Yes to having other structured ways of finding info. about consumers 10. Considers user views when formulating strategies. 11. Has forums where residents involved in consultative /decision making process. 12. Makes reference to the enabling role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made no proposal to transfer stock • Sees itself as a traditional authority

APPENDIX 5

Summary of Interviews Conducted by Case-Study Authority

Table 1: Interviews conducted in North-West District Council

Interview No.	Title of Respondent
NW1.	North-West District Senior Housing Manger
NW2.	North-West District Economic Development Officer
NW3.	North-West District Housing Management Officer: Estates and Lettings
NW4.	North-West District Housing Management Officer: Rents and Lettings
NW5.	North-West District Economic Development Officer
NW6.	North-West District Chief Planning Officer

Table 2a: Interviews conducted in North-Met Council .

Interview No.	Title of Respondent
NM1.	North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side
NM2.	North-Met Senior Research and Development Manager
NM3.	North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator
NM4.	North-Met Consultation Manager
NM5.	North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal Division
NM6.	North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Urban Renewal Division
NM7.	North-Met Project Manager for 3Bs Regeneration Area.
NM8.	North-Met Assistant Director of Housing: Client Side
NM9.	North-Met Housing Manager
NM10.	North-Met Geriwell Action Team: Programme Leader
NM11.	North-Met Senior Research and Development Manager
NM12.	North-Met Advice and Access Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator
NM13.	North-Met Geriwell Action Team: Co-ordinator for Private Sector Improvements
NM14.	North-Met Community Housing Partnership Manager
NM15.	North-Met Accommodation Officer: Ex-Chair of Voluntary-Sector Forum

Table 2b: Interviews conducted with Housing Associations and Voluntary Sector Organisations in North-Met.

Interview No.	Title of Respondent
NM16.	North-Met YAP Co-ordinator: voluntary group
NM17.	North-Met Porterloo Housing Association: Development Manger
NM18.	North-Met Greenwood Housing Association: Chief Executive
NM19.	North-Met FASE Project Manager: voluntary group
NM20.	North-Met Bond Board: Project Co-ordinator: voluntary group

Table 3a: Interviews conducted in South-City Council.

Interview No.	Title of Respondent
SC1.	South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division
SC2.	South-City Special Project Co-ordinator: Beckston Renewal Area
SC3.	South-City Participation Support Officer
SC4.	South-City Special Projects Co-ordinator: St. Magnums Renewal Area
SC5.	South-City Enabling Team Manager: Voluntary-Sector Co-ordinator
SC6.	South-City Strategic Services Manager: Enabling Division
SC7.	South-City Service Development Officer
SC8.	South-City Regeneration Partnership: SRB Co-ordinator
SC9.	South-City Community Development District Manager
SC10.	South-City Service Development Officer

Table 3b: Interviews conducted with Housing Associations and Voluntary Sector Organisations in South-City.

Interview No.	Title of Respondent
SC11.	South-City First Step: Director: Ex-Chair of Supported-Housing-Forum
SC12.	South-City Link-Up: Director: Current Chair of Supported-Housing-Forum
SC13.	South-City Crocus Supported Housing Association: Director
SC14.	South-City Faith Housing Association: Director

APPENDIX 6

Case-Study Authority Exhibits

List of Exhibits Within Appendix

1. North-Met: Summary of Community Housing Partnership 2 Housing Plus Projects
2. North-Met: City Challenge Delivery Structure
3. North-Met: SRB Delivery Structure for Bilton, Bogden, Bearsford (3Bs) Renewal Area
4. North-Met: Bilton, Bogden, Bearsford SRB Area: Vision and Objectives
5. South-City: Beckston Renewal Area: Vision and Objectives
6. North-Met: Example within 3Bs Renewal Area of Safety and Security Measures

Exhibit 1: North-Met: Summary of Community Housing Partnership 2 Housing Plus Projects

Project Title	Lead Managing Agency	Aims	Projected Outputs
Housing Association Regeneration through Partnership (HARP) (SRB / City Challenge)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Porterloo Housing Association Indigo Housing Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build on existing HARP partnership arrangements To develop and deliver integrated projects in targeted areas To secure complementary funding with emphasis on the private sector To explore how existing funding can be used to provide cost effective solutions to regeneration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8,000 Construction jobs created (working weeks) 80 Housing association dwellings improved £5.1 m value of public/private sector investment 170 dwellings improved with energy efficiency 42 Private sector dwellings managed by housing association/bought back into use by housing associations
Establishment of Common Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North-Met Borough Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish North-Met Housing Register to co-ordinate procedures for access to social housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of agreed model Organisation structure for North-Met Housing Register Comprehensive IT equipment Substantially improved service delivery to customers in housing needs One application per applicant 40% reduction in administration of duplicated applications Tighter nomination mechanism 100% removal of duplicated offers Removal of duplicated visits Savings to be redirected into service improvements
FASE (Dispersed Foyer supporting the accommodation, social and economic needs of young people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North-Met Borough Council Northern English Housing Association Porterloo Housing Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provision of an integrated housing/support/training/employment/leisure package for single young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8,960 people using the scheme/supported/advised 1,080 construction jobs created (working weeks) 40 bed-spaces created 45 people trained who obtain jobs 90 people trained who obtain qualifications 18 properties improved

Continued overleaf...

Project Title	Lead Managing Agency	Aims	Projected Outputs
Housing Needs Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North-Met Borough Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Precise understanding of housing needs and demand Identification of housing need at district and locality level Effective use of existing housing Ensure new or rehabilitation activity meet projected housing need precisely Linkages to urban regeneration 5 Local Housing Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New housing provided to precisely meet need 5 Local Housing Plans Special Needs Housing Strategy Reduction in voids Strategy for applying PPG 3 in outer districts Links to major urban regeneration projects Safer, more sustainable communities Establish need for lifetime homes Renewal of existing stock
Integrated Housing Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenwood Housing Association North-Met Borough Council Indigo Housing Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify areas of common working/sharing resources/services Explore 'one-stop shops' Joint policies on managing voids Contracting out maintenance services via one contract Common approaches to anti-social behaviour / crime prevention Promotion of community development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal voids: Council and Housing Associations Single contracts for landscape/bulk purchase One stop-shop for housing management services Common strategies for anti-social behaviour/management of voids Reduction in housing management costs Common resourcing of caretaking services Improved property maintenance standards Support/training/community development for tenants associations
Development of Innovative Housing Solutions to secure redevelopment of key sites in target areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern English Housing Association North-Met Borough Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define selected target areas Schedule of opportunities to be evaluated Identification of funding services/options Investigation of Housing Investment Trust Commercial/mixed housing opportunities promote sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total projected investment of £50m Land Database New innovative housing solutions/mixed development opportunities, e.g. commercial frontage sites/custom built Major urban regeneration projects 1000 homes created 300 affordable homes provided via PPG 3 200 homes in North-Met town centre 12,000 construction jobs created Maximisation of external funding/European funding

Continued overleaf...

Project Title	Lead Managing Agency	Aims	Projected Outputs
Local Employment Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern English Housing Association North-Met Borough Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage housing associations to develop and implement local recruitment policies to reflect North-Met's Value Diversity Policy Encourage/Support housing associations in implementing employment practices to assist North-Met people secure employment Develop work experience/training opportunities for local people seeking employment with housing associations Common policy on recruitment of consultants/contractors Support for community enterprise/voluntary sector initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of existing housing association recruitment policies Setting of equality targets 40 jobs created for North-Met people 50 local people on work experience including PATH trainees Contractors/consultants meet agreed code of practice on recruitment and employment Maximise opportunities for local contractors/Housing direct labour organisation
Improving quality of care/support services to elderly/special needs groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manchester Churches Housing Association Boating Housing Association North-Met Borough Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop supported housing strategy Establish volume procurement between partners in care/support services Sharing/developing warden services Establishing specialisms between partners Minimise service charges/maximise quality of services Make best use of existing accommodation/support independent living with caring Support Networks Establish joint register of housing association/council properties suitable for people with disability Review specifications to ensure housing association dwellings constructed to meet lifecycle standards/SMART technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three year strategy to address supported housing needs Quantified demand for move-on accommodation Gaps in the effectiveness of existing supported housing schemes identified Common definition produced against which the standard and quality of support services can be measured Quantified support needs of individual client groups More houses to meet lifecycle standards/better standards of design Reduction in duplication of services allowing resources to be transferred Limit vulnerability of customers to changes on revenue funding arrangements

Continued overleaf...

Project Title	Lead Managing Agency	Aims	Projected Outputs
Improved Social Fabric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North-Met Borough Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of factors affecting poor social cohesion and contributing to anti-social behaviour and criminal behaviour • Develop strategy to engender community commitment at all levels • Utilise Public Art to develop cohesive communities • Encourage community enterprise initiatives • Develop and support voluntary sector networks • Contribution to broad based anti-poverty strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative developments which incorporate elements/space to facilitate cultural industries • Art based community development programme • Imaginative design incorporating Public Art and community innovation • Consistent implementation of anti-social behaviour policy • Consistent implementation of anti-poverty strategy

Exhibit 2: North-Met: City Challenge Delivery Structure

The City Challenge agency for North-Met is a company limited by guarantee to create and enhance economic and social opportunities and conditions for the residents of Geriwell.

Membership: Membership of the company was initially drawn from partners who worked on the bid, but Articles of Association were flexible enough to permit changes of membership to accommodate any new interests which emerged from the community.

Company Board: The Company Board comprised the following representatives:

Chair (casting vote only) Leader of North-Met Borough Council
North-Met Borough Council (3)
Geriwell Challenge Area Forum (4)
North-Met Business Forum (3)
Developers / Private Sector Partners (2)
North-Met Chamber of Commerce (1)
Training and Enterprise Council (1)
Housing Consortium (1)
Police Authority (1)
Co-opted members (at Board's discretion) (2)
Chief Executive of City Challenge Team (as non voting member)
18 Total Voting Members

Chief Executive : The Chief Executive of the Company was appointed by the Board, to whom he was accountable. He has primary responsibility for the effective planning of the City Challenge initiative and for the delivery of the agreed strategy and outputs, including monitoring, evaluation, and development. He has a direct support team of 10 people, some of whom have been seconded from other organisations. The team included a company secretary and accountant.

Relationship to Council:

North-Met Council's representation on the company and its Executive Board was less than 20 percent. Following acceptance of the bid by the Government, an action plan was drafted for the Company's approval. The plan was considered and approved by North-Met Council before submission to the DoE. After approval, North-Met Council completed an Implementation Document in conjunction with the DoE whereby the Council undertook to apply for City Challenge monies for which it assumed responsibility.

Methods of Implementation:

The Company established a number of delivery mechanisms to implement the vision of the Geriwell Challenge. They include the Tongue Valley Development Agency, Mast Hall Trust and Geriwell Housing Exchange.

Source: North-Met City Challenge Bid Document

Exhibit 3: North-Met: SRB Delivery Structure for Bilton, Bogden, Bearsford (3Bs)

Renewal Area

The 3B Challenge Fund Programme is delivered by a partnership vehicle comprising of four key constituent parts as described below. The partners agreed that North-met Borough Council would act as the accountable body for the Partnership, and assume responsibility for the receipt and use of the SRB Challenge Fund grant. Ultimate responsibility for the Challenge fund expenditure is assigned on a project by project basis to Chief Officers of the Council and other implementation agencies.

a) *The 3Bs Partnership Forum*

The Council has delegated authority for the greater part of its duties and responsibilities regarding the SRB Challenge Fund programme to the Partnership Forum. The Forum takes responsibility for ensuring effective implementation of the 3Bs programme and for taking key decisions on strategy, programme and plans. It has the following membership:

- North-Met Metropolitan Borough Council 8 ward members
- North-Met and Murray Training and Enterprise Council 2 representatives
- Wogan and North-Met Health Authority 2 representatives
- North-Met District Council for Voluntary Services 2 representatives
- Theme Groups 4 representatives

b) *Theme Groups:*

The Forum is supported by four Theme Groups who are responsible for developing specific themes of the 3Bs project. Whereas the Forum concentrates on strategic matters, Theme Groups focus on operational matters including the development, implementation and monitoring of relevant programme areas, and they also have delegated powers to approve projects up to agreed levels. Membership is appropriate to the theme programme areas, incorporating representatives of service providers in targeted sectors, and business and community beneficiaries.

c) *3Bs Partnership Executive Team*

The Partnership Team has the responsibility for effectively co-ordinating and delivering the SRB Programme including appraisal, monitoring, and evaluation of projects and production of annual plans. It is responsible for advising and supporting the Forum and its Theme Groups as well as other community and individual stakeholders. The multi-agency team comprises of staff from the four main partners and is also responsible for promoting 'added value' both between themes/objectives and from new external funding opportunities not yet identified.

d) *Management Steering Group*

A small management steering group has been established to offer advice, guidance and support to the Partnership Team and is comprised of senior managers from the four main partners, together with the Chief Executive of City Challenge.

Source: 3Bs Partnership: Challenge Fund Delivery Plan 1996/7

Exhibit 4: North-Met: Bilton, Bogden, Bearsford SRB Area: Vision and Objectives

The 'Bilton, Bogden, Bearsford – A Partnership for Prosperity' Challenge Fund is led by North-Met Borough Council in partnership with a wide range of public and private organisations in North-Met. If successful, the community of Bilton, Bogden and Bearsford will be transformed through the influx of public and private resources made possible by the Catalyst of Challenge Fund money. The bid will harness the skills of a diverse and dynamic partnership consisting of the private, public, community and voluntary sectors which will deliver an innovative area-based regeneration initiative. This will help transform an area experiencing deprivation, lack of opportunity and social dependence into an enterprising competitive and sustainable community which examines opportunities for the people and businesses of the area.

Our Challenge Fund bid combines a wide range of economic and physical and social programmes which will enable multi-racial communities to thrive, grow and develop. To achieve this vision, the Partnership has developed with the views and needs of the communities as paramount, a holistic programme meeting all the strategic objectives of the Challenge Fund. This has been brought together under four key themes which bring together detailed projects and programmes as follows:

- Theme 1: Promoting access to appropriate education, training and employment.
- Theme 2: Promoting the growth potential of new and existing business.
- Theme 3: Promoting the improvement of environmental and physical conditions to create an attractive place to work, live and invest.
- Theme 4: Promoting safe, healthy and supportive environments.

We are confident that successful implementation of our bid will harness the intrinsic potential for development and growth within the people and business of the 3Bs area. By the end of our four year programme we will have achieved increased business competitiveness, growth in local employment and the economy, and an environment which is improved both physically and through the creation of a better quality of life for local people.

Our locally based regeneration vision for this Challenge Fund should be seen in the context of the emerging North-Met *Prospectus*. The *Prospectus* aims to formulate a shared 10 year vision for North-Met's future. The important initiative is being developed in partnership with the communities, business and organisations which make up the Borough of North-Met and will be completed early in 1996. The Challenge Fund bid shares the common values, goals and objectives of this Borough wide Agenda for regeneration and provides a valuable opportunity for the future.

The Partnership Steering Group representing key business and community partners in the Borough has overseen the preparation of the bid. We believe the development of a new Bilton, Bogden and Bearsford is vital for the creation of a viable, harmonious and sustainable community for the twenty first century. We are committed to its future and development and delivery.

Source: North-Met Challenge Fund Partnership: Bilton – Bogden – Bearsford: A Partnership for Prosperity: SRB Funding Application (1).

Exhibit 5: South-City: Beckston Renewal Area: Vision and Objectives

The aim for the Beckston Renewal Area project is to comprehensively and cohesively address, in association with the local community, issues of housing renovation and redevelopment alongside action on environmental, movement, economic and social problems within a 10 year period.

The Strategy's vision for Beckston is to develop a place which should be accessible and stimulating. It should be a place where people can live, work and play, in safety. Beckston should become a place of distinction, characterised by the quality of its housing, other buildings, streets and public spaces. In order to achieve this vision, this strategy promotes action in respect of:-

- (a) *Housing:* to achieve healthy and enjoyable housing.
- (b) *Environment:* to achieve lively and attractive surroundings which people can enjoy and move around safely.
- (c) *Movement:* to achieve the movement of goods and people whilst enhancing safety and accessibility for all members of the community.
- (d) *Economy:* to achieve the provision of employment and training opportunities for the local community.
- (e) *Community:* to achieve accessible facilities and a range of cultural and recreational facilities for people in Beckston.

Source: Beckston Renewal Area Strategy (1994: 9).

Exhibit 6: Example within North-Met 3Bs Renewal Area of Safety and Security

Measures

The Housing Department working with the Government Safer Cities Project and Greater Manchester Police has completed the first phase of a three year programme, linking into various funding mechanisms and activities, with a common aim of reducing crime. Specifically, the initiative's aims are threefold:

- a) To provide local authority housing staff with training on security and crime prevention issues
- b) To increase the level of awareness of residents regarding security and crime prevention issues, whilst promoting and encouraging community 'togetherness'
- c) To promote a number of target hardening schemes to improve the security of individual properties and vulnerable people

Source: (SRB 2: 7).

To complement the above initiative, another security scheme which 'enhances' the housing investment programme is the 'Domestic Security Initiative'. This project has three elements:

- a) To improve security for residents in their homes either through a responsive service aimed at victims of burglaries or a programme to target vulnerable localities or groups, e.g. elderly, disabled or single parent families;
- b) A range of environmental security improvements will be carried out to particularly vulnerable locations in consultation with local communities and the Police 'Architectural Liaison Officer';
- c) Working in partnership with Safer Cities, Greater Manchester Police and community groups to develop and deliver a programme of awareness raising events throughout the life of the SRB project. This will incorporate the use of the Property Shop (developed through the Property Bank Project) as a security advice point.

Source: (SRB 2b: 2)

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