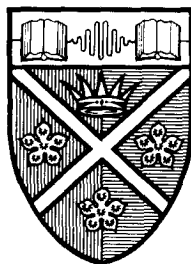


# STRATHCLYDE PAPERS ON GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS



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## *EASTERHOUSE – AN URBAN CRISIS*

by

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## The Origins of Easterhouse

Easterhouse, an estate of 45,000 people in the north-east of Glasgow, has achieved fame in Scotland and beyond for its deep-rooted social and economic problems. Yet, unlike many urban crisis points elsewhere in Britain and abroad, it is not a relic of the industrial revolution or the unplanned development of the nineteenth century, but a modern housing estate conceived and developed precisely as part of the answer to urban decay and dereliction in central Glasgow. In this paper, we ask how Easterhouse moved from being part of the solution to the urban problem to being part of the problem itself and consider the prospects for recent and planned initiatives for the scheme.

Glasgow's four peripheral estates of Easterhouse, Castlemilk, Drumchapel and Pollok were not, as is sometimes imagined, the result of town planners' visions but of the urgent need in the post-war years to build houses as rapidly as possible for Glasgow's congested population and of a battle, which was never adequately resolved, between those who considered that this could be done within the city boundaries and those who favoured dispersal to new towns and communities beyond the conurbation. The city's housing situation in these years was certainly critical. Applying the standards of the 1944 Scottish Housing Advisory Committee to the 1931 census figures, it was found that 59.9% of all households were overcrowded and when the 1951 census was analysed the figure was still as high as 44.2% (Baird, 1958). In central Glasgow, 700,000 people lived at 400 persons to the acre, with some areas as high as 700 to the acre. Large numbers of houses were needed to cope with the overcrowding and more would be needed in due course to

replace the slums and bring the stock up to an acceptable standard. For the Clyde Valley Regional Planning Advisory Committee (CVRPAC, 1949), the solution was clear. Some 550,000 people, half of Glasgow's population would need to be rehoused but only half of these could be accommodated by redevelopment within the proposed green belt. The remainder would have to be dispersed away from the conurbation altogether, mainly into planned new towns which would not be mere dormitory suburbs but would contain a full range of employment and social facilities. Glasgow Corporation rejected this approach, fearing the loss of population and rateable value and in a resolution of 1946 declared that it could solve its housing problems within its own boundaries. Its chief engineer, Robert Bruce, produced a plan (Bruce, 1945) to show how over extra 70,000 houses could be provided by building at high density and using all the available land. Supporters of this solution could point out that, following the pre-war boundary extensions, some 40% of the city consisted of agricultural land, enough to accommodate 73,000 new houses. What was in dispute here was, then, not the physical practicability of building entirely within the boundaries but its desirability.

The Bruce Plan was eventually defeated and the City's first Development Plan of 1952 proposed a mere 35,000 houses within the city, with overspill agreements to be made with new towns and other communities to receive the rest of the displaced and surplus population. Progress with overspill, however, was slow and by 1969 only 19,000 of the planned 35,000 overspill houses had been built. At the same time, new household formation, improved standards and redevelopment of the older areas was constantly raising the numbers of houses required. For the politicians, this was the overwhelming priority. Already by 1958, 45,000 houses had been built in the city, almost

all by the Corporation - yet the waiting list stood at 100,000. The result was the piecemeal erosion of the green belt and the extension of the four peripheral estates to the dimensions of medium-sized towns. By 1970, another 50,000 municipal houses had been built yet it was estimated that, given the state of the stock, there was still a potential need for another 100,000 houses in the next ten years (Glasgow and SDD, 1970). By this time, practically all the land in the city had been used up and a further overspill effort was being urged.

The periphery, as a result, developed further and faster than had ever been planned, with 3,569 houses built at Easterhouse by 1958, 12,997 by 1968 and 14,959 by 1978. It was a single-tenure, one-class estate. Some 95% of the housing was corporation-owned, predominantly in three and four storey tenements and from the start there was a substantial proportion of large families. Such was the urgency to build houses that shopping and community facilities were, in the early years, seriously neglected. Lack of school building combined with teacher shortages to curtail education provision with children in part-time schooling until the 1970s. In 1963, proposals were first mooted for a Township Centre, combining shopping and social facilities but concern about viability and costs held it up for a decade. By 1966 agreement had been reached with a private developer for a project of 95 shops, five supermarkets, a cafeteria, a restaurant, a car showroom, a service station, a post office, library, city factor's office, police station, bowling alley, community hall and dance hall. A year later, the developers cut down the proposals, postponing the ballroom, cinema and restaurant until there was evidence of their commercial viability and halving the number of shops. It was not until 1969 that contracts were placed and in 1972 the first shops in the Township Centre were finally

opened. By this time, rising unemployment and continuing low incomes indicated that further development would not be a commercial proposition and the second phase of the centre remains unbuilt. Suggestions that commercial entertainment facilities would have to be subsidised by the council had met a cool response in 1969 when a joint Scottish Office-Corporation report had pinpointed this as a key deficiency of the area. Publicly-owned recreational facilities were developed, with a community centre and a swimming pool in 1971, but these remain limited. It was not until 1983 that a health centre was established and in the same month, the Rogerfield child care clinic was closed.

Employment opportunities within the area were also limited. An industrial estate was established at Queenslie but of the 10,000 jobs there less than a third went to Easterhouse residents (CES, 1985). Long distances, poor services and high fares on public transport were obstacles to seeking employment further afield in a community in which, by 1981, only some 15% of households were car owners.

### **Easterhouse as a Problem**

From an early date, Easterhouse was seen as a 'problem estate' and this perception, which in its details was not always justified, contributed to the problem itself. Moving to the periphery was rarely popular with rehoused city-dwellers and in 1969 it was revealed that nearly a third of Easterhouse tenants had filed applications for transfers to other schemes or other local authorities. In the early days, a major concern was over law and order, with vandalism, hooliganism and gang fights being seen as a particularly severe. Informed observers disputed this. In 1968 Professor R.E.Nicoll of Strathclyde University reported that his analysis of crime

figures indicated that Easterhouse was no worse than anywhere else and, indeed, the crime figures for that year showed a 22% fall for the area, against the Scottish trend. Coverage of the area by the press laid stress on violent crime in a highly sensational manner. Indeed, Easterhouse's treatment by the press parallels that accorded to Glasgow as a whole after the publication of *No Mean City*.

Interpretations of the causes of and solutions to juvenile delinquency also varied. There was widespread support for the view that social and recreational facilities for young people should be improved and in 1968 the singer Frankie Vaughan started his association with the area. At Vaughan's initiative a much-publicised 'arms surrender' was organised for the local gangs and the Easterhouse Project to provide youth facilities was launched. A Trust was set up with support from the Corporation and contributions from private donors but the level of support was disappointing - the largest contribution came from Frankie Vaughan's donation of his concert takings in Glasgow, with some other gifts from England and abroad but hardly anything from Scotland. The Project was wracked with controversy from the outset and during the Conservative administration in the City Chambers in the late 1960s, had to struggle for support. Baillie James Anderson, convenor of the Police Committee, an exponent of tough law and order policies, was a regular critic. In 1969, Anderson criticised proposals to improve the environment as 'pie in the sky idealism' in an area prone to vandalism and opposed a scheme to provide fenced gardens on the grounds that the fencing posts would be torn up and used as weapons. When, in the same year, the project's Youth Centre was temporarily closed (because of vandalism according to the critics, for lack of finance according to its supporters) Anderson pronounced the project a failure, adding that 'this is

precisely what I prophesied' (Glasgow Herald, 18-10-69). Vaughan's efforts to turn the gangs' energies into peaceful channels was criticised by Lionel Daiches, former Sheriff-Substitute in Glasgow who lamented that 'before one can get public concern one must be a delinquent' (Glasgow Herald, 2-7-68). After initial problems concerning finance and its much publicised beginnings, the Corporation's police committee gave permission in 1970 to release an officer to the Project. Since then, a series of constables with experience in youth work have been seconded to it as part of the police Community Involvement Branch. Last year, sixteen years after its opening, the 'Easterhouse Project Temporary Centre' - as a plaque in the Nissan hut still describes the youth centre - was renovated. This was funded by a financial appeal throughout Britain, not by public agencies. In addition to providing a much-used centre for youth, the Project employs eight local people as youth workers funded by the NSC. Gang demarcation lines remain as rigid as ever but there appears little evidence of particularly serious disorders and violence as reported by the press in the late 1960s.

The other main concerns expressed in the 1960s were about the lack of community and shopping facilities, a lack which, as we have seen, was only slowly and partially filled, and about a lack of 'community feeling'. Easterhouse Shopping Centre is classified in Strathclyde Regional Council's Structure Plan as a 'District Centre' but, as a survey of shoppers carried out in October 1984 (Glasgow, 1985) showed, the Centre functions in a far more limited way than this would suggest. 95% of the shoppers were residents of Greater Easterhouse, with 52% living in the four adjacent neighbourhoods of Provanhall, Kildermorie, Blairtummock and Bishoploch. One finding was indicative both of the low level of car ownership and the local nature of the Centre; 6.5% travelled from the Centre by taxi while just 5.1%



did so by car or van. Shoppers surveyed in the Centre used the facilities mainly for the purchase of food and groceries with the bulk of consumer durables being bought in the city centre. Over half the respondents were dissatisfied with the Centre (51.4%) with the major complaints being the lack of competition (with only one supermarket) and high prices. Following the closure of the Coop store in 1984 an Easterhouse Services Monitoring Group, as it became, was established by local residents and made representations to Fine Fare on pricing and other matters, with some degree of success.

The higher prices charged in Easterhouse Centre, however marginal, exemplify how a low income community can be placed under further pressure. While the low incomes of the area might indicate that more retail outlets and completion of phase two of the Centre would not be viable, this is far from the whole story. The existence of an open air market in Auchinlea Park, used by 53% of the Centre's shoppers and the use of the very large number of mobile shops operating in the area suggests that some unmet demand does exist. This seems to be confirmed by the exceptional length of queues in certain outlets, particularly the only bank serving the area. Though the mobile shops and open air market do not have the same overheads as fixed retail outlets, the high prices in the mobile shops suggest that for Easterhouse the retailing problem may be due to supply as well as demand factors. Clearly, more detailed analysis is needed either to confirm or refute the proposition that the low income economy cannot sustain more retail outlets.

The lack of 'community feeling' is an amorphous idea but it was frequently suggested that the social cohesion which had characterised the old inner-city tenement areas had been broken up in the move to the

periphery. As the inner-city areas themselves had often been developed extremely rapidly in the nineteenth century, often to accomodate Irish and Highland incomers, it might have seemed reasonable to expect community identification to develop over time and this has been a consistent goal of policy. While there has been some success here, however, the relatively high turnover of houses and the out-migration of the more active and mobile members of the population militated against this from the early days. It has also been increasingly recognised that the tenure pattern in the area, with nothing but low-cost municipal housing is an obstacle to the development of a balanced community and militates against attempts to attract and maintain even the modestly upwardly mobile.

#### **Quantifying the Problem**

We have indicated that, by the 1970s, Easterhouse was suffering from a range of severe social problems. The impact of the recession in the 1980s has exacerbated many of these, as the analysis of the 1981 census for the Easterhouse APT (with a population of some 20,000) shows (Strathclyde, 1984). While, as befits a postwar development, practically all houses have the basic amenities, no less than 29.5% are classed as overcrowded, against a Glasgow average of 15.9%. There are 6.4% of households with four or more children against 2.2% for the city as a whole and 15.9% of households contain single-parent families (against 7.0% for the city). Only 1.7% of heads of households are in professional or managerial occupations, compared with 11.0% for Glasgow and 16.2% for the region as a whole; by contrast 39.7% are in low-paid occupations (25.6% for the whole city). Male unemployment is 40.3% overall and 47.8% among the 20-24 age group (19.2%

and 24.0% for the whole city). The extent of low incomes can be judged from the fact that some two thirds of households are on housing benefit. 85.1% of households are without a car (70.6% for the city and 54.6% for the region). The population of Easterhouse has been declining along with that of the city. Taking the Greater Easterhouse area as a whole, the population declined from 56,483 in 1971 to 45,708 in 1981 (CES, 1985) but, because of diminishing opportunities elsewhere, this was not as great as had been anticipated in the late 1970s, when it was hoped that population movement could, if not solve the problems of the peripheral estates, at least make them more manageable. The age structure of the population, reflecting that of the scheme, showed an increase in the 17-24 age group and only a small drop in that of 12-16, indicating that the unemployment problem is likely to increase. Overall, Easterhouse retains a younger population than that of the city as a whole and, with low levels of educational achievement, limited prospects of moving into employment outwith the area. Health statistics reinforce the image of deprivation. The perinatal death rate is 23.5% against 18.4% for Glasgow and the infant death rate 22.0%, against 16.3%. Health problems are related to and exacerbated by housing conditions.

The Easterhouse Area Office of Glasgow District's Housing Department is responsible for just under 14,000 houses. Using three variable - vacancies, turnover and transfers out - and local knowledge of area office staff, all housing in Easterhouse was categorised as being average or above average in terms of stress (GDC Annual Housing Review, 1984). On the basis of census data, the Provan parliamentary constituency which largely coincides with Easterhouse is shown to have the worst levels of overcrowding in the city, which in turn has some of the worst levels in Britain (OPCS 1981 Constituency Monitors). Turnover in Easterhouse is at a rate of 14-15%

annually compared with 9% for the city. A survey showed that only 20% of those who occupied a tenancy were able to furnish it, a factor contributing in turn to the high turnover (GDC Housing Plan 8). The reputation earned by Easterhouse as an area in which it is easy to gain a tenancy allied with pressures to let properties may well have resulted in many houses being used as 'transit homes' or 'giro drops'.

Overall, then, Easterhouse exhibits the classic symptoms of multiple deprivation, a finding confirmed by the CES (1985) report, which noted that it contained 10 of the worst 30 enumeration districts in the city (7 of the others were in the other peripheral estates). Glasgow, in turn, was one of the worst off cities in Britain in terms of deprivation.

### **The Impact of Public Policy**

By the late 1960s, it was already widely accepted that the policy of building at high density on the periphery had been mistaken, however understandable in the circumstances of the time. The 1971 census showed a slump in the city's population from 1,065,017 to 898,848, less a result of planned overspill than from spontaneous movement, but indicating that an end to the crude housing shortage was in sight. The second review of the Development Plan in 1972 called for an end to overspill and the application of resources to combatting urban decay. This was in tune with the changing national policy agenda, where the 'rediscovery of poverty' had focussed attention on the problems of urban deprivation. National policies in both Scotland and England began to shift from a concern with overspill and physical renewal to an emphasis on the social and economic problems of the inner cities (Keating and Boyle, 1986). In England, this was marked by

the Inner Area Studies, the 1977 White Paper on the cities and the 1978 Inner Urban Areas Act with its Partnership and Programme schemes. In Scotland, the shift in emphasis had been heralded with the West Central Scotland Plan of 1974 which had recommended reconsideration of the proposed Stonehouse new town and the establishment of a development agency for the West of Scotland. In 1975 the Scottish Development Agency was set up with both economic and urban renewal responsibilities and, following a further recommendation in the Regional Report of the new Strathclyde Regional Council, Stonehouse was abandoned and its team and resources transferred to the inner-city Glasgow Eastern Area Renewal (GEAR) project. Strathclyde's Structure Plan placed the same emphasis on renewing the older industrial areas and tackling urban deprivation. In the Glasgow conurbation, however, urban decay manifested itself in two types of location. In the older urban and industrial areas, there was the problem of the decline of traditional industries and the flight of the younger and more enterprising sections of the population, often accompanied by poor housing conditions and other symptoms of multiple deprivation. In the peripheral schemes, similar social and environmental problems could be seen but linked here not to the decline of an economic base but to the failure to develop one in the first place.

Attention had been drawn to the plight of the periphery in the second review of the Glasgow Development Plan in 1972. This found, as we have noted, that the crude housing shortage would soon be over but devoted extensive coverage to the extent of multiple deprivation, confirming that this extended well beyond the inner city areas zoned for renewal, to the Corporation's own post-war estates. 34% of all the tenants of Easterhouse had outstanding transfer requests and 58% of these wished to go back to

the Gallowgate or surrounding areas in Glasgow's old east end, where social and shopping facilities were available in the ratio of one per 386 persons, against one per 13,850 in Easterhouse (Glasgow, 1972). The 1976 Regional Report of Strathclyde Region concurred in giving a high degree of priority to combatting multiple deprivation and Areas for Priority Treatment (APTs) were designated. These were to receive special consideration in the allocation of resources from capital and revenue budgets and to be the location of special multi-agency initiatives to provide a focussed attack on their problems. However, while some of the declining industrial areas were to be designated as Economic Priority Areas with the focus on bringing back industry, the main thrust of the measures for the peripheral estates were in the field of social policy. The development of the Structure Plan shows this up clearly. The first version, in 1979, talked of the need for 'priority for related action in the fields of housing, derelict and degraded land and planning blight both the improve employment opportunities and maintain the progress of renewal' in nineteen areas, including Glasgow's four peripheral estates. The 1981 revision, produced after the council had developed its economic and social strategies, claimed that 'there is a strong correlation between the Council's APTs, the prospective joint economic initiative areas and the urban renewal priorities identified in the approved Structure Plan'. This coincidence did not, however, apply to Easterhouse and the other peripheral schemes which, while they were all APTs and 'renewal areas' were not 'early action' renewal areas or joint economic initiative areas. When, for the 1984 revision of the Structure Plan, Glasgow District proposed adding Easterhouse to the list of early action areas, the Region turned down the idea with the delphic comment that in Easterhouse 'the vacant land is concentrated on the periphery, which

presents problems associated more with agricultural practice than urban renewal' ! (Strathclyde, 1984b).

The divergence of the social and economic aspects of urban renewal policy increased after the experience of GEAR. The SDA had been pushed into this rather reluctantly by the Scottish Office, which saw the project as a co-ordinated attack on all aspects of urban decline, but the Agency increasingly came to regard the social policy role as a diversion from its main task of economic and industrial renewal. Subsequently, the SDA's area projects focussed more narrowly on the latter, increasingly seeking locations offering the best return on investment rather than those with the most severe social problems (Keating and Boyle, 1986).

We have indicated that, by the mid-1970s, Easterhouse was recognised as a priority area by local and central government, eligible for additional resources through the Urban Programme and from local authority mainstream capital and revenue budgets. Data on the geographical distribution of expenditure is notoriously difficult to assemble but the District Council has undertaken a series of exercises to assess the impact of capital investment by public and private agencies on the priority areas, GEAR, the Maryhill Corridor and the peripheral estates. The figures for capital spending from 1979-80 to 1983-4 indicate a bias against the estates, with investment per head by all agencies amounting to £586 in Easterhouse against £2415 in GEAR and £1776 in the Maryhill corridor. District council spending alone, the figures are £219 per head in Easterhouse, £604 per head in GEAR and £684 in the Maryhill corridor - though these figures exclude the District's non-HRA capital programme which provides grants for private house improvement. Given the lack of private housing in Easterhouse, inclusion of this would produce a further bias against the scheme. What

also emerged was the crucial dependence of the peripheral estates on council spending. While the District Council was responsible for nearly 40% of all investment over the period, in the peripheral estates it is the dominant investor (*Table 1*). In Drumchapel, for example, 85% of all investment was undertaken by the District. In Easterhouse, this figure was just 37.5% but this was due to the fortuitous circumstance of the Monkland Motorway passing through the area, increasing sharply the contribution of Strathclyde Region during the road's construction. There is no private investment recorded and only a token amount by the SDA, a finding confirmed by the SDA's own figures showing Provan third from bottom of the list of parliamentary constituencies in terms of Agency investment (Hansard, 6-12-84). More detailed figures which have been produced for selected years up to 1984-5 confirm the picture (*Table 2*).

What emerges, then, is that Easterhouse is critically dependent on public expenditure and, given its preponderance of public sector housing, vulnerable to policies such as prevailed in the early 1980s, when central government sharply diverted housing capital expenditure from the public to the private sector. For the city as a whole, the centrally-permitted expenditure on council house investment (the HRA account) fell from £62.6m in 1979/80 to £51.0m in 1984/5 while that for private sector grants and loans (the non-HRA account) increased from £13.3m to £84.5m. The balance has since been reversed with the heavy cuts in the non-HRA programme, though in real terms council housing investment remains well below the levels of 1979.

Figures on revenue spending are even more elusive. Under Strathclyde Region's anti-deprivation policy launched when the council was set up and refined as the *Social Strategy for the Eighties* the area is eligible for



preferential treatment in the allocation of resources. In education, falling school rolls and the elimination of the teacher shortage has meant that staffing levels could be established on a proper basis and then extra staff appointed under the Scottish Office *Circular 991* scheme allowing 390 additional teachers in Strathclyde's areas of need. In Social Work, too, extra staff have been provided since reorganisation and Welfare Rights workers have been deployed to try and ensure that people get the state benefits to which they are entitled. The fact remains, however, that many revenue services are demand-led so that those areas with more children staying on at school will tend to get more education expenditure and make more demands on the library service.

A major aim of the *Strategy* has been to ensure not simply that resources were available but that the various service delivery agencies cooperated in a joint appreciation of the problems facing them and in coordinated strategies for tackling them. At the same time, the need for community cooperation has been stressed. This stems from a concern that local government professionals tend to see problems in compartmentalised terms and draw a line around their sphere of competence, resisting intrusion by other professionals. The 1972 report by the old Glasgow Corporation had foreseen a problem of coordination when the two-tier local government system came into being, at a time when joint approaches were most needed; but there is also a problem about liason within authorities, of bringing for example teachers, social workers and policemen to share a common appreciation of their problems. Strathclyde's original joint initiatives in seven of the APTs focussed on this problem, with a limited degree of success (Keating and Midwinter, 1981).

It would not be unfair to conclude from this that Easterhouse has not had a good deal in terms of policies and resources since its establishment. It has, however, been the scene of a number of specific initiatives in community development, housing, economic development and education, culminating in the recently-announced Greater Easterhouse Initiative and it is to these that we now turn.

### **Community Development.**

As we have already mentioned, one of Easterhouse's early problems was the failure to develop a 'community spirit' and the lack of the infrastructure of community development such as shops, schools and leisure facilities. Time has however been a major force in aiding the development of a community. In 1966 a "good neighbours campaign" was launched and a new community development committee was pioneered in Easterhouse by the Corporation, Scottish Office and Easterhouse residents. At that time it was not only the image of the peripheral estates but of Glasgow itself which perturbed city fathers. A survey by pupils at one of the secondary schools concluded that Easterhouse was a "very boring place" and required more playing fields, a cinema, theatre, youth clubs (Glasgow Herald, Sept. 5, 1966). It was with this background that the "Frankie Vaughan era" began two years later which may have resulted in the establishment of a youth club but did little to improve the area's image. During this period, in April 1969, an Action Group was established in an attempt to combat the adverse publicity being given to the area. It is notable that while the media concentrated on the tribulations affecting the Easterhouse Project, in other parts of Easterhouse successful community activities and organisations were developing. In Easthall, as it became known, for example, a community was

developing which now has a highly active and, by any standards, sophisticated Residents Association.

One idea posited in 1972 was to abandon the name "Easterhouse" and split up the area into ten smaller units each with its own name. The following year the Housing Sub-Convener of the Corporation named the ten smaller units - Queenslie, Provanhall, Bishoploch, Commonhead, Lochend, Kildermorie, Blairtummock, Rogerfield, Wellhouse and Easthall (Glasgow Herald, April 14, 1973). "Easterhouse" did not disappear as intended and perhaps Easterhouse could learn something from Glasgow's "Miles Better Campaign" which approached the city's image problems in a more positive and confident manner. The community newspaper, *The Voice*, established in 1972 in an attempt to mitigate the bad publicity given to the area, has fulfilled the dual functions of informing the community, helping foster a community spirit and campaigning on local issues. *The Voice* was awarded first prize in 1978 as a community paper. In 1982 Strathclyde Regional Council withdrew its financial support and subsequently the paper has had a precarious existence. In its early days, *The Voice* was influenced by the Church of Scotland; later, it reflected the local Labour Party view. This year, it was taken over by a collective of young radicals who are now locked in combat with the Festival Society which they regard as elitist and unaccountable.

The Easterhouse Festival Society emerged following a public meeting in Autumn 1977 called by the local Church of Scotland community minister amongst others. Its aims were set out in its first Annual Report:

"To celebrate life in our community, to raise questions about our community and take action; to give youngsters something to do; to bring all sections of the community together. It would also show the authorities that we as a

community are prepared to organise things for ourselves. The expectation was the Festival would allow the community to celebrate its own life; provide a platform for local talent; help the community focus on solutions to its own problems; and help further a change of 'image' for the area." (First Annual Report of Easterhouse Festival Society)

Taking their inspiration from Craigmillar Festival in Edinburgh, the Easterhouse Festival Society have initiated various community activities including Job Creation schemes, environmental improvements, amateur dramatics and artistic ventures, organising gala days as well as some employment initiatives. Funded by the Scottish Arts Council, Urban Aid, Strathclyde Region, Glasgow District, and the Manpower Services Commission and with a budget of over £110,000 in 1984/85 it is perhaps inevitable that other community groups within Greater Easterhouse should be somewhat cynical and critical of the Society. The major criticisms made, whether or not justified, are that the EFS expenditure is largely used to pay the staff rather than "going to the community" and that the Society is not "in touch" with the people of Easterhouse. With so little public financial backing for so few facilities in Easterhouse such criticisms are probably inevitable, but recently they have broken into bitter conflict, resulting in the resignation of the Festival director and a major question mark over its future.

Community spirit is obviously difficult to develop or to measure. The association of Easterhouse with gang warfare obviously has made the area unattractive to people outside. Any community spirit which is likely to develop within an area "under siege" will be defensive and introspective. To make Easterhouse a more attractive place with a more positive community

spirit will require improved facilities and physical infrastructure as well as changed attitudes.

### **Housing**

We have noted that Easterhouse is an area of housing stress, with problems of overcrowding, high turnover and poor tenure mix. A number of initiatives have been taken by the District Council in recent years to break away from the old tradition of municipal housing and so help address the problems of estates like this. These include policies to achieve a more varied social mix, to improve the physical environment, to improve the administrative efficiency of the housing service and to increase tenant participation. All raise problems, not least of which is the potential for conflict among the Council's own aims. For example, the conflict between the goals of meeting the needs of the single homeless and meeting the aspirations of the tenants to develop an attractive community can be recognised in the vexed question of allocations policy. Lifting the pressure on the Housing Office to let houses to anyone applying and attempting instead to attract those with intentions of staying in the area would conform to the Council's policies for community development but obviously creates problems with respect to the provision of housing for needy sections of the population.

Creating a varied social mix suggests the creation of more varied housing tenure and this, too, creates problems. Selling houses to sitting tenants in line with central government policy would not in itself alter the social mix, though it might help to retain the upwardly mobile sections of the community. Nor have Easterhouse tenants shown much interest in the right-to-buy legislation, given the poor state of the housing stock. The

idea of selling houses to private contractors was mooted in the late 1970s and, together with large-scale demolitions, was seen as a possible means of tackling the problems of areas with concentrations of Difficult-to-Let houses. The Scottish House Builders Association, on the other hand, made clear in 1981 their belief that building for sale in Easterhouse was unrealistic and their Deputy Secretary was quoted as saying that private house-builders were more interested in the inner city areas.

To overcome this problem, Housing Convenor John Kernahan developed the idea of 'partnership' between the public and private sectors. Both Crudens and Barratts thus became involved in rehabilitating an area in South Rogerfield on the periphery of Easterhouse while, after the demolition of 400 houses in Garthamlock, CBC Homes began building under license from the District Council. In Lochend, 'homesteading' was introduced in Glenelg Quadrant. This involved offering 100% loans to people on the council waiting list to purchase the shell of a council house which would otherwise be demolished, together with grants for rehabilitation. Despite some concern within the Labour Party that homesteading was merely council house sales by the backdoor, the scheme appears to have been a success, in that Glenelg Quadrant, from being a 'difficult-to-let' area has been transformed into a renovated and attractive scheme. Following this, homesteading was expanded into other areas, though the political suspicion remains.

The Pendeen Crescent/Sandaig Road area of South Barlanark was another difficult area, two-fifths vacant in late 1982. Here, after clearance, the Council proposed a Community Trust though it appears that local opposition has prevented the emergence of anything on the lines of the Stockbridge Village Trust on Merseyside. The Scottish Development Agency has, uncharacteristically, taken an interest in housing in Barlanark and,

characteristically, commissioned consultants to look at possible approaches which might be developed. Again in Barlanark, an innovative approach was adopted by the Housing Department when a group of tenants from Calvay Crescent approached the Council in 1983 complaining about conditions in the area where improvements were not due until 1991. After discussion, the idea of a par-value cooperative emerged though in this case problems arose with the Scottish Office (Keating, 1986). The Council's idea for this and three other cooperatives was to use money available under the non-HRA capital programme (intended for private housing improvement) to improve the property. To do this, the council would dispose of the houses to a cooperative of tenants. The purchase would be financed by loans from banks and building societies, with the cooperative claiming interest subsidies under the MIRAS scheme for owner-occupiers. At the same time, tenants would be eligible for housing benefit on the rent paid to the cooperative. In this way, a viable financial package could be assembled. The Scottish Office, however, vetoed the scheme on the grounds that the tenants should not be able to enjoy both the subsidies for tenants (housing benefit) and those for owner-occupiers (MIRAS subsidies for the coop). In the event, the problem was resolved by the Housing Corporation agreeing to come in and finance the scheme as a community-based housing association, though it and future developments of the sort must be funded within the Housing Corporation's existing Scottish budget.

Another area of concern is repair and maintenance, dependent not only on adequate funding but on good relations between the Housing and Building and Works departments. A rather anomalous situation exists whereby tenants report the need for repairs to the Housing Department but the work is carried out by the Building and Works Department, the latter being neither

decentralised like the Housing Department nor directly accountable to the tenants. It would be wrong to portray the maintenance of Glasgow's public sector housing as being characterised by maladministration. Areas such as Drumchapel, Cambuslang and Darnley demonstrate that the difficulties inherent in the administrative structure for repairs can be overcome by establishing localised repairs teams. One solution would be to decentralise the Building and Works Department and consolidate it within the Area Housing offices. This is an idea being considered by the Glasgow Housing Inquiry.

Increase tenant participation has been a key means of improving landlord-tenant relations as well as the quality of decisions. Housing forums exist in various parts of the city, including Easterhouse and in some areas, notably Kingsridge/Cleddans in Drumchapel, tenants have been involved in local lettings policies. The Calvary cooperative, of course, is itself an example of increased local control of housing resources, while the Joint Social and Economic Initiative (see below) may also try and extend tenant participation.

On the purely physical side, proposals have been made over the years for selective demolitions, selected storey reductions, internal alterations, rehabilitation, external repairs and reroofings. Such proposals have been put forward in a detailed form by the architects commissioned by the SDA to consider the South Barlanark area (McGurn, Logan, Duncan and Opfer, 1985).

#### **Economic Initiatives.**

We noted earlier that Easterhouse, built essentially to relieve Glasgow's housing stress, never developed an economic base consistent with its size.



Deindustrialisation on Clydeside and the recession of the 1980s have compounded the problem, hitting Easterhouse and the adjacent manufacturing areas of eastern Glasgow particularly hard. Yet the main thrust of spatial economic policies in Scotland has been directed to the new towns and the traditional industrial areas (Keating and Boyle, 1986). This is not to say that the problems of employment in Glasgow's periphery have been totally neglected but the main initiatives have been in the field of 'community business' geared to satisfying the limited local demand rather than integrating areas like Easterhouse more fully into the regional economy.

Towards the end of 1979 the Easterhouse Festival Society (EFS) established the Easterhouse Employment Initiative Group, from which a community company Provanhall Holdings Ltd developed in December 1980. It has converted flats into shop units and converted a school annexe into workspaces for the District Council but, as a private company, Provanhall Holdings was unable to receive Urban Aid or funding from charitable trusts. The Easterhouse Community Trust was therefore established as the Company's fund raising arm. The Manpower Services Commission, Urban Aid, the Gulbenkian Trust and the Regional and District Councils have given financial and other support.

Another initiative which owes its origins to the EFS has been the Greater Easterhouse Partnership. Formally launched in February 1985 as a company limited by guarantee with enterprise trust status, the Partnership is supported by the two local authorities, the SDA and a number of private businesses including Arthur Young (Accountants), Scottish and Newcastle Breweries, Marks and Spencers, and Barratts Urban Renewal. A Community Group and a Funding Group exist with the former identifying potential projects and the latter deciding whether to provide funds. This dual

structure is reflected in the management of the Partnership; a community manager and a business manager, the latter seconded from one of the Partnership's private sector backers, work together to process applications from the local community. Though it is too early to assess this initiative it has given grounds for optimism and this example of a Scottish Business in the Community (SCOTBIC) enterprise offers both the business acumen of the private sector and the local expertise of the community manager and community based support.

Easterhouse has also been the site of one of the Manpower Services Commission's (MSC) Technical and Vocational Initiative experiments. This originated in concern within government about the decline of technical education and a belief that this was one of the factors in the decline of the British economy (Moon and Richardson, 1984). It can also be seen as a bid by the MSC and Department of Employment to gain control of part of the education service to combat the liberal education traditions of the Department of Education and Science. There appears to have been no Scottish involvement in the evolution of the policy but in due course Scotland was given its share of the experiments and, within Scotland, Strathclyde Region got two. In its origins, TVEI seems to have been conceived as a challenge to the educational establishment, with the usual consultative mechanisms being by-passed (Moon and Richardson, 1984). In the implementation phase, however, the policy has had to come into the schools and be put into effect by teachers, with the support and cooperation of the local educational departments. In this process, it seems to have experienced a type of goal-displacement familiar to the public policy literature.

TVEI involves introducing into a group of neighbouring schools a vocational education stream geared to specific skills, for pupils from 14 to

17 (or 18 in England). MSC money is provided for materials and equipment and it is intended that, as the training programmes progress, pilot industries will be established on school premises. As these mature, they will spin off into the community, being replaced by new ones developed in the courses.

Like other initiatives of the Thatcher Government (enterprise zones are an obvious analogy) TVEI might have been expected to arouse ideological opposition on the part of Labour local authorities implying, as it does, that comprehensive education has been a failure and that children should be trained vocationally from such an early age. On the other hand, it offered the prospect of extra resources in a time of extreme stringency. The same applies at the level of the school - indeed so worried were teachers about the precariousness of the MSC money that they exempted TVEI from the boycott of new developments which was part of the long 'industrial action' of 1985-6 (an invitation, if one was needed, for the government to give the MSC control of more of the education budget), though recently the EIS has turned against the scheme. Strathclyde Region's response to the TVEI invitation was to place it in an area of social and economic deprivation on the ground that it was here, with low levels of educational achievement, that traditional education had been found most wanting. It was also claimed that training in vocational skills could assist in the economic regeneration of the area.

The Easterhouse TVEI was launched in 1984, with an emphasis on high technology. 'Computer Studies and units in the application of new technology (would) form compulsory elements of all years of the course. Equally important other units (would) reflect the technological bias of the course as a whole' (Strathclyde, 1984c). According to the MSC, the emphasis on

high technology emerged from surveys of youngsters in the area. It is evident, too, that the preferences the teachers involved played a large part in the choice. What does not appear to have been considered at this stage is the appropriateness of high technology ventures as a viable industrial and economic strategy for youngsters with (by definition) no higher education, operating in a poor local market. Indeed, there seems to have been little serious economic analysis at all in the TVEI, with the question of whether the 'industries' generated would merely serve the local market or compete in regional markets glossed over. The initial list of industries seemed to suggest both, with proposals for boat building, house repair, graphic design, fast foods, a residential centre, burglar alarms, a community information service, a travel agency, school supplies and a community computer service. The emphasis was to change in the implementation stage.

The link with the economic development needs of the area, however, is weak. When the time came for the establishment of pilot industries, the real problems of breaking into the competitive economy surfaced and the list of industries was reduced to low-technology ventures serving purely the local market, soft toys, 'cute cakes', a wrought iron works and leather patch-work. Nor was the establishment of the pilot industries connected in any way to the instruments of spatial development policy. There is no programme of help with premises, investment, infrastructure or business advice to tie in with the vocational training programme. What emerges from TVEI is therefore some extra money for Easterhouse schools, as long as the experiment lasts and perhaps some very marginal impact on the less competitive sections of the local economy. Much of the TVEI money and effort has in practice gone into providing courses of a more conventional

kind, albeit not geared to the usual certificates. As a result of the teachers' insistence, there are to be programmes of 'life skills' to train children to cope with the needs of contemporary society. This is indicative of the assimilation of TVEI to traditional education and may be of help in getting the children to compete in the tight local employment market but in itself does not, of course, promote economic development. TVEI indicates that, when this government determines on a programme, it will find the money to pay for it; at the same time, though, it has been cutting back on programmes which could have a direct impact on unemployment levels while, in the absence of reflation at the national level, job prospects for the residents of Easterhouse remain poor.

The way in which mainstream economic and planning policies may continue to work against Easterhouse is illustrated by the application made in 1985 by Vilware Packaging Ltd for planning permission to build a warehouse and a number of retail outlets on Auchinlea Park. The number of jobs associated with this project has varied with a figure of 1500 mentioned. The company's managing director met with the Easterhouse Community Council and promised more than 1000 jobs local unemployed and that Vilware would inject "a considerable sum" to rebuild the leisure scene in Easterhouse (Glasgow Herald, May 16, 1985). Opposition to this move came from a variety of sources. An Aberdeen-based firm objected that the land at Auchinlea Park had not been publicly advertised as being considered as a major retail and industrial estate. This would suggest that there is indeed private sector interest in investing in Easterhouse. Other objectors included Glasgow Parks Department, Queenslie Community Council, and the Greater Glasgow Health Board as well as the District Councils of Hamilton, Motherwell, Monklands and Strathkelvin - all no doubt fearing that the

retail outlets might attract custom from within their boundaries. A petition signed by 5000 tenants supporting Wilware was submitted to the District Council though the organisers felt they had been snubbed by the Council. After much controversy and an embarrassing vote against the plan by the planning sub-committee had to be reversed, the District approved the idea only for it to be blocked by Strathclyde Region.

A number of important points arise out of the Wilware episode. Easterhouse does not appear to have vacant land on which industrial activity can develop. The Queenslie Industrial Estate is almost empty and has proved quite unattractive to business and industry. The SDA did conduct a feasibility study which was not, however, made public other than the section which made clear the need to make it a secure estate. The historical development of Easterhouse offered little physical scope for industrial or leisure facilities and gives the impression of Easterhouse as a kind of "dormitory estate". Fairly radical surgery will be required if both leisure and economic facilities are to develop in the area and Easterhouse is to more than a concentration of dwelling places. Another aspect of planning which the Wilware episode brought to the fore was the place assigned to Easterhouse within the strategic and local plans of the Regional and District Councils. The emphasis on investment in the city centre and the fears that Easterhouse might take away trade from other areas in the region would seem to contradict the stated intention of favouring Glasgow's peripheral estates.

It would be wrong to concentrate solely on the local authorities. Central government and its agencies have responsibilities also. The Scottish Development Agency, as noted earlier, is taking an interest in the Pendeen/Sandaig housing but has played a fairly minimal role in Easterhouse

over the years since it was established in 1975. Though it has an input into the community business ventures there has not been the major investment programmes in Easterhouse which are to be seen in the city centre. Glasgow Provan was third from the bottom, only behind Glasgow Garscadden and Caithness and Sutherland, in the league of Scottish Parliamentary constituencies receiving SDA current investments as at November 1984 (Hansard, December 6, 1984). Notably, Glasgow Central was the recipient of by far the largest investment. The recently formed *Glasgow Action* is an example of an SDA sponsored idea which is all but exclusively concerned with prestige city centre projects. The argument that Glasgow's peripheries need a vibrant financial centre may have validity but clearly Easterhouse also requires major capital investment.

#### **The Greater Easterhouse Joint Social and Economic Initiative.**

By the early 1980s, the peripheral estates featured on the policy agenda of both Glasgow and Strathclyde and in October 1983 the Chief Executive's Department of The Region put forward proposals for joint social and economic initiatives for Greater Easterhouse and Drumchapel. The particular problems of depressed council housing schemes had been noted as early as 1975 by the Morris Committee then and it is quite remarkable how similar have been the proposals and language, if not the administrative detail, of the Morris Committee and the ideas behind the recent proposals for Joint Social and Economic Initiatives in Easterhouse and Drumchapel. Greater coordination of service provision, increased participation and the fostering of a community spirit on the social side of the Initiatives plus the economic aims of increasing investment and securing employment for the areas. As in the GEAR project and the English Inner City Partnerships, the

emphasis is put on the need to tackle both the social and economic problems of the area. In the absence of a serious reappraisal of the economic priorities of both central and local government, however, what is emerging is more social than economic.

After much discussion at officer and member levels within and between both local authorities, agreements were reached in August 1985. These set out the broad outlines of the proposals. The Greater Easterhouse area thus defined covers a substantial area including the neighbourhoods of Commonhead, Bishoploch, Lochend, Rogerfield, Blairtummock, Kildermorie, Provanhall, Queenslie, Craigend, Garthamlock, Easthall, and Wellhouse, as well as Barlanark to the south of the Edinburgh Road and Ruchazie and Cranhill to the west of the Avenue End and Stepps Roads. In order to involve the local community, community conferences, rather poorly attended, were held in each of the neighbourhoods which made up the area. Fifteen residents were chosen from these community conferences who formed a Residents Forum.

An Interim Planning Group met after the formation of the Residents Forum, consisting of residents, elected member and officials and acted as the institutional lead-in to the establishment of the formally constituted body which would assume responsibilities as the Joint Initiative. The Area Management Group (AMG) was formally constituted in April 1986 as a Joint Committee of the two Councils and consists of five District Councillors (currently the locally elected members), five Regional Councillors (currently the three locally elected members plus two others), and five members of the community of Greater Easterhouse (chosen from the Residents Forum). The AMG is to hold office for two year periods with (re-)appointments due on May 1, 1987. One interesting question in this



constitution concerns the respective roles which each of the three groupings are to assume over time. The question of "who speaks for Easterhouse?" will be a particularly interesting one should the AMG be seen to divide into its groupings at any stage. Issues such as "representation" and "local mandates" become most interesting in the case of such a body as the AMG.

The AMG is to be serviced by an Initiative Director and a small staff. This has been a contentious matter especially following the appearance of the advertisement for the post of Director in the *Scotsman*, *Glasgow Herald*, *Guardian*, *Sunday Times*, but not in the local community newspaper, *The Voice*. It was felt by many local people that what was being asked for was a missionary or a "superman". The position was then readvertised in a different tone. The holder of the office of Director is recognised by almost all concerned to be of crucial importance.

The actual powers of the Initiative are vague and deliberately so. There would appear to be the view that the AMG should gain powers over time as it gains experience. Similarly, the finances of the Initiative are seen as evolutionary. As many local authority functions are statutorily defined making responsibility that of one or other Council, it will not be possible to devolve such powers to the AMG. Thus, areas in Social Work and Education for the Region and Housing provision for the District would require legislative amendment before they could be devolved. So the core of finances, at least in the early years, would be represented by a guaranteed sum from urban aid and a community budget. There is no new money made available for the project and it is likely tht these sums would have come to the area in any case. Other sources of funds, it is hoped could include

the private sector, the European Community, the Urban Programme, the SDA, and the Greater Glasgow Health Board.

The Initiative is thus an 'add-on' to the policies and the programmes of the participating agencies and does not in itself represent a major change of priorities or a redirection of programmes. The SDA input, a vital element in the economic side of the initiatives, is weak and the local authorities are constrained by the tight controls on their capital and revenue budgets exercised by central government. In contrast to GEAR or some of the English urban initiatives, there is no central government involvement; nor will allowance be made for the initiatives in determining spending guidelines. It has become a cliché that urban economic and social problems cannot be solved by 'throwing money at them'. If this were all that there is to be said, it would be a comforting thought; but solutions to urban problems do not come free. Large amounts of money need to be expended, if not quite 'thrown at' the problem, particularly in areas like Easterhouse which have been starved of investment in the past. A low-income area such as this cannot find prosperity by selling things to itself and without outside capital. In the absence of a financial commitment by local and, particularly, central government, which now controls all the purse strings, there is a danger, indeed, that the initiatives could come to be nothing more than window-dressing, with a consequent increase in community frustration. On the other hand, they may be of some significance *politically* by putting the estates towards the top of the policy agenda and creating channels through which pressure can be brought to bear on departmental budgets.

As we stated at the beginning of this paper, Easterhouse was conceived as a response to urban decay and dereliction in central Glasgow along with

the other peripheral estates of Drumchapel, Castlemilk, and Pollok in the post-war period. Around the same time as Easterhouse was emerging so too were the Scottish New Towns which also owed their existence to the urban decay and dereliction of central Glasgow. Easterhouse differed markedly from the New Towns and though few would want to precisely replicate the New Town model in Easterhouse, there seems little doubt that had Glasgow's largest peripheral estate been given similar social, educational, and economic amenities, facilities and opportunities of East Kilbride, Cumbernauld, Livingstone or Glenrothes then it would have developed very differently. It is far too early to judge where the Easterhouse Initiative is going but a strong case could be made, and has been, (CES, 1985) for a kind of new Town status for Easterhouse. Given the discrimination against the area over the years, whether intentional or not, and given the alternative of doing little or nothing it would seem that major investment and positive discrimination in its favour by central and local authorities as well as private initiatives such as *Glasgow Action* would only be making up for past mistakes and omissions.

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TABLE 1

: AGENCY CONTRIBUTION BY PRIORITY AREA (%) - 1979-80 TO 1983-84

	GDC	SFC	SSHA	GCHB	SDA	PRIVATE	URBAN PROG
GEAR	25.0	11.3	31.8	4.3	17.2	9.8	0.7
MARTIHILL CORRIDOR	38.5	13.1	12.5	0.2	6.0	28.9	0.7
CASTLEHILL	94.2	5.1	-	-	-	-	0.8
DRUMCHAPEL	85.4	10.9	-	0.5	-	-	3.2
EASTERHOUSE	37.3	59.8	-	1.8	0.1	-	0.8
FOLLOK	44.5	11.0	31.7	-	-	12.2	0.7

Figures may not add due to rounding

Source: Glasgow District Council

TABLE 2

## AGENCY EXPENDITURE BY PRIORITY AREA, £m (Oct 84 prices)

	GEAR			MARYHILL CORRIDOR			DRUMCHAPEL			EASTERHOUSE			CASTLEMILK			FOLLOK		
	78/79	83/84	84/85	78/79	83/84	84/85	78/79	83/84	84/85	78/79	83/84	84/85	78/79	83/84	84/85	78/79	83/84	84/85
SRC	1.7	3.0	6.7	0.7	1.3	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.2 <sup>1</sup>	0.4	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.0	1.2	0.9	1.5
GDC	13.9	18.5	21.2	9.4	7.3	11.6	0.2	1.5	2.3	0.3	0.2	2.4	0.0	1.1	2.4	3.8	1.7	3.5
SSHA	2.6	3.5	4.3	0.0	2.4	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.9	0.3
GGB	0.5	1.3	0.2	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
HC <sup>2</sup>	N/A	13.1	9.4	N/A	7.6	6.5	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0
SDA	2.4	4.9	5.4	0.0	0.7	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Private Sector <sup>3</sup>	N/A	2.8	7.2	N/A	3.3	9.8	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0
Regional Policy	8.1	10.0	4.7	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	4.0 <sup>4</sup>	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Urban Aid <sup>5</sup>	N/A	0.7	0.2	N/A	0.5	0.5	N/A	0.3	0.2	N/A	0.2	0.1	N/A	0.1	0.3	N/A	0.2	0.3
TOTAL	29.2	57.8	59.3	11.3	23.5	34.0	0.2	1.8	2.5	6.5	1.1	6.6	1.3	1.3	2.7	5.0	6.7	5.7

Notes: 1 Motorway

2 Block allocation for 1978/79 which cannot be disaggregated

3 Planning Department monitoring had not begun in 1978/79

4 Represents a single large investment in Easterhouse

5 Disaggregated figures for 1978/79 not available

N/A Not Available

Source: Glasgow District Council