

Housing Privatisation, 30 Years On: Time for a *Critical* Re-appraisal

SESSIONS, SPEAKERS, PAPERS AND ABSTRACTS

Monday, 26 July

Session 1: Housing Privatisation in Britain: Motives, Mechanics, Actors and Effects

Convenor: Stuart Hodkinson (University of Leeds) s.n.hodkinson@leeds.ac.uk

Keynote speech:

Professor Peter Malpass, University of West England, Peter.Malpass@uwe.ac.uk

'The Reprivatisation of Housing: a Work in Progress'

Bangs and whimpers: The end of monotenure in unpopular council-built estates

Becky Tunstall, London School of Economics, R.Tunstall@lse.ac.uk

This paper presents evidence on Right to Buy sales, resale transactions and prices in unpopular council-built estates. Using case studies, it discusses how a housing market has finally become established in these areas over the most recent ten years of the 30 years' Right to Buy history. It shows how these areas fit into their local markets and how they have been affected by national and local price rises and falls. It also considers some evidence of the impact of the Right to Buy and other low cost home ownership initiatives and resales on buyer capital gains and on population turnover and mix. In summary, homes for sale in unpopular council estates are 'integrated' into national and local markets in the sense that they are subject to broad national and local trends in transaction volumes and prices. They have also assumed relatively stable positions in the rankings of local sub-markets, if distinctively disfavoured ones, at prices between two-fifths and four-fifths of local averages. In many cases monotenure has ended with a whimper, but in both the highest demand and lowest demand local markets, and in periods of the fastest rises and falls in the market generally there have been some loud bangs (featuring mixed tenure schemes, the flight of the owner occupier, rackrenting, flipping and rapid capital extraction), which have created shockwaves for all the local stakeholders traditionally referred to in assessments of the impact of the Right to Buy.

The Case against Privatisation

Defend Council Housing, info@defendcouncilhousing.org.uk

There are still more than 2 million council tenant households in over 200 local authorities across the UK, despite unimaginable pressure to accept one of the government's three privatisation options of stock transfer, PFI or arms length management companies (ALMOs). Many tenants have rejected privatisation or are actively fighting proposals in their area. Registered Social Landlords are becoming larger and more commercialised, increasingly asset stripping estates and building (once) lucrative private homes - leading to problems in the recent credit crunch. Tenants pay with less security and accountability, and higher rents. Legal change in 2008 encouraged this commercialisation by enabling profit-making providers to become RSLs. Nowhere are tenants enthusiastic for privatisation. It only ever goes through because tenants are coned, blackmailed or bullied into thinking it's the only way to get improvements to our homes. In defence of council housing over the last twelve years has arisen an unprecedented alliance of council tenants, trade unions and elected politicians across parties, uniting around calls for a 'Fourth Option' of direct investment in council housing. The grassroots campaigning organisation Defend Council Housing and its allies have

developed a clear financial case for direct investment. This political pressure has forced the government to significant changes in policy in the last year.

Council Housing and the Private Finance Initiative: Privatisation, or Something Far Worse?

Stuart Hodkinson, s.n.hodkinson@leeds.ac.uk

Despite the Labour Party's historic links to the tenants' movement, following its return to power in 1997 as the pro-market *New Labour*, its overall approach towards council housing deviated little from Conservative policy. The Right to Buy was retained (although the maximum discount was significantly reduced) and the 'stock transfer' programme of selling off whole estates and authorities housing supply to charitable housing associations expanded (see Ginsburg 2005). At the same time, however, New Labour's enthusiasm for demunicipalisation was matched by an investment and reform programme for what remained of council housing under the 2000 Decent Homes policy that compelled all social housing providers to ensure that their homes met a minimum standard by 2010. Alongside this physical investment, the government required local authorities to plan for 'sustainable communities' as part of an 'urban renaissance' agenda that prioritised 'tenure diversification' and 'social mixing'. Despite an enormous academic literature on the use of PPPs in public services and particularly the controversial Private Finance Initiative (PFI), there is almost no research on the use of PFI in meeting the government's Decent Homes and Sustainable Communities agenda (but see Hodges and Grubnic 2005). This paper attempts to redress this imbalance by examining the contested use of PFI in 'regenerating' working class housing estates in England. It argues that PFI is a particularly neoliberalised form of privatisation that brings a disturbing vision from the future as to where 'social housing' and the wider public sphere might be headed.

From 'Homes for heroes' to 'Homes for locals': the changing rhetoric of British social housing allocation

John Sturzaker, School of Architecture, Planning & Landscape, Newcastle University

john.sturzaker@ncl.ac.uk

Social housing allocation in Britain has recently been re-focused to place greater emphasis on meeting local needs. This concept has cross-party political support, and can be seen as the conjoining of two separate 'ideological' developments: firstly the changing nature of how 'need' is perceived and defined in relation to social/affordable housing; and secondly the trans-political popularity of decentralisation/localism, whereby politicians of every party advocate the devolution of power from the centre to communities. A re-focusing of social housing onto 'local' people does, though, ask fundamental questions about who social housing is 'for' in the 21st Century, and how this has changed since the earliest days of council housing provision. This paper seeks to answer these questions and explore the implications of this shift in approach by looking at the two broad ideological principles behind it, then considering the potential implications of the two concepts combining, using social housing provision in rural areas as a broad case study. The paper concludes there is a high risk that making 'localness' a key factor in eligibility for social housing would be inequitable and lead to the exacerbation of social exclusion for minority groups.

Housing association rents: are they more market-orientated?

Connie P. Y. Tang, University of Cambridge, pyt20@cam.ac.uk

Before 2002, there were three phases of state involvement in introducing market-based approaches in setting the levels of housing association rent: Phase I: 1972–1987, the 1972 Housing Finance Act and the 'fair rent'; Phase II: 1988–1995, the Housing Act 1988 and the deregulation of social rent-setting; Phase III: 1996–2001, the Housing Corporation's regulation of rent increases. Finally, in April 2002, the rent restructuring policy was implemented to re-regulate the rent-setting across all social housing stock (housing association and council housing). A target rent formula was introduced in which social rents are now based on individual property values and local earnings. Based on the analysis undertaken for the Tenant Services Authority, this paper first examines the trend of housing association rents before 2002, and how they diverged from council rents. It then clarifies how the post-2002 housing association rents simulate some aspects of market rents but continue to be sub-market. It then evaluates the outcomes of the rent restructuring policy both in terms of its impact on the capacity of housing associations to undertake proper

maintenance and improvement of existing stock and the more general objective of promoting choice within the social housing sector.

Session 2: Post-Social Housing: Risk, Privilege, and Control

Convenor: Professor Caroline Hunter (York Law School, University of York) cmh516@york.ac.uk

Privilege and Conduct: Law's Intervention into Landlord/Tenant Relationships

Lucy Barnes, University of Kent, l.d.barnes@kent.ac.uk

This paper will explore the construction of 'housing' and how landlord/tenant relationships have been interpreted to provide an imperative for behavioural modification. Thus, this paper will take a particular focus on anti-social behaviour legislation, and the manner in which this modulates expectations from various housing stocks; from the noise sensitivity of closely related urban housing stock, to the expectations placed upon parents for the control of their child's conduct in villages. Key to this presentation will be a sense of 'privilege' attached to particular housing options, and how this modulates the expectations that society, and the courts, may have of these residences. In particular, as social housing stocks become fewer and fewer in number, I suggest that we may read in judgements an increasing form of behavioural expectation as a mode of securing tenure.

Shifting risks and changing patterns of tenure

Sarah Blandy, Leeds University s.blandy@leeds.ac.uk, Caroline Hunter, York University, cmh516@york.ac.uk

In 1979 almost one in three households in the UK were council tenants. Now, two-thirds of us are owner-occupiers and only 11% are tenants of a local authority. This paper examines these changes in tenure structure over the years since 1980 from the standpoint of risk, drawing primarily on the work of Beck and Giddens. We are interested, primarily, in how the risks to the various parties involved (tenants, local authorities, central government, and registered social landlords) have been assessed and which interests have been responsible for re-allocating and re-branding these risks. We can see re-branding in operation with the Right to Buy provisions. In the *Norwich* case, central government was intent on prioritizing its policies and the individual property rights of secure tenants, whereas the local authority wished to point out the potential risks of the move to owner-occupation. The current government requires information about these risks to be given by housing departments to any tenant contemplating exercising the Right to Buy. These financial risks have become particularly acute for those who bought flats under the right to buy and now face large bills for repair and improvement work. Using the example of Right to Buy, we analyse the ways in which the risks involved in different tenures have shifted in their allocation over the past thirty years.

Are social landlords different now? Understanding the liability of leaseholders to pay for works carried out under the Decent Homes Initiative

Helen Carr¹, University of Kent / Part time Chair of the Residential Property Tribunal, h.p.carr@kent.ac.uk

Understanding the meaning and mutations of the 'social' has pre-occupied many social theorists particularly since Nikolas Rose suggested its death may be imminent. Its complexity has been particularly apparent within the always contingent world of welfare housing. The introduction of the Right to Buy, the subsequent 'residualisation' of the sector and the introduction of punitive sanctions for both anti-social tenants and those tenants who harbour the anti-social have all been claimed as important manifestations of the reconfiguration of the state. The point that is made is that those who fail to be effective consumers are the new socially excluded and the injustice of their position makes the stark realities of the neo-liberal/neo-conservative order patent. This paper takes a different approach to the reconfiguration of the social. Its concern is with those who are newly included within a citizenship which is based upon one's potential as a consumer – those who exercised *the Right to Buy* or those who purchased former council properties as a

¹ The views expressed in this article are those of the author.

low cost means of entry into home-ownership. Indeed its focus is on the most marginal of owner-occupiers, those who purchased local authority flats² and the difficulties they faced when their freeholders presented them with large service charge demands generated as a result of repair and improvement work carried out under the government's Decent Homes Initiative. Many of these leaseholders have utilised recently extended rights to challenge service charge demands in the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal. Whilst Flint has argued that newly excluded groups provide a potential site for resistance to housing market processes, I suggest that there is even more to be learnt from the legal and political responses to the resistance of the *newly included* who are acutely aware of their precarious hold on citizenship. Their plight, although particular and localised and of little interest to many social commentators who characterise them as beneficiaries of Thatcherism, is of importance because it serves as a useful illumination of the general character of contemporary government. In addition I seek to demonstrate that in certain fields doctrinal legal analysis can provide a useful perspective on theoretical problems. The paper proceeds as follows; it begins by explaining the context of the Decent Homes Initiative and its place in the third way project of New Labour, it then moves to the reformed legal framework available to those challenging service charge demands before considering the difficulties faced by the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal in determining disputes between social landlords and their leaseholders. Finally it draws some conclusions about the ambiguous nature of the contemporary role of the social landlord suggesting that this results, quite unexpectedly, in an enhanced potency which leaves leaseholders vulnerable; not only are they subject to the vagaries of the market but also to the ambitions of the re-invigorated social landlord.

Asylums, Control and Residualisation

Alison M Ball, and Andy T Hanson, Department of Geography, Hull University
andrewhanson443@btinternet.com

Social and health policy over the last twenty years has seen many changes and challenges, one of the most notable has been the closure of institutional residential facilities for those regarded as excluded in society (ie the mentally ill and those with associated problems) to living and inclusion within wider society. This paper explores the institutional logics which reinforces the perception of professionals working with people with mental health problems living within the community as 'the other'. Drawing on the outcomes from preliminary ethnographic fieldwork, the authors of this paper argue that with the shift to care in community settings, the perceived role of professionals working with individuals with mental health problems in community settings on a day to day basis resonates with that of psychiatric nurses who worked in institutional psychiatric settings. The institutional logics which were evident in the 'Asylums' can be identified in those working in social housing settings. The community workers referred to in this paper are social housing officers. The work of Christian Albrekt Larson (2006) is referred to in a discussion of how welfare attitudes follow institutional logic and influence support for welfare regimes. A comparison with the views of how psychiatric nurses viewed their patients in Asylums some 25 years ago is made in an attempt to illustrate this phenomenon in an historical context.

Critically Exploring 'Choice' in Social Housing

Chris Bateman, Heriot-Watt University Edinburgh, cb161@hw.ac.uk

At the heart of New Labour's 'modernisation' agenda across the welfare state was the promotion of public sector marketisation and choice-based policies (Vidler and Newman, 2006). This was of concern to many as consumerisation is traditionally associated with the private sphere, and is firmly rooted in neoliberal thinking (Self, 2000). Critics argue that choice policies are inequitable and foster more individualistic citizens, eroding the civic nature of public services and endangering the future of the welfare state (Marquand, 2004). For its proponents, however, choice policies can make public services more efficient, equitable and responsive to service users and are necessary to retain support for the welfare state in the 'consumer society' (Le Grand, 2007; Shaw, 2008). One of the four key choice policies across the public services is choice-based lettings in social

² A higher discount was offered to encourage tenants to purchase their flats.

housing (Needham, 2008). Much of the academic concern about CBL has also focused on its (in)equity (Marsh *et al.*, 2004; Pawson *et al.*, 2006) and placed it in wider theoretical debates about neoliberalism and the state (Brown and King, 2005; Cowan and Marsh, 2005; Cowan and McDermont, 2006). This paper taps into these debates and reviews key literature on the consumerisation of public services and social housing. It then draws on interviews and focus groups with 'potentially vulnerable' housing applicants and other stakeholders in a CBL pilot scheme in Glasgow. It critically embraces questions about choice and its role in the 'modern' public services – is it equitable or does it threaten the welfare state 'safety net', and what are the implications for the future of social housing?

Session 3: Privatisation and the Tenants' Movement

Convenor: John Grayson (Sheffield Hallam University / AdEd Knowledge Company)

j.grayson@phonecoop.coop

Privatisation and the tenant movement in London

Sharon Hayward (*in an individual capacity – with experience as a long-term council tenant representative and worker for London Tenants Federation*)

Council housing privatisation is focused on facilitating middle class colonisation of areas high in concentrations of working class residents. It aims to inflict further damage to an already fragmented working class. The forces and the effects of the neo-liberal agenda have been excessive in London, with high and increasing polarisation of its communities. Along side housing privatisation, there is a wide range of alternative tools available to achieve the same ends, including development of luxury housing on public and on previously designated industrial land, appropriation of previous light industrial buildings for loft apartments, setting of housing targets and having statutory London-wide planning policies. Higher percentages of council homes still remain in the capital than elsewhere in the country. This paper will take a broad brush look at London in this context and at the parallel changes in the tenant movement. It will include a couple of specific examples of anti-stock transfer campaigns, (from Islington and Hackney), an assessment of the damage inflicted on London's tenant movement (including the loss of some independent tenant federations); the development of some new tenants structures and voluntary/community structures that involve tenants (including: Haringey Federation of Residents Associations, London Tenants Federation and Just Space Planning Network).

From power to engagement over thirty years, an overview of the effects of housing privatisation on tenant movement organisation

John Grayson, Sheffield Hallam / AdEd Knowledge Company

This paper will review the effects of privatisation of Council Housing, and 'regeneration' programmes on the way tenants have organised their influence and resistance. The paper will assess the direct effects of changing legislation and public policy on forms of organisation including the decline of the influence of 'federation' models, and joint decision making in council housing. The paper will consider the 'renewal' and 'partnership' frenzy in local governance and its effects on tenant movement organisation. The paper will survey the existing research and cite case studies and examples from original research mainly in the North of England with tenant and resident associations suggesting the importance of 'activist wisdom' in engaged participative community research. The paper will also interrogate the impacts of privatisation on changing political and research discourses which have patterned responses and analysis of the tenants movement and working class housing on 'estates'.

Universal claims: strategies and mobilisation in the English tenants' movement

Quintin Bradley, Leeds Metropolitan University, Q.Bradley@leedsmet.ac.uk

The tenants' movement of England was once defined by its support for a universal model of public rented housing. Their Tenants' Charter, the manifesto of the movement published in 1970, was a declaration of rights founded on an ideal of general needs council housing – a vision shattered by the Right to Buy and thirty subsequent years of residual welfare policy. This paper goes in search of the manifesto of the tenants' movement today. Applying the technique of frame analysis to the 'identity talk' of tenants' organisations and their members, it reveals the unwritten, unacknowledged and far from formulated ideals that still pose a contentious challenge to contemporary housing policy. Uncovering the collective action frames that unite a fragmented and domesticated social movement, this paper explores the construction of aims, the rehearsal of strategy, and the mobilisation of a movement that still champions a universal model of welfare against privatised social policy.

'Hands Off Our Homes' (again): anti-stock transfer campaigns in the 'silent' South East of England

Paul Watt, Birkbeck, University of London, p.watt@bbk.ac.uk

Since 1988, stock transfer has been a major feature of housing tenure realignment with a significant shift of ownership away from local authorities to RSLs. However, this has been a heavily contested policy both at national and local levels, prominently described as 'privatisation' by the campaigning organisation *Defend Council Housing*. Whilst the majority of stock transfers have proceeded, a significant minority (around one quarter in England and one third in London) have resulted in 'no votes' against transfer. The existing literature has outlined the main reasons why stock transfer is contested, both by tenants as a whole as well as by anti-transfer campaigns. However, the analysis of opposition to stock transfers has tended to focus on large cities, notably Glasgow, Birmingham (Mooney and Poole, 2005; Daly et al., 2005) and London (Watt, 2009a, 2009b). In this paper, I focus instead on the opposition to transfer in a part of what has been described as the 'silent South East', i.e. the generally affluent and politically Conservative area of Wycombe District in South Buckinghamshire. In the summer of 2000, a 'no vote' occurred in this local authority area as a small majority of council tenants rejected transfer to a housing company. Based on participant observation research on the anti-transfer campaign plus a discourse analysis of local newspaper coverage and campaign documents, I examine the socio-political composition of the campaign as well as the reasons why the 'no vote' occurred. The paper illustrates the vampire-like nature of the stock transfer policy since transfer is yet again being pursued by the council in 2009-10. This strategy has brought forth another anti-transfer campaign, albeit one that is operating in considerably different socio-political circumstances to the previous campaign. Such circumstances arguably reflect a more general weakening of organised labour organisations.

Beyond the Fragments? Anti-Privatisation/-Gentrification Struggles in English Working-Class Urban Areas

Paul Watt, Birkbeck, University of London, p.watt@bbk.ac.uk, and Stuart Hodgkinson, University of Leeds

This paper provides an overview of anti-privatisation/-gentrification struggles in English working-class urban areas in relation to different prongs of New Labour's urban regeneration policy for creating so-called 'Sustainable Communities', i.e. the Decent Homes Programme using Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs), the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), stock transfer and the Mixed Communities Initiative. The dominant discourse regarding council tenants (and social housing tenants in general) portrays a 'socially excluded' section of the population constituting the 'Other' to New Labour's self-actualising model of home-owning, job-hungry, 'active citizens'. The dominant analysis of neoliberal urbanism in critical scholarship, meanwhile, falls into what Gibson-Graham (2008: 618) call 'strong theory' - all-encompassing and reductive explanations that focus on the top-down processes of urban restructuring that seem all-powerful and impossible to challenge. Without wishing to minimise the very real social and financial problems that working class communities face, or downplay the obvious power of the state and (finance) capital to carry out urban restructuring, in this paper we draw upon our research and activist experiences to illustrate the various ways that people in working-class communities have collectively and individually resisted privatisation and state-led gentrification in their areas. We argue that council tenants as well as working class owner occupiers represent one of the 'threads of resistance' to neo-liberalism (Hackworth, 2007), as seen in their variously principled and pragmatic attempts to 'roll back' New Labour's communitarian brand of 'roll out neo-liberalism'. Thus despite tenants' well-known and very real paucity of

resources (legal, financial, knowledge, etc.), they have been able to reject the neo-liberal subjectivities (as self-interested, individualist consumers) that are offered to them via New Labour's housing and regeneration policies. This opposition has also uncovered the structural precariousness of neoliberal urban technologies like PFI, stock transfer and asset-backed regeneration companies and shown how the mundane activism of everyday tenant resistance can exploit particular opportunities to win important concessions from regeneration schemes. We view this paper as not offering an off-the-academic-peg blueprint for moving 'beyond the fragments' of contemporary anti-privatisation struggles, but instead as the first step in trying to analytically and politically synthesise some of the mobilisations we have been variously involved in.

Abstentions, expulsions and stock transfer: a tenants' campaign and the struggle for accountable housing
Stewart Smyth, Dublin City University, stewart.smyth@dcu.ie

Public Accountability (PA) is a contested concept but one that has a continuing influence on the delivery of public services. Previous literature shows various formulations of PA including describing the concept as "chameleon-like", "ever-expanding" and "iconic". In recent years PA, and the related public services, has been restructured according to neo-liberal principles. Where before PA was accomplished through democratic and bureaucratic forms, now in the neo-liberal age managerial and market based forms of accountability predominate. It is the ongoing impact of this change that is analysed here. The current literature deals inadequately with the complexity of PA relationships and the changes that have occurred over the last 30 years. Thus, a re-theorisation of PA, *as a relationship where civil society seeks to control the state*, is explored. This approach enables an analysis that shows the current PA practices are an outcome of both reforms from above (from the government) and resistance from below (in the shape of tenants campaigns). The question of accountability is one of the arenas in which this clash between the state and civil society plays out. The paper reports the early results of a case study based in the NW of England into a stock transfer and the resistance it engendered.

Session 4: Housing regeneration at the crossroads: the end of the New Labour era. Privatisation, hybridisation or sustainable mixed communities?

Convenors: James Rees (University of Manchester) James.E.Rees@manchester.ac.uk
Graham Squires (University of the West of England)

Salford 7, relocating, segregating and diluting the urban working class. Reflecting on the ideologies and strategies of 'slum' clearance and regeneration.

Dr. Lawrence Cassidy, lor_cd63@yahoo.com

The Salford 7 district is located next to the centre of Manchester. It was previously a high density factory suburb, housing networks of families that formed over generations. However, due to successive rounds of demolition over the past forty years, it has resulted in large scale population fragmentation, long term social polarisation, sustained health problems and the ongoing erasure of the built environment (Peck, 2002; Mallinson, 2003; Dorling, 2007). The area was cleared as part of the local councils 'slum clearance' strategy, largely in the 1970s and early 1980s, resulting in the complete erasure of the built environment. This process entailed sweeping away enclaves of streets that could potentially have remained. The majority of the population were relocated to overspill estates on the periphery of the city. A minority of the original population were re-housed in new council houses and high rise flats, built in central Salford. However, many of these have also since been demolished. Today, the native population is increasingly being replaced by middle class professionals, contributing to the loss of a sense of place and identity. Regeneration and relocation strategies have resulted in the majority of the native population being relocated outside the district. This paper reflects on issues produced by the ever increasing privatisation of public space over the past thirty years and the wholesale demolition of older established communities. It involves analysing past and present processes of planned blight, or deliberate decline, designed to force residents to leave the area. It also reflects on strategies of social control and segregation in other international locations. One example is apartheid South Africa, where urban many communities were cleared under the Slum Clearances Act, the

Group Areas Act and other related acts, which were designed to relocate urban populations to outlying districts or tracts of land, producing cultural and spatial segregation. The paper also focuses on long term strategies of reclaiming a sense of place, using material artefacts collected from demolished sites and collecting stories from residents who have been relocated. These are exhibited in community spaces, where residents have easy access. This project aims to identify strategies of regrouping and social/political networking.

The Elephant Is Not For Sale

Richard Lee (tenant activist, Director of Elephant Links Community Forum 2000-2002, member of Elephant and Castle Amenity Network 2009-2010)

richardlee50@googlemail.com

This paper examines the impact of New Labour's regeneration programmes in the London Borough of Southwark: at the Elephant and Castle, one of the largest developments in London and on the Aylesbury, Tony Blair's flagship estate. From a tenant activist perspective, we critically examine what has happened on the ground since 1997. This is testimony to a continuing struggle and a contribution to debates about regeneration policy and the different strategies for resistance. We argue that the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and New Deal for Communities (NDC) have not addressed deprivation and are essentially a fig leaf for property led development. We emphasise the uprooting of working class communities. Whilst the demolition of council housing is a central feature, there is also the loss of affordable shops, street markets and local services, the loss of tenants' amenities (play space, green space, community space) and the loss of a political voice. We will examine the various methods of resistance employed by activists at the Elephant and Aylesbury and place this in the context of a wider community resistance to regeneration that is taking place across London.

Urban Housing Market Restructuring: neighbourhood privatisation, tenure transitions and "mixed communities" viewed from a wider framework of a sustainable and socially-inclusive urban renaissance

James Rees, University of Manchester, James.E.Rees@manchester.ac.uk

The paper considers some key case studies (as well as wider policy discourses) of what is termed urban housing market restructuring. Despite widely different urban and governance contexts, key urban housing regeneration schemes have important similarities. In Manchester, the regeneration of the eastern side of the city involves redevelopment involving demolition and the private-sector provision of new housing for the market. Combined with stock transfer and reprovision this has led to significant tenure transitions in less than a decade, depending on the exact interventions in neighbourhoods. This in itself can be viewed as a form of neighbourhood privatisation and despite rhetoric of 'mixed communities' a significant implicit agenda is changing the social profile and cultural characteristics of the area, and unlocking perceived barriers to economic growth. Similarly, in Leeds new housing developments fit squarely within growth agendas, with a model of provision of new sites with a strong presumption towards market housing and small components of affordable housing. Finally, in a very different economic and political context, the case of an inner London borough is considered where 'mixed community' discourse is used to legitimate altogether more 'gentrificationist' motivations towards council housing. While drawing links between these areas and teasing out the political economy of governance and politics that underlies them, a final concern is to assess the widespread impacts of the financial crisis and public sector funding crisis which is likely to have significant implications for both the dominant public-private model of regeneration as well as the small counter-Privatisation tendencies of the Labour Government's 'neo-Keynesian' reaction to the recession (for example the new round of council house building).

Using History and Developing Evaluation Tools for Housing-Led Regeneration (HLR)

Leif Jerram, University of Manchester, l.jerram@manchester.ac.uk

Antony Lockley, University of Salford, A.C.Lockley@salford.ac.uk

Regeneration, and its evaluation, is a highly 'presentist' discourse, whereby urban intervention is problematized in a very narrow time horizon, that engages little with previous experiments in this area.

Evaluations are conducted and awards are given out to neighbourhood interventions, houses and buildings less than a year old, yet homes and places are phenomena that stretch out over time, and are embedded in individual and collective narratives and memories that span generations. Learning from the past rarely influences the current practice of housing-led regeneration (HLR); the absence of historical perspectives and learning is all the more surprising given the almost constant practise of environmental revision in British neighbourhoods and cities for almost sixty years. Lockley and Jerram intend to address the issue of the use of history in analysing and rethinking HLR through a study of two separate areas of Greater Manchester (Langworthy and Ardwick) that have been in almost constant spatial reconfiguration since WW2. During this period these neighbourhoods have undergone varying programmes ranging from total clearance and demolition, through the construction of high-rise, low-rise and Radburn developments, to the demolition of the same and their replacements with social and private sector housing, culminating in the current return to whole-sale revision in the form of Private Finance Initiates (PFIs). In their presentation Lockley and Jerram will introduce and invite discussion/feedback on an innovative approach that seeks to use the methodologies of history (such as oral history, municipal archives and personal testimony), to devise a set of intellectually convincing - and policy/outcome relevant - evaluative tools for the HLR of the present.

Privatisation in an Urban Renaissance: Urban Design in City Centre and Fringe Neighbourhood Regeneration from a Housing Perspective

Graham Squires, University of the West of England, graham.squires@uwe.ac.uk

The Urban Renaissance agenda launched in the late 1990s envisaged a design-led regeneration of towns and cities in the UK (Rogers, 1999). It brought a strong emphasis upon urban design to the well-established social, economic and environmental objectives of urban regeneration, and it promised a qualitatively different approach to revitalising urban areas (Punter, 2009). This paper considers whether this vision has only been advantageous to housing (and property) developers in neighbourhoods where capital has been able to thrive. For example, many city centre neighbourhoods have seen the emergence of a high quality built environment mainly in the form of 'luxury' apartment housing and commercial office space – largely driven by the high capital growth of city centre real estate prices (Harvey, 2008). In addition, drivers of housing design quality are potentially compromised by the strong market orientation of the regeneration ethos. Furthermore, wider processes of privatisation within housing-led regeneration can be scrutinised as to whether it has been incentivising quality urban design and delivering cohesive and sustainable cities as a legacy. This paper will more specifically discuss whether low quality housing design will always be intrinsically applied to fringe neighbourhoods in the process of housing-led regeneration – and thus reinforcing urban problems across cities. This is placed in the context of recessionary impacts on property and the real estate sector that have seen a slow-down in property development as has the opportunity for new design opportunities. Peripheral neighbourhoods marked for regeneration may be at most risk of achieving quality housing as they experience private market difficulties – this is in addition to a restriction of public investment if there is a focus on reducing the public borrowing sector requirement. Discussion of historical design legacies of the urban fabric are also discussed in housing and neighbourhood developments that have increasingly focussed on private sector interests. The paper questions whether high quality design of housing (and the public realm) in unpopular fringe neighbourhoods could be part of the urban renaissance legacy – and if so, whether it will be increasingly driven by market forces and the processes of privatisation.

Session 5: Alternatives to the Market

Convenors: Kim McKee (University of St Andrews), km410@st-andrews.ac.uk

Tom Moore (Sheffield Hallam University), Tom.Moore@student.shu.ac.uk

Community Ownership of Social Housing in Glasgow: empowering Glasgow's tenants?

Kim McKee, University of Glasgow, km410@st-andrews.ac.uk

The 2003 Glasgow housing stock transfer was underpinned by the political rationale of community ownership: an ideal that aspired to empower citizens by devolving both ownership and control of council housing from the state to local communities. This ambition was to be achieved through a two-tier stock transfer process: firstly, by the establishment of the Glasgow Housing Association and devolution of former council housing management to a citywide network of Local Housing Organisations, which are small-scale, community controlled housing organisations governed by committees of local residents; and secondly by commitments to future Second Stage Transfers in order that these local organisations may own as well as manage the housing. Ethnographic case study research highlights that far from realising ambitions for enhanced local control through community ownership, housing governance in Glasgow post-stock transfer is characterised by difficult central-local tensions within the devolved management arrangements; delays and emergent complexities in delivering the pivotal goal of further secondary transfers; and a notable lack of support, and indeed interest, amongst lay tenants and key actors for this underlying imperative to transfer ownership of the housing. Furthermore given the constraints facing all Registered Social Landlords through the housing legislative and regulatory framework, community ownership may actually enhance instead of reduce the power and influence of the state within housing governance.

Property rights, empowerment and ‘consumer insulation’: asset-based welfare systems and the real ‘third way’

Malcolm Harrison, University of Leeds, m.l.harrison@leeds.ac.uk

This paper explores an alternative - both to market liberalism and to ‘top-down’ centralised planning - by attempting an overview of the issue of empowerment via local collective control of resources. A particular concern is with social housing (broadly defined), and options for generating greater security and sustainability via ownership. There are four main elements in the analysis. First, a commentary on the context in terms of changing welfare systems, economic liberalism, and the differential incorporation and vulnerabilities of consumers. Second, attention will be drawn very briefly to the relative neglect of property rights issues in left-wing policy debates, and the ambiguities therein about localism, as well as the absence of genuine interest in assets issues within mainstream academic social policy. Third, the paper will mention a few examples of challenges and possibilities over the years, ranging from economic ideas underpinning garden city concepts through to the mortgage strikes of the pre-war era, mutualism, local housing prioritisation, and co-ops. Finally, we begin to outline some implications and problems to be thought about, if a route of this type were being advocated as a major component in public policies today.

Key success factors: A comparison of the US and UK urban community land trust landscape

Udi Engelsman and Alan Southern, University of Liverpool Management School

uengelsman@arena-housing.com

Although far from being mainstream and widespread, community land trusts have emerged as part of the US solution to the housing market failure created by the sub-prime credit crisis. Billed as a ‘counter cyclical’ model, the CLT limits the potential profits gained during the ‘good times’ but also provides stewardship, assistance and a step onto the housing ladder during the ‘bad times’. In the context of the urban environment, CLTs in the US have been more successful than their UK counterparts. Although a crude comparison due to different political, social and economic contexts some factors can be identified and generalised as critical success factors necessary for the success of a CLT. This paper will look to compare the urban CLT landscape in the US and the UK through a number of case studies to identify some of the reasons why CLTs have struggled in the UK and have been more successful in the US. Some key success factors in the US include city and state political support, community activism, accepted legal structures and public funding. Many of these are still lacking in the UK thus slowing down the development of community land trusts especially in the urban domain.

Time to let the CAT out of the bag?

Peter Bevington, Freelance Consultant, peter@peterbev.fsnet.co.uk

This paper will consider the growing emphasis, over the past twenty-five years, on the role of the local

community in models of regeneration and neighbourhood management. It will argue that, even as the idea of community ownership of land and/or assets has begun to gain credence, including the emerging idea of Community Land Trusts, the full potential of community governance and stewardship may not yet be apparent. While it is right that there should be concerns about vesting land in 'permanent' community ownership or stewardship, the legal framework may already exist whereby regeneration objectives can be achieved under community governance without the risks associated with a permanent transfer of ownership. The paper will propose using key features of the Housing Action Trust model to enable a Community Land Trust – or Community Action Trust – to be granted a secure lease of land and/or property within a defined area and access to other resources in order to achieve defined social, economic and environmental objectives. The key principle taken from the Housing Action Trust legislation is that the tenure of land may be tied to the achievement of defined regeneration objects and that disposals of land may equally be made on terms tied to the achievement of those regeneration objects.

Community Land Trusts as 'third sector housing'?

Tom Moore, Sheffield Hallam University, Tom.Moore@student.shu.ac.uk

This study investigates the concept of Community Land Trusts and their role in the provision of affordable housing. A CLT is a community-led housing initiative which provides affordable housing to meet local needs. The study aims to unpick the extent to which CLTs represent a revival of mutualism and co-operation in the provision of housing, concepts which have been evident in the garden city, almshouse and co-operative movements of old, challenging traditional forms of housing democracy such as state and open market provision through 'third sector' housing. The study charts this through exploration of the rationales and relationships that have manifest in the formation and development of CLTs, investigating the politics behind the recent movement and its future development.

Cohousing and low impact living: the example of LILAC in Leeds

Paul Chatterton, University of Leeds, p.chatterton@leeds.ac.uk

This paper critically explores the potential for creating low impact, affordable and socially cohesive neighbourhoods. It will use the LILAC project (Low Impact Living Affordable Community) as an example - a pioneering cooperative ecological, cohousing project that is building 20 homes on a brownfield site in urban Leeds. The challenge that Lilac has set for itself is threefold: to respond to climate change and energy scarcity by building carbon neutral (or even positive) housing in terms of construction and in use; to respond to the housing crisis by providing permanently affordable housing by a new mutual home ownership society model; and to embed a sense of community through the Danish cohousing model. Important issues to be explored and addressed include: replicability, stereotypes and perceptions, viability, capacity and upskilling, financial resources, expectations, democratic accountability, and relationship to the local authority and local control.

Session 6: Making Public Housing Work

Convenor, Sarah Glynn, sarahglynn@hotmail.com

Keynote speech:

Professor Danny Dorling, University of Sheffield, danny.dorling@sheffield.ac.uk

'The Right-to-Sell – a National Housing Service?'

Making Public Housing Work

Sara Glynn, Honorary Fellow, University of Strathclyde

This paper is an attempt to pull together an outline of the different elements that are needed to making public housing work. It will look at a wide range of factors from physical and ecological improvements to management practices and democratic accountability. The aim will be to begin the process of creating a synthesis of good practice in public housing through an examination of current and historic examples.

Did it have to be like this? A socialist critique of New Labour's performance in housing

Alan Wigfield and Cathy Davies, Salford University

wigfield884@btinternet.com

In 1997, most Labour-controlled local authorities hoped an incoming Labour Government with a massive majority would reverse some of the worst excesses of Margaret Thatcher and John Major. They hoped for a new settlement between central and local government and a future in which they would be able to invest again in long-overdue maintenance and modernisation of council stock. They hoped to be able to build again; responding to the many thousands waiting for council housing by this time. Instead, they have faced a government which has determinedly continued to asset-strip the public sector. They have been faced with Hobson's Choice in relation to maintenance and modernization: that is, variations of privatization. New council building on the scale required to tackle the housing crisis has become a dim memory for those 1990s Housing Committee members. And what of council housing itself? Transformed into "social housing," apparently overrun by "anti-social behaviour" and with tenants whose vulnerabilities are such that they need to be "mixed" (that is, lost) in owner-occupied estates. Would socialist governments and Ministers of Health (and indeed Housing) of the past have done the same as Tony Blair and his colleagues? There were alternatives to stock transfer, the criminalization of young people and the overwhelming emphasis on private/public funding of housing associations. This paper will identify the possibilities ... then and now.

Arguments for a renaissance of municipal housing

Glyn Robbins, London Metropolitan University, glynrobbins@aol.com

The economic crisis triggered by the collapse of the speculative housing market begs the question of an alternative. UK housing policy of the last thirty years has relied on the private sector to deliver new homes not only for owner occupation, but also for what has become known (contentiously) as 'social housing'. This has been accompanied by the well-chronicled decline of local authorities, both as the providers of new homes and as housing managers. Despite the crash, the fact that every significant government housing target is set to be missed and the considerable financial problems of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), what could be thought of as the neo-liberal consensus on housing is dented, but not broken. There has, until recently, appeared little appetite amongst politicians or policy makers for seriously rethinking our housing policy. This paper argues that a radical reconsideration is overdue and will set out the arguments for a renaissance of public, municipal-led housing.

What is it that we might build?

Malcolm Fraser, Malcolm Fraser Architects, Edinburgh, Malcolm.Fraser@malcolmfraser.co.uk

I am an architect who has worked, in my time, for disadvantaged communities, for well-off folk buying the very best for their homes and for the volume-housebuilders, at both the top and bottom end of their market. From this experience, and from my everyday experience observing how communities work – how children play, or people look after themselves and their neighbours – I've formed the view that the building bit of making homes and communities should not, at heart, be a complex matter. It's about a network of sunny, connected spaces, with buildings as dense as is consistent with the amenity of most having gardens and terraces, well-connected to transport, shops and other shared facilities. So I wonder why, when I look at housing design initiatives, others see it as needing complex policies and vast armies of consultants and civil servants to tell us what to do? I'd like to consider that, if we could build social housing again, what is it that we might build? The market is consumed by arguments that are purely scenic – principally around Prince Charles pediments and wiggly-roads "urbanism", but also wilful, show-offy icon-nonsense. And

“consultation” exercises which are classics of the manufacturing-consent school. New initiatives towards social housing ape the language of Blairite “choice”, and consideration of how people use space, and interact with each other and their environments, is almost completely absent. By showing built examples of my and other’s work, I would like to suggest a radical, but simple, cheering and social vision for building new communities.