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BYKER : A Study of Communication between
Planners and the Public in an area affected
by Slum Clearance.

M.A. Thesis.

By Richard Alan BATLEY.

Submitted July 1971.

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ABSTRACT

This study sets out to examine whether the local community has any political meaning for its residents, in the sense that their relations with the city council are affected by it. On the one hand, it investigates the importance of the community; 1. in supporting certain orientations among residents towards political involvement, and 2. in offering certain organisational means of political communication. On the other hand, it investigates the attitudes of local authority officials and councillors to the involvement of the public in aspects of their decision-making. The study relates an initial analysis of community attachment and political attitudes to an analysis of the attitudes and action of all those involved in a particular decision in the field of town planning.

The area of the study (Byker in Newcastle-upon-Tyne) was chosen because it was faced with slum clearance by the council. A questionnaire was applied to 10 per cent of the households in the area to discover and then inter-relate:

1. The degree of residents' attachment to the community in terms of their performance of certain roles, identification of the area and membership of local organisations;
2. Their orientation to local government and to participation in politics;
3. Their response to the demolition plans.

By participant observation and the interviewing of local leaders, local organisations were examined to assess their view of their role, and, especially, their role in the demolition situation. The study was here concerned with the potentiality of organisations to act as mediators between the planners and the planned.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with councillors and with officials concerned with planning and rehousing. The object here was to assess the implications of their view of the situation and of their performance for the information and response of residents.

-ENDS-

C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page No.</u>
Abstract	
Introduction	1
<u>Part 1 Research Approach</u>	<u>1 - 36</u>
Chapter 1 Theoretical Approach	2
Chapter 2 Research Technique	30
<u>Part 2 Background</u>	<u>37 - 88</u>
Chapter 3 Slum Clearance	37
A. The Law	37
B. Newcastle's Clearance Programme	47
C. The Department Process	56
Chapter 4 The Development of Modern Byker	61
Chapter 5 Byker in Newcastle	69
Age	69
Class	70
Housing Tenure	72
Social Malaise	73
Housing Conditions	79
Conclusion	86
<u>Part 3 Byker - The Community</u>	<u>9 - 166</u>
Chapter 6 Passive Community Attachment	90
a. Residential Attachment.	90
b. Family Attachment	95
c. Neighbourly Attachment.	102
d. Friendship Attachment	109
e. Shopping Attachment	112
f. Occupational Attachment.	115
Sex and Community Attachment	121

	<u>Page No.</u>
Marriage Status and Community Attachment	123
Age and Community Attachment	125
Proximity to Demolition and Community Attachment	128
Interrelations between scales	130
The Passive Community Attachment scale	133
Chapter 7	
Subjective Identification	137
Sex and Subjective Identification	145
Age and Subjective Identification	147
Proximity to Demolition and Subjective Identification	148
Passive Community Attachment and Subjective Identification	148
Chapter 8	
Activism - The Performance of Voluntary Roles	152
Age and Activism	162
Demolition and Activism	162
Community Attachment and Activism	164
Subjective Identification and Activism	164
Conclusion	165
<u>Part 4 Byker - Political Culture</u>	<u>67 - 223</u>
Chapter 9	
Elections	168
The Significance of Voting	168
Local Elections	170
General Election	176
Chapter 10	
Byker's Political Culture in the national context	178
1. Cognitive Orientation	179
2. Affective and Evaluative Orientations	186
3. Summary of Comparative findings	200
Chapter 11	
The Political Orientation of Groups	203
1. Sex and Political Orientation	203
2. Age and Political Orientation	205
3. Activism and Political Orientation	211

4. Community and Political Orientation	214
5. Cultural groups and Political Orientation	217
6. Conclusion	221

Part 5 The Response to Demolition 223 - 285

Chapter 12	Public Attitudes to Housing and demolition	223
	a. Satisfaction and Existing Housing	223
	b. Attitude to demolition	232
	c. Aspirations	235
	d. Conclusion	245
Chapter 13	The Public Response to Demolition	248
	1. The level of Knowledge	249
	2. Sources of Information	252
	3. Information seeking and Action	257
	4. Group differences	267
	5. Conclusion	278

Part 6 Leaders, Representatives and Officials 286 - 401

Chapter 14	The Public's Expectations of Leaders, Representatives and Officials.	286
	Expectations of the Council's Attitude	287
	Expectations of Representation	290
Chapter 15	Local Organisations	295
	1. Labour Party Branches	296
	2. Trade Union Branches	302
	3. Workingmen's Clubs	308
	4. Churches	317
	5. Byker Community Association	324
	6. Conclusion	333
Chapter 16	Local Councillors	335
	1. Councillors' Action	338
	2. Communications with the Public	343
	3. The Councillors' view of their Role	351
	4. Conclusion	356

	<u>Page No.</u>
Chapter 17	
Council Leaders and Officials /	359
The Policy Setters	362
The Plan for Byker	371
Departments and the Byker Plan /	375
Official Roles	379
Officials' Attitudes to Public Participation	389
Conclusion /	398
Chapter 18	
Conclusion /	402
SOME PROPOSALS	412
Official Attitudes to Participation /	412
Supply of Information	415
Communicating Information	416

I L L U S T R A T I O N S

		<u>Page</u>
Map	Newcastle	60A
Graph	Municipal Elections - Percent Polls 1958-68.	174A
Diagram	Residents' Choice of Area.	238A
Map	Byker Guidelines for Redevelopment.	372A
Map	Byker 1897.	Annex 1.
Map	Byker 1904.	Annex 2.
Map	Byker 1967.	Annex 3.
	Statements as to Sales of Property in Northumberland belonging to Sir. William Lawson - about 1840.	Annex 4.

LIST OF TABLES

Page

Chapter 2	Table 1	Byker Sample and 1966 Census - Sex.	34
	2	Byker Sample and 1966 Census - Age.	34
	3	Byker Sample and 1966 Census - Housing tenure.	35
Chapter 3	4	Proposed Timing of Clearance and Redevelopment (1963).	54
Chapter 5	5	Age Groups in Byker and Newcastle.	69
	6	Occupational Class Groups in Byker and Newcastle.	70
	7	Socio-Economic Groups in Byker and Newcastle.	71
	8	Household tenure in Byker and Newcastle.	72
	9	Social Malaise.	76
	10	Rooms per household in Byker and Newcastle.	81
	11	Size of household in Byker and Newcastle.	82
	12	Density of Occupation in Byker and Newcastle.	82
	13	Housing Amenities in Byker and Newcastle.	84
Chapter 6	14	Birthplace of Interviewee.	92
	15	Length of Residence in Byker.	93
	16	Residential Attachment Scale.	94
	17	Number of Relations in Byker.	101
	18	Family Attachment Scale.	101
	19	Neighbourly Attachment Scale.	109
	20	Location of three best friends.	111
	21	Friend Attachment Scale.	112
	22	Place of Shopping.	114
	23	Shopping Attachment Scale.	115
	24	Male Occupations - Two Generations.	117
	25	Place of Work - Two Generations.	119
	26	Occupation Attachment Scale.	121
	27	Proportion of Households for each Scale Measure.	130
	28	Significance of the Relationship between high scorers on each Scale Measure.	132

	29	Individual Measures against Overall PCA Scale.	135
Chapter 7	30	Impressions of Byker People.	143
	31	Subjective Identification Scale.	145
	32	PCA Scale against SI Scale.	149
	33	Comparative Levels of Organisation Membership.	153
	34	Organisational Membership by Sex.	154
	35	Membership and Attendance of Some Organisations.	156 & 157
	36	Percentage of Population Holding Posts.	160
	37	Local Activism and PCA.	163
Chapter 9	38	Majorities of Labour over Conservative Parties.	171
	39	Order of Municipal Election Turn-outs by Ward.	173
	40	Polling order by Party Loyalties 1963-1968.	174
Chapter 10	41	Awareness of Local Government Services.	180
	42	Character of Impact of Local Government.	182
	43	Awareness of Local Government Affairs.	184
	44	Knowledge of the Names of Council Representatives.	185
	45	Expectation of treatment by Council Office.	188
	46	Feelings on Voters' Choice and Influence.	192
	47	Attitudes to Councillors' Motivations.	194
	48	Attitudes to Active Local Participation.	197
	49	Citizens' strategies of Influence on Local Government.	199
Chapter 11	50	Political Orientation by Age.	209 & 210
	51	Political Orientation against Activism and Attachment.	216
	52	Affect against Cognition of System.	218
	53	Affect against Cognition of Input Process.	220
Chapter 12	54	Housing Satisfaction.	224
	55	Satisfaction and Age.	225
	56	Satisfaction and Community Attachment.	227

	57	Reasons for Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction.	232
	58	Age and Approval of Demolition.	234
	59	Willingness to Leave (i)	236
	60	Willingness to Leave (ii)	236
	61	Reasons for Wishing to Stay in Byker.	237
	62	Reasons for Choice of Area.	240
	63	Age and Determination to Live in Byker.	243
	64	Community Attachment and Determination to live in Byker.	245
Chapter 13	65	Level of Information on Demolition Plans.	250
	66	Sources of Information on Demolition Plans.	254
	67	Information Seeking and Attitude to Plans.	264
	68	Cognitive Orientation and Knowledge of Plans.	277
	69	Groups and their response to Plans.	281 & 282
Chapter 14	70	Expectations of Treatment.	288
	71	Expectations of Representation.	291
Chapter 15	72	Occupation and Periods of Service - Middle Club Committee Members.	312
	73	Church Membership.	318
Chapter 16	74	Percent of Ward Knowing each Councillor.	336
	75	Councillors' Occupations.	347

3. Tables

INTRODUCTION

This study was designed to form part of a research programme investigating public participation in local government. One of the central interests of the larger programme has been in the possible effect on participation, of the re-organisation of local government into fewer, larger units. Some of the smaller authorities on Tyneside have opposed amalgamation on the grounds that it would reduce the public's access to, and involvement in, local government by removing its base from the 'community.'

It was felt that some test could be made of this assumption by examining a small area with its own claim to distinctiveness, but which is already a part of a large city. The purpose of the study would be to investigate whether, in these circumstances, the locality still had any political function as a unit separate from the rest of the city. More specifically, we are interested to find whether such a locality has any political meaning for its inhabitants, in the sense that their relations with the city council are influenced by it.

PART I - RESEARCH APPROACH

Chapter 1

THEORETICAL APPROACH

We are interested in investigating the importance of the local 'community': 1) in supporting certain orientations towards political participation, and 2) in offering certain organisational means of political communication.

A. Political Orientation: Almond and Verba in The Civic Culture⁽¹⁾ have attempted to expose the sets of attitudes which underlie 'the democratic model of the participatory state.' They propose to distinguish 'democratic' from other states in terms of the 'political culture' which prevails in them, rather than (as Lipset)⁽²⁾ in terms of the social and economic conditions which tend to be associated with western democratic systems. Almond and Verba propose that: 'Rather than inferring the properties of democratic culture from political institutions or social conditions, we have attempted to specify its contents by examining attitudes in a number of operating democratic systems.'⁽³⁾ Using the definitions, and classification of types of orientation developed by Parsons and Shils, they describe the political culture of a nation as 'the particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among the members of the nation.'⁽⁴⁾

The orientation of an actor is defined by Parsons and Shils as his relation to objects which may be 'other actors or physical or cultural objects.'⁽⁵⁾ His relationship is in terms of his ends, his view of the situation, and 'his normatively regulated "plan"' for achieving his ends. This orientation is broken down into analytic elements by Almond and Verba after Parsons and Shils:

- 1) The cognitive orientation - the actor's knowledge of and belief about objects.
- 2) The affective orientation - his feelings about objects.
- 3) The evaluative orientation - his assessment of objects in terms of his value standards, his knowledge and his feelings.

The political culture of a social system is therefore the cumulative pattern of orientations established by the various members of the system towards political objects. These objects are identified as: the political system grouped into the "input" and the "output" processes, and lastly the self as a political actor.

We can assess the nature of a political culture by drawing together individual orientations to each of these objects. We may ask what the individual knows of the political system (for Almond and Verba's purposes, the nation) and its general characteristics, its history, size,

location, power' and constitution, how he evaluates these, and what emotional attachment he has to them. As regards the self as political actor, we are concerned with the individual's knowledge and assessment of his own role and the norms according to which he is expected to behave in the polity. Similarly, we are concerned with his orientations to the input process by which various persons fulfilling roles which are grouped into structures (such as parties and interest groups) are involved in feeding demands into the system, which may convert these demands into policies. And in the output process we are concerned with the individual's knowledge, affect and evaluation of the administrative process by which these policies are applied.

There is surely some difficulty in summing these responses and emerging with an impression of a prevailing culture of political orientations. Almond and Verba suggest that we should look at the frequency of different kinds of cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations, and compare the frequency of orientations found in a particular social system against certain ideal types of political culture. These ideal types are combinations of response to the various political objects. Thus:

- a) A Parochial culture would be one in which the individual member has no cognitive, affective

or evaluative orientation to any of the political objects.

- b) A Subject culture would be one in which the individual was oriented in all three ways to the System as General Object and to the Output Objects, but he would not regard himself as a political actor or as having any relationship with the process of input of demands. He would be essentially passively related to the political system.
- c) A Participant culture would be one in which the individual was oriented in all three ways to the four categories of political object. He would not necessarily be favourably inclined to all of them, but would in any case regard himself as an actor within the system.

These are ideal types because they assume a coincidence of orientations within the individual, and between individuals within a polity, whereas in fact some mix is to be expected. The process of political development toward a participant culture may leave some areas of political life in which individuals (or some individuals) may continue to think of themselves as uninvolved (parochial) or only passively involved (subject). For example, the individual may continue to have a primarily parochial (non-participatory) orientation to the local squirearchy while regarding himself

as competent to intervene in national politics. Likewise, some portion of the population (say, peasants) may retain a wholly subject sub-culture in a state where others have a participatory orientation. The expectation is that a political culture will be mixed in one or both of those ways (within individuals and/or between portions of the population).

Political cultures may be further sub-classified. The concept used in this further classification is 'congruence' - that is, congruence between the culture and the political structure. The two are in congruence when psychological orientations are in conformity with the requirements of the political system. Thus, a subject culture requires knowledge of the system and of the output objects combined with favourable affective and evaluative estimations of them. If the affective and evaluative orientations were however unfavourable (or negative) the culture would be described as incongruent: this incongruence would imply 'alienation' from the system and output objects. Similarly, the participant culture may be one in which the members of the system are disaffected from, and have unfavourable opinions of, the functioning of the political system and the other types of political object. This would be an alienated participant culture. Its converse, where its members

were favourably inclined in their feelings to, and evaluation of, the political system and all its parts, would be an 'allegiant', participant culture. Such an allegiant orientation to the general system, the political input and output processes, and the self as political actor is what Almond and Verba term 'the civic culture', a participant political culture in which the political culture and political structure are congruent. (6)

The typology of political cultures which Almond and Verba have developed may be summarised in the following diagrammatic forms, taken from The Civic Culture:

Types of Political Culture				
	System as General Object	Input Objects	Output Objects	Self as active participant
Parochial	0	0	0	0
Subject	1	0	1	0
Participant	1	1	1	1

*Congruence/Incongruence between Political Culture & Structure

	<u>Allegiance</u>	<u>Apathy</u>	<u>Alienation</u>
Cognitive Orientation	+	+	+
Affective Orientation	+	0	-
Evaluative Orientation	+	0	-

* A (+) sign means a high frequency of awareness, or of positive feeling or of evaluation towards political objects.

A (-) sign means a high frequency of negative evaluation or feelings.

A (0) means a high frequency of indifference.

Almond and Verba use this theoretical framework to explain 'the properties and performance of different kinds of political system.'⁽⁷⁾ By cross-national research, they wish to identify those sets of attitudes which underlie 'the democratic model of the participatory state.' One difficulty involved in this sort of cross-national research is that, because it deals with different political systems, the attitudes which it is comparing are attitudes to different political objects. Almond and Verba accept that this problem is not wholly soluble, but attempt to relieve it in several ways. The questions asked must, in as far

as it is possible, be related to 'behaviour or attitudes that are least determined by the structure of the situation.'⁽⁸⁾ Thus 'willingness to discuss politics' would be a measure of commitment to the input process, rather than membership of a political party which would connote different degrees of political commitment in different nations. (The danger is that questions may become so unrelated to concrete political roles and structures, that they become meaningless.) Another way of dealing with the problem is to make the comparisons of orientation between systems indirect, by first comparing orientations associated with groups (education, sex, etc.) within a system, and then comparing systems on the basis of the differences between groups within them.

In the study which is the subject of this thesis, we are dealing with sub-cultures within a single system. The system of local government and the roles, structures and processes contained within it are much the same throughout the country. This reduces the problem of comparability, but does not eradicate it. The same act performed by different individuals may still have different significance - voting by the old and infirm represents a much greater commitment to participation than voting by the young. Again, apparently similar positions may fulfil different roles in the town than in the country (the rural

councillor may be a generalised leader, and the only channel of communication with the polity for the rural public, while the urban councillor may have a more limited role). These problems may be overcome to some extent by comparing local data with national data by groups (for example, age for age, and sex for sex); and also by using national data from areas similarly placed on the urbanism scale and on the scale of local government autonomy.

In the case of this study, national data are derived primarily from information on county boroughs in Volume II of The Management of Local Government,^{(9)*} but also from The Civic Culture: data which refers to the Tyneside conurbation is also used in some instances.⁽¹⁰⁾ This will be compared with local data gathered by questionnaire using questions based partly on the two former works.

The theoretical framework of Almond and Verba will be used: 1) to assess the political culture of the research area, to decide whether it is distinctive in terms of the political attitudes which it supports; 2) to locate differences of orientation within the area, and to decide whether these may be associated with other variables.

* Referred to in this thesis as the Maud Report

B. The Structure of the Research Area - The 'Community'.

The structural basis of attitudes. Almond and Verba stress that political orientation may be separated analytically from other kinds of psychological orientation. But this does not mean that within the individual they are distinct. In fact, to the extent that there are political sub-cultures which are more or less congruent with the same political system, they may perhaps be explained in terms of differences between the social structures within which individuals have learned their political orientations (among other kinds of orientation) and experienced the political system.

In seeking to explain Labour voting in Britain as a reflection of the individual's involvement in distinct sub-cultures with a normative system which deviates from the national value system, Parkin has similarly felt the need for a structural explanation of cultural differences. Writing of the psychological explanation of the working-class Conservative vote, Parkin says:

Without wishing to minimize the importance of attitudes in accounting for individual or group action, I think it may be doubted whether, in this particular case at least, it is legitimate to treat attitude differences as an independent variable. After all, when faced with sharp differences in outlook and perception amongst a given population, a sociologist is always forced back to the question of whether there are some distinctively structural factors which underlie the differences and which provide him with a sociological rather than a psychological explanation for them.(11)

In other words, our interest in whether there are distinctive attitudes prevailing in the locality under study, leads us back to consideration of the underlying social structure and whether this is distinctive.

A 'Scale of Community'. We would not expect our locality, a part of a city, to be so distinctive as to form a social system in Talcott Parson's terms, but we can regard such a system as a polar type at the top of the scale of distinctiveness. The elements of a social system for Parsons are that it :-

a) is 'a system of interaction of a plurality of actors, in which the action is oriented by rules which are complexes of complementary expectations concerning roles and sanctions.'⁽¹²⁾ - in other words, interaction is based on norms incorporated into role expectations;

b) has boundaries and tends to maintain them.

'..... a theoretically and empirically significant difference between structures and processes internal to the system and those external to it exists and tends to be maintained.'⁽¹³⁾

c) 'contains within approximately the boundaries defined by membership all the functional mechanisms required for its maintenance as a system.'

(14) The functions which must be fulfilled are

broadly grouped into the categories: instrumental (goal-achievement); adaptive (adaptation to the environment); pattern-maintenance (passing on and maintaining the value-system), and integrative (the integration of relationships between members).

Taking these as requirements of the social system we may measure any territorial area against them to assess its place on a scale of distinctiveness. One which satisfies all these requirements, Parsons terms a 'society', and anything less he terms a 'sub-system' of a society.

We are dealing with the lower end of the scale, with small areas which evidently are not self-sufficient functionally, nor more than partially distinctive in their value-systems and internal roles and structures. In other words, we are dealing with the ranking of sub-systems along a scale of self-sufficiency, the upper end of which we would not expect them to attain. This scale, we will call a 'scale of community'.

Since the size of this study will not allow us to make rigorous structural-functional comparisons between the research locality and other areas, nor to describe the locality in its totality, we will largely be concerned with:

- 1) the degree to which individual residents and groups of residents experience their locality as self-sufficient.....

2) in terms of the degree of exclusiveness with which they perform certain roles within rather than outside the locality. These roles will be selected for their supposed relevance to response to slum clearance (the subject of the case study of political participation).

The concept 'community' will not, then, be here used in an absolute sense, to decide whether or not our locality is 'a community' measured against certain criteria; but rather in a scalar sense to decide whether residents are more or less 'community attached' in certain spheres of their life; thus to characterise the locality as a community to a greater or lesser extent depending on the attachedness of its members in these spheres.

The Definition of Community. An edition of Contemporary Sociology⁽¹⁵⁾ has been devoted to definitions of community. Discussing Hillery's exhaustive analysis of the same subject⁽¹⁶⁾ the author concludes that the most common characteristics in the 94 definitions treated by Hillery were:

- 1) A group of people living within a relative, small geographical area.
- 2) A group of people who inter-act socially.
- 3) A group of people which is self-sufficient - they meet most of their material and social-emotional needs within the community.

4) A group of people who share a common set of economic and social institutions - they share a market place, church or churches, school system, local government, etc.

5) A group of people who share common ends, norms and means - they have the same or very similar societal values, and they are used to a common set of procedures for achieving their common goals.

6) A group of people who are conscious of their common life and common goals.

But, the author says, 'the effect of applying all the elements of this definition would be to restrict the field of community study to small groups of people with a simple social structure.' While accepting that the first criterion is too limiting (and vague) and suggesting that it should be replaced by König's assertion 'that community is above all a local phenomenon dominated by the associative principle of neighbourhood',⁽¹⁷⁾ in the framework of this study it seems best that all the other criteria should be regarded as necessary contributions, but that they should not be regarded as absolutes. Thus the definition of community given by the author of the article is accepted, but as a polar type:

It is useful to consider community as a relatively autonomous social system, consisting of economic, educational, religious as well as political systems united in a community complex. Such an autonomous system

would have to perform the four functions called by Parsons: adaptation, goal-attainment, integration, and latent pattern-maintenance.

This is in accordance with König's own 'preliminary definition':

A community is first of all a global society [a term which König does not adequately define except to say that it "embraces a 'totality' of social relationships"] of a local unit type embracing an indefinite multiplicity of functional spheres, social groups and other social phenomena, and conditioning innumerable forms of social interaction, joint bonds, and value concepts. Further, apart from numerous forms of inner relationships which may exist in the previously mentioned parts, it will also, and as a matter of course, have its own tangible institutional and organisational external structure.(18)

It seems unnecessary to include notions of the physical size of a community in the definition. König is even more convoluted in his discussion of this problem, but seems to come to the following general conclusion: It is not physical size which is important as a criterion of community, and only 'spatial proximity' (between members) in as much as this is related to functional interdependence. The approach of this study here corresponds to that of Scott Greer.

Communities of Interdependence. For Scott Greer, 'geographical contiguity has no self-evident social meaning. It may become the basis for interdependence only when it constitutes a field for social action.'(19) Local residential areas are no longer (in the urbanised world) definable as pure communities, that is as 'viable wholes through which

the individual may clarify in social discourse and affect through social action the objects of his desires and grievances.'⁽²⁰⁾ Urbanism involves the loss of integrity of such local groups, as the growing specialisation of functions (division of labour) removes their control from specific localities. This produces the 'community of limited liability' where individuals have only a partial commitment to their residential area, because it only satisfies part of their needs, and even those can be satisfied elsewhere. What Scott Greer calls 'the radii of interdependence' thus differ from function to function, and from individual to individual, so that the spatial area no longer contains more than a segment of any individual's behaviour. Thus, we see that the local shop-keeper is more instrumentally committed to the locality, than the man living in it, but working outside it, in a business with national interests. We would therefore expect those individuals with greater functional dependence on the locality to be more committed to its defence, more intensive in their voluntary participation in its organisations, and more possessed of its values and norms.

In a primary community of the preliterate type on the other hand 'the radii of many functional interdependencies

were short, coinciding with the same aggregate of persons. The result was for the individual a complete dependence upon this community leaving him few choices; for the community, it was autonomy from outside groups. There was a coincidence of many organisational networks, based upon functional interdependence for various social products in the same small aggregate. The result was an extreme density of inter-action. When such density of inter-action occurs, a secondary function results: the social process. This may be defined as communication as an end in itself; it is identical with many meanings of 'communion', and it is the basis for that aspect of an association which we call the primary group.(21)

Scott Greer's theory is in accordance with our use of the concept 'community' to measure the extent to which individuals are attached to the locality in various of their roles. We will in his terms be assessing how far individuals and groups are functionally interdependent within the circumference of the locality in certain roles. The more this is so, the more there will be frequent inter-action within the locality.

This approach is similar to that of Morris and Mogey, who were concerned with the effect on social relationships of rehousing from slums.(22) They reject community analysis which applies the word community to any area 'which has three or more of the sixteen basic elements [established by Hillery]. This word which was originally a polar type, has now become a blanket term.'(23) 'Community' for Morris and Mogey

describes the case where primary social relation-

ships are coupled closely with a small physical group.(24)

That is, social network and physical locality coincide. Morris and Mogeby analyse their locality (Berinsfield) by measuring it against four aspects of community relationships and asking how far it could be considered a community from each of these points of view. It does not attempt to be a comprehensive analysis but covers only the following four aspects of community:

common bonds through perceived shared interests; networks of interlocking memberships in voluntary associations; common membership of reference groups, whose presence is not necessarily visible to the casual observer; and the feeling of living in a friendly cohesive territorial group.(25)

In this study we will consider similar aspects of community, but unlike Morris and Mogeby, we are not concerned with changes over time and the analysis will not be dynamic. The roles selected for study are those which it is felt are some of those most likely to be affected by rehousing: the roles of resident, family-member, neighbour, friend, voluntary association member, shopper and worker. There is also an analysis of reference groups, derived from data on subjective identification with the area, and ideals and aspirations for rehousing.

Having assessed the community-attachedness of individuals and groups within these spheres of their behaviour, we will attempt to discover whether attachment and type of

attachment has any relation with types of political orientation. In other words, we will see whether the 'community' has any distinctive significance in the formation of political attitudes.

A second part of this study of the 'community' will be devoted to an account of the place of organisations and leaders in the locality. This portion of the research proceeded by interview and observation rather than questionnaire. The object will be to outline the functional importance of these organisations to the locality, the self-view of their roles, and especially the nature of their leadership.

C. The Case Study - Slum Clearance.

The area of the study (Byker, a suburb of Newcastle) was chosen partly because it had the reputation of being a strong 'community', and partly because it was faced with complete clearance as a slum. This allowed investigation of the response of the area to a political decision, and a comparison of the response of individuals and groups.

1. Almond and Verba do not test their measures of attitudes to political behaviour against actual performance. This section of the study will, therefore, be partly a test of whether such attempts to assess attitudes may emerge with results which may be predictive of political action. Performance will be assessed in terms of the individual's knowledge of the council's

demolition plans, his attempts to get more information and possibly to influence council policy, the channels of communication which he uses to receive and pass on information. The expectation would be that those with a greater attitudinal propensity to political participation would be better informed, more likely to have attempted to get more information, and more likely to have used the sources of information closest to the council, than those with a lesser such propensity.

2. Community attachment will also be tested against performance. First, the questionnaire data will allow us to assess whether there is any association between dependence on the locality and the nature and extent of communication with the council on the subject of slum clearance. The central question here will be to decide whether those who spend more of their lives exclusively in Byker, tend to depend more on internal sources of information. To the extent that this is so, it could either limit their knowledge by reducing their contact with authoritative sources, or it could increase their knowledge if local leaders and organisations are well informed.
3. Membership of voluntary associations will be treated in a different category from other forms of local attachment. Kornhauser⁽²⁶⁾ has posited that they are

an essential part of the democratic infrastructure, helping to formulate and channel the views of individuals up to the polity on the one hand, and acting as a channel of information from the government on the other. Almond and Verba find this view confirmed, at least in as much as organisation members feel themselves to be associated with the input and output processes of the political system:

The organisational member, compared with the non-member, is likely to consider himself more competent as a citizen, to be a more active participant in politics, and to know and care more about politics. He is therefore more likely to be close to the model of the democratic citizen.(27)

They also find that the relationship is even stronger for members of political organisations, and for active members (i.e., office-holders) or organisations. These relationships between organisational membership and attitudes will be examined: the case study will allow a further test in terms of the actual performance of organisation members as against non-members. Are they more prone to be better informed by more authoritative sources, and, especially, are they more likely to have made deliberate efforts to acquire information from the council and even to make their views felt? In Scott Greer's view, if the local area is too small to have its own political structure, voluntary formal organisations 'are the only existing groups through which an inter-

dependence specific to the area (issuing in local problems) communicated through the press (as community issues) can become manifest in social action.'⁽²⁸⁾

4. The effect of dependence on community organisations and leaders for information and action on demolition, by, say, the parochially oriented and the most community attached, will depend on the view which these organisations have of their role in the situation. If they regard themselves as having a communal leadership responsibility they may make it their business to acquire and pass on information. The next stage will therefore be to investigate the efforts of these organisations and local leaders, their view of their role in the situation, and their attitude to demolition. Their response to this new 'external stimulus' (Morris and Mogeys) will probably depend on their view of their 'normal' role in the community. For example, a residents' association, regarding itself as interested specifically in the locality, is likely to find the demolition situation allows it full opportunity to perform according to its own view of its role: while a local party branch regarding itself as responsible more to the city party than to its membership catchment area, may well continue to take little interest in the local situation and therefore not act as an informative agency to its members on the subject.

Similarly, the demolition situation will be looked at from the point of view of all the other main actors - the town hall officials (of the planning, public health, housing, and housing architects departments), the local councillors and the party leaders - to assess the implications of their view of the situation for the political response of the local residents.

For all these groups - local leaders and organisations, officials, councillors and party leaders - there will be an account of:

- 1) Their view of their role.
- 2) Their objective contribution to the slum clearance process.
- 3) Their view of their goals and role in this situation.
- 4) The view of the interests and roles of other groups (including local people) in the situation.

These estimations of their roles will be compared with Byker people's expectations of them, and with the actual use made of leaders, representatives, and officials for information, and possibly as channels for action. If there is a certain set of shared attitudes to them, perhaps this can explain why certain potential channels of communication are not used.

Only such a total view of the situation will allow us

to see how far the local residents can participate politically. An analysis of the effect of living in a certain locality on the attitudinal predisposition to, and the institutional feasibility of, participation in politics is incomplete if account is not taken of the role of other groups which may limit popular participation.

This portion of the study has been conducted by observation, interview, and the examination of official documents, council minutes, and local newspapers.

5. Lastly, this study is concerned with the nature of the response to the decision to demolish Byker. This concerns approval or disapproval of the decision, and underlies all other consideration of the performance of local people. We would not expect action in the form of protest, if there is general approval of the scheme, though we may still expect people to act to acquire information about their future. But there is a further reason for interest in this aspect of the study.

Various American studies have associated concerted and aggressive action in defence of the locality against renewal schemes with stable neighbourhoods. Clarence-Davies III has written: 'In a sense we may say that stable and cohesive neighbourhoods when threatened with

change will project their antagonism outward against the city rather than consume their energies in internal struggle. (29)

He is concerned with areas subject to improvement as well as slum clearance areas, but his hypotheses seem to be applied to both cases. First he posits that change will produce an antagonistic response; and second that such a response in a cohesive neighbourhood will coalesce into group action. These hypotheses may be tested if Byker emerges as a cohesive locality.

Kaplan puts forward a rather more qualified set of hypotheses which may also be tested:

Organised opposition is more likely to appear in areas with a high percentage of home ownership, a predominance of one - or two - family houses, and a relatively stable population. It is less likely to appear in areas with a high degree of transiency and absentee ownership and a large number of tenements and rooming houses. While the former type of area tends to be a relatively integrated sub-community with traditions of its own, the slums tend to be incapable of organised neighbourhood action. (30)

And he goes on to say that the reaction seems to be more organised and hostile in a 'status-preserving' rather than a 'status-seeking' group.

How far the response to demolition can be associated with these social characteristics in Byker will be one of the questions asked in this study.

D. Summary:

The essential concern of this study is with the significance of the local community for political behaviour, with regard to the possibility of its supporting certain political attitudes and providing certain organisational means of political communication. We are interested therefore:-

- 1) In the prevailing political culture of the locality, and whether it may be called distinctive - thus typologising the locality. In differences of orientation between groups and individuals within the area.
- 2) In the degree to which the locality acts as a community for groups and individuals in certain spheres of their life.
- 3) In relating political orientation to community attachment to see whether the 'community' has any distinctive significance in the supporting of certain orientations.
 - hypothesis: That passive community attachment (i.e., excluding organisational membership) is associated with a distinctive orientation to local government participation.
- 4) In relating organisation membership to political orientation.

- hypothesis: That activism (i.e., organisational membership) is associated with a participatory orientation to local government.

5) In the place of local organisations, leaders and representatives in the locality - their roles, and their view of their roles.

6) In relating political orientation to actual performance in the case study.

- hypothesis: That those with an attitudinal propensity to participation are better informed of demolition plans, are more likely to have sought more information, and more likely to have used authoritative sources of information.

7) In relating community attachment to actual performance.

-hypothesis: That passive community attachment is associated with informal sources of information rather than authoritative sources.

8) In relating activism to actual performance.

- hypothesis: That active community attachment is associated with more information, seeking of information, and authoritative sources of information.

9) In understanding the demolition situation from the points of view of the actors involved be-

sides the public (local leaders and organisations, councillors, officials and party leaders), and assessing the influence of their view of the situation on the position of local residents (their information and their possibility of participation).

10. In the relation between the nature of the locality's response to demolition plans and its social characteristics.

Chapter 2

RESEARCH TECHNIQUE

The analysis of community attachment, political orientation, and the public's response to demolition plans was done largely by questionnaire.

A. The Questionnaire.

It was felt that the questionnaire would have to collect information by household* for the assessment of community attachment and of response to demolition. It was felt that in these two respects it was unreal to regard the individual as the unit, e.g., the husband may be strongly attached to the community network but only through his wife's friends, relations and neighbourly associations, etc.; and the wife, while being concerned about demolition, may leave the business of collecting information on it to her husband. The difficulty is, however, that the questions on attitudes (political orientation, attitudes to demolition) can only be applied to individuals. This means that there is some question of the validity of relating attitu-

* In the terms of the 1961 Census, 'A household comprises one person living alone or a group of persons living together, partaking of meals prepared together and benefiting from a common housekeeping.'

dinal information (collected from individuals) to behavioural information (collected from households).

For reasons of economy of time and therefore money, interviewers were not instructed to contact specifically the husband or the wife. That is, while they had to contact one of these two, it did not matter which one. As expected, this led to an over-representation of women interviewees. Since most of the information related to the behaviour of both of them it was felt that this was justifiable, but it may mean that the responses to the attitudinal questions (which refer to the interviewee's attitudes only) may not be wholly representative of the community. In fact, it was found in the pilot and full-scale survey that the differences between males and females in all but 'political orientation' attitudinal questions was rarely significant.

Mr. Louis Moss of the Government Social Survey suggested that the problem of the representativeness of political orientation questions would be reduced if they were compared sex for sex with the national data. The differential between men and women for the two sets of data, over the various orientation questions, could then be compared to assess whether the small sample of Byker men seemed to deviate similarly from Byker women in their attitudes, as the national sample of men deviated

from the national sample of women. This technique has been used.

The total number of households in the Byker area, according to the October 1966 electoral register, was 4,508. This register was the latest complete one available and the sample was drawn from it. The sample drawn was then checked against the list of amendments which were published in the early part of 1968 for inclusion in the next register. This allowed the exclusion from the sample of newly demolished houses.

The intention was to have responses from around 10% of this household population of 4,508, i.e., about 451. Anticipating a 20% non-response rate, 556 households (slightly less than 20% over 451) were drawn at regular intervals from the electoral register.

In fact, the non-response rate was about 20% and 443 questionnaires were completed. The reasons for non-response are given below.

Number Byker Households	-	approx. 4,508	
Households drawn	-	556	
Not contacted due to:-	temporary absence		= 1
	no reply		= 42
	empty house		= 15
	incapacity (senile, etc.)		= 4
	ill-health		= 5
	Refusals (8.3%)		= 46
Number of households interviewed			= 443 (79.7%)

A pilot survey was run in January 1968, and the final form of the questionnaire was administered over a period of seven weeks from the last week in January. Four professional interviewers were employed and one experienced student interviewer also helped the researcher considerably.

Comparability of Survey Data

Some indication of the representativeness of the sample may be gained from a comparison with the 1966 10% census, but there are several reservations. First, and most important, this survey extracted demographic data on one or other householder, whereas the census extracts data on all individuals within selected households.* Second, the 1966 Census is given in its most local form for 'enumeration districts'. Byker area includes eight of these districts, but two overlap into other areas which are very different from Byker, especially in housing-type: these two therefore have been omitted from the census data. Third, unfortunately the age-ranges are not exactly the same in the two samples. The Byker sample, because it was drawn from the electoral register, begins at the voting age of 21 and age-groups are classified in tens from 21 on; the census age-data is given from zero classified into age groups covering ranges of between 5 and 15 years. Age information is therefore grouped into broad categories which are nearly comparable.

* For this reason, information relating to the household as a whole is more accurate - see Table 3.

Table 1

	-	Census figures from age 20.	
<u>Sex of Adults</u>	-	Byker figures from age 21.	
		<u>1966</u>	<u>Byker</u>
		<u>Census</u>	<u>Sample</u>
Male		48.4%	31.6%
Female		51.6%	68.4%
		<u>100 %</u>	<u>100 %</u>
Base		946	443

Table 2

		<u>Age of Adults</u>					
<u>Census</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>		<u>Total</u>	
<u>Range</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Census</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Census</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Census</u>	<u>Sample</u>
20-29	21-30	19.7%	24.8%	19.6%	20.8%	19.6%	22.1%
30-59	31-60	58.1%	40.5%	49.7%	48.6%	53.8%	46.2%
60-64	61-65	9.8%	9.8%	9.6%	9.3%	9.7%	9.3%
65+	over 65	12.5%	24.8%	21.1%	21.1%	16.9%	22.3%
		<u>100.1%</u>	<u>99.9%</u>	<u>100 %</u>	<u>99.8%</u>	<u>100 %</u>	<u>99.9%</u>
Base		458	140	489	303	947	439 *

* Computer errors have occasionally led to the total figure being slightly less than it should, as here.

The female sample proportions were very close to the census proportions, but due to the method of applying the questionnaire males over 65 are heavily over-represented. This indicates that the information on females will be more valid than on males, where age is an influential variable. Taking the total age figures there is a tendency to over-represent the oldest and the youngest age-group due to the male disproportion. But it was found that none of the differences between the census and the sample total figures were statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.* Comparing information referring to households rather than to persons we find that the sample and the census seem to match.

Table 3

	<u>Housing Tenure:</u>	
	<u>Census</u>	<u>Sample</u>
Owner-Occupier	8.3%	9.7%
Renting from Council	13.9%	17.6%
Renting Privately	76.8%	71.6%
Other	1.0%	1.1%
	<u>100 %</u>	<u>100 %</u>
Base	517	443

The slight differences (which were not significant at the 95% confidence level) between figures for council - and private-renting, may be explained by the fact that by 1968 many houses had passed into council ownership under compulsory purchase orders.

* That is, the differences were not significant at the 5% level using the standard error significance test.

B. Other Research Methods

Much of the research was not done by sample survey. Those parts relating to the activities and attitudes of councillors, officials, party leaders and local organisations were collated from formal interviews, and the consultation of official documents, council minutes and the local press. Altogether, about 45 formal interviews of a structured or semi-structured nature were conducted with 38 people; the council minutes were consulted from 1952 to date, and the local press from 1962.

The researcher also participated in local activities and organisations, and interviewed local people and leaders informally.

PART II
BACKGROUND

Chapter 3

SLUM CLEARANCE - Law and Process

This section will outline the legal powers and obligations of the local authority with regard to slum clearance. It will then go on to deal with Newcastle's slum clearance programme, and the application of the law to Byker. Finally, it will outline the process of slum clearance as it involves the various departments of the civic centre.

A. The Law ⁽³¹⁾

Until very recently, the mechanism of town and country planning has been based on the Town and Country Planning Act 1947.⁽³²⁾ Planning Acts since that date have adjusted the powers of the local authorities but not in substance, and in 1962 most of the provisions of the 1947 Act were re-enacted.

Under the Act, every planning authority (that is, every county council and county borough) was required to produce a plan for the area in its responsibility and submit it for the approval of the Minister of Housing and Local Government. These plans were to be updated every five years and in the meantime the authority was

expected to allow only development which was substantially according to the plan. Any serious departure from the plan required the approval of the Minister.

At the stage of the formulation of the plan, a local authority may prepare the way for future compulsory acquisition in two ways. It may 'designate' land for its use or the use of government departments - this procedure allows acquisition of land which ordinary compulsory purchase powers may not be sufficient to acquire. And it may then, or at any later date, request ministerial approval for the scheduling of 'comprehensive development areas.' The C.D.A. mechanism also provides wider powers than the local authority would otherwise have, by allowing it thus to acquire areas to be redeveloped as a whole for any purpose defined in the development plan. C.D.A.'s are usually inner-city areas, and may be applied, for example, where an area consists of obsolescent or badly laid out buildings rather than slums.

Newcastle produced its first development plan in 1953 and then 'designated' only two sites for compulsory acquisition (one for the G.P.O., and one for the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of National Insurance and Pensions). It was sparing also in its use of comprehensive development powers, scheduling only one area for redevelopment as a C.D.A. (Hindhaugh Street). Since then,

until Spring, 1967, ten more C.D.A's were approved by the Council and one more was approved, then withdrawn.

In 1954, the Housing Repairs and Rents Act ⁽³³⁾ required local authorities to submit to the Ministry: estimates of the number of unfit houses in their area, and their proposals for dealing with them. This signalled the resumption of the pre-war clearance programme. Newcastle estimated that 4,645 of its 88,216 houses were unfit, and of these 2,136 were to be demolished in the next five years, under the 1936 Housing Act. The Council also proposed a programme of clearance which will be dealt with later in this section.

The 1957 Housing Act laid down standards of unfitness and required local authorities to deal with 'unfit' houses. First, every authority has a duty to carry out inspections 'from time to time' to identify unfit houses in their area. Having identified them it is required to deal with them either by forcing the owner to improve the house if he can do so 'at reasonable expense', or to demolish them itself, or to close them, or to improve them itself for temporary use.

The standards of unfitness are not laid down in the Act, but the factors which are to be taken into account are given as:

- 'a) repair;
- b) stability;

- c) freedom from damp;
- d) natural lighting;
- e) ventilation;
- f) water supply;
- g) drainage and sanitary convenience;
- h) facilities for storage, preparation and cooking of food and for the disposal of waste water, and the house shall be deemed unfit for human habitation if and only if it is so far defective in one or more of the said matters that it is not reasonably suitable for occupation in that condition.'(34)

Clearance may be achieved under two main headings.

The first is Part III of the Housing Act. Under this the authority may declare an area to be a Clearance Area if the houses 'are unfit for human habitation, or are by reason of their bad arrangement, or the narrowness or bad arrangement of the street, dangerous or injurious to the health of the inhabitants of the area, and that the other buildings, if any, in the area are for a like reason dangerous or injurious to the health of the said inhabitants.'(35)

Also under this part of the Act, the authority may declare an area to be a Redevelopment Area. Broadly, this section operates where an 'area contains fifty or more working-class houses' at least one third of which are overcrowded, unfit, or badly arranged, where 'the industrial and social conditions of their district are such that the area should be used to a substantial

extent for housing the working-classes', and where, 'it is expedient in connection with the provision of housing accommodation for the working-classes that the area should be redeveloped as a whole,' (36)

Under Part V of the Act, the local authority may demolish houses not for reason so much of their condition as to provide land for the erection of new houses.

'It shall be the duty of every local authority to consider housing conditions in their district and the needs of the district with respect to the provision of further housing accommodation ... and ... to prepare and submit to the Minister proposals for the provision of new houses, ...' (37)

For this purpose, the local authority has power 'to acquire any land, including any houses or buildings thereon, as a site for the erection of houses ...' (38)

Only minor modifications have been made to these sections of the 1957 Housing Act. A 1968 White Paper, 'Old Houses into New Homes' (39) has proposed, among other things, that a further criterion be taken into account in the estimation of unfitness: the internal arrangement of a house. The same White Paper has proposed an alteration to the system of compensation laid down in the Housing Act 1957, the Slum Clearance (Compensation) Act 1956, and the Housing (Slum Clearance) Compensation Act, 1965.

The existing system of compensation is summed up in the 1968 White Paper:

'The basis of compensation is that if a house is unfit for human habitation it cannot be assumed to have any value. The compensation is therefore for "site-value" alone: that is, the owner is paid no more for his land than he would be if there were no house on it at all. Over the year certain exceptions to this principle have grown up. Owner-occupiers now never receive less for an unfit house than the gross value for rating purposes. If a house has been well maintained in spite of its unfitness, a "well-maintained" payment is made. For owner-occupied houses this is four times the rateable value: for others, it is twice. If an owner-occupier bought a house which is now unfit, between 1939 and 1955 (when very few slums were being cleared) and has had it for less than fifteen years, he gets the full market value of the house.'(40)

The White Paper proposes that changes in the basis of compensation should be introduced and backdated to houses dealt with since 23rd April 1968. These changes would have the effect of guaranteeing all owner-occupiers (of fit and unfit houses) who owned the house on that date or for ~~at least two years~~ the full market value of their houses. Well-maintained payment for such houses would then cease, but for tenanted houses it would be increased to four times the rateable value of the house, limited by the market value of the house.

It is important to clarify the position of the tenant in this compensation procedure. If he is a tenant of a house declared 'unfit' but 'well-maintained' then part of the well-maintained payment may be apportioned to him by the local authority. But if he is the tenant of a 'fit' house (or of an unfit house which is not well-maintained)

he receives nothing. It may therefore be in the interests of the landlord to have his house declared 'fit', and of the tenant to have it declared 'unfit'.

Public inquiries follow both the original submission to the Minister of a development plan, and the submission of proposals for compulsory purchase under either the 1947 Planning Act or the 1957 Housing Act, if there are public objections. Customarily, the public inquiry on a compulsory purchase order concerns the terms of compensation for the owner of property, which depend on its classification as a fit or unfit building. When the council approves a compulsory purchase order for a clearance area, within six months it must submit its resolution to the Minister. At this time it must also advertise the submission in the local press and 'serve a notice to the like effect on every owner, lessee and occupier (except tenants for a month or any period less than a month) of land in the defined area ...'(41) The exclusion of tenants paying monthly or more often has recently been remedied in a government circular requiring their inclusion, according to Newcastle's Housing Department.(42) In any case, the city's Public Health Department, which is responsible for sending the notices, already notified all tenants whom it felt might profit from a 'good maintenance' claim.

A Ministry of Housing and Local Government inspector

conducts the inquiry, hearing the objections and checking the classification of properties as unfit. The Minister's eventual decision is sent to the council and objectors, and published in the local press.

New legislation⁽⁴³⁾ (passed on 25 October 1968) is partly intended to remedy two defects of the present system which have been touched on here: cumbersome and slow appeals procedure, and 'inadequate participation' and information of the individual citizen. Approval of the development plan may take '3 to 4 years', and, due to the pressure on inspectors of inquiries concerning planning permission, there are also considerable delays in the approval of compulsory purchase of clearance areas. At the same time, the public inquiry system allows little contribution from the public except in the form of objections, and the notification procedure until recently only contacted a small proportion of the affected population.

The proposed planning procedure is based on the report of the Planning Advisory Group, 'The Future of Development Plans' (1965). In brief, it advocates the treatment of development planning in two parts, and the delegation of responsibility for some planning appeals from the Minister to the individual inspectors. In place of the detailed development plan produced every five years, there would be a 'structure plan' which would indicate 'the broad basic

pattern of development and the transport system.' This would be submitted to the Minister for his approval, and for the consideration of objections which will necessarily refer to 'issues of general policy and principle.'⁽⁴⁴⁾

The second part of the development plan would consist of 'local' or 'action area' plans detailing proposals for areas within the structure plan. These 'will not be submitted for ministerial approval but must conform with the policies laid down in the urban plan or county plan,'⁽⁴⁵⁾ and, in addition, action area plans 'will be used as supporting evidence for compulsory purchase orders or other statutory action that is taken in the area.'⁽⁴⁶⁾ Instead of there being a ministerial inquiry,

'the authority will be required to afford an opportunity for detailed comments, representations or objections to be made; and they must take these views into account in deciding whether to amend the plan before formally adopting it. The Minister will have reserve powers to call in a local plan and deal with it himself where exceptional circumstances warrant it.'⁽⁴⁷⁾

The essential differences between the two systems from the point of view of this study are that:

- 1) The opportunity to object to detailed proposals (e.g., affecting buildings) comes only with the local plans under the new system.
- 2) Objections are then to be made to the local authority concerned and not to the Minister.

- 3) Initially at least, contacts with the public on local plans are to be consultative - the authority 'will be required to consult with local interests during the plan-making process, before resolving to deposit a plan formally for public objection.' (48)

In the Planning Advisory Group Report, great emphasis is placed on the consultation and information of the public:

'The new system increases local responsibility in planning and this places an even greater obligation on authorities to explain their proposals both to the public at large and to the individuals affected. Special care should be taken to explain not only the proposals but also the processes involved - the rights of objection, arrangements for rehousing, help with relocating businesses and other assistance that will be given to those affected. ...' (49)

The ways in which this can be achieved have been examined by the parliamentary Skeffington Committee.

Lastly, it should be pointed out that the 'present right of objection to compulsory purchase orders will, of course, be maintained.' In effect, action area plans will be used as supporting evidence for such orders in the place of 'designation' in the development plan.

The point to be made here is that in the changed procedure, the authority of the council is increased; the potential influence on plans of the public is expanded, provided two important conditions are satisfied. The first of these conditions is that the local authority

genuinely opens its plans to public influence, and the second is that the public know how to, and do, take the opportunity to make views felt. Much depends on the attitude of the council, especially when it is considered that planning is to be a staged process, each stage adding to the power of the council and the individual only becoming aware of precisely how his interests are to be affected in the final stage. Thus, at the structure stage when the plan is up for ministerial inquiry, it is too little detailed to warrant individual complaints; acceptance of the structure plan will lend support to the action area plans (because it has broadly identified the areas), and objections to the action area plans can, in most cases, only be made to the executive body, the council; acceptance of the action area plan 'will be used as supporting evidence for compulsory purchase orders.'

B. Newcastle's Clearance Programme.

In November, 1952, a Mr. T.A. Porter was allowed to appear in full council to present a petition. It was signed 'by some 458 persons living in insanitary and dilapidated property in the city ...' and appealed for 'a plan of slum clearance by degrees ...' and for the reservation of a quota of council houses for clearance tenants. 'We therefore respectfully petition the City Council to instruct

the Housing and Health Committees to take the necessary action to implement our requests.'⁽⁵⁰⁾

In the same meeting and in answer to a Labour motion requesting 'the Health Committee to consider and report upon the steps to be taken to ensure the early commencement of slum clearance,' Councillor Mrs. McCambridge (Chairman of the Health Committee) declared: 'We are so conscious of the fact [of insanitary conditions] that we have already set up an Insanitary Properties sub-committee, which has already met'

In the following year, in a full council meeting of May, 1953, Mrs. McCambridge was able to announce that her committee had produced a slum clearance programme 'to deal with these areas during the next ten years.' And in a meeting in July of the same year when the programme was approved, she said: 'We were in fact dealing with the problem before we had notification from the appropriate Minister asking our intentions.' The government circular requiring information on local authorities' proposals for dealing with slums (anticipating the 1954 Housing Repairs and Rent Act), was not, it seems, the first stimulant to local interest in slum clearance.

The ten year programme of slum clearance established a priority order for slum areas - the Scotswood Road (Noble Street) area in the west of the city was to receive

first treatment. Three of the other areas mentioned were in Byker - Parker Street, Thornborough Street, and Walker Road. In fact, they were the older parts of Byker, built in the first thrust down towards the river from Shields Road before 1887.⁽⁵¹⁾ Most of Byker was to remain untouched, however.

Slum clearance, at this time, was regarded as a matter for the Public Health Department. The ten year programme was produced by it on the basis of health criteria according to the 1936 Housing Act. The 1951 Development Plan produced by the City Engineer and Planning Officer and becoming operative in March, 1953, made no mention of slum clearance. It was not then envisaged as an opportunity for planning.

The Progressive Party were in power at this time and until 1958. Both it and the Labour Party were committed to slum clearance, but Labour, under Councillor T.D. Smith, made the matter a central issue and applied pressure in the Council for faster action. In a council debate in December 1954, Mr. Smith began: 'I want if I can today to carry on the debate where we left it two years ago. It is two years since we had a debate on slum clearance.' And he went on to appeal for the construction of multi-storey buildings in the Shieldfield area of the city to allow the people to stay there at rents they could afford. In November 1957, the Progressives announced the beginning of the second wave of

clearance within the ten year programme. Mr. Smith still complained; the slow rate of rehousing was holding up clearance: 'I am one of the representatives on the Slum Clearance Committee and I would say, looking at the records, that this is one of our biggest single headaches.'

In 1958, Labour, with Councillor Smith at its head, came to power. A new five year rehousing programme for slum clearance areas (still only including Parker/Thornborough Streets in Byker) was drawn up by the Joint Subcommittee as to Slum Clearance on 14th November 1958. But by 1962 the Conservative Party (formed largely from the Progressives) was complaining of slow progress on fulfilment of the original ten year clearance programme. Speaking of the Thornborough Street clearance area, Councillor Trotter (Conservative) said in June 1962: 'This scheme was originally approved in a ten year plan in 1953, and it was estimated that it would be represented in 1961 and clearance would take place in 1963.' Labour agreed that there had been a delay according to the original ten year programme, but not according to the plans they made on coming to power. Mr. Smith claimed of the Conservatives that: 'We could have brought the programme forward if you had not opposed us getting land. You bear the responsibility for Parker Street and

Thornborough Street ... It is true that it [the programme] has been amended. It was amended because we had to replan the city.'

Two points might be noted here. First, the shortage of building land mentioned in Mr. Smith's speech had forced the council to acquire large estates outside the city (Newbiggin Hall and Westerhope in 1957), and had become an argument for further clearance of land for building (though new building usually accommodates fewer people in the same space). Second, a Planning Department had been formed in 1960 under a City Planning Officer, Dr. Wilfred Burns. This heralded a new approach to clearance in Newcastle.

Although some of the houses scheduled as unfit in the ten year programme of 1953 were still due for clearance in 1968, in 1963 the council claimed that the slum problem was now small. The clearance programme announced in the new Department's 1963 Development Plan Review was, however, a vast increase on the figures submitted to the government in 1954. Newcastle then proposed to demolish 2,136 of 4,645 unfit houses in the following five years; but in 1963 it proposed that 9,400 dwellings would be cleared by 1967 (involving 10,000 families), and 15,200 houses between 1968 and 1981. These were mainly houses regarded as

obsolescent rather than unfit. It was the Planning Committee which announced these proposals; the more limited approach of the Public Health Department had been superseded.

In spite of the increased size of the clearance programme, the emphasis in the Council had now been switched to the problem of modernising old buildings to prevent them from becoming slums. The Labour Party Policy Advisory Committee (the guiding committee of the then Council), in announcing the Council's Five Year Capital Works Programme in February 1965, mentioned that 'well within the Five Year Programme the last tenant will have been removed from the last "statutory" slum dwelling, but long before then the resources of the Council will be directed to the short-term modernisation and long-term revitalisation of houses which, in a short while, would otherwise become slums.'

This view of the slum problem was repeated by the new Leader of the Council (now Conservative), Councillor Arthur Grey, in December 1967, '... as far as the rehousing programme is concerned, the end is in sight.' As the City Planning Officer (until February 1968), Dr. W. Burns has written: ⁽⁵²⁾ 'The main problem

is in dealing with houses that are socially outworn, if not physically useless, and this calls for new thought in planning the housing programme' which 'therefore, provides for the maximum possible clearance of older houses combined with a massive improvement programme: the standard of improvement being determined by the programmed life of the property.'

The whole of Byker was included in the clearance proposals contained in the 1963 Development Plan Review, drawn up by the new Planning Department. The original areas scheduled in the 1953 Public Health Department programme were included now as priority areas. These were coloured red on the planning maps and were for demolition between 1963 and 1967. Following these came the newly proposed areas, coloured blue for clearance between 1968 and 1971, and yellow for clearance between 1971 and 1976. The timing of clearance for Byker was given as follows:

Table 4 overleaf ...

(This is not a complete list of Byker Streets but of proposed C.P.O. areas.)

<u>Table 4</u>	<u>Clearance dates</u>	<u>Redevelopment dates</u>	<u>Areas Cleared by Aug. 1968 or in process</u>
Burton Street	1962/67	1962/67	Part
Clive Terrace	"	1968/71	
Byker Bank	"	-	Yes
Albion Row	"	1962/67	Yes
Walker Terrace	"	1968/71	
Headlam Street	"	"	Yes - Part
Grace Street	"	"	
Parker Street/ Thornborough St.	"	1962/67	Yes
Gordon Road	"	1968/71	
Raby Street	"	1962/67	Small part
Stephen Street	1968/71	-	
Melrose Street	"	-	
St. Lawrence	"	-	Small part
St. Peter's	"	-	
Bolam Street	"	1971/76	
Chirton Street	"	"	
Burnaby Street	"	"	
Avondale Road	1971/76	"	
Solway Street	1971/76	"	

Whereas the 'red' areas of Parker Street/Thornborough Street were originally scheduled by the Public Health Department as unfit under the 1936 Housing Act, and cleared under Part 3 of the 1957 Housing Act as 'unfit for human habitation', large parts of the 'blue' and 'yellow' areas were not unfit, even by the more exacting standards of the 1957 Act. These areas could be cleared under the 1947 (or re-enacted 1962) Planning Act as 'designated' land or comprehensive development areas, which would not require evidence of their unfitness but rather of the council's need of the land for necessary development. Or these areas could be cleared under the 1957 Housing Act Part 3 as land 'the acquisition of which is reasonably necessary for the purpose of securing a cleared area of convenient shape and dimensions, and any adjoining land the acquisition of which is reasonably necessary for the satisfactory development or use of cleared land.'⁽⁵³⁾ Or if these lands could not be thus 'reasonably' included with unfit areas, Part 5 of the Housing Act could be applied permitting clearance of land 'as a site for the erection of houses.'

In fact, in Newcastle the Planning Act has been applied rarely for clearance of areas required for housing, and according to the Planning Department⁽⁵⁴⁾ this is at least partly due to the receipt of directives from

the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. The Housing Act cannot be so sweepingly applied, so its application involves a more protracted legal process which makes the timing of demolition and rehousing less predictable.

The Housing Act only is being applied to Byker, initially Part 3 but 'somewhere along the line between the areas coloured red, blue and yellow, Part 5 will have to be brought in.'⁽⁵⁵⁾ In fact, in January 1968 an area (Winship Terrace) was submitted to the Minister for compulsory acquisition under Part 5 'to allow the Council's housing clearance to proceed according to programme, to allow the redevelopment of Byker to be carried out comprehensively and to allow the erection of houses to modern internal and environmental standards.'⁽⁵⁶⁾

By August, 1968, demolition had still only affected the areas marked in Table 8. This concerned about one third of dwellings in the area, mainly those on its periphery, leaving the core of Byker untouched.

C. The departmental process:

A short description of the responsibilities of the various departments involved in the clearance process will aid later analysis of their inter-relations and

relations with the public. The Parker Street area will be used as an example of the timing of the process.

1. Initiation

Until the formation of the Planning Department, this seems to have lain largely in the Public Health Department.

The list of areas to be cleared in the Development Plan Review 1963, seems to have been compiled out of a 'walking tour' of the city by the Development Plan Officer. (57)

2. Classification

The Public Health Department is called in to review the areas classifying them as 'fit' or 'unfit' (marked respectively grey and pink on the planning maps). Public health inspectors at this stage, pay one short visit, then about a fortnight later a longer visit (30-40 minutes) to every household. (58)

3. Representation

The Public Health Department's zoning is then 'represented' to the Housing Committee (to the Health Committee before the Conservative administration's 1967 regrouping of functions) - Parker Street was represented to the Health Committee in February 1963.

4. Boundaries of C.P.O. areas.

The Planning Department then establishes the bound-

aries of the C.P.O. areas. Boundaries may be drawn around fit houses adjoining unfit ones so that their demolition may be achieved under Part 3 of the 1957 Housing Act.

5. Establishment of ownership of property.

The City Legal Department checks the ownership of all property by contacting owners and agents. It then reports to the full council advising the compulsory purchase order (C.P.O.).

The Legal Department checks ownership before advising the C.P.O., because the Housing Act allows a delay of only six months before the approval by the council of an order and its submission to the Minister. (59)

6. Approval by Council and Submission to Minister.

The Housing Committee (previously the Health Committee) 'reports' the C.P.O. to the full council for its approval, prior to the submission of the order to the Minister of Housing and Local Government. Parker Street was reported, approved and submitted in July 1963.

7. Notice of C.P.O.

The Public Health Department then notifies by letter owners, lessees, and tenants paying rent more often than monthly. The Public Health Department has also on its own initiative notified tenants who might profit from making a good maintenance claim, until recent directives

made it obligatory that all should be informed. (60)

The notice must specify how and when objections are to be made.

8. Public Inquiry

The Ministry advertises the order in the local press and, if there are objections, calls a public inquiry at which a Ministry inspector adjudicates. He hears the case of the Council, put by the Planning Department and the Public Health Department, and the case of objectors, put by themselves or their solicitors. Objections are often put only in writing, and are rarely more than formal claims for reclassification of property from unfit to fit.

The Parker Street inquiry was held in December 1963, and about 45 objections were made concerning about 323 holdings out of about 800.

9. Confirmation of C.P.O.

The report of the inspector is submitted to the Minister. His decision is then conveyed to the interested parties giving the main points arising in the inquiry, the inspector's findings, and the reasons for the Minister's decision.

The Parker Street area was confirmed in July 1964.

10. Evaluation of Property.

The Estates Surveyor of the Property Department

assesses the value of the property for compensation. Previously, this would be according to their classification as fit or unfit, and well or badly maintained - now most owner-occupiers will receive full market value, but tenanted houses will still be compensated on the basis of site value plus good maintenance awards (see section - 'Slum Clearance - The Law').

11. Housing Inspection for Council Housing

The Housing Department sends an inspector to each house to assess the needs, suitability for new housing, rent capacity, and preference of area for families to be rehoused. The inspectors claim that the interviews take between 10 and 30 minutes. (61)

12. Rehousing

The Housing Lettings Officer offers council houses to each family. At least two offers may be made and often more - they are made, not together as alternatives, but in succession. If all offers are refused the council may take out a court injunction to remove the occupier, but this action is rarely or never applied: the threat is enough.

13. Demolition

This is carried out by the City Engineer's Department. According to the chairman of the Housing Management Committee in 1955, clearance occurs 'approximately six to eight months after the acquisition of the site by the council.' (62)

The Parker Street area was demolished from December 1965.



A BYKER STREET AND BACK ALLEY



Chapter 4THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN BYKER

Byker is an inner suburb of Newcastle about one mile from the centre of the city on the way to Wallsend, and beyond that to North Shields and the coast. Though the name Byker is historic, it does not now correspond to any administrative division of the city. It consists of three wards, two of whose boundaries run well into neighbouring suburbs.

Yet, even to the stranger, Byker is quite clearly marked off from the areas around it. To the north is Shields Road, a main road and an important shopping centre, and beyond it the suburb of Heaton; to the west, in the direction of the city is a small river, the Ouseburn, which has carved out for itself a broad valley spanned by Byker bridge which takes Shields Road into the city; to the east up a steep hill surmounted by Byker parish church is a relatively major road (Union Road running into Alledale Road) which is the border line of a council house estate beyond; and, lastly, to the south is the river Tyne. Only on the south side is there any doubt by local residents about the limits of Byker. Close to the river there is a small area called St. Peters, which some people distinguish from Byker.

These boundaries are about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile long to the north and south, about 1 mile long to the east, and about $\frac{1}{3}$ mile from Byker bridge down the Ouseburn to the Tyne in the west. Within this enclave are rows of narrow streets, regularly crossing each other at right angles and resolutely ignoring the contours of the area as they run straight up the steep hill. They are mostly still left cobbled except for the few main streets. The terraced two-storey houses which line them are, in fact, flats of the one-up-one-down variety, their doors opening straight out over the polished step on to the pavement. At their backs, their small walled-in yards face each other over narrow back-alleys.

Near the river Tyne, and towards the Ouseburn, the houses run into factories, mechanics' yards, warehouses and garages. Many of these are small local businesses, but there are some big firms among them, all contributing to the smoke and heavy lorry traffic which shudders up and down the narrow streets around them. To name but a few of the larger firms, there are: Spiller's Mill, Domestos, British Engines, Hawthorn Leslie, John Porter docks, and Shepherd's Scrap Metal. In the north-east, just outside the boundaries of Byker along Shields Road, there is another big firm, one of the biggest employers in the area: Parson's engineering works.

But until 100 years ago Byker's character was very

different. In the middle of the eighteenth century, John Wesley is supposed to have gazed on the hill which now bears these dismal streets and called it 'the nearest place to heaven on earth.' William Whellan, writing just before it became what it is, in 1855 described Byker as follows:

Byker is a township and village formerly held by the tenure of grand sergeantry by a family who bore the local name, but is now the property of several proprietors The village of Byker is pleasantly situated on an eminence commanding an extensive prospect of the town of Newcastle, the river Tyne, and the northern part of the county of Durham [across the Tyne]. It is said to be a place of great antiquity, but of this we have little more than tradition to warrant the assertion. Edward II dates letters from Byker and on the next day from Newcastle.(63)

As far as can be gathered from A History of Northumberland by Northumberland County History Committee, Byker first appears in 1198, as a township in the 'sergeantry' of William of Byker. A 'sergeantry' included three townships, and with Byker were the neighbouring Shieldfield and Pandon. Byker seems, eventually, to have passed successively into the hands of the earls of Arundel and Northumberland. But from 1463 the corporation of Newcastle held it as tenants. For a short period from 1537 the ownership of Byker passed to the King until,

In 1543 the manor of Byker was sold to James Lawson of Newcastle, who was also the owner of Cramlington and West Matfen. The overlordship of Byker was restored to the seventh earl of Northumberland with the rest of his estates in 1557 and remained in the family.(64)

It remained in the hands of the Lawsons under the overlordship of the earls of Northumberland until,

William Wright, who assumed the name of Lawson by Royal licence on inheriting the Lawson estates, sold Byker in separate portions in the early part of the nineteenth century; the land north of Shields Road was sold to Sir Matthew White Ridley. Byker Bar was sold in 1840 to Matthew Plummer, who mortgaged it to Edward Collingswood of Dissington. It was divided up into building lots and sold in 1872.(65)*

It was during William Wright's ownership of Byker that the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 widened the boundaries of Newcastle (among other boroughs) to include the townships of Westgate, Elswick, Jesmond, Heaton and Byker. This opened the way to the burst of suburban building which followed. A brief account of this is in Middlebrook's history:

Byker from about 1870, and Heaton from 1880 made almost the same "prodigious progress" as Elswick. In 1851 Shields Road was a country lane running through fields between the village of Heaton with 435 inhabitants to the north and the township of Byker with 7,040 to the south. In 1878, to give easier access to these eastern suburbs from the centre of the town, a private company opened Byker Bridge as a toll bridge over the broad Ouseburn valley. By 1887 the built-up area extended from Shields Road southwards up Raby Street into Byker as far as Norfolk Road and northwards up Heaton Road as far as Heaton Station, though the streets were marked out up to Meldon Terrace, with a farm and Heaton Hall standing in open countryside beyond. By 1900 the corporation had bought Byker Bridge and made it toll free; new streets branched off from Heaton Road as far as Simonside Terrace; while Raby Street, street-lined on both sides, now ran right through to St. Peter's. By 1911 the population of Heaton was 21,912 and Heaton Road had been built up to the far end. Byker, on the other hand, with a population that had swollen to 48,709 now merged indistinguishably into Walker as Elswick did into Benwell.(66)

* Annex 4 - Statement as to Sales of Property.

The scale of this development can best be seen by reference to population figures for Byker:

1801	-	3,254	1871	-	10,704	Area:
1811	-	3,029	1881	-	21,011	687 acres to 1901,
1821	-	3,852	1891	-	32,332	then 878 acres to
1831	-	5,176	1901	-	45,460	1921.
1841	-	6,024	1911	-	48,709	
1851	-	7,040	1921	-	51,458	
1861	-	7,663				

The area of Byker throughout this period was larger than, but contained, the area now known as Byker, which has remained almost unchanged since the early years of this century until the demolition in the latter half of the 1960's.*

This rapid building programme was associated with a change in the industrial character of the area. Byker, with the rest of Tyneside, was characterised until the middle of the nineteenth century by a multitude of small industries as well as the relatively large coal-mining industry. The valley of the Tyne was littered with iron foundries and forges, collieries, lead mines, glass-houses, breweries and refineries, chemical works, shipbuilding yards, potteries, soap factories, dyers and copperas works, and much of this industry was concentrated on the fringe of Byker where the Ouseburn runs into the Tyne. According to Mackenzie:

Byker township has no collieries; but it contains two glass-houses; three wind flour-

* Annexes I, 2, 3 - Maps of Byker 1897, 1904, 1967.

mills, one steam flour-mill, and two mills for grinding flint; one lead factory; one flax mill; one sal ammoniac works; two copperas works; one small tannery; one small skinners; and a glue factory.(67)

But after 1850 many of these small industries were in decline, as new large scale industries took their place. Tyneside's iron industry was unable to compete with its rivals in Teesside and West Durham for quality and accessibility of ore. But as the iron industry built up in these parts, the coal-mines further north were increasingly called on for coal for smelting. The increasing use of the steam engine and gas for lighting also contributed to this developing demand. Newcastle became the focus of the coal industry for Northumberland and North Durham. Direct rail links were built from the pits to the Tyne docks, and according to Middlebrook this improvement of shipping facilities allowed 'coal exports from the Tyne to increase more than five-fold between 1850 and 1913.'(68)

This development of shipping facilities took a further step when in 1852 the first sea-going iron screw collier was designed and built on the Tyne. This, according to Middlebrook, was the response to the growing threat of the Midlands coal industry's domination of the London market. New rail links had put the Midlands in easy contact with London, and the North's coal industry had to respond with more efficient modes of transport. Whether or not there

was such a causal link, this new shipbuilding and associated engineering industry now grew up on the back of the coal industry. The demand for powerful and iron-clad ships was further increased in 1854 with the Crimean War.

It was during this period up until the end of the nineteenth century that the great shipbuilding firms of the Tyne were born and developed. Only Smith's had its origin before this time in the previous century. Hawthorn Leslie's was created in 1885 out of a combination of Hawthorn's engineering works at St. Peters, and Leslie's shipbuilding works at Hebburn; Swan Hunter's came into being in 1903 out of an amalgamation of Coult's shipyards at Low Walker and Swan and Hunter's shipyard at Wallsend; Parson's opened its electrical works in Heaton in 1889, and its steam turbine works at Wallsend in 1898; Armstrong's began as a small hydraulic engineering company in 1847 and expanded into shipping with Mitchell's yard (of Walker) in 1868.

It was this industrial development which brought with it the need for large settlements of workers along the river Tyne. The Byker area was well-placed for such a settlement, near Walker and Wallsend, just across the river from Hebburn and Jarrow, and on top of St. Peter's. As Middlewood writes: 'The overspill westwards into Elswick and Westgate and eastwards into Byker and Heaton was mainly

by artisans who had come to live near the shipyards and engineering shops along the river where they worked ...' (69)

Transport facilities for these workers were improved at the same time as Byker was going through its fastest building period (1870-1901). Byker road bridge was opened in 1878 linking it with the city, and in 1880 special 'workmen's trains' were introduced on the riverside railway line which runs from Newcastle to North Shields through Byker.

Today, the industry of Byker people is considerably diversified, but this early concentration on the shipyards and engineering, and the rapidity of the building programme meant that Byker brought its inhabitants together in a broad range of common experience. This was shared by other working-class suburbs along the river, but Byker is one of the few which survive as they were first built.

We will ask next how far Byker still represents a community for Byker people, now that its history is more or less forgotten. This problem will first be examined using information which compares Byker objectively with the city as a whole, and then using the survey data.

Chapter 5BYKER in Newcastle

From the information available in the 1966 census, a picture emerges of Byker as a place of some homogeneity which is distinct from the city at large in many aspects. We will consider here statistics according to age, socio-economic groups, class, housing tenure and social malaise. Lastly, we will compare housing conditions in Byker with those in the city as a whole.

Age

Byker is often said to have an ageing population. This impression is sometimes used to support the assertion that the 'community' is unbalanced. In fact, the percentages per age group in Byker follow very closely those for Newcastle. (The figures given in all tables for 'Byker' will be those for the area of Byker minus the two enumeration districts which overlap into areas outside Byker.)

	<u>AGE</u> - Census 1966 (10%)	
	<u>Newcastle</u>	<u>Byker</u>
0 - 14	23.0%	23.4%
15 - 19	8.2%	6.4%
20 - 44	30.1%	31.2%
45 - 64	25.8%	27.2%
65 +	13.0%	11.9%
	<hr/> 100.1%	<hr/> 100.1%
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Base		1,348

In fact, Byker has a lower than average representation of the over 65's.

Class & Occupation

Compared with the city as a whole, Byker is much more homogeneously working-class. Only 2.9% of its population, as opposed to 16% of the city's, falls outside the unskilled-skilled workers categories, according to the occupations of heads of households.

Table 6 CLASS - Census 1966

<u>Class</u>		<u>Newcastle</u>	<u>Byker</u>
Professional, etc.	I	4.3%	0.4%
Intermediate occupations	II	11.7%	2.5%
Skilled occupations	III	53.1%	57.2%
Semi-skilled occupations	IV	18.4%	20.3%
Unskilled occupations	V	12.5%	19.5%
		100 %	99.9%
	Base	8,160	477

The disproportionate representation of the skilled working-class in Byker is made even clearer from the Table (number 7) of socio-economic groups.

largely concentrated on manufacturing industry (73% of men, as opposed to the Newcastle average of 23%). Perhaps it is the high proportion of skilled workers which partly accounts for the relatively low rate of unemployment in the area. Compared with a city average of 5.2% in 1966, 5.0%* of men were unemployed in Byker, which is well below most other riverside working-class areas.**

Housing Tenure

Byker is predominately an area of privately rented flats. These flats occupy one floor of a two-storey terraced house.

Table 8

TENURE OF HOUSEHOLDS

		<u>Newcastle 1961</u>	<u>Byker 1966</u>
Owner-occupier	...	27.3%	8.3%
Council renting	...	27.6%	13.9%
Private renting	...	41.1%	76.8%
Other	4.0%	1.0%
		<u>100 %</u>	<u>100 %</u>

The limited number of council-owned dwellings consists of a few blocks of flats erected since 1955, a strip of pre-war council building in the south of the area, and some properties acquired through compulsory purchase for demolition. The proportion of the latter is, of course, increasing.

*4.1% for the whole Byker area, including those wards which overlap.

** Rising to more than 10% in Stephenson, Armstrong, Walker, Scotswood, Shieldfield, Berwell and Elswick.

The majority of people, then, live in a small flat owned by a private landlord. An investigation of the public inquiry files⁽⁷⁰⁾ relating to one of the larger clearance areas reveals that nearly half (59 out of 123) of the landlords of this particular area owned only two or less dwellings. One half of the dwellings in the area (339 out of 668) were owned by landlords possessing eight or less dwellings. Only 63 of the dwellings were owned by landlords (or occupiers) living in the area or having their business there, and 200 of the 668 dwellings were owned by landlords who lived outside Newcastle. The remainder, 405 dwellings, were owned by landlords living outside Byker but in Newcastle.

The pattern is therefore of small absentee landlords, and this seems to be common to Byker at large. The area therefore approaches homogeneity in its system of housing tenure. Most people only have contacts with their landlord through one of the large local agents through whom he operates.

Social Malaise

The City Planning Department has gathered from other departments in the Civic Centre information relating to factors of social stress and environmental hardship. The Department is aware of the inadequacies of this information as a measure of social stress - that the data often relates

to different periods for different factors (mainly between 1963 and 1964) and that the percentage points per ward are the average of those of the enumeration districts within the wards (when the E.D.'s differ in size). But it considers that they are still a useful indication of potential or actual stress and they are taken to be so here.

The main factors considered are: overcrowding, eviction, illegitimacy, venereal disease, psychiatric admissions to hospital, mental sub-normality, child neglect, problem families, receipt of national assistance and free school meals, offences against the person, offences against property, larceny, juvenile delinquency and probation, and the incidence of various diseases. The City Planning Department has been particularly interested in relating the incidence of these factors to housing conditions: 'Investigations so far made in the City indicate that the distribution of outworn housing bears a strong correlation to the patterns of distribution of social, physical and mental ill-health.'⁽⁷¹⁾ While the Department claims to avoid establishing any causal relationship in its report,⁽⁷²⁾ it does conclude first that: 'The City's clearance areas tend to be worse than the city average, especially in respect of certain aspects of physical

health', and secondly that: 'The conclusions must be limited to the observation that the three phenomena of poor housing conditions, low social status, and high incidence of child neglect tend to go together - although even here the figures for Byker reflect an important exception.'

Byker, like all clearance areas, scores badly on factors relating to ill-health. Ignoring this, we can divide the other factors broadly into three categories. The first relates to poor environmental conditions and poverty, the second concerns 'anti-social' (or 'immoral') behaviour and manifestations of socio-psychological disorder, and the third relates to crime.* The second and third categories only consist of moral items, and can therefore be used as indications of social-psychological instability and failure to inculcate social norms, conditions which would exist least in an integrated community. Taking the relevant parts of the three wards into which Byker is divided, we then find that Byker scores as follows:

Table 9 ... overleaf ...

* In all cases the figures relate to the residence of the subject or offender.

<u>Table 9</u>		<u>SOCIAL MALAISE</u>		<u>BYKER area Enumeration Districts per Ward</u>						
	2	<u>Byker</u> 3	4	<u>St. Anthony's</u> 5 8 9			<u>St. Lawrence</u> 13 14		<u>Byker Area</u> <u>Average</u>	
<u>A. Environmental</u>										
Overcrowding	1.98	2.34	1.83	1.37	1.09	0.88	2.32	1.42	1.65	
National Assistance for Old	1.01	0.86	3.61	2.49	0.88	2.60	0.57	0.76	1.60	
National Assistance for Others	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.49	1.54	1.52	0.00	0.66	0.78	
Free School Meals	0.28	0.00	1.00	1.18	1.46	2.41	0.32	0.42	0.88	
<u>B. Social-psychological disorder</u>										
Illegitimacy	0.57	0.64	2.37	0.80	0.66	0.98	0.85	0.57	0.93	
Venereal Disease	1.02	0.46	0.37	1.15	0.30	1.05	0.23	0.31	0.61	
Psychiatric cases	0.66	0.00	1.18	0.93	0.77	1.13	0.74	1.32	0.84	
Mental Sub- normality	0.21	0.24	0.00	0.89	1.10	1.82	0.48	1.27	0.75	
Problem Families	0.66	0.45	1.42	0.56	0.23	0.69	0.45	1.40	0.73	
<u>C. Crime & court cases</u>										
Offences against person	0.28	0.00	0.00	0.70	0.87	1.72	0.56	0.00	0.52	
Offences against property	1.54	1.74	1.18	0.62	1.53	1.13	0.50	1.65	1.24	
Larceny	0.72	1.08	3.83	2.69	1.66	0.82	0.81	0.36	1.50	
Juvenile Delinquency	0.00	0.80	2.53	0.00	0.00	0.41	0.53	0.35	0.58	
Probation	1.33	1.30	0.95	1.12	0.00	0.46	0.70	1.20	0.88	

The base score of '1' represents the city average, so that the score of a particular area on a particular index represents the relationship between the level of that index in that area and the city as a whole. Thus, a score of 1.48 indicates a level of 'disorder' 48% higher than the city average: and a score of 0.52 indicates a level 48% below the city average. The rates are per population at risk.

The figures are of varying validity since they are derived from very different levels of incidence of the various disorders. Thus, the enumeration district is really too small an area to measure accurately the incidence of psychiatric disorders, while it may be adequate for the measurement of overcrowding. The compilation of an area score probably, therefore, gives a truer impression.

We find that in some aspects of 'environmental' and 'crime and court' problems, the Byker area is above average, but that in all aspects of 'social-psychological disorder' it is below average. The latter is taken here as an indication of social stability likely to be associated with social integration of a more developed nature than in the city as a whole. It cannot be explained by age differences which we have shown hardly exist between the Byker area and the city as a whole.

In the other section concerning social stability and the acceptance of prevailing norms, 'crime and court cases',

Byker is above average in 'offences against property' and 'larceny', but well below average in 'offences against the person', 'delinquency' and 'probation'. Risking an over-interpretation of the data, the divergence between damage to property and persons could be explained by the prevalence of a normative system which is more tolerant of the former than the latter. 'Delinquency' and 'probation' cover a wide range of misdemeanours but applying mainly to young people, their low incidence could be taken as an indication of the area's effective socialisation of children. (73)

This impression that there is a well internalised norm of respect for persons but not property is supported by a local probation officer. (74) He finds that there is a local 'roughness' which is within bounds; a strong prevailing morality which attaches little shame to imprisonment for theft but forbids personal injury.

This conclusion is particularly striking after comparison with other parts of the city where we find that overcrowding and a low level of household amenities is associated with a high level of illegitimacy, venereal disease, offences against property and person, larceny, and probation. But other clearance areas also (and these are similar to Byker in house-type and age) are associated with a low incidence of psychiatric cases, illegitimacy,

and (unlike Byker) larceny. Where other clearance areas have an average incidence of juvenile delinquency, Byker's is low.

Housing Conditions

The Council is not compelled more than formally to justify its scheduling of an area for clearance, in public. In the inquiry for the Parker Street area, the Planning spokesman described the area as 'largely developed before 1878' saying that it should be redeveloped 'on a comprehensive scale if a satisfactory layout is to be achieved.'⁽⁷⁵⁾ And the Public Health Department spokesman testified that he had 'personally inspected every building' and that each was 'unfit for human habitation and is not reasonably suitable for occupation in that condition.'

Clearance areas appear to have been identified on the following grounds: disrepair of individual houses, lack of amenities, overcrowding and bad layout. In a Planning Committee publication,⁽⁷⁶⁾ it is written:

Everyone today expects a house or flat to have for example a fixed bath, an internal w.c., hot water, and space for the modern household labour saving devices. Some of these facilities can be fitted into the existing structure, but the common type of two storey flat on Tyneside produces many difficulties in realising this aim because of its relatively small floor area. These dwellings are often tightly packed into an area that has no open space, no trees, few pleasant features and often many undesirable ones.

We will take these points and compare Byker with Newcastle.

Density

Moser and Scott in their comparative study of British Towns⁽⁷⁷⁾ based on the 1951 census have shown that Newcastle comes high on three indices of lack of space and high density. It had the third highest percentage of households living at densities of one and a half persons per room or more; the fifth highest percentage of dwellings with three or less rooms; and the sixth highest average occupancy rate of rooms per person. The City Planning Department has found that the clearance areas have an even higher proportion of dwellings with only three rooms or less, and has concluded that overcrowding should be reduced by putting the emphasis 'on building larger rather than smaller dwellings.' And, 'Attention should be directed as a priority to those parts of the City where serious overcrowding is now most prevalent' including 'parts of Byker.'⁽⁷⁸⁾

Byker does, indeed, have a much lower number of rooms per occupied household space, according to the 1966 10% census. In Byker 36.5% of households have three or less rooms; in Newcastle the equivalent figure is 11.7%. But the number of persons per household in Byker is lower on average than in the city as a whole (a household is 'one

person living alone or a group of persons living together, partaking of meals prepared together and benefiting from a common housekeeping.')

Table 10

Number of Rooms per occupied Household Space (1966
10% census)

	<u>Newcastle</u>	<u>Byker*</u>
1 room	10	3
2 rooms	163	30
3 "	818	160
4 "	2,555	189
5 "	2,534	131
6 "	1,473	14
7 "	378	2
8 "	185	-
9 "	106	-
10 "	217	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	8,439	529
	<hr/>	<hr/>

* Again, all figures for Byker exclude the two enumeration districts which run outside the area.

Table 11

Household Size - number of households (1966 census)
Per cent.

<u>Persons</u>	<u>Newcastle</u>	<u>Byker</u>
1	19.0%	25.0%
2	29.8%	30.2%
3	20.3%	20.1%
4	15.2%	14.7%
5	8.2%	6.4%
6	4.5%	2.5%
7	1.4%	0.4%
8 +	1.6%	0.8%
	<hr/> 100.0%	<hr/> 100.1%
	Base Number 8261	517

The result of this smaller household size is that Byker households do not emerge as more densely occupied per room than Newcastle as a whole (taking as the measure the Council's standard of 0.8 persons per room). (79)

Table 12

Density of Occupation - percentages of Households.

<u>Persons/room</u>	<u>Newcastle</u>	<u>Byker</u>
Over $1\frac{1}{2}$	5.7%	3.5%
1 - $1\frac{1}{2}$	13.2%	9.1%
$\frac{1}{2}$ - 1	63.9%	56.1%
less than $\frac{1}{2}$	17.2%	31.3%
	<hr/> 96.9%	<hr/> 100.0%
	Base Number 8261	517

This may be explained partly by small family size, and partly by the greater propensity of Byker old people to live alone or with one other person (84% of Byker men over 65 and women over 60, as opposed to 69% for Newcastle). But it cannot be explained, as we have seen early in Chapter 5, by the argument that the Byker population is disproportionately old; in fact, there is a lower proportion of Byker residents over 65 than in Newcastle (11.9% to 13.0%).

Amenities

Quite evidently, housing in Byker is sub-standard according to the criteria recommended in the Parker Morris Report ⁽⁸⁰⁾ which Newcastle Council accepts as the basis for its building programme. It has, according to these criteria, inadequate floor space, inadequate washing, W.C. and heating facilities, and inadequate fittings in bedrooms and kitchens. Besides which, its layout and high density (of persons per acre) are regarded as obsolete by the Council.

Even comparing Byker with Newcastle for what may be regarded as minimum amenities, Byker is shown to be extremely low on the scale:

Table 13

Housing Amenities - 1966 10% census

		<u>Percentages</u>	
		<u>Newcastle</u>	<u>Byker</u>
<u>Hot Water</u>	{ Exclusive H.W. tap	84.1%	45.8%
	{ Shared H.W. tap	2.0%	0.0%
	{ No H.W. tap	13.9%	54.2%
		<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.1%</u>
<u>Fixed Bath</u>	{ Exclusive F.B.	79.2%	29.0%
	{ Shared F.B.	2.9%	0.0%
	{ No F.B.	17.9%	71.0%
		<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
<u>W.C.</u>	{ Exclusive { inside W.C.	68.0%	9.9%
	{ Shared inside W.C.	3.3%	0.2%
	{ Exclusive outside { W.C. only	26.8%	84.9%
	{ Shared outside { W.C. only	1.5%	4.1%
	{ No inside or { outside W.C.	0.4%	1.0%
		<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.1%</u>
All Amenities exclusive	66.7%	7.9%	
Base Number	8261	517	

In some areas of Newcastle such amenities are being installed in a revitalisation programme. The Planning Department finds that the 'small floor area' of the Byker

type of flat would create 'many difficulties in realising this aim', even if the area was considered worth preserving. Some representatives of the Public Health Department on the other hand feel that those areas of Byker not zoned as unfit could have the amenities installed at less financial and social cost than the demolition and rehousing programme.

Rents

Lastly, rents in Byker are exceptionally low by city standards. Whereas £2.10s.0d may be considered an average weekly rent for a 2-bedroomed Council house in Newcastle, the highest rent in one clearance area in Byker (Grace Street) in 1965 was £2.2s.4d. The lowest was 8s.3d for a 2-bedroomed flat in the Grace Street area, and the lowest in the Byker Bank clearance area was 7s.3½d. The wide range must be partly accounted for by the control of rents in the 1939 Rent Act, and their subsequent decontrol under the 1957 Act - for those dwellings whose tenants have changed since then.

In the Grace Street area, rents ran as follows for the first twelve flats listed:

four 4-roomed flats - 19s.4d., 16s.10d., 16s.10d., 16s.4d.
 five 3-roomed flats - £1.5.7d., 17s.7d., 16s.10d., 16s.4d., 16s.4d.
 three 2-roomed flats - £1.13s.0d., 16s.4d., 16s.4d.

In the Byker Bank clearance area, where the lowest rent was 7s.3½d., the highest was £1.15s.0d and most were between 13s.0d and 18s.0d.

Conclusion

The common industrial and housing experience shared by the people in Byker's early days, seems in some form to survive. Byker remains an area where the vast majority of people occupy a similar class position, share a similar relationship with their landlord, and where the men have similar work experience and work relations. It is suggested that this homogeneity is related, through a commonly accepted normative system (based on stability, shared experience, and inter-personal relations), to the low incidence of social-psychological disorder and to the low level of juvenile and inter-personal crime.

The assumption of a relationship between class and residential homogeneity and the existence of a communal code is well documented in sociological literature.⁽⁸¹⁾ As Brian Jackson⁽⁸²⁾ claims, class homogeneity is more meaningful as a common bond of similar experience for the working-class than for the middle-class. A wide range of incomes in the middle-class splits it competitively; in the working-class, the narrow range of wages unites it. David Lockwood has explained the differences in class awareness between the middle-class and the working-class (where in Marxian terms their market situation is similar) as founded on a difference in work and status situations.⁽⁸³⁾ In both respects, the worker is grouped to a much greater extent than the clerk.

He works in large cohesive groups, his skills are standardised and he is more separated than the clerk from management; and in terms of status the manual worker's traditional 'low education, authority, security and literacy' have served to heighten his class consciousness.

Homogeneity of house-tenure and of class in the residential area have also been shown to be related to the prevalence of a distinctive class code. Rex and Moore distinguish five classes in Sparkbrook on the basis of the pattern of house-tenure, and writes, '... we agree with Max Weber when in his analysis of the formation of classes he gives equal consideration to ownership of domestic property and ownership of means of production.'⁽⁸⁴⁾ Jackson writes that not only have community groupings grown out of the working-class need for mutual aid but also: 'Those groupings are the tighter because income and work originally compel the working-class to live in dominantly one class neighbourhoods '⁽⁸⁵⁾

Wilmott and Young,⁽⁸⁶⁾ and Benney and Geiss⁽⁸⁷⁾ have also shown that residential class homogeneity is associated with 'correct' class identification and voting. Parkin⁽⁸⁸⁾ takes voting 'as an index of individual commitments not merely to parties and programmes, but to a wide range of social values; for obviously, political allegiances are to an important extent a reflection of the

values men subscribe to in areas of life outside the realm of politics.' He goes on to claim that Labour voting, and therefore the existence of a 'deviant sub-culture', will be most prevalent where the individual is immersed in both a working-class industrial sub-culture and a distinct social community. Together, these would serve as 'barriers' to the dominant values of the society.

The postulates arising from this are several. Local homogeneity of work situation, class and system of house-tenure are likely to be associated with:

- 1) social-psychological stability through the prevalence of a normative system;
- 2) the strengthening of class attitudes,
- and 3) to the extent that the locality is distinct from areas around it, an awareness of the local community and the existence of local values as well as class values.

Byker's political culture would in this case include general working-class plus local attitudes.

Possibly, attitudes to authority developed on the shop-floor and through the relationship with an absentee landlord, are reflected in people's attitudes to local government. It is beyond the subject of this study to test such a connection more than impressionistically. We are concerned next with examining the last postulate: whether a local awareness has developed in Byker out of the homogeneity and physical distinctiveness of the locality, an awareness which may affect political behaviour.

PART IIIBYKER - THE COMMUNITY

This Part looks at the locality of Byker from the point of view of the resident. The purpose here is to investigate how far residents are dependent on the locality for the performance of certain roles, and as a frame of reference. Does Byker form the boundaries for the performance of these roles? In Scott Greer's terms, to the extent that the radii of interdependence for these various roles are contained within the locality we may regard it as a significant unit for action in fulfilment of these roles. Using community as a polar type (in which the radii for each role corresponds with the geographical boundaries of the area) we will examine the 'community attachment' of individuals and groups for each role and then establish an overall scale. This scale will be concerned with passive community attachment - that is, the performance of involuntary roles. Another measure will relate to active community attachment - that is, belonging to local rather than outside organisations. A third measure will relate to the individual's awareness of the Byker area as a distinct locality, and his identification with it - subjective identification.

Chapter 6

PASSIVE COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT

The six roles chosen for investigation are ones which most households may be expected to contain: the roles of resident, family-member, neighbour, friend, shopper and worker. They were chosen for their near universality, for their vulnerability to a change in the environment by rehousing, and for the fact that they are largely involuntary roles (that is, ones which the subject probably will not as consciously choose to perform as, for example, the roles of club-member or councillor). For most individuals it will not be by any deliberate act that they choose to perform these roles (or not), within (or outside) the locality. They may be treated as indices of their passive attachment (or not) to the locality.

a) Residential Attachment

Local living memory goes back to the early days of Byker. One old lady still lived in a house built by her grandfather, whose firm, she claimed, built Burton Street (which was named after him); another said that her father was a joiner hired to work on the building of Bolam Street in the east. Yet another old lady (aged 84) remembered when local people used to wash their clothes down by the banks of the Ouseburn.

Long residence is claimed by Wilmott and Young in Family and Kinship in East London to be an important foundation for the emergence of communal relationships: 'Long residence by itself does something to create a sense of community with other people in the district.'⁽⁸⁹⁾ Not only does it create a sense of community but the passage of time also builds interlocking personal relationships. Childhood friends become adult friends, and, as they marry, provide a new range of acquaintances in their families. The subject's own family (if it is also of long residence) provides him through its members' friends with a secondary range of acquaintances until 'people can make use of one or other of their possible approaches to establish a relationship with almost anyone, ...'⁽⁹⁰⁾ The authors stress 'the importance of [long] residence' in developing such relationships.

Byker, like Bethnal Green, contains a large proportion of locally born people. 53% of the people in the Bethnal Green sample were born in the area; whilst 47% of the Byker sample were born in the Byker area. In the London suburb of Woodford Green, Wilmott and Young found that only 12% were born locally, so by this measure Byker rates high. The figures are more significant when it is considered that Byker is a much smaller area than Bethnal Green: in 1966 it contained 17,450 people in an area of 223 acres, against

Bethnal Green's population of 54,000 (in 1955). If the suburbs immediately bordering on Byker (Walker, Walkergate, South Heaton, Shieldfield, Battlefield and Stepney) are included, we find that nearly 69% of all those interviewed were born within the area. There is no significant difference in birthplace between age-groups, but a tendency for the 41-50 group to be more often born in Byker (56%).

Table 14

<u>BIRTHPLACE OF INTERVIEWEE - PERCENT</u>		
<u>Birthplace</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Points*</u>
Byker	47.2	2
Neighbouring Areas	21.4	1
Elsewhere Tyneside	16.9	0
Elsewhere	14.5	0
	<u>100.0%</u> (No. 443)	

Of those 234 people who were not born in Byker itself, 38% had lived there for 21 years or more. Indeed, we find that only 32% of all the interviewees had lived in Byker for less than 21 years. This is striking compared with Vereker and May's figures for the Liverpool Slum Clearance area of Crown Street which the authors regarded as indicative of geographical stability - 52% of people had lived there less than 10 years.

* 'Points' refer to points awarded as a contribution to the scale measure.

Table 15Length of Residence in Byker - Percent of Interviewees

<u>Years</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Points</u>
0 - 5	15.1	0
6 - 10	8.2	1
11 - 20	8.9	2
21 - 30	13.0	3
31 - 40	11.9	3
41 - 50	11.0	3
over 50 years	32.0	3

These figures do indicate that long residence is characteristic of the area, but we must turn to information on the spouses of interviewees before we can assess the prevalence of long residence per household.

209, or 47%, of the interviewees were born in Byker, and, in addition, 49% of the spouses of those interviewees having spouses (411) lived in Byker before they were married. These were not entirely matched couples - thus, 53% of those who were born in Byker married people who lived there also, while 40% of those who were not born in Byker married people who already lived there. In other words, of the 443 households 68% had at least one spouse who lived in Byker before marriage. Of married households (or once married), out of 411 there were 110 (or

25%) in which one partner had been born in Byker and had married somebody already living there.

If the information on residential stability is grouped, so that each household is awarded a score according to the points system shown in the tables (plus 2 points for the interviewee's spouse living in Byker before marriage), we can form a 'residential attachment' scale. This illustrates the high level of household residential stability, and allows us to differentiate between groups.

Table 16

Residential Attachment Scale - per Household

Score	Percent Households
High (3 & over)	75.2
Medium (2)	8.6
Low (1 & 0)	16.3
	<u>100.1%</u> (No. 443)

The following combinations would produce a 'High' score:

- 1) Interviewee was born in Byker and
 - lived there at least 6 years (in practice, nearly all of these had lived there more than 21 years), or
 - spouse lived in Byker before marriage.

- 2) Interviewee born in neighbouring areas and
 - lived in Byker at least 11 years, or
 - spouse lived in Byker before marriage.
- 3) Interviewee lived in Byker at least 21 years.
- 4) Interviewee's spouse lived in Byker before marriage and
 - interviewee has lived in Byker at least 6 years.

b) Family Attachment

Wilmott and Young stress the complementary importance of kinship and long residence in building up a network of personal contacts in Bethnal Green. Long residence not only is likely to mean that the local extended family of the individual grows, but also the existence of the extended family is likely to contribute to the effect of long residence on the establishment of non-kin contacts:

'Either length of residence or localised kinship does something to create a network of local attachment, but when they are combined, as they are in Bethnal Green, they constitute a much more powerful force than when one exists without the other.'⁽⁹¹⁾

They went on to suggest in their study of Greenleigh that it was the break-up of these close kinship groups by slum clearance which was the most important cause of a sense of isolation on new estates. Their later study of

Woodford Green,⁽⁹²⁾ a more middle-class suburb, made it clear, however, that kinship ties were important as the hub of social relationships only to working-class people. Middle-class people were able to establish contacts for themselves by their own efforts - through friendship circles and organisations. Working-class people in a middle-class area would therefore be more likely to be forced back on the nuclear family. Two recent American studies suggest that this is so: one,⁽⁹³⁾ shows that working-class people are no more likely to have extended family relationships, have fewer friends and belong to fewer organisations; the other,⁽⁹⁴⁾ claims that while 73% of households are of the modified extended rather than nuclear type, the isolated nuclear type is most frequent in lower class groups.

It seemed likely that Byker would conform to the Bethnal Green model, being old-established and homogeneously working-class. There were several indications of the strength of kinship relations, though many residents claimed that they were rapidly becoming less important. Many interviewees, when questioned about friends, either named members of their family or said that they had no friends apart from their family. The system of 'speaking for' a member of the family to one's landlord or rent collector to get him a vacant flat in the area is prevalent in Byker as it was in Bethnal Green. And in many households visited, there

were examples of family-continuity of residence. One man (aged 60) had lived since his marriage next door to the flat into which his father moved as a boy. The connection between family ties and attachment to Byker was mentioned by another man who had spent his youth in Elswick, about three miles away: "my father was born in Byker and used to talk about it and I always wanted to get back to Byker I finally got back here three years ago."

For many young couples, according to local people, a common tendency is to stay in Byker in the early years of marriage. There, the low rent allows them to save for a better house later, and the mother of the wife is near at hand for help with children. Matrilocality, at least in the early phase of marriage, is a phenomenon which has been observed in many studies of working-class areas. It was not thoroughly studied in Byker, but there is more than hearsay to indicate that matrilocality is the norm. When asked which relative, if any, they saw most often, the responses indicated that the most frequent contact was between the subject and female relations. This applied whether the subject was male or female. It is also true that men more often mentioned contacts with their wife's relations, than women mentioned contacts with their husband's relations. The relationships mentioned most often

by men and women were in order of frequency:

<u>Men:</u>	sister	-	16.1% of mentions by males
	daughter	-	11.2%
	son	-	10.5%
	mother	-	9.8%
	mother-in-law	-	9.1%
	brother	-	12.6%*
<u>Women:</u>	mother	-	20.7% of mentions by females
	daughter	-	16.8%
	sister	-	22.5%*
	son	-	5.7%
	brother	-	4.5%
	nephews and nieces	-	3.9%

Women mention their mother-in-law on only 3.6% of occasions. This, and the above table, would seem to confirm Vereker and May's finding in another slum clearance area in Liverpool that: 'There seemed to be a greater degree of intimacy between women and their relatives than between the men and theirs' '(95)

* This is placed low in order because the one word, 'brother', is used by both partners to the relationship so that it is doubled in value. The same applies to 'sister'.

The relationships which have been mentioned are one-sided, that is, they are records of mentions by one party. In many cases, a relationship which is important for one partner may be less important for the other. A more complete analysis shows the relative importance of whole relationships in the following order.*

<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Percent of mentions</u>
Mother - Daughter	18.8%
Sister - Sister	11.3%
Brother - Sister	10.3%
Mother - Son	7.8%
Father - Son	6.7%
Brother - Brother	6.3%
Father - Daughter	6.2%
Mother-in-law - Son-in-law	4.6%
Brother-in-law - Sister-in-law	2.4%
Mother-in-law - Daughter-in-law	2.1%

This is a listing in order of the most important of those relationships which were named by both parties. By far the most important seems to be the mother-daughter relationship. The son is much less likely than the daughter to see his parents most often, and it is significant that the mother-in-law appears to have more contact with her son-in-law than with her daughter-in-law. Men most frequently see female relatives and the most frequent relationships of

* The sexes are weighted to make them equal in number.

all are between women. These figures indicate, even if they are not sufficient to imply matri-locality, that women are the pivot of family relationships and that it is the wife's family which receives most attention.

But contacts with kin are only important to this study if they are important enough to the individual to help to bind him to the area or to take him outside it. One measure of the importance of the relationship is frequency of contact. Respondents were asked how often they saw the relation whom they saw most often. Only 15% saw them less often than once a week, and as many as 40% saw them every day. Most households, it appears, have frequent contact with family members not living in the same house through at least one member of the household (the interviewee). This will only be a factor contributing to community attachment if the relation seen most often lives in Byker: in fact, this is so in 53% of cases (1 point toward the family attachment scale).

Other relations besides those who are seen most often by the interviewee are also likely to be in contact with the household, especially if they live nearby. The high frequency of contact with most often seen relatives suggests that there is considerable contact with other relatives also. Interviewees were asked how many relations (on both their and their spouse's sides) they had living in Byker, out-

side their own households.

Table 17

Number of Relations in Byker - Percent of Households

<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent Households</u>	<u>Points</u>
More than two	47.4	1
Two	10.4	0
One	13.3	0
None	28.9	0
	<u>100.0%</u> (No. 443)	

If, for households with two relations in Byker, these two relations comprised 'most of their family' in their opinion, a score of one was awarded to this group also (17.4% of the 46 having two) since it would imply a concentration of family contacts within Byker.

The scale of attachment to Byker area through family is built upon these two factors - number of relations in Byker, and the location of the relation seen most frequently by the interviewees:

Table 18

Family Attachment Scale - per Household

<u>Score</u>	<u>Percent</u>
High (2)	38.8
Medium (1)	23.7
Low (0)	37.5
	<u>100.0%</u> (No. 443)

A high score can only be achieved if the household has more than two relations in Byker (or two relations comprising most of the family) and if the interviewee sees most frequently a relation who lives in Byker. This is a rigorous test, and the large proportion scoring high comprises households with numerous and regular family contacts.

c) Neighbourly Attachment

Morris and Mogeey use 'Neighbourhood' as a concept distinctive from 'residential group' to describe the network of contacts with co-residents which the individual may have. Residential groups exist only in so far as neighbouring families' networks coincide so that territory becomes associated with a shared network. Neighbourhood is a form of interaction (with the functions of mutual aid and socialisation of children), which may or may not be identified with an exclusive territory.

In his analysis of Gosforth,⁽⁹⁾ a Cumberland village, Williams describes a system in which neighbourly interaction is close-ended; that is, it corresponds to a residential group. The habits of borrowing between neighbours, helping each other with children and in sickness, and, 'calling without knocking' are ingrained. There is also what Williams describes as a chain reaction effect of a stimulus throughout the group; for example, offending one person would produce hostility to the offender among the neighbours,

a situation which would not arise where the neighbour-system is not group-based but an individual network.

Morris and Mogeey point to a general decline in dependence on the neighbourhood during this century and give the following possible reasons:

- 1) greater ease of access of friends and relations who live in other residential areas;
- 2) commercial entertainment providing substitutes to the group;
- 3) increasing specialisation of land use and groups has reduced the range of common interests, e.g., co-workers rarely live together,
- 4) the growth of 'respectability' as a working-class ideal - implying rejection of dependence on neighbours, and the assertion of status differences.

Many local people in Byker remarked on this sort of process. Especially old people seemed to feel that neighbours were not as helpful as they used to be. Some talked of feeling isolated: "The people in the street have all changed. I don't know them now." Many were nostalgic about the times when groups of neighbours used to share, borrow and even cook for each other - "we used to do it but it seems to have dwindled away." But there were two interpretations of this change: one was that it represented a decline in friendly relationships; the other, that it was

a healthy development - "You shouldn't borrow things that you should have in the home. We've never been like that around here, for a long time." In both cases, the reason given for the change was usually increased prosperity.

Possibly the decline in 'co-operative' neighbouring which was commonly observed is associated with the 'growth of respectability as a working-class ideal.' There seemed to be some support for this theory in the often vigorous rejection of the suggestion (in question 36) that the interviewee might exchange things with, or borrow from, his neighbour. Only 21% replied that they did - many of the others referred to borrowing as an old practice which was no longer necessary.

Two other questions were asked to estimate the contacts of individuals with their neighbours. (It was left to the interviewee to define 'neighbour'). One referred (question 37) to the number of "people in your neighbourhood" that the interviewee would speak to in the street - 86% of interviewees would speak to at least six of their neighbours. Another referred to the "number of the names of the families in your neighbourhood" that the interviewee knew - 82% could name at least four. These are established measures of neighbourliness (as is the first question mentioned), and the proportion of interviewees scoring in the highest bracket is very large. The indication is that there is a

high level of friendly contact with neighbours - a situation which might be expected from the evidence already mentioned that 68% of interviewees have lived in the area at least 21 years.

It was quite common for interviewees to claim to know everybody in the street, or even "nearly everybody in Byker I should think." One woman who had replied that she would never borrow from her neighbours, said that she was, however, very friendly with them and knew the names of at least 50 of her neighbours. It is against this standard that some older people claimed that neighbours were not as friendly as they had been in the past.

Possibly, this judgment was due, in part, to the decline of their own interaction as they have grown old, and possibly to their memory of the old mutual assistance neighbourly support, but some old people felt that it was the young who were different: "All the neighbours of years ago are very friendly, but as the younger women are moved in, they seem they won't make friends", or, "I know everyone who's lived here more than ten years." This impression was in fact found to be "true" - the young age-group (21-30) were significantly* less likely to be neighbourly on the neighbour attachment scale. Since the 21-30 age group were, in fact,

*p is less than 0.1 per cent., chi-square 15.43

no less likely to have been born in Byker, this would seem to point to a temporary^φ or permanent change in neighbourly behaviour.

The territorial base of neighbourhood in the pre-World War II Byker was manifested in the outings organised by street and back-alley groups. There are several indications that it survives in some form. One indication is that many interviewees who wished to emphasise the extent of their contacts claimed to know "everybody in the street", and even the man already quoted who said he didn't know anybody now thought in terms of the street as the unit. Several of those interviewed said that they had heard we were interviewing from somebody in the same street. But some streets were divided: several streets running through Byker from the bottom to the top of the hill were said to have a good end and bad end (the bottom), and this did not seem merely to refer to the quality of the housing. One man, who had until recent years lived at the east end of Harriet Street but had then moved a few hundred yards to the west end, found his new situation uncomfortable: "Harriet Street is like two communities divided. The people at the top [west] end are a rough lot - I don't speak to any of them." It is only where neighbourhoods do form such residential groupings and are not merely an individual's network of contacts that the following could happen: Mrs. C. complained

^φ Possibly the young married household takes some time to find its place in the neighbourhood network.

that there had been "some trouble in the street" as a result of which she became an outcast. The neighbours "came in a deputation" to her house and when she let them in they criticised her so strongly that she "became hysterical and nearly suffered a miscarriage."

Returning to Morris and Mogeys outline of possible reasons for the decline in dependence on the neighbourhood, some reasons may be advanced for its survival in a relatively strong form in Byker. While access to friends and relatives outside the area is obviously improved by modern public transport: 1) A large number of people have many of their friends and relations in Byker; (2) Only a small proportion have their own cars - 65 (12.7%) out of 511 households according to the 1966 10% census. While commercial entertainment and shops in the city are an obvious attraction, there are many local clubs* and a good local shopping area.* While common interests may have been reduced by diversification of industry,* this remains a homogeneously working-class area with a concentration of workers associated with engineering. Its working-class homogeneity may have discouraged status competition, even if independence of the neighbours is a new ideal.

* These items will be dealt with later.

The three questions used to measure neighbourliness were drawn from the Wallin-Guttman scale of neighbourliness. (97) This scale consisted of 12 questions designed to test women's neighbourliness, but it has been found to be scaleable for other groups. Morris and Mogey found no sex differences in the response, nor did this study find any significant sex differences. Like Morris and Mogey, the use of only three of the questions from the twelve is justified because: 'one of the most useful features of a Guttman scale is that one can expect a correlation of unity between the scale as a whole and any subset of items taken from it.' (98) Scoring according to the scale is as follows:

Q.36 Do you and your neighbours exchange or borrow things from one another like books, magazines, dishes, tools, recipes or food?:

often, sometimes, rarely	-	1
never	-	0

Q.37 About how many of your neighbours do you say "Hello" or "Good morning" to when you meet in the street?

six or more	-	1
five or less	-	0

Q.38 How many of the names of the families in your neighbourhood do you know?

Four or more	-	2
One to three	-	1
None	-	0

Summing these, the result was as follows:

Table 19

Neighbourly Attachment Scale

High	(4 or 3)	-	79.7%
Medium	(2)	-	9.9%
Low	(1 or 0)	-	10.4%
			<u>100.0%</u> (No. 443)

d) Friend Attachment

The next set of questions to be asked were designed to estimate the degree to which people were dependent on the locality for their close friendship circle. The location of 'best' friends outside the area would both encourage and indicate social activity outside Byker which would imply a reduced dependence on the area.

Several studies have shown that friendship circles have secondary importance to family, especially in working-class areas. Wilmott and Young showed that not only were friends often made through family links but also that they had a strictly limited access into the home.⁽⁹⁹⁾ In their study of Woodford they showed that the practice of building

up a circle of friends deliberately was largely a middle-class phenomenon, and that the working-class residents of the area were less likely to have social contacts with people outside the family. A study of Liverpool (100) has also suggested that neighbours are held at a certain social distance - too much familiarity is not accepted. The same study also indicated (101) that, while the neighbours were much more important than family in the borrowing of minor items, at times of crisis (e.g., sickness) kin relations rose in importance (102). As Morris and Mogeys have said, the 'inequality' of a situation in which aid cannot be reciprocal 'is tolerable only when a close relationship exists.'

This theory of the maintenance of social distance seemed to apply in Byker. Many people, and even some who stressed the helpfulness of their neighbours, seemed reluctant to concede that they had any friends in Byker or elsewhere. One interviewer reported on such a case: "Said she had no friends but obviously there are several neighbours with whom she is on friendly terms. Two popped in while I was there, and she was out chatting to some when I first called." Some people could not name any friends but their own family, and others, who were quite obviously not socially isolated, could name none at all. Several interviewees commented rather proudly that they never had any-

body but relatives into the house. 'Friend' was obviously a term which was applied sparingly.

Interviewees were asked where their three best friends lived, in Byker or elsewhere. The response was as follows:

Table 20

Location of Three Best Friends

	<u>Per- cent</u>	<u>Points</u>
All in Byker	36.2	2
2 in Byker, 1 in neighbouring areas	3.8	
1 in Byker, 1 or 2 in neighbouring areas) or 2 in Byker, none in " ")	9.9	1
1 in Byker, none in neighbouring areas	12.0	
0 in Byker, 1 or more in neighbouring areas	13.3	0
Other	24.8	
	100.0%	(Base No.443)

[Neighbouring Areas = Walker, Walkergate, South Heaton, Shieldfield, Battlefield, Stepney.]

40% of people had most of their three best friends in Byker, and a further 22% had at least one friend in Byker. Of the nearly 25% in the 'Other' category, more than half were people who claimed that they had no friends at all, while the rest were people all of whose principal friends lived beyond even the neighbouring areas. The signifi-

cant point is that only a very small proportion of people (allowing for those without friends) only had friends outside Byker and its neighbouring areas.

From the single questions asked in this section, scoring on the Friend Attachment scale was as follows:

Table 21

<u>Friend Attachment Scale</u>		
<u>Score</u>		<u>Percent</u>
High	(2)	40.0
Medium	(1)	21.9
Low	(0)	38.1
		<u>100.0%</u> (Base No. 443)

e) Shopping Attachment

A high proportion of women interviewed (or married to interviewees) were housewives or only part-time workers. Of the 409 women, 284 were housewives (or part-time workers), 101 were employed, and 24 retired. According to the 1966 census an average (over the 6 enumeration districts entirely in Byker) of 35% of women in the Byker area worked part or full-time. For the remaining 65% shopping is the one almost universal activity which takes them outside the house. Shopping is also likely to be an almost daily activity for many women, and there-

fore one which provides them with regular personal contact. To the extent that shopping involves visits outside the locality, it is therefore likely to reduce local social dependence.

Local shopping provision is very good. First, there are many small street corner shops which stock a wide variety of everyday household requirements. There is a regular but sparse flow of customers to these shops throughout the day and often until late in the evening. Their handiness and variety of goods allow local people to make frequent visits to them for small items, either to supplement their larger shopping expeditions or to stand in place of a home-larder. There are also more specialised shops within Byker, especially down Raby Street which runs through the area from north to south: here, there are all kinds of foodstore, small clothes shops and hardware stores. Some older people said that Raby Street used to be a centre for shopping which served the neighbouring areas as well as Byker, but now it has a ragged and rundown air. It runs at right-angles into Shields Road in the north and this is a much more important shopping centre, which serves the east side of the city with several large chain food-stores, a department store and many smaller specialised shops. Because it serves a much larger area than Byker alone, Shields Road, though bordering the area, is not regarded in this

study as essentially a community shopping centre. People shopping there will not only come into more contact with 'outsiders', but will also be served by shop-assistants many of whom will have no local interest.

Interviewees were asked where they, or their wives, did "most of your day to day shopping for groceries and that sort of thing." They responded:

Table 22

<u>Place of Shopping per Household</u>		
<u>Place of Shopping</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Points</u>
Corner shop or Raby Street	45.6	2
Shields Road	45.1	1
Outside Byker	5.9	0
Other and Don't Know	3.4	0
	100.0%	(Base No. 443)

Shopping in Shields Road did not always represent a decision to shop less locally for the individual. Many people actually lived nearer the Shields Road centre than any corner shop or Raby Street. But the fact of shopping on Shields Road would, nevertheless, remove these individuals from the network of internal communications which local shops probably provide.

The Shopping Attachment scale was established from this single question, as follows:

Table 23Shopping Attachment Scale

Score	Percent
High (2)	45.6
Medium (1)	45.1
Low (0)	9.3
	<u>100.0%</u> (Base No. 443)

f) Occupational Attachment

The relation between class homogeneity in the work and residential situation, on the one hand, and consistent class identification and voting on the other, was discussed in Chapter 5. It was also mentioned there that not only is Byker a homogeneously working-class area, but also that it contains a heavy concentration of workers in manufacturing industries (81% of men in one part of Byker against a city average of 55% - 1966 census). An earlier Chapter (4) showed how Byker's building was associated with the late 19th century growth industries of ship-building and engineering. This would all suggest that there might survive in Byker both some degree of occupational homogeneity and of local working.

Lipset (103) has described the political solidarity and high level of participation of isolated occupationally homogeneous groups. He attributes this to the need of such groups to supply their own leaders, to their frequent interaction and to the sense of 'being different' which grows out

of isolation: their 'leftist voting' is explained at least partly as the result of the insecurity of employment associated with such groups. Morris and Mogey⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ discover a further factor making for solidarity in the sort of isolated occupations that Lipset describes (mining, fishing, dockwork, agriculture, as well as the armed forces and merchant navy) - this common factor was their 'unusual stress on teamwork.' Morris and Mogey found an association between working in a team and being 'neighbourly'.

Byker is ringed by a large number of industrial plants, warehouses, workshops, dockyards and shipyards. There is a good chance that many co-residents may also be co-workers in one of the big local establishments such as Parsons (engineering), Hawthorn Leslie (engineering), Spillers, Domestos, British Engines, Limmer and Trinidad works, John Porter (docks), etc. But these industries are of such variety that there is also a good chance that, though working locally, co-residents may be employed in a very different way. The variety of local employment is reminiscent of the situation in Bethnal Green,⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ and, as there, it may be partly responsible for the relatively low local unemployment figure of 4.1% (for the whole Byker area) against a city average of 5.2% - 1966 census.*

The questionnaire revealed the following distribution of male householders (male interviewees plus husbands and

* See also page 72, ch.5.

ex-husbands of women interviewees):

Table 24

Male Occupations - Two generations - Percent

Industry	Male Householders	non-Byker Fathers	Byker Fathers
Shipyards	15.0	16.9	17.5
Dockyards	2.5	6.5	6.5
Engineering	26.4	13.4	18.5
Other	56.1	63.2	57.5
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Base Number	406	231	207

The picture is of an area of highly diversified employment, most men working in a wide range of industries included in the 'Other' category. The previous generation (fathers of interviewees) was divided into fathers of interviewees born in Byker (and who therefore lived there themselves) and all other fathers. This shows that Byker fathers and other fathers were hardly different in their distribution over the three traditional local industries, except that fathers of Byker interviewees were slightly more likely to work in the engineering industry. Over the two generations there seems to have been a focusing in the area on the engineering industry and a slight decline in the local importance of the shipyards and dockyards.

The area is not, then, occupationally homogeneous, but there is a fairly high proportion of workers in the shipyards and engineering taken together (41%). These industries, and especially the shipyards, have been characterised by team-work. A local union official* described the sense of local identity which was maintained by, for example, groups of riveters who worked as teams hiring themselves (until the recent re-organisation) to the shipyards up and down the river.

Even if Byker is not occupationally homogeneous, it is possible that it remains the focus of residents' employment. This would both imply increased psychological dependence on the locality, and reduced contact with outsiders both in the journey to and from work and at work. The following table shows the place of work of men and women residents, of their fathers, and of the fathers of residents born in Byker. Men householders in this table include only those interviewed or currently married to interviewees.

* Mr. H. Mallaburn, A.E.F. branch secretary.

Table 25

Place of Work - Two Generations

Place of work	Women House-holders	Men House-holders	Fathers of inter-viewees	Fathers of Interviewees Born in Byker
Byker	37.2%	16.3%	17.4%	28.5%
*Neighbouring Areas	20.4%	34.7%	36.4%	41.1%
Elsewhere Tyneside	38.0%	46.0%	32.3%	22.7%
Elsewhere	4.4%	3.0%	15.3%	7.7%
	100.0% (No.113)	100.0% (No.326)	100.0% (No.437)	100.0% (No.209)

* South Heaton, Shields Road, Walker, Walkergate, Shieldfield, Wallsend, Stepney.

It shows, as might be expected, a declining dependence of men for work on the immediate neighbourhood. (The last column gives the truest description of the pattern in Byker a generation ago, since it isolates the fathers of those respondents who were born in Byker, i.e., the fathers must have lived there). But still, 51% of men work in Byker or within a mile of it. As a result, according to the census of 1966, about one quarter of those workers resident in the Byker area walked to work - 27.1% in Byker ward, 23.9% in St. Anthony's and 24.5% in St. Lawrence's. These proportions are exceeded only by the two city centre wards of St.

Nicholas and Central (40.5% and 31.8%), by Westgate (27.8%), and (except for Byker) by Sandyford ward (24.9%),

Of those 113 women who work full-time (the table does not include female part-time workers) 42% (47) work outside Byker and its immediately neighbouring areas. But this 47 represents only 11% of all 433 women who were either interviewed or were married to, or had been married to, interviewees. All the rest (386) are either housewives, part-time workers, or workers in Byker; in other words, they spend most, if not all, of each day in the Byker area. Only a small proportion of women were therefore counted as occupationally detached from the community.

Byker is not a heterogeneous occupational area, but most male occupations do come within the category of 'manufacturing.' The area does not appear to be as heavily the focus of employment as it was in the past, but a large number of local people still do work in the vicinity. Occupation as a reason for attachment to the area is therefore likely to be declining but still a factor of some importance.

The Occupation Attachment scale had to make provision for those respondents who were not employed. Housewives and people retired over 5 years were therefore awarded points as if they were people employed locally. This seemed justified because they seemed likely to spend a large

part of every day in Byker. Married households therefore scored for the interviewee's place of employment and that of the spouse. Unmarried households were therefore deprived of part of their scoring power: these respondents had no spouse to help link the household through his or her occupation to the community.

Two points were awarded for being a housewife, retired over 5 years (not including housewives), a man working in Byker (one point for neighbouring areas), an employed woman working in Byker (one point for neighbouring areas). The scale is as follows:

Table 26

Occupation Attachment Scale

Score	Percent
High (4 or 3)	20.5
Medium (2)	27.3
Low (1 or 0)	52.1
	99.9% (Base No. 443)

Sex and Community Attachment

All of the above scales were established for households rather than individuals. Thus, in the case of the Occupation, Residence and Family scales, information on both

spouses (if there were two) was incorporated. In the case of the Shopping scale, the information was gathered about that member of the household who did the shopping, assuming that it was primarily one of the two spouses. But the Friend and Neighbour Attachment scales could only refer to the individual being interviewed. It was felt that neighbourly relations would be similar for husband and wife, and that even if friends were not similarly shared, the friendship circle of one partner would be influential on the household as a whole. The pilot study indicated that there were no sex differences in community attachment scoring. Morris and Mogeey in fact found 'very few systematic differences between husbands' and wives' responses' to their survey which included the same question on friends and two of the Byker study's three neighbourliness questions.

However, if there were found in the Byker study to be significant differences between the sexes in scoring on the Friend and Neighbour scales, it was felt that they should be rejected as measures of household attachment. A chi-squared distribution test was applied, and no significant difference* was found to exist between the sexes on these two scales. On the Neighbour Attachment scale, 75% of men and 82% of women scored high; while on the Friend Attachment scale respectively 41% and 40% scored high.

* Down to the 10% level of significance, meaning that there was not even a chance of 1 in 10 that such a difference would be observed.

Marriage Status and Community Attachment

Three marriage status groups were distinguished:

1) the married; 2) widowed, separated or divorced, 3) single. Groups 2) and 3) had a reduced chance of scoring high on the Residence and Family scales, and no chance on the Occupation scale. This influence of marriage status on scoring power seemed reasonably to reflect the likely effect of the absence of a spouse on attachment to the community. A spouse could be expected to add to (or subtract from) the individual's sense of attachment to the locality by his long (or short) residence in the area, his local (or outside) occupation, and his nearby (or far off) relatives. However, the Friend and Neighbour scales were individually measured which gave Groups 2) and 3) an equal chance with Group 1) of scoring high, though the absence of a spouse might (especially in the case of Friends) reduce their range of acquaintances. The Shopping scale was in a class apart including only information on the principal shopper, of whom there is likely to be only one, even in a married household.

The widowed, separated, divorced and single were no less or more likely than the married to score high or low on the Friend and Neighbour scales. Perhaps the exclusion of information on the spouses' neighbour and friend circles introduced an underweighting of married households in these two scale measures.

Interestingly on the Family scale, the widowed, separated and divorced (Group 2) were much more likely than the married and the single to score low.* It was especially interesting that they were more likely to score low than single people (74% Low and Medium scores against 63% for single people), though the widowed, separated and divorced could have mentioned their ex-husband's relations as well as their own. Perhaps some

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- * chi-square = 6.60, $p < 2.5$ per cent at 1 degree of freedom.
- meaning that there is a possibility of less than 2.5 in 100 that such a difference would occur by chance.
 - 1^o of freedom applies to a 2 x 2 table: we have here grouped Low and Medium scores against High, and Group 2 against Groups 1 and 3.
 - All chi-square tests in this study include Yates correction which reduces the possibility of calling a relationship significant when it is not.

of these people deliberately excluded themselves (or found themselves excluded) from family relationships, or perhaps single people have deliberately fostered relationships with their own relatives. In any case, the married group scored predictably higher than the other two groups.*

* chi-square = 7.26, $p < 1$ per cent.

Age and Community Attachment

Age had a significant influence on all of the attachment scales, but only in the case of Residence Attachment was there a continuous relationship. Grouping low and medium scores and calling them low, we find that residential attachment increased with age from 41% scoring high in the 21-30 age group to 96% scoring high in the over 65 age group.** This is quite obviously due to the increasing chance with increasing age that the interviewee would have spent a long period in Byker; there was no significant difference between age groups in the proportion born in Byker.

** chi-square = 25.41, $p < 0.1$ per cent
at 5° of freedom.

In the other scale measures of attachment there was no continuous relationship of scoring with age, but there were significant relationships between certain age-groups and strength of attachment. Those people aged over 51 compared with the younger set were much more likely to score high on the Shopping* and Friend** Attachment scales (again, low and medium scores are grouped against high scores making a two column by two row table). That is, the older people were more likely to shop within Byker, and more likely to have most of their friends in the Byker area.

Relationships between age groups and levels of attachment can be distinguished for the Work, Family, and Neighbour scales if, this time, we group low against high and medium scores. In this case, the over 65 age group is much more likely to score low on Occupation attachment.*** This is not due to their retirement because retirement was counted as an occupation, but probably because interviewees of this age-group were more likely to have lost their spouses who could not therefore contribute to the household

* chi-square = 15.37, $p < 0.1$ per cent.

** chi-square = 5.80 $p < 2.5$ per cent.

*** chi -square = 10.89, $p < 0.1$ per cent.

score. The over 65 age group was also more likely to score low on Family attachment*, and this must signify a real difference in situation since the widowed could include their dead spouse's family in the scoring.

The youngest age-group (21-30) were found to be significantly less neighbourly than the others together.** This could be due not only to less neighbourly attitudes, but also to recent setting up of household in a new area, or to both spouses working away from the home.

When all the six measures of community attachment were combined into one total passive community attachment scale, it was found that there was a continuous relationship between age and this total measure,*** both increasing together up to the age of 65. After that age there was a drop in high scoring down to a proportion (29%) which was only just above the 21-30 age group's percentage of high scores (24%). 61% of the 61-65 age group scored high on the overall measure of passive community attachment, and this was the highest proportion reached.

* chi-square = 3.39, $p < 10$ per cent.

** chi-square = 15.43, $p < 0.1$ per cent.

*** chi-square = 23.73, $p < 0.1$ per cent at 5° of freedom -
grouping low and medium against high scores.

Proximity to Demolition and Community Attachment

Current demolition areas in Byker are distinctly located and mostly peripheral to the entire area. Those neighbourhoods which bordered or were contained in demolition areas could have been affected either by a breakdown in social networks as the normal patterns of life were upset, or they could have been subject to a turnover of inhabitants which would also affect social relations. Whether there had been any such breakdown in these areas was of intrinsic interest, but it would also be of relevance to the study of communications. Those people living near or in current demolition areas were therefore separately examined on the attachment scales.

There were two main areas affected by past and present demolition. Almost the whole of the area west of the north-south railway (Albion Row clearance area) was affected, and on the other side of the railway bordering the old Parker Street/Thornborough Street clearance areas were half of Harvey Street and the whole of Norfolk Road. There were also parts of several other streets. The qualification was that the street should be directly abutting a demolition area.

There was found to be no significant difference between those households which were near to demolition areas (142) and those which were not (301), in their scoring on the Friend, Occupation, Shopping or Residence Attachment scales.

The households which were nearer demolition areas did, however, score significantly lower on the Family* and Neighbour** attachment scales. Since they were a similar group to the rest of Byker in their least directly interpersonal roles (of resident, worker, and shopper), it seems justifiable to conclude that their lower level of contact with family and neighbours represents some breakdown in their pattern of social relationships. This lower scoring cannot be explained by an abnormal turnover of demolition area inhabitants since they scored very nearly as high as the other Byker people on the Residence attachment scale.

The demolition area group scored as high as the rest on the Friend scale, but were regularly (though insignificantly) lower scoring on Occupation, Residence and Shopping. This had the cumulative effect that they were significantly less likely to score high on the total passive community attachment scale.***

* chi-square = 6.42, $p < 2.5$ per cent.

** chi-square = 4.80, $p < 5$ per cent.

*** chi-square = 5.53, $p < 2.5$ per cent.

Interrelations between Scales

A high proportion of local people scored high on each of the scales taken separately:

Table 27 Proportion of Households per Score for Each Scale-measure of Attachment

Percent Scoring on each Scale			
Scale	High	Medium	Low
Residence	75%	9%	16%
Family	39%	24%	38%
Neighbour	80%	10%	10%
Friend	40%	22%	38%
Shopping	46%	45%	9%
Occupation	21%	27%	52%

Base No. 443

The meaning of a high score is that in the fulfilment of that role, for the high scoring individuals Byker is important as a sphere of action. In Scott Greer's terms, the locality will be significant in delimiting the radii of action in the performance of that role. The more the separate measures correspond to each other in defining the community attached portion of the population, the more this portion can be described as functionally dependent on the community.

The scale-measure which was least predictive of performance in the other roles was Occupation attachment. High scorers in Occupational attachment were more likely to score high on the Family and Friend scales, but there were otherwise no significant relationships here. There was also no significant relationship between high scores on the Family scale on the one hand, and high scores on the Friend and Shopping scales on the other. Otherwise all the scales were significantly related to one another. This is best shown in the form of a table giving:

- 1) The proportion of high scorers in the rows (across) who score high also in the columns (down).
- 2) The level of significance of the relationship; that is, the percent probability that such a relationship could be mistakenly attributed when in fact it does not exist.

For the purposes of these calculations, low and medium scores were grouped against high scores, forming a series of 2 x 2 tables to which the Chi-square Test was applied.

Table 28

Significance of the Relationships between High Scores on each of the
Scale Measures

	Neighbour Prop- [*] % ortion sig.**	Residence Prop- % ortion sig.	Friend Prop- % ortion sig.	Family Prop- % ortion sig.	Shopping Prop- % ortion sig.	Occupation Prop- % ortion sig.
Neighbour	- -	82% 0.1%	45% 0.1%	43% 0.5%	49% 1%	21% not sig.
Residence	87% 0.1%	- -	44% 1%	44% 0.1%	49% 5%	20% not sig.
Friend	90% 0.1%	84% 1%	- -	43% not sig.	52% 5%	25% 10%
Family	88% 0.5%	86% 0.1%	44% not sig.	- -	46% not sig.	25% 10%
Shopping	86% 1%	80% 5%	46% 5%	39% not sig.	- -	23% not sig.
Occupation	80% not sig.	75% not sig.	50% 10%	47% 10%	51% not sig.	- -
Proportion of High Scores per column, and No. in ()	80% (353)	75% (333)	40% (177)	39% (172)	46% (202)	21% (91)

* 'Proportion' refers to the proportion of households scoring High on the two named scales.

** The lower the percent figure, the higher the level of significance.

In some instances, the same or greater proportions will be seen to have varying or lower significance. This is due to the varying number of high scorers per row (across) - where there is a relatively low total number of high scores, a greater disproportion in their distribution may be needed for it to be as significant as a smaller disproportion of a larger total. These instances are mainly in the Friend and Family scales which have rather small numbers of high scorers (in brackets).

The bottom row (across) shows the proportion of high scorers per scale measure as an indication of the degree to which high scorers from other scales are disproportionately represented.

Except for the Occupation scale, there is a high level of inter-relatedness between the various measures. People attached to the community in one role are generally more likely to be attached to it in other roles. Since there is such an inter-relationship it is possible to construct a total passive community attachment scale out of the various individual measures.

The Passive Community Attachment Scale.

It is useful to construct such a total scale in order to make later comparisons of attitudes with community attachment more manageable, and also to identify the group which scored high throughout the range of measures.

Every High score was attributed 2 points.

Every Medium score was attributed 1 point.

Every Low score was attributed 0 points.

Resultant total scores between

9-12 were described as High

6-8 were described as Medium

0-5 were described as Low.

At the least, anyone scoring high on the total Passive Community Attachment Scale had to score at least three highs and three mediums on the individual scales. 36% of the households achieved at least this level, 43% of them were rated Medium on the total scale, and 21% were rated Low.

Such an overall scale would be imperfect as a summary of all the individual measures unless each was strongly related to it. There must be a considerably greater chance that those scoring high on one scale will still score high on the overall scale. Chi-square tests in fact reveal that each of the six measures is so related to the Passive Community Attachment Scale, at the high level of significance of 0.1%.*

* The chi-square scores were :

Work	: Total - 52
Family	: Total - 69
Shopping	: Total - 33
Neighbour	: Total - 41
Residence	: Total - 62
Friends	: Total - 128

Table 29 Scores on Passive Community Attachment Scale**Per Individual Measure -- Percents***

		High	Medium	Low	
Neighbours	High	44	46	10	100
	Medium	14	38	48	100
	Low	0	17	83	100
Residence	High	47	45	8	100
	Medium	10	45	45	100
	Low	1	32	67	100
Friends	High	68	28	4	100
	Medium	29	49	22	100
	Low	7	54	39	100
Family	High	60	35	5	100
	Medium	35	51	14	100
	Low	12	46	42	100
Shopping	High	51	38	11	100
	Medium	28	48	24	100
	Low	5	41	54	100
Occupation	High	69	25	6	100
	Medium	38	48	14	100
	Low	22	47	31	100
Total scale		36	43	21	100

(Base No. 443)

* The figures are rounded and minimally adjusted to add to 100%.

This table shows the proportion of high, medium and low scores on the individual scales who score high, medium and low on the overall scale. In each case high scorers on the individual scales are more

likely to score high on the overall scale, and low scorers more likely to score low.

As has been mentioned, there is a continuous relationship between increasing age and increasingly high scores on the passive community attachment scale, up to the age of 65 plus when scoring diminishes. Those people who lived near demolition areas were less likely to score high on the overall scale, due to their significantly lower scoring on the Family and Neighbour scales and slightly lower scoring on the Occupation, Shopping and Residence scales.

Just over one third of the sample population (36%), 161 households, rated high on the passive community attachment scale, and 93 (21%) rated low.

Chapter 7

SUBJECTIVE IDENTIFICATION

This chapter considers the propensity of local people to be aware of Byker as an area with its own character. Such an identification of Byker seems likely to be associated with a sense of identification with Byker, if its characteristics are viewed favourably.

In his study of the Cumberland village, Gosforth,⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Williams found that villagers not only treated outsiders with caution, but also rigidly identified themselves as 'lowlanders' with a style of living separate from that of the upland farmers. In the very different area of Chicago which Rossi and Dentler studied (Hyde Park), they found a similar sense of distinctiveness among the residents who,

defined themselves as living in an 'unusual community'. They were conscious of its relatively high income base, its atypically high proportion of professional and semi-professional occupational groups, and its vocal political consciousness

and

of the fairly distinct differences between their social structure and styles of life and those of the immediate, surrounding residential locales.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾

This self-consciousness in Hyde Park contributed to the creation of voluntary community organisations to deal with urban renewal problems.

Lynd described such local identities as not only important to the local resident, but also to the outsider. Place of residence, he suggested, was increasingly used as a means of locating the individual on the status scale, according to which the actor could adjust his

behaviour:

Residential areas tend to become more segregated and homogeneous. Such external⁷ as where one lives become more important as placing one in the larger and less familiar population and personal means of placing one in the group, involving considerations of the kind of person one is, yield to more quickly⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ determinable, shorthand symbols, notably what one owns.

Local identification and ownership as a means of placing one within the group were found by Willmott and Young to be unimportant in Bethnal Green:

The nature of the community [internally cohesive] also means that it is almost impossible to 'put on airs' or to claim any superiority, just because you earn more or spend more than your neighbour.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

but Bethnal Green inhabitants could not escape the fact that other people "in other parts of London are much better off, and that many of them look down on manual workers of the kind who inhabit Bethnal Green -- or the 'slums' as the borough would be (and is) called by its detractors."⁽¹¹⁰⁾ The authors claim that the tight knit community, as in any other almost exclusively working class area, is a form of defence against such "middle-class notions".

The position of people in Byker seems to correspond with that set out by Willmott and Young. Respondents were asked, first, whether they thought that "people in Byker are any different from the people in the other areas around it", and, second, whether they felt that "People in other parts of Newcastle have a particular impression of Byker people". The interviewers were asked to decide whether the answer was intended as a favourable comment on Byker people, and to

categorise it according to whether it referred to class or status differences, social attributes, or physical qualities. The interviewers were instructed in the meanings of these terms:

- 1) Class difference - reference to class, status, wealth.
- 2) Social attributes - friendliness, neighbourliness, helpfulness, independence, 'stuck-up' etc.
- 3) Physical description - tough, skilled, dirty etc.

It was sometimes difficult to decide which category an answer referred to, and the recorded statistics are only a guide to interviewers answers. Two almost unclassifiable phrases continually appeared: 'rough' (which was sometimes recorded as a physical and sometimes as a social attribute depending on the context); and 'salt of the earth' (which seemed best classified as a social attribute).

The first question, asking if the interviewee felt that Byker people were any different from people in the neighbouring areas was frequently found puzzling. Puzzlement was often followed by a defensive 'no'. In all 32% of the 443 interviewees thought there was a difference, and overwhelmingly (26%) thought this was favourable to Byker people. They described the difference mainly in terms of local people's friendliness.

But the next question on the outsider's view of Byker people brought a much more willing response. Only 22% of interviewees felt that outsiders had "no particular impression" of them: 69% thought they had an impression, and overwhelmingly they thought it was an unfavourable one (66%). Most commonly other people's impressions

were felt to involve class comparisons.

There seemed to be a readily expressed awareness among Byker people that outsiders viewed them as 'low class' and looked down on them. One respondent summarised their impressions in this way:

"They think we are untidy, layabouts, unemployed, hanging about corner ends, staying in bars using the money to have a pint and back horses."

Others referred more directly to class comparisons:

"They think they're 'it' and you're low down because you live in old houses."

"They think we are lower than a snake's belly."

"They look down on Byker. Its always been an area for ship-yard and dockyard workers. There are no white-collar workers here."

"... lower class. I'm the poor relation, living in Byker."

"They look down on them just because its Byker. 'Byker' somehow sounds awful; 'High Heaton' has a much better sound."

Many people felt that these impressions held by outsiders had survived from the period of pre-war unemployment:

"They think its a depressed area. The same kind of feeling as they have about Jarrow. Its an industrial area, close packed together. They think people are dirty."

"It originated before the war, in the slump when there were a lot of men unemployed. There were a lot of fights down Byker Bank. It was a rough area, but its demolished now."

Many respondents seemed to be made particularly aware of Byker's image when they went shopping in the city. One man said that he had been refused hire purchase terms at a department store because of his address; even if it was not in fact the reason for the refusal, he was convinced that it had been. Comments such as the following were common:

"If I buy something at Bainbridges to be delivered, I always say 'Newcastle 6'. I find if I say 'Byker', you don't get the same treatment."

"People's eyebrows are raised when you say you live in Byker." For this reason many people said that it was common for local people not to admit that they came from Byker when they were outside the area. Such feelings might well lead not so much to a confirmation of community solidarity, as to a desire to escape from the area and shed the image. An extreme case of this was the music-teacher who did her best to impress on the interviewer that she was misplaced. She thought that Byker people were "very immoral; the woman upstairs has three children and she is not even married, and their speech is dreadful." She would like to live in High Heaton where her music pupils are and where the residents are "more élite."

But more often, people who recognised that outsiders had a poor impression of Byker seemed anxious to affirm their own opposite opinion. It was especially noticeable that many people who answered to the first question that they thought that Byker people were not different, followed up their account of other people's poor opinions

with a vigorous listing of local virtues. One such respondent said: "They think Byker people are common. But they are good people in Byker. They would never see a neighbour beat." The virtues of local people were usually identified as friendliness or neighbourliness. Whether or not the social network of community (as Willmott and Young claimed for Bethnal Green) was a successful defence against disturbing ideas from outside, it was the virtues of such a system which were quoted by respondents as the features which they felt raised them above outsiders. Possibly those who felt the outsiders' criticisms, but were not able to answer them with opposing claims would be more inclined to leave the area than those who made counter-vailing claims of local solidarity.

The different responses to the two questions are best illustrated in the table below. The percentages referred to in the 'Area of Comparison' columns represent the proportion of those who had an opinion (favourable or unfavourable) who mentioned each category. There were 141 people who themselves thought there was a difference, and 302 who felt that outsiders thought so.

Table 30 Impressions of Byker People.

	Percent of Respondents	Area of Comparison - Percent * of those having an impression			
		Class and Status	Social Attributes	Physical Qualities	Others
A. Self Impression:					
Favourable	26%				
Unfavourable	5.6%				
None	62.5%				
Don't know and others	5.9%				
	100.0%	5.0%	90.8%	6.4%	3.5%
B. Outsiders' Impressions:					
Favourable	2.7%				
Unfavourable	65.5%				
None	22.3%				
Don't know and others	9.5%				
	100.0%	66.9%	16.2%	39.7%	4.6%
	(443)				

* Percents in 'area of comparison' do not total 100% because some of those having opinions gave more than one answer.

Three other questions were asked which were designed to test the interviewee's familiarity with the area, on the premise that this would increase with the 'sense of belonging'.

Two questions referred to the name of the locality. The first asked respondents what they would 'call this locality'. This met

with some puzzlement as respondents searched for the 'right' answer. Some 86% settled on 'Byker' and 14% gave the name of their ward, some other name (e.g. 'the North East' region) or said they did not know. Those not replying 'Byker' were asked if they "would say you lived in Byker". 52 out of the 62 persons not replying 'Byker' in the earlier question then agreed that they did, three said that they did not, and seven did not know. Of those who insisted that they did not live in Byker or who were uncertain, the majority were inhabitants of St. Peter's. This is an area of a few streets near the dockside which seems to have had a greater local identity in the past, when according to some local people, it used to be known as 'velvet city' (a term which seems to have referred to the practice of richer parents of dressing their children in velvet suits on Sundays).

Respondents were then asked: "If a stranger asked you to tell him what were the boundaries of Byker, what would you tell him?" There are no official boundaries to the Byker area which has no longer any administrative significance, and the intention was only to find whether the interviewee had any clear notion of the area as a unit. Some people, even those who had lived there all their lives, were confused by the question, but 68% responded with a clear definition which usually corresponded closely to the area dealt with by this survey (see Ch. 4).

A 'subjective identification' scale was compounded out of the five questions which have been mentioned, to distinguish the group who were most likely to be able to identify Byker, and to be aware

of it as an area with its own character. One point was awarded to those who 'would call the locality' Byker, two points to those who could identify its boundaries, one point to those who themselves felt that Byker people were 'different' in some way, and one to those who felt that others thought so.

Table 31 Subjective Identification Scale

	Score	Percent Respondents
	0	0.2
Weak	1	8.6
	2	16.5
	3	21.2
Strong	4	36.8
	5	16.7
		<u>100.0%</u> (Base No. 443).

This signifies that 54% of respondents (those scoring 4 or 5) were able to identify Byker in some way as a territorial area in which they lived, and also to attribute to it some distinctive characteristic. The 21% scoring 3 were also included in the 'strong identifier' category since many of these were also able to identify the area and attribute to it some distinctiveness, but were unable to answer the 'boundaries' question which rated 2 points.

Sex and Subjective Identification

The Passive Community Attachment scale made use of information collected from both spouses in a married household. The Subjective Identification (SI) measure and scale depended on the knowledge and

attitudes of the interviewee only. It would have been impossible to sum the attitudes of husbands and wives. This means that the SI scale rates one representative of each household rather than the household itself.

There were significant differences in response per sex for two of the measures and for the total scale. Men were more likely to be able to describe the boundaries of the area^{*}: 81% of men as against 62% of women were able to do so. Women, however, significantly more often thought that outsiders had a particular impression of Byker people^{**}: 72% of women thought so, against 61% of men. On the overall SI scale men were more likely to score high than women^{***} -- 81% of men and 72% of women.

As an indicator of subjective identification in Byker the scale is unrepresentative because it contains too many women. If the sexes are weighted to bring them to equality of numbers, the proportion of 'strong' identifiers on the scale would rise from 75% to 77%.

The scale does however allow us to distinguish two groups, the strongly and the weakly identified interviewees.

* Chi-square = 15.70, $p < 0.1\%$

** Chi-square = 4.45, $p < 5\%$

*** Chi-square = 4.38, $p < 5\%$

Age and Subjective Identification

There is no continuous relationship between increasing age and the subjective identification measures and scale. However, certain age groups score significantly differently to the rest.

There is a tendency throughout for the over 65 age group to score low on each of the measures, but this difference is only significant in the question referring to outsiders' impressions of Byker people. The over 65 age group was significantly less likely to think that outsiders did have any particular impressions.*

The age group 21-30 was more likely to name Byker as the locality that they lived in,** and if they and the age group 41-50 are drawn together the significance of the relationship is even more impressive.*** But it is difficult to discern any pattern in this.

A meaningful relationship is more discernible if we compare age against the overall scale. Here the age groups over 61 are significantly more likely to be rated as weak identifiers.**** This seems to be largely due to their greater inability to identify Byker's boundaries -- success in which would have gained them two points. The older groups seemed more often to be confused by this question,

- * Chi-square = 7.0, $p < 1\%$
- ** Chi-square = 5.28, $p < 2.5\%$
- *** Chi-square = 16.24, $p < 0.1\%$
- **** Chi-square = 4.86, $p < 5\%$

and their lower overall SI scoring would seem to have more to do with their confusion than their non-identification with Byker.

Proximity to Demolition and Subjective Identification

Those who lived near demolition areas seemed to be no different from the rest of Byker except in one measure. They were less likely to be able to distinguish the area's boundaries.* The difference can probably be explained by the fact that most of them lived in the west of the area beyond a railway which divides them from the rest of Byker.

Passive Community Attachment and Subjective Identification

We have now two measures of attachment to the area: attachment in the sense of the performance of roles within rather than outside the area, and in the sense of the interviewee's recognition of the distinctiveness of the area. This allows us to narrow the definition of the community-attached to those households which score high on the passive community attachment (PCA) scale and whose interviewee-representative emerges as a strong identifier. Out of the 161 households which scored high on the PCA scale, 122 (76%) score strongly on the Subjective Identification scale also. These form the group which we will call the strongly community attached.

There is a tendency, which is not quite significant at the 10%

* Chi-square - 3.30, $p < 10\%$

level,* for those who rate High or Medium rather than Low on the PCA scale to also score strongly on the SI scale. There is a significant relationship between strong subjective identification and two of the individual PCA measures: high scoring on the Subjective Identification scale increases with scoring on the scale of neighbourliness from low through medium to high:-- the more neighbourly are much more likely to be strong identifiers.** Those who are most attached (high plus medium scorers) to the area through their families are also more likely to be strong identifiers.*** There is a tendency in the same direction for each of the other PCA measures (occupation, residence, friends, shopping), but no others reach the level of significance at the 10% level.

Table 32 Distribution of Passive Community Attachment ratings on the Subjective Identification scale.

Passive Community Attachment	Subjective Identification		Total
	Weak	Strong	
Low	32.3%	67.7%	100% (93)
Medium	22.8%	77.2%	100% (189)
High	24.2%	75.8%	100% (161)
Total	25.3%	74.7%	100% (443)

* But would have been so without Yates' correction.

** Chi-square = 10.06 with two degrees of freedom, $p < 1\%$

*** Chi-square = 2.90, $p < 10\%$

Some sociologists have concluded that self-consciousness is essential to community. Mercer includes in his definition of community: "... an awareness of their uniqueness and separate identity as a group"¹¹¹; and it is "the decline in the old feeling of solidarity" that Stein seems to stress to prove his thesis of "the eclipse of community."¹¹² Such self-consciousness (subjective identification) seems to exist at a high level in all groups in Byker.

But it can be imagined that even without the development of self-consciousness, group membership in the areas examined (in the investigation of 'passive community attachment') will be influential on the attitudes and values of individuals. When, as in Byker, many of the groups to which the individual may belong throughout his life, are community-based the influence of the community on his outlook and behaviour seems likely to be considerable. Schnore has written:

First what are the most salient group memberships? Granting (for the sake of argument) that group membership makes a difference in a person's behaviour, which groups make the most difference? The answer of course may vary with the life cycle. The family may be the most crucial for a person in the formative years of his childhood; the peer group may be more important to him in adolescence; and the occupational group may be most salient in his adulthood."¹¹³

At each stage of his life, the Byker resident has a good chance of belonging to groups which are primarily community-based. This applies to those roles which have been examined, and also to juvenile roles. Until the 1968 school reorganisation, almost all Byker children (except for those attending grammar schools) will have been educated in Byker from primary to secondary level. And the streets

and back-alleys are their play-areas. The establishment of secondary schools serving larger areas in the 1968 reorganisation, means that children from the age of 11 will for the first time leave to go to school outside Byker. The same declining dependence on the locality seems to have occurred in the sphere of the leisure activities of adolescents.¹¹⁴

It is this relationship between local attachment and attitudes and behaviour that is the central concern of this study. The expectation is that the community attached group will manifest some distinctiveness in their political attitudes and behaviour, as a result of their common experience.

Chapter 8ACTIVISM - THE PERFORMANCE OF VOLUNTARY ROLES

Almond and Verba find that people who belong to organisations are more likely than others "to be close to the model of the democratic citizen." Before we examine this finding's relevance to Byker, we will investigate whether community attachment has any relationship with active membership of organisations ('Activism'), and in particular with active membership of local organisations ('Local Activism'). To the extent that there is a relationship with Activism in general, we will have evidence of a propensity of the community attached towards participation in group activities. We will particularly examine this relationship with regard to participation in local organisations, which may act as intermediaries between the individual and the local authority on the slum clearance issue.

Many studies have shewn that working-class people tend less often than the middle-class to belong to organisations.⁽¹¹⁵⁾ However, compared with figures obtainable for other areas, a high proportion of Byker respondents belong to organisations:

Table 33 **Comparative Levels of Organisation Membership**

	Byker	Almond & Verba for UK residents educated to levels: Primary : Secondary		Maud Report ⁽¹¹⁶⁾ UK County Borough figures - All Classes	Willmott and Young - W/Class in Woodford	
Belonging to:						
At least 1 organisation	66%	41%	:	55%	59%	34%
None	34%	59%	:	45%	41%	66%
	100%	100%	:	100%	100%	100%
	(No. 443)	(No.593)		(No. 322)	(No.629)	(No.355)

Most of the 66% (48%) belonged to at least one organisation which met in Byker. Males tended more often than females to belong to organisations, but the difference between the sexes is less than either Maud⁽¹¹⁶⁾ or Almond and Verba find nationally due to the abnormally high level of membership by women:

Table 34 Organisational Membership by Sex of Respondent

	Byker		Maud - all UK		Almond and Verba - UK	
Belonging to:	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
At least 1 organisation	76%	61%	77%	49%	66%	30%
None	24%	39%	23%	51%	34%	70%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	(140)	(303)	(989)	(14195)	(460)	(503)

This high level of membership by women is mainly accounted for by two types of organisation: church and bingo clubs. The membership of the first is matched by the attendance of the second.

This is a study of household patterns of behaviour, so that most of the information on organisational membership relates to households rather than individuals. Respondents were asked whether either they or their spouse belonged to any of a list of organisations. They were also asked to say where the organisation met, and whether they or their spouse were regular attenders (in the case of those organisations not meeting at regular intervals those people attending "all or most" of the meetings were classed as regular attenders; in the case of those meeting at least weekly those people attending "at least monthly" were counted as regular attenders).

Table 35

Membership and Attendance per Household

Organisation	Place of Meeting - Percent of 443					Proportion of Members who are regular attenders
	Byker	Neighbouring Areas*	Elsewhere Tyneside	Elsewhere		
1. Trade Union branch (193)	12.4%	12.9%	16.0%	2.3%	29.0% (56)	
2. Political Party or Organisation (5)	0.7%	0.2%	0.2%	0	40.0% (2)	
3. Professional Association (5)	0	0.2%	0.9%	0	40.0% (2)	
4. Public Bodies (2)	0	0.2%	0.2%	0	0	
5. Welfare Organisations (8)	1.1%	0.2%	0.5%	0	87.5% (7)	
6. Church or Chapel (154)	28.7%	3.8%	2.0%	0.2%	48.7% (75)	
7. Workingman's Clubs (142)	21.9%	6.1%	3.8%	0.2%	81.7% (116)	
8. Community Centre (18)	3.8%	0.2%	0	0	94.4% (17)	
9. Ex-Servicemen's Organisations (22)	2.9%	0.7%	1.4%	0	63.6% (14)	
10. Old People's Clubs (21)	3.6%	0.7%	0.5%	0	85.7% (18)	
11. Youth and School Organisations (5)	0.5%	0.2%	0.5%	0	40.0% (2)	
12. Sports and Hobbies Clubs (14)	0.9%	1.4%	0.7%	0.2%	71.4% (10)	
13. Bingo Clubs (111)	18.7%	4.7%	1.4%	0.2%	73.9% (82)	
14. Other Clubs (38)	3.6%	2.3%	2.3%	0.5%	68.4% (26)	

Of 443 Households

This table shews not the proportion of respondents who belonged to the organisations, but the proportion of

households having one or more member of each organisation. The percentages in the extreme right hand column represent the proportion of members who are regular attenders and the bracketed figures refer to their numbers. The total numbers of member households are in brackets in the left hand column.

* Neighbouring Areas - Walker, Walkergate, Shieldfield, South Heaton, Battlefield, Stepney (all within half a mile of the boundaries of Byker).

While the order of size of claimed membership places trade unions first, followed by church, workingmen's clubs and bingo clubs, the order of importance in terms of numbers of regularly attending members places workingmen's clubs first, followed by bingo clubs, church, then trade unions. Proportionately the community centre has the most regular members followed by welfare organisations, but the numbers are small. Of the organisations with large membership the workingmen's clubs have the highest proportion of regular attenders, followed by bingo clubs, church and trade unions in that order.

A loose distinction may be made between 'issue' organisations and 'social' organisations -- respectively organisations listed 1 to 6, and those listed 7 to 14. It seems that while two of the 'issue' organisations (trade unions and church) have the largest number of self-claimed members, it is two of the 'social' organisations which have in absolute and proportional terms the larger regularly attending membership. Expressed in terms of membership per household: while more households have at least one member of an issue organisation (289 to 221 households), only 88 have at least one regularly attending member of an issue organisation as compared with 163 with at least one regularly attending member of a social organisation.

Almond and Verba in The Civic Culture and Almond in The Politics of the Developing Areas ⁽¹¹⁷⁾ have shewn that while members of all organisations tend to be more politically competent than non-members, it is the members of 'issue' or 'political' organisations who most clearly demonstrate this. This will be discussed more fully later,

but the point to be made at this stage is that it is the social, entertaining organisations which claim most active membership in Byker.

Household membership is primarily of organisations meeting in Byker. Of the larger organisations, only the trade union branches have more members who must leave Byker for meetings than who stay in the area. Indeed, of the 267 households which have husband or wife regularly attending any organisation, only 54 solely attend organisations which meet outside the area. The remaining 213 we call the 'local Activists': the whole 267 we call 'Activists'.

Office-Holders

The Activists contain a small proportion of households with representatives who at the time of the survey were office-holders in their organisations or who had been during the previous ten years. There was a total of 33 people (husband or wife) who were or had been office-holders out of the 443 households -- that is, 7.5 office-holders per 100 households. 24 of these were men (16 being office-holders in Byker organisations, and 8 of outside organisations) and 9 were women (7 of Byker organisations, and 2 of outside ones). Expressed as a proportion of the total number of people interviewed or currently married to interviewees (770), we find that Byker rates low for office-holding compared with national figures, in spite of its high membership rate.

Table 36 Percentage of Population Holding Posts

	Byker			Maud Report ⁽¹¹⁸⁾ - UK figures			Almond and Verba [*] - UK figures		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Holds post	5%	2%	4%	19%	10%	14%	21%	7%	13%
No post	95%	98%	96%	81%	90%	86%	79%	93%	87%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base Numbers Totals	356	414	770	989	1195	2184	460	503	963

These figures are not entirely comparable. First, the Byker sample was drawn from the population of households and not of individuals,* which tends to make it unrepresentative for consideration of personal membership and office-holding patterns. Second, the question asked by the three surveys were different -- the Byker questionnaire included people who had been office-holders in the last ten years;* the Maud Report included only those people now office-holders; while Almond and Verba's study covered all those who had ever been officers. But even over the longer time span (of 10 years) a significantly smaller proportion of Byker people had been office-holders than the Maud Report discovered were post-holders at the time of its national survey. **

Thus, while 'passive' membership is widespread in Byker, active personal commitment to an organisation in the sense of office-holding is comparatively rare. It is widespread participation in the decision-making of organisations which Almond and Verba describe as characteristic of democratic societies, and which they find to be related in individuals to high levels of political competence. The low level of office-holding in Byker can perhaps be partly explained by the nature of some of the organisations belonged to:- bingo clubs⁽¹¹⁹⁾ for example, are commercially operated, and membership of Workingmen's clubs requires no more than passive attendance. But it seems

* But both these factors would tend to increase the number of post-holders found in Byker.

** A standard error test was applied, and the difference was found to be significant at 1%.

likely to be true also that even in organisations with locally appointed or elected leaders, these posts reach only a narrow circle.

Age and Activism

There were no differences between age groups as to the propensity of households to have representatives belonging to organisations, except among the over 65 group. The oldest respondents were significantly less likely to be rated as Local Activists* (34% compared with an average of 48%).

Demolition and Activism

As might be expected, and reflecting the reduced level of their local interaction with family and neighbours, the group of households sited near demolition areas are less likely to be connected with organisations. 41% of them as opposed to 52% of the remainder were rated as Local Activists -- a significant difference.** The physical destruction of a residential area seems to be accompanied by a corresponding decline in social involvement.

Community Attachment and Activism

Several studies have shewn a relationship between participation in local organisations and interest in, and attachment to the locality. Morris and Mogeys find that while regular attenders are not more locally

* Chi-square - 9.20, $p < 0.5\%$

** Chi-square - 3.97, $p < 5\%$

active in all spheres, they are more likely to be neighbourly and to claim more friends in the area.⁽¹²⁰⁾ Willmott and Young found that "active club members had friends in more often."⁽¹²¹⁾

These findings were supported in Byker. All Activism (that is all regular attenders) was closely related to the high scoring on the scale of passive community attachment,^{*} and Local Activism (regular attenders of local organisations) was even more significantly related to high scores on the PCA scale.^{**} As scoring increases so does the proportion of Local Activists.

Table 37 Relation between Local Activism and Passive Community Attachment

		Local Activists	Others	Percent
Passive Community Attachment Scale	Low	31%	69%	100% (93)
	Medium	43%	57%	100% (189)
	High	64%	36%	100% (161)
		(213)	(230)	(443)

For each of the individual measures too, the proportion of Local Activists increases with attachment (the relationship is continuous for all but the Residence and Friend scales). Grouping the Low and Medium attachment scorers, we find that there is a significant

* Chi-square - 12.43, $p < 0.1\%$

** Chi-square - 24.00, $p < 0.1\%$

relationship between attachment and activism for each scale,* except Shopping and Residence. Local Activists were more likely than other people to have contact with locally living family, to have their friends in the area, to know their neighbours, and (though not significantly) to shop locally and to have lived in the area a long time. Above all, they were more likely to work in Byker. 81% of the highly occupation-ally attached were Local Activists, 71% of the non-attached were not Local Activists.

Subjective Identification and Activism

There is no significant relationship between scoring on the subjective identification scale and either Activism in general or Local Activism in particular. But in both cases the more strongly identified tended to be more active organisationally also, than the more weakly identified.

Taking the individual measures, however, Local Activism is related to high scoring on two of the questions. Thus they were significantly more likely to spontaneously give Byker as the name of the area in which they lived; ** of the 62 who could not, 44 were not Local Activists. They were also more likely to feel that outsiders had a particular impression of Byker people. ***

* Occupation, $p < 0.1\%$
 Family, $p < 2.5\%$
 Neighbours $p < 2.5\%$
 Friends $p < 10\%$

** Chi-square - 9.62, $p < 0.5\%$

*** Chi-square - 6.39, $p < 2.5\%$

Both measures indicate that there is a relationship between what might be called involuntary and voluntary involvement in the locality.

Conclusion

There is widespread participation in local organisations in Byker. Regular attendance, as measured by respondent's claims, tends to be most frequent in the case of organisations whose function is largely social. The low proportion of people who hold or have held positions of leadership indicates that there is a prevailing unwillingness to take such positions, or that leadership in these organisations is deliberately restricted to a few, or that their nature (for example, because they are commercially organised) precludes local involvement. These factors will be examined in the survey of local organisations.

Those households whose members attend local organisations tend to be drawn disproportionately from the ranks of those who in their everyday life are more involved in the area, and from those who are more ready to identify the area and to be aware of other people's impressions of it.

Of the 122 households which score high on both the PCA and SI scales, 79 are Local Activists (a significantly higher proportion than the remaining 321 households can claim). These we will call the 'Attached Local Activists' -- a group which is objectively and subjectively attached to Byker and which is involved in local

* Chi-square - 17.84, $p < 0.1\%$

organisations. This group we can also break down into parts to assess their separate relations with political orientation, as possible structural influences on attitudes.

PART IV

BYKER - POLITICAL CULTURE

In this analysis of the political attitudes of local people, the cultural typology, as outlined in the first chapter, will be closely followed. We will be concerned with characterising the locality, and, if possible, identifying groups according to the categories: political cognition, affect, and evaluation. These categories of political attitudes will then be related to the structural factor of attachment to the community.

Before we resort to the measures of political attitudes gained from the survey, it will be useful to survey the already available data on local elections.

Almond and Verba identify cognitive and affective attitudes to voting and electioneering, using these as indications of the individual's commitment to the input process and the polity at large. "The great act of mass participation in a democracy is the election",⁽¹²¹⁾ and the participant citizen must therefore be aware of and favourably oriented towards this act. But before we go on to study attitudes or propensities to participation, we will ask how far Byker people do participate in this "great act."

Chapter 9

ELECTIONS

The Significance of Voting

Systems analysis describes the vote as an input of support into the system by which it is given the power to turn demands into outputs in the form of authoritative policies.⁽¹²²⁾ From the point of view of the individual the act of voting may be seen as functional as an expressive act of support, rather than primarily as an opportunity to choose between policies. On the latter point, Richard Rose has found in a recent study⁽¹²³⁾ that only 48% of voters felt that the government had much influence on their lives; only 18% of this 48% could name more than one way in which the government did influence them, while 30% of the 48% could offer no examples; and only 15% of voters named the government as a body outside their family which could help them with their chief concerns. In other words, since he finds that most people are affectively oriented towards voting, he concludes (on the basis, admittedly, of narrow evidence) that it serves rather as a symbol of generalised support than as an instrumental act. If this is so, then voting can be taken as an important indicator of support for the political system, as an attitudinal measure in itself.

There are other psychological components to this support than a sense of duty to vote. Campbell has shown⁽¹²⁴⁾ that voting is positively related to a high intensity of preference for a party, to

a high degree of interest in the campaign, and to a high sense of political effectiveness (which we might call 'citizen competence' in Almond and Verba's terms). He also shows with Lazarsfeld⁽¹²⁵⁾ and Lipset⁽¹²⁶⁾ that identification with a party, and voting itself, are partly dependent on the absence of cross-pressures. If the individual is subject to inconsistent attitudinal pressures from heterogeneous groups, the division of his loyalties may incline him not to vote, or to be less consistent in his voting choice. Both Lazarsfeld and Campbell identify a process (the 'funnel of causality' - Campbell) which tends to polarise individual choice as elections approach. In Lazarsfeld's terms, the individual tends towards an increased consistency of voting choice with that of the group which is most influential on him. He finds that the swing of those who change their party choice before elections is towards consistency with their family and their social background (class, religion, and urban or rural background). Likewise, Campbell⁽¹²⁷⁾ finds that an identification with a party implanted in youth by a group with which the individual is psychologically identified, requires little reinforcement; and the most influential of these groups is the family.

Lipset finds⁽¹²⁸⁾ that homogeneous class areas (which therefore reduce cross-pressures in respect of class) are associated with higher voting levels, though other pressures (for example, from the mass media, church or schools) may intervene to upset this. Other factors which he identifies as important influences on the decision to vote are: the orientation to voting of the groups which influence the

individual; access to political information (aided by education, contact through associations, and increased leisure); and the perceived relevance of government policies to the individual (increased by direct dependence on the government for jobs or aid, by specific issues of interest to the individual, and general crises).

In Byker we find an area which seems, in many respects, to be homogeneous in class, job-type and housing tenure. It is also an area in which, as we have seen, a high proportion of the inhabitants are residents of long standing, with families in the locality and a high rate of membership of local organisation. Taking the last point of Lipset in the previous paragraph, we may note that, faced by demolition, it is also an area to which we might expect local government policies to seem relevant. If we find that the level of voting is, in spite of these factors, comparatively low we might tend towards the conclusions that the prevailing group orientations in this relatively homogeneous area are not towards political participation, and (or) that access to political information is low. These are both factors which will be tested later.

Local Elections : Party Identification.

Byker area consists of the whole of one ward, Byker, and part of two others, St. Anthony's and St. Lawrence. All three wards have long been regarded as safe Labour seats. The degree of safety until 1965, and the decline of Labour security since 1965 leading to the winning of a seat in Byker in 1968 by a Conservative candidate, can be

seen by the record of percentage majorities of Labour over the Conservatives in annual municipal elections.

Table 38 Percent Majorities of Labour over Conservative Parties.

Ward	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	Ward Size	
							1958	1968
Byker	82.1	84.6	24.9	38.4	16.9	-10.2	8,811	5,095
St. Anthony's	80.3	82.1	no elec- tion	74.7	54.6	37.2	9,517	8,063
St. Lawrence	63.4	48.6	38.6	55.7	36.0	26.7	9,934	7,972

Prior to 1963, going back to 1959, the Labour majorities had been of the same order as is shown for 1963 and 1964. In 1959, there was no contest in Byker ward, in 1958 there was a strong majority for Labour, and in 1957 and 1956 there was again no contest. In both St. Anthony's and St. Lawrence's there were no contests for the three consecutive years 1956 to 1958. Where there was no contest in these three wards, a Labour candidate was, of course, returned unchallenged.

The decline in Labour voting in the last four years, is not associated with a decline in turnout. Indeed, in Byker ward, and in the one (of three) relevant polling district in St. Anthony's, there has been an increase in percent turnout since 1964, except for a slight decline in 1968; while in St. Lawrence's (which registers the least change in voting choice), there has been no clear trend of decline or increase in voting turnout. The percent poll trends are made clear in the graph.

This does not necessarily show that there has been a switch by the same voters towards the Conservative Party; nor is it likely

that the whole of the increased Conservative vote is due to the emergence of previous non-voters (putative Conservatives), nor that (given the increased vote) it is due entirely to the abstention of hitherto Labour voters. It does show that a sizeable proportion of Byker voters is prepared to vote Conservative: - in Byker ward 55% (679 people) of a 24.2% vote in 1968; in St. Lawrence 36.6% (682) of a 23.4% vote; and in St. Anthony's 29.5% (541) of a 22.7% vote. In other words, while support of the Labour Party is the prevailing pattern for the area, its structural homogeneity does not preclude a sizeable 'deviant' vote.

Voting Turnout.

If we turn now to voting turnout and compare Byker with other wards in the City for the period between 1963 and 1968, we find that Byker area wards (starred) come regularly near the bottom of the list. The percent polls will not be given, so as to simplify the table, but as an indication of the range: the highest poll recorded for the six years was at Kenton in 1968 (58.65%), and the lowest at Stephenson in 1965 (7.33%).

Table 39 Order of Municipal Election Turn-outs by Ward

Ward	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	Placing over the six years
Westgate	1	3	7	8	3	5	First 10
Elswick	2	1	2	5	9	4	First 10
Scotswood	3	15	15	13	14	14	Changing
Dene	4	5	4	-	11	10	Changing
Jesmond	5	6	3	2	6	2	First 10
Heaton	6	10	11	4	-	9	Changing
Blakelaw	7	9	5	10	10	12	Changing
Fenham	8	7	6	6	7	8	First 10
Walkergate	9	4	8	3	2	3	First 10
Kenton	10	2	1	1	1	1	First 10
Benwell	11	11	18	14	16	15	Last 10
Arthur's Hill	12	8	9	7	4	6	Changing
Stephenson	13	18	16	18	19	18	Last 10
Sandyford	14	12	10	9	5	7	Changing
St. Nicholas	15	13	13	11	8	11	Changing
*Byker	16	17	19	16	18	20	Last 10
*St. Lawrence	17	14	12	15	13	13	Last 10
Walker	18	16	14	12	12	16	Last 10
*St. Anthony's	19	19	17	-	15	17	Last 10
Armstrong	20	20	20	17	17	19	Last 10

The last column groups the wards into three categories - those appearing regularly among the first ten in polling turn-out, those appearing regularly in the last ten, and those which change from year to year. We can also group the wards into those returning a Conservative candidate regularly throughout the period, those returning a

Labour candidate, the regularly inconsistent wards, and those two wards which returned a Conservative in 1968 after voting Labour in the five preceding years. Thus:-

Regular Conservative - Dene, Jesmond, Heaton, Fenham, Walkergate,

Kenton, Arthur's Hill, Sandyford, St. Nicholas.

Regular Labour - Benwell, Stephenson, St. Lawrence, St. Anthony's, Walker, Armstrong.

Inconsistent - Westgate, Elswick, Blakelaw.

Labour inconsistent - Byker, Scotswood.

Grouping these two tables, it is found that all the regular Labour seats fall into the last ten in the polling order, and that the Conservative seats come comparatively high in the order. Regularly inconsistent wards all come high in order, while the 'Labour inconsistencies' come low in order (only in 1968 did Scotswood leave the bottom ten).

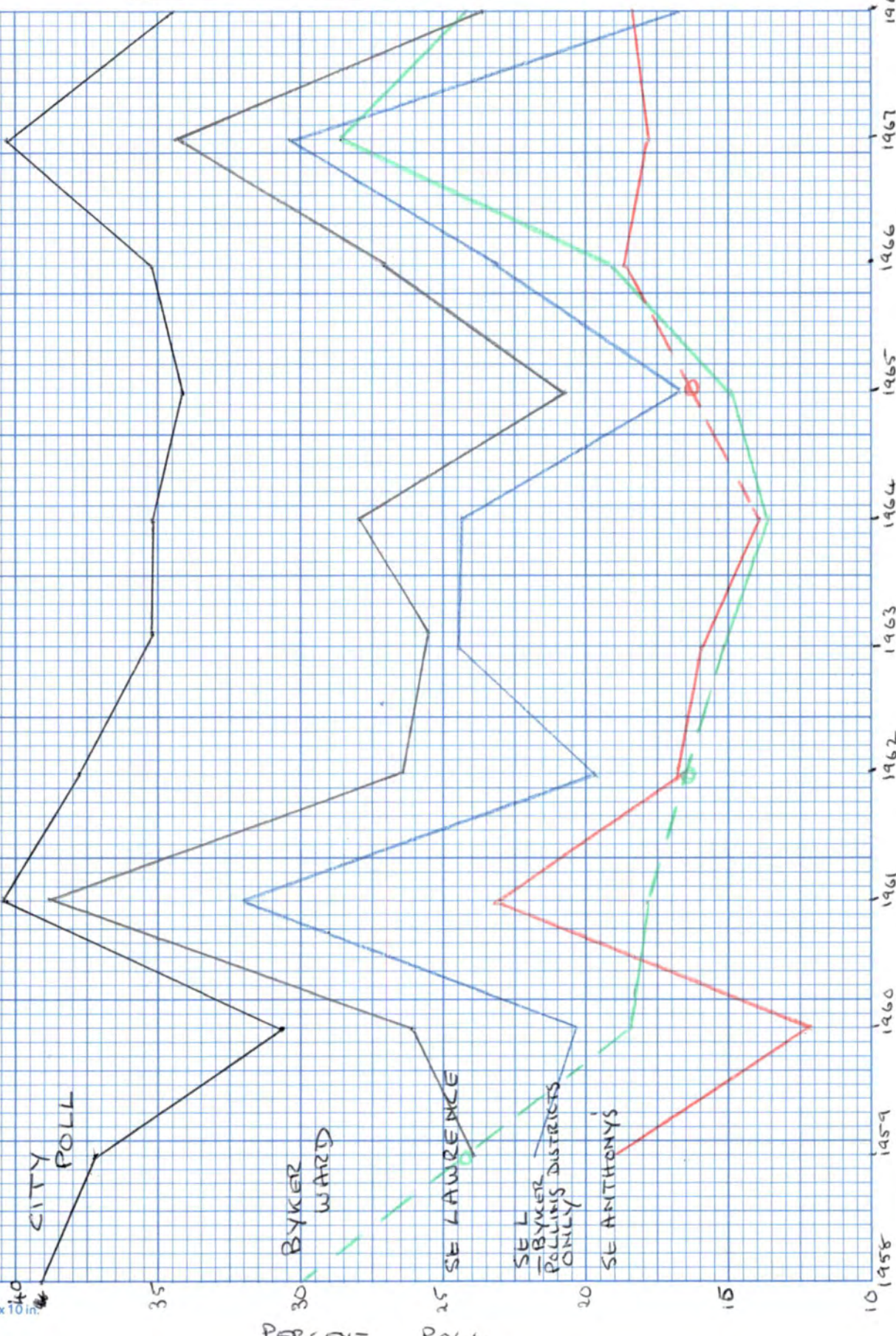
Table 40 Polling Order by Party Loyalties - 1963-1968

Number of Wards in:	First 10	Changing	Last 10	Total
Ward Loyalties				
Conservative	4	5	0	9
Labour	0	0	6	6
Labour Inconsistent	0	1	1	2
Inconsistent	2	1	0	3

The pattern is for Labour wards to produce a lower level of

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS — PERCENT POLLS 1958-68

○ — No Poll



turnout than Conservative wards. The low level of voting in wards in the Byker area (shown in the graph) seems not therefore to differentiate them from other wards generally supporting the Labour party.

Ranking the 8 Labour wards plus 'Labour inconsistent' wards against each other for level of turnout (percent of electorate) we find that:

- 1) Byker ward appears regularly among the four wards (of the eight) which rate lowest for proportionate turnout, except for 1968 when it comes fourth (on the occasion that the Conservative was returned).
- 2) St. Anthony's ward also appears regularly among the last eight, on all but one occasion (1965) when it was fourth. If we count only the single polling district which is in the Byker area, we find that it polls consistently with the three lowest polling wards.
- 3) St. Lawrence ward, on the other hand, appears regularly among the first four of the eight wards, except in 1968 when it came fifth. If we count only the two of the four polling districts composing the ward which falls in the Byker area the same pattern is repeated. These polling districts rate with the first four wards (except for 1968) but lower down the scale than the ward as a whole.

The fact of a low level percent vote is first of all a normal phenomenon in Labour majority wards in the City, at least over the last six years. But Byker area, except for St. Lawrence ward (its

two 'Byker' polling districts in 1964 containing 5,724 of the total Byker area electorate of 17,633), is characterised by a low vote even by Labour standards. This cannot be explained solely by the 'security' of Labour majority in 'Byker' wards (leading perhaps to apathy on the part of voters and campaigners) because the other Labour wards are equally safe. This would tend us to the conclusion that the prevailing cultural orientation is not towards local political participation (including here affectivity towards the system, and a sense of effectiveness), and that access to political information may be low. These are the factors that we will test in the next section, but first we will briefly comment on General Election figures.

General Election

In the General Election of 1966 again we find that Labour wards record generally lower percent polls than Conservative wards: only three of the eleven Labour wards came in the first ten (of the twenty) wards in polling order. Byker ward, in particular, is again characterised by a low poll - coming 17th in order. But St. Lawrence comes 6th and St. Anthony's 12th.

Since level of poll seems to be strongly related to the constituency in which the ward finds itself - some constituencies voting generally higher than others - it is useful to compare wards within constituencies. Byker and St. Anthony's wards fall in Newcastle Central Constituency which is safe Labour and had an overall percent turnout of 66.6%. This constituency poll, both Byker (68.1%) and

St. Anthony's (73.5%) exceeded. St. Lawrence falls in Newcastle East Constituency which is marginal (but went to Labour in 1966). In the East Constituency a high overall poll was recorded (80.7%), and St. Lawrence polled lower (76.2%) than the other five wards composing it.

It seems from this that Byker wards are less distinguishable in national elections from the general Labour ward pattern. The non-participating culture of Byker (measured by electoral figures) is most distinctively associated with local government.

Chapter 10BYKER'S POLITICAL CULTURE IN THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

We will first investigate the distinctiveness of the prevalent political culture in Byker, and then go on to examine differences in orientation between groups in the area in the next section.

The municipal election figures indicate first that structural homogeneity in the area is not so influential on local attitudes as to limit voting choice to the Labour Party. This will not be considered further in the discussion of political culture. We will be concerned with the prevalence of broader loyalties: to the 'system', and to the democratic ideal of 'popular participation.' The data against which we will compare local orientations is derived largely from the Maud Report⁽¹²⁹⁾ and 'The Civic Culture.'⁽¹³⁰⁾

Our approach breaks 'political culture' down into three analytic elements: cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations. The individual is (or may be) oriented to political objects in each of these three ways; and the objects of his orientation are of four types: the system as a whole, objects involved in the input process, those involved in the output process, and himself as a political actor. The analysis which follows will be according to this breakdown. The survey questions on which the analysis is based will be mainly drawn from the Maud Report, the relevant section of which was deliberately modelled on 'The Civic Culture' approach.

These questions have the advantage of being more concrete and specific than Almond and Verba's could have been, since the latter were dealing with five separate national cultures. This more specific reference to institutions made for greater comprehension on the part of interviewees, and, it may be supposed, to greater reliability of data (since less depended on the interviewee's interpretation of the questions).

There is, however, a problem of comparability. The national data was gathered from samples of individuals. The Byker data is based on a sample of households represented by individuals. This led to an under representation of males. Where possible there will therefore be a sex for sex comparison.

1. Cognitive Orientation

The question we will first consider is: how aware and informed of the local government system are local people? The 'participant citizen,' if he is to be positively affectively and evaluatively oriented to local government, would also have to be aware of and have some interest in its activities and processes. The 'parochial'* would be hardly aware of any aspects of government; while the 'subject' would be oriented mainly toward the system and the output process, manifesting less interest in the input process and his own role as a political actor.

* This term is only used as a technical abbreviatory word -- it does not signify that the individual is parochial also as regards national government.

a) Output Process

What impact do local residents conceive the local administration as having on them? Are they aware of the output of the local council?

Interviewees were asked: "First, about public services and amenities, can you tell me some of the things that the Newcastle City Council* provides in this area?" This question was modelled on one used by the Maud Report. A list of local government services was provided to the interviewers who could check responses against the list but could not prompt the respondents. Remarkably few could name even one service.

Table 41 Awareness of Local Government Services - Percent

	Byker			Maud UK figures			Maud County Borough figures
	M	F	All	M	F	All	All
One or more services named	51%	47%	48%	80%	70%	74%	80%
None named	49%	53%	52%	20%	30%	26%	20%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base No.	140	303	443	989	1195	2184	629

By comparison with Maud, this demonstrates a high level of ignorance on the part of Byker respondents. A standard error test was applied and it was found that the differences between males and between females in the two samples, and the differences between

* This term used to avoid confusion.

Byker total proportions and the proportions of Maud UK and County Borough respondents able to name a service, were all significant.*

The services most commonly named concerned the provision of parks and recreation grounds, and housing and town planning. This reflects the order found in the Maud Report except that 'Refuse collection' took first place there. Very often answers to do with planning were derived from the interviewee's own local experience of demolition. Possibly one reason for the low response, was that the question asked the interviewee about services "in this area"; perhaps some felt that it was services provided uniquely to Byker that they were being asked to name. All the same, the wording was the same in the Maud Report.

As the Report points out: "One could conclude that to some people the services they use, perhaps almost daily, are just 'there' or perhaps provided by an anonymous 'them'."⁽¹³¹⁾ Possibly also many people would know that the services were council-run if they were named.

If Byker is low on output cognition, is it an area in which people tend to assess the impact of local government as favourable, unfavourable or non-existent? In Almond and Verba's terms, are they

* Male differences $p < 5\%$: Female differences $p < 5\%$

Byker Total: Maud UK $p < 1\%$

Byker Total: Maud CB $p < 1\%$

The standard error of a percentage test was applied to these and the differences following in this section.

$p < 5\%$ means that it is 95% sure that there is a real difference.

$p < 1\%$ means that it is 99% sure that there is a real difference.

(respectively) allegiants, alienated, or parochial? Unfortunately the Maud Report asked no relevant question, and the Almond and Verba study investigated the attitudes only of that group which assessed that government had an impact on their lives. Since the ability to name a Council service did not seem an adequate test of people's recognition that local government had some impact on them, all Byker respondents were asked the Almond and Verba question: "On the whole, do the activities of the city council tend to improve things in this area or would we be better off without them?" The question had the weakness of vagueness and also of definition (what is meant by 'improving things'? -- for people living in a demolition area there are no present signs of improvement though they may be aware that this is the long-term aim). But most interviewees were readily able to place themselves in one of the following (of Almond and Verba's) categories.

Table 42 Character of Impact of Local Government

<u>Percent saying of council :</u>	<u>Byker</u>			
	M	F	All	
Improves conditions	38	39	39	Allegiant
Sometimes improves conditions and sometimes doesn't	21	15	17	
Better off without local government	19	15	16	Alienated
Local government makes no difference	14	10	11	
Other	0	2	1	Parochial
Don't Know	8	19	16	
	100 (140)	100 (303)	100 (443)	

Too fine a distinction should not be put on these answers for the reasons stated, but the general indication is that while the majority (56%) are favourably oriented to local government, there are sizeable proportions of people who answer in a directly hostile or 'alienated' fashion (16%) and in a parochial fashion (28%). Women are more likely than men to find that local government has no impact on them or to be ignorant of its impact, that is to be parochial in their orientation. This is matched by their greater ignorance of local government services.

Almond and Verba found that of those 76% of their UK sample who assessed that national government had some impact on their lives 92% assessed this impact as favourable. The same pattern was revealed for local government. No direct comparison can be made but the indication is of a higher than average disaffection from local government in Byker.

b) Input Process

By the input process is meant the process by which public, group and individual demands are fed by such structures as parties and interest groups into the polity. The most basic level of involvement in this process is the individual's following of political affairs.

Interviewees were asked: "In the last month have you heard anything about what the city council is doing?" This again was a question taken from the Maud Report with which the Byker data can be compared.

Table 43 Awareness of Local Government Affairs - Percent

Have you heard anything?	Byker			Maud UK			Maud - CB's only
	M	F	All	M	F	All	All
Yes *	31	26	28	34	26	30	33
No	66	73	71	66	73	69	66
Don't Know	3	1	2	--	--	1	1
	100	100	101	100	100	100	100
	(140)	(303)	(443)	(989)	(1195)	(2184)	(629)

While Byker people tend less often to be aware of the recent activities of the council, there are no statistically significant differences between the sets of responses. In fact, there is quite a striking closeness between the Byker and the national data, especially in the sex ratios. There is shown to be as high a level of input cognition in Byker as in the nation on average, by this one measure. But still the proportion of people who are aware of local government activities is low.

The most frequently mentioned activity of the council was the slum clearance of the area. It seems quite likely that, but for this present and local activity, more people would have been ignorant. This may have falsified the picture; on the other hand, demolition and moving into a council house is a process which brings people into contact with the council, and one which may therefore be genuinely politically educative.

* A 'Yes' had to be supported by a correct mention of a recent activity of the council.

c) The System

A test of interviewee's knowledge of local government organisation and constitution, may have been the best means of examining 'cognition of the system as a political object'. It was felt however that this would have been either too rigorous, or (as in the Maud Report questions asking which posts are elective) subject to guessing by interviewees and misunderstanding on the part of interviewers. The Almond and Verba example of questioning people on their knowledge of post-holders' names was therefore followed. This data also had the virtue of comparability.

First, a question was asked for comparison with the Maud Report data, on the name of the Mayor. This was assumed to be associated with knowledge of the council as a political object. Second, interviewees were asked for the name of their ward councillors, and the results were compared with data for Newcastle as a whole.⁽¹³²⁾

Councillors seemed to be the most obvious local manifestation of the council as a political body.

Table 44 Knowledge of the Names of Council Representatives - Percent

Correct name given for	Byker			Maud CB's	Woodhead Newcastle
	M	F	All	All	All
Mayor	20	: 8	: 12	35	
3 councillors	1	: 0	: 0		7
2 councillors	4	: 1	: 2		5
1 councillor	11	: 14	: 13		35
No councillors	85	: 86	: 85	(629)	52
	(140)	:(303)	:(443)		(124)

People in Byker are distinctly less able to name their Mayor than people living in county boroughs in general.* This is especially so for women, since the Maud Report finds 'no discernible difference' between the sexes, whereas in Byker it is marked.

Byker people are also significantly less able to name any councillor than people in other areas of Newcastle.** Only 15% could name any councillor in Byker, compared with a city average of nearly 48%, and men were hardly more knowledgeable than women, so the result is not to be explained by the sample's over-representation of women.

Consistent with their lack of information on the 'output' of the local authority, Byker people thus manifest also ignorance of the system itself (in as far as it is represented by some of its leading personnel).

d) The Self

Cognition of the self as political actor is closely bound up with the evaluation by the individual of his political role. The individual is only likely to act politically (and therefore to perceive himself as a political actor) if he conceives of himself as competent. The 'self' will therefore be dealt with later.

2. Affective and Evaluative Orientations

What the individual feels about political processes, roles and

* p < 1%

** p < 1%

personnel is separable only theoretically from the way in which he evaluates them. These two forms of orientation will therefore be investigated together.

The participant citizen must be not only informed but also positively oriented in his attitudes to the political system. The individual who is informed but suspicious of the motives of government, and who has no pride or enjoyment in the institutions and processes of the polity is described by Almond and Verba as an 'alienate'. The 'subject' is positively oriented in his attitudes to the system and its administrative (output) mechanism, but is uninterested in himself contributing to the political process and in following the 'input' process. The 'parochial,' of course, has also no feelings about the political system.

a) Output Process

"The feelings that people have toward governmental authorities may be inferred from their expectation of how they will be treated by them."⁽¹³³⁾ Almond and Verba therefore questioned their interviewees on their expectations of the kind of treatment they would receive from government officials and the police. Expectations of "fair and considerate treatment" would lead to the assumption that "at least in these respects they were favourably disposed toward governmental authority."⁽¹³⁴⁾

The question that was applied in Byker was a slightly modified version of one of Almond and Verba's questions: "Suppose that there

were some question that you had to take to the council offices (civic centre) -- for example a housing regulation. Do you think you would be given equal treatment? I mean, would be treated as well as anyone else?" The Almond and Verba version referred to 'a government office' rather than the council offices, and mentioned 'a tax question' as an example as well as a housing regulation.

Table 45 Expectation of Treatment by Council Office

Percent who would	M	Byker		Almond and Verba All - UK
		F	All	
Expect equal treatment	56	62	60	83
Not expect equal treatment	24	24	24	7
Depends	8	3	4	6
Don't know	12	12	12	2
	100	101	100	100
	(140)	(303)	(443)	(963)

There are scarcely any differences between the responses per sex. But the difference between the two samples is striking. The national sample is much more likely to expect equality of treatment than the Byker sample.* The same difference remains if we isolate the less educated portion of the national sample. The differences in the wording of the two questions seem unlikely to explain the distinction unless 'government office' carries a very different emotive connotation

* $p < 1\%$

than 'council offices'.

The large proportion of people who would not expect equality of treatment confirms the comparatively high level of 'output alienation' that has been described. But in many cases the disaffection seemed to be linked not so much to a suspicion specifically of local government administrative machinery, or even of government in general, as to a feeling of alienation from the middle class world of which government is part. Typical comments were:

"I would hope so, but it depends what class of person you are, where you come from."

"They take notice of you if you have clean boots and a clean face."

"Its a question of who you know."

"If I had a few pounds in my pocket they might do."

"No, it depends where you come from. We don't get the same treatment as people from Jesmond and areas like that. If you say you come from Byker, people's attitude changes. People have a warped impression of Byker."

These answers bear a close resemblance to the replies to the question on other people's impressions of Byker. It seems that for many residents mistrust of government is just part of a feeling of belonging to a group which others treat and regard as inferior. In the same way, Brian Jackson interprets working-class suspicion of the police as a result, not so much of specific experiences, as of

the impression that the police represent authority; whereas the middle-class see the police as benign servants. (135)

Other people quoted specific experiences with local government administration. Usually they quoted housing problems, and perhaps the question was faulty in leading them to this issue.

"I have had three doctor's notes for getting a new house in seven years and haven't got a house yet, and yet I know someone who got a house in five months."

Some people gave answers which referred to 'bad' rather than unequal treatment -- cases, for example, of what the respondent took to be the reluctance of the council to give information on demolition timing. Even if the answer was not to the point it displayed a readiness to criticise the administration.

In spite of the comparatively high level of disaffect from the output process, it is still the majority of people who see the administrative machinery of the council as non-discriminatory.

b) Input Process

We are here concerned with what Almond and Verba call "The flow of feeling from community to polity." The link between these two structures consists in the existence of processes which transmit demands from the former to the latter. For them to function effectively these processes must be ones which people believe to be effective and to which they have some emotional commitment. Almond and Verba examine people's feelings about voting and election campaigns:

their interest in and enjoyment of them. While the answers differentiated well between the USA and other countries this seemed likely to be due partly to the fact that the question was oriented to the nature of American campaigns. These questions were not felt to be suitable to the nature of British politics.

Two questions were therefore drawn from an article by Rose and Mossawir on the function of elections.⁽¹³⁶⁾ They were designed to test voters' values and beliefs, and specifically to gauge their affect for or disaffect from liberal doctrines of representation.

The questions were: Would you say that

- 1) "Voters have a big influence on the way the country is governed, or that they don't have much influence?"
- 2) "There is a real difference between the parties for voters to choose from, or no real difference?"

The positive responses were taken as the liberal alternatives, and the negative responses as disaffected alternatives. Rose and Mossawir (in Stockport) applied these questions and two others to people's feeling on national politics; in the Byker survey they were slightly modified to refer to local government.

Respondent's answers were distributed as follows:

Table 46 Feelings on Voters' Choice and Influence

Percent of Respondents choosing	Male	Byker Female	All
2 LA's	12	14	14
1 LA and 1 Don't know	4	5	4
1 LA and 1 DA	33	22	26
1 DA and 1 Don't know	6	9	8
2 DA's	41	44	43
2 Don't know	4	6	5
	100 (140)	100 (303)	100 (443)

LA = Liberal Alternative

DA = Disaffected Alternative

While Rose and Mossawir found a heavy preponderance of people choosing the liberal alternative for each of their four questions, in Byker the majority chose the disaffected alternatives. 56% of their respondents chose the liberal alternative at least three out of four times, but in Byker only 14% chose the liberal alternative twice. As many people in Byker chose to refute both 'liberal' suggestions (43%) as chose to endorse either or both of them (44%). The tendency is the same for men as for women, though men were slightly more likely to choose at least one liberal alternative.

Perhaps the Byker sample would have produced a greater proportion of positive responses if they had been questioned on national rather than local government. But the question referring to differences

between the parties did not refer directly to local parties, and the level of negative response indicated a much greater disaffection from parties as instruments of choice, in Byker than in Rose and Mossawir's sample. More than 50% of the Byker sample felt that there was no difference between the parties, compared with 23% of the Stockport sample.

The comparative disaffection from parties probably is to be partly explained by the timing of the two surveys. The Stockport survey was conducted in the winter before the 1964 General Election when both parties were keenly offering programme alternatives; the Byker survey was conducted in winter 1968 when the Labour Government was being heavily criticised for employing 'Conservative' policies.

But there is practical evidence to support the conclusion that endorsement of the traditional input processes (of elections and parties) is particularly low in Byker. The polling figures already quoted show that the local wards rate continually low in the order of voting turnout.

c) The System

To assess the degree of affection felt for the political system, Almond and Verba asked their respondents "what are the things about this country that you are most proud of?" To the extent that political institutions were quoted as objects of pride, nations were said to be more or less affectively oriented to the System.

The question would not have been applicable to this micro-political

study. Instead a question was taken from the Maud Report which referred to the councillor's motives for becoming a councillor. As the main political figures in the local government system, they seemed suitable 'political objects' for the expression of affect or disaffect from that system. Admittedly, we would expect a superimposition of attitudes to councillors as people.

The respondents were asked to say whether they agreed, disagreed, 'didn't know' or were not sure, to five statements given as possible motives for becoming a councillor:

- 1) "Because they have the good of the community at heart."
- 2) "Because they want higher positions at work."
- 3) "Because they want to make money for themselves."
- 4) "Because they feel a sense of duty to their fellow-citizens."
- 5) "Because they want people to look up to them."

Answers of agreement to numbers 1) and 4) and of disagreement to numbers 2), 3) and 5), were taken to be indications of favourable attitudes to councillors. The distribution of responses compared with the findings of the Maud Report were:

Table 47 Attitudes to Councillors' Motivations - Percent

Respondents of whose replies there were	Byker			Maud - UK	Affect
	M	F	All	All	
None favourable	23	20	21	19	Low
1 favourable	19	16	17	11	
2 or 3 favourable	31	36	35	32	Medium
4 favourable	17	16	17	49	High
5 favourable	10	12	11	27	
	100 (140)	100 (303)	101 (443)	100 (2184)	

There are no significant sex differences in the Byker sample. Both sexes are more likely to interpret councillors' motivations unfavourably than the national sample. Since only 15% of Byker respondents were able to name a councillor, this must be taken not as a commentary on known personalities, but as an expression of attitude to local government and to the type of person who is willing to put himself forward for a representative position.

If the responses are grouped so that none or one favourable indicates low affect, two or three favourable indicates medium affect, and four or five high affect, the differences between the samples are striking. 38% of the Byker sample falls into the 'low affect' category, compared with 19% of the national sample; and only 28% gave a 'high affect' distribution of responses compared with the national sample's 49%.*

In spite of the naïveté of the statements most people were able to respond in simple agreement or disagreement. The statement which evoked the most unfavourable responses was number 5: most people felt that councillors wanted people to look up to them. This response might have had its roots in a generalised suspicion of assertive leadership. But people were much less ready to attribute to councillors the motives of money- and promotion - seeking.

* These differences were significant at 1 per cent.

d) The Self as Political Actor

Lastly we will consider the individual's willingness to view himself as a political actor. This is the essential ingredient of the civic culture: "A democratic citizen speaks the language of demands."⁽¹³⁷⁾ He will not only expect to receive fair treatment at the hands of the administration ('subject competence'), he will also take action to express his view and remedy the situation if he feels that the administration has acted wrongly ('citizen competence'). Both are components of the civic culture, but citizen competence is characteristic of the civic culture alone.

Almond and Verba ask whether the respondent could do anything about an unjust local (or national) regulation, and also whether he would do anything. In the Byker survey in common with the Maud Report only the latter was asked: "If there was something that you felt strongly that Newcastle City Council ought or ought not to be doing, would you do anything to try to get them to change to your point of view?"

Of the Byker sample 47% said they would act; of the Almond and Verba sample, 50%; and of the Maud Report sample, 64%. These are the people with the sense that they are competent to act as political citizens. In the Maud Report these were further divided as to their own view of their chances of success in influencing local government; that is, according to their level of confidence. Thus:

- 1) The Confident:- Would or might intervene and would succeed.

- 2) The Fairly Confident:- Would or might intervene and might succeed.
- 3) The Ineffective:- Would or might intervene but would not succeed.
- 4) The Indifferent:- Would not try to intervene.

A comparative table shews that Byker is low in confidence,,

Table 48 Attitudes to Active Local Participation - Percent

Attitude	Byker			Maud - UK		
	M	F	All	M	F	All
Confident	9	9	9	16	8	12
Fairly Confident	21	23	22	38	32	34
Ineffective	14	15	15	20	17	18
Indifferent	56	53	54	26	43	36
	100 (140)	100 (303)	100 (443)	100 (989)	100 (1195)	100 (2184)

if the 'confident' and 'fairly confident' categories are grouped.

The Byker sample is also significantly more likely to be 'indifferent'. *

Byker deviates most distinctively from the national sample in the case of men. In Byker, they are scarcely distinguishable in their effectuality from women (in fact tending to be more indifferent), whereas nationally men tend to be more confident.

In about equal proportions the Byker sample and the UK sample drawn by Almond and Verba say that they would do something to influence local government. The means by which they would attempt to do this,

* $p < 1\%$

however, seem rather different. Almond and Verba investigate this problem because it has a bearing on the actual influence the individual may be able to exert. If he has a clear notion of the "channels open to him", and of the "resources he has available to use", he is likely to have "real influence potential". The use of formal and informal groupings for action is found to be characteristic of the democratic state. The employment of such 'social resources' implies confidence in one's fellow citizens, and the ability to mount an effective opposition in face of the huge resources of government.

The figures for Byker 'strategies of influence' are set out below. Unfortunately they are not directly comparable with Almond and Verba's data except in the order in which strategies are named. It appears that going to the administrative officials (or the Council) is a much more common first resort in Byker than nationally, where it figures at the bottom of the list. As with Almond and Verba, the second most often quoted strategy would be to join or organise an informal group. Following this, Byker people would contact political leaders or newspapers (whereas, according to Almond and Verba, nationally this would be the first resort). It is possible that Almond and Verba interpreted references to the 'Council' as a reference to the use of political leaders, and this would explain the discrepancy. It seemed evident, however, that people claiming that they would go to the Council meant that they would consult the official relevant to their problem.

Table 49 What Citizens would try to do to Influence their Local Government

	Byker Percent of people who would do something	Almond and Verba - UK order of importance of strategies of influence
A. <u>Try to enlist Aid of others</u>		
1. Join or organise an informal group to write letters or to petition.	27%	Number 2.
2. Work through a formal group or party	2%	Number 4= .
B. <u>Act Alone through:</u>		
1. Political leader	15%	Number 1.
2. Letter to Newspaper	4%	
3. Going to the 'Council'	38%	
4. Administrative officials	13%	Number 4= .
5. Other	6%	Number 3.
Dont Know	6%	

111%*
(203)

The responses indicate that councillors, the formal link between the people and the local authority, are not widely regarded as effective means of communication. This supports the findings that there is

* More than 100% because some people would take more than one line of action.

little knowledge of councillors and a low estimation of their motives. Most people (51%) would carry their complaint straight to the 'non-political' administration in spite of the fact that, as we have seen, many are not convinced of the fairness of the treatment they would receive at the hands of officials. Of those Byker people who would act more than a quarter would take informal group action; nationally, Almond and Verba found that 43% of those who felt they could act (a larger number than those who would) would envisage such action. If this cooperative mindedness is a feature of participatory democracies, then it is less apparent in Byker than nationally but still important.

3. Summary of Comparative Findings.

From this comparative study, we have the following indications of the prevailing political culture in Byker.

Orientations to:

1) The System-Knowledge, affect and evaluation of elected representatives.

- Cognition : Low.

- Affect and Evaluation : Low

2) Output process - Knowledge of administrative services and expectations of treatment from officials.

- Cognition : Low

- Affect and Evaluation : Low

3) Input process - Awareness of council activities and estimations of popular influence and choice.

- Cognition : Average

- Affect and Evaluation : Low

4) The self as political actor - Estimations of the subject's ability to act effectively.

- Affect and Evaluation : Possessing an average sense of competence but low in confidence, and more likely to resort to the administration for redress of grievances than to act politically.

Measured against the two national samples it seems that the Byker population is generally less politically aware (in local government) and less attached to the institutions and processes of local government. It is characterised more by disinterest and disaffection toward all political objects than by an orientation which is weighted to any set of them. That is, it is not oriented heavily towards the participant citizen's interests (the input process and the self as political actor), nor towards the subject's interests (the system and the output process). Its abnormal disinterest rather makes the Byker population parochial by comparison with the national average. But it is also heavily disaffected from local government, rather than parochially neutral in its attitudes.

This apparently anomalous position could perhaps be explained as follows. First concerning political knowledge, of two important contributory factors one seems likely to be the prevailing low level of education, which Almond and Verba find to be associated with reduced political cognition. The second is perhaps that Byker residents until recently have had little cause for contact with the Council. Most importantly they have had no contact with the local authority in its most directly influential role as landlord -- contact which might be expected to increase awareness if not affect.

These two factors of disinterest and non-contact might normally be associated with neutral attitudes, but in Byker a rather hostile feeling to the council is apparent. It is suggested that this is first a part of the working-class suspicion of "all those representatives of the middle class world - doctors, matrons, magistrates, council officials - who have such a day to day influence on his life".⁽¹³⁸⁾ Superimposed on this, the relative isolation of Byker both helps to consolidate this class feeling, and also magnifies it to the extent that the residents feel that outsiders look down on the area.

The council's demolition programme is the first important contact that most local residents will have had with the council. There is general local approval of the programme itself, but not of the way the clearance is being achieved. The council is therefore cast in a purely destructive role (there are no signs of local rebuilding). In a more politically educated area resentment may be modified by an awareness of the council's other activities and a predisposition to interpret the council's intentions favourably. In Byker resentment is unchecked by any wider experience. In other words, disaffection exists in Byker not so much in spite of as because of the low level of awareness of local government.*

* This assessment assumes that low levels of information and affect exist in the same person. This relationship is examined in Chapter 11, Part 5.

Chapter 11

THE POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF GROUPS IN BYKER

We will examine now the relationship between social structure and political orientation. We will isolate four structural factors and investigate their association, if any, with certain political predispositions. These factors are two independent variables, age and sex, and two variables which result from the earlier parts of this study, community attachment and activism.

1. Sex and Political Orientation

Almond and Verba found that sex was a highly influential factor in each of the countries that they studied: "... men showed higher frequencies and higher intensities than women in practically all the indices of political orientation and activity that we employed."⁽¹³⁹⁾

The same pattern is to be observed in the Maud Report data. For this reason it was felt that the Byker data might suffer from unrepresentativeness of the responses which referred to individual attitudes (rather than household behaviour), since there was an overweighting of women in the sample. This possibility was explored in the pilot survey, which however indicated that there were no systematic differences in political knowledge and attitudes between husbands and wives. It was therefore felt to be permissible in this respect to interview either member of a married household; a practice which led to the over-representation of women.

This indication was supported by the survey data which demonstrated that only one question concerning political orientation produced significantly differing responses according to sex. This in itself is an important finding. By reflecting the female pattern of low knowledge and affectivity, Byker men were shown to deviate from the national male pattern, more strongly than women did from the female pattern.

The one question on which men significantly differed from women was on their ability to name the Mayor.* Of men 20% knew his name (Mr. Roy Hadwin); of women only 8%. There was no greater likelihood however that men could name their local ward councillors. These two measures of system cognition were combined for later analysis.

In the two other cognitive measures, men were slightly (but not significantly more likely to respond positively. They could more often name a local government service (output cognition), and had slightly more often heard of a recent council activity (input cognition).

But in the measures of affective and evaluative orientation they were generally more likely to appear disaffected than women (again not statistically significantly). They slightly less often expected equality of treatment from the council offices (output affect). Their assessment of the impact of local government as beneficial or not, differed from that of women only in as much as men were more likely to give an answer of any sort and less likely to say that they did

* Chi-square = 11.47, $p < 0.1\%$ (with Yates correction as in all chi-square tests unless stated otherwise).

not know. Their impression of the motivation of councillors was slightly more often a hostile one (system affect). They less often felt that they would intervene to influence the council if they disagreed with its policy, and of those who would intervene fewer of the men anticipated that their action would be successful. And their 'strategy of influence' was less likely to be to join in a cooperative group with other people, and more likely to be to contact political leaders.

These differences are not statistically significant but the broad picture is that men are more informed of local government than women, but more often have unfavourable attitudes towards it.

2. Age and Political Orientation

There is no continuous relationship between increasing age and political orientation. The only generalisation that can be made is that the middle age ranges tend to be the best informed and most favourably oriented group.

a) System Cognition :

The younger age groups (aged 21-50) were significantly less likely to be able to name the Mayor than the older ones (51-65+)*. There were no significant relationships between age and ability to name a councillor, but the youngest (21-30) and the oldest (65+) age groups were less likely to be able to do so.

* Chi-square = 4.18, $p < 5\%$

Affect : The youngest and the oldest age groups also more often felt that councillors were motivated selfishly, but this association was not significant.

b) Output Cognition :

The middle age groups (31-50) could most often name a service provided by the council.* The group least able to do so was the oldest (65+): 38% of these could name a service compared with 60% of the 31-50 age group.

Affect : No age group was significantly more likely to view the impact of the council as favourable (i.e. to be allegiant) though people aged over 65 tended to think so least often. On this measure the youngest age group was as favourable to the council as any other, but they were the most likely to expect unequal treatment from the council;** 31% of them definitely expected to be discriminated against compared with an average of 22% for the other groups. The most likely to expect fair treatment were the age-group from 61-65 (85% against an average for the others of 58%).

c) Input Cognition :

The age group 61-65 also tend more often to be aware of recent council activities, but this was not significant. The groups which tended to be least aware were once again the youngest (21-30) and the

* Chi-square = 8.25, $p < 0.5\%$

** Chi-square = 2.85, $p < 10\%$

oldest age groups (65+)

Affect : If on the question about voters' influence and party choice, the most affectively oriented (choosing two liberal alternatives, or one and one 'don't know') are compared against the least (choosing two disaffected alternatives, or one and one 'don't know'), we find that the age groups from 21-40 are significantly less likely to be affective towards the traditional input processes* than the older groups. This is best seen in the table 50.

d) Self as Political Actor :

Affect and Evaluation : This is the most important section in our analysis of participatory propensities in Byker. We are concerned here with people's confidence in taking action to influence the local council over an issue on which they disagree with it.

The middle age groups from 41-65 are the most likely to feel that they would intervene.** Of those of each age group who would (or might) intervene, these are also the age groups which would most expect success. The 21-40 age group are both more indifferent, and also the group the least confident of success***: 52% of those of this group who would act would also expect to be successful in influencing the council, compared with 75% of all other groups.

* Chi-square = 5.50, $p < 2.5\%$

** Chi-square = 6.95, $p < 1\%$

*** Chi-square = 9.93, $p < 0.5\%$

There is no clear age pattern on the manner (strategy of influence) in which people would attempt to influence local government. The age group over 65 would least often choose to act with other people in a group. The youngest age group would least often choose to go to their councillor (only 7% compared with an average of 16%), and most often go to an official or the Council (56% compared with 45%).

Two groups stand out as the least informed and with the most unfavourable attitudes to the council -- the oldest (65+) and the youngest (21-30). This is in broad confirmation of the findings of the Maud Report, ⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ except that the young in Byker seem to be more consistently disaffected. Whether disaffect and low information are directly causally related, or related to a common cause, cannot be decided from this study. But it is suggested that general ignorance of local government is contributory to the growth of general disaffection resulting from the application of a particular policy. There is no wider experience on the basis of which the response of the less knowledgeable may be tempered. Demolition itself is in principle approved in Byker, but it is still an upsetting process.

Table 50 Percent Distribution on Political orientation questions by age group --
Percents of age group totals

Age Group	SYSTEM			OUTPUT PROCESS		
	Cognition		Affect	Cognition		Affect
	Names		Councillor's Motives	Names	Impact of Council	Expected Treatment
	Councillor	Mayor	High & Medium Affect	A service	Allegiant	Definitely Equal
21-30	9	7	58	46	59	55
31-40	20	10	65	59	53	61
41-50	18	9	65	62	62	58
51-60	15	15	62	49	60	62
61-65	19	17	68	44	63	85
65+	13	15	59	38	46	56
Total Percent	15	12	62	48	56	60
Total Numbers	(65)	(53)	(272)	(213)	(247)	(267)

Table 50 continued on page 210

Table 50 continued from page 209

	INPUT PROCESS		SELF	
	Cognition	Affect	Evaluation	
	Names	Voting Choice & Influence	Confidence in Ability to Influence Council	
	Activity of Council	High Affect	Confident	Age Group Totals
21-30	26	11	42	97
31-40	33	14	43	49
41-50	29	20	54	65
51-60	27	22	52	89
61-65	37	22	59	41
65+	24	20	37	98
Total Percent	28	18	46	443
Total Numbers	(123)	(81)	(203)	

3. Activism and Political Orientation

Organisational membership is found by Almond and Verba⁽¹⁴¹⁾ to be associated with political interest and a sense of competence to influence the administration. This is particularly true of membership of organisations which are conceived by their members as being political.

We have already seen that it is the 'social' rather than 'issue' (or political) oriented organisations which in Byker claim the largest and most regularly attending membership. We have also seen that active participation in these organisations to the extent of holding office is comparatively rare; it is these office-holders whom Almond and Verba found to be particularly self-confident in their role of political actor. All these qualifying factors would moderate our expectation that organisational membership in Byker would be strongly associated with political competence and interest.

A preliminary indication that some association existed was gained from interviewee's reports of their voting. They were asked whether they had voted in the previous years' municipal elections. 60% of the sample claimed to have done so, but there was in fact a turnout in Byker ward of 29%, in the one relevant polling district of St. Anthony's ward of 18%, and in the two relevant polling districts of St. Lawrence ward of 32%. Evidently the claims are more representative of a sense of obligation to participate in elections, than of actual voting behaviour. Taken in this sense, we find that respondents who belonged to an organisation in Byker or in the directly neighbouring areas were definitely more likely to make the claim than

people belonging only to an organisation further away or none at all.* In other words, local organisation membership has some association with the sense of obligation to take part in the local vote.**

We will examine now relationships between membership by households and political knowledge and the sense of competence. Attitudes associated with the organisational membership of one spouse, are likely to be reflected to some extent on the other. It seems false to treat the individual as a unit in this respect: we would expect a wife's level of political knowledge and competence to be affected by her husband's.

Political Cognition :

Activism (that is regular membership of any organisation per household) is significantly related to output cognition. Activists are much more likely to be able to name a local government service.*** 55% of them are able to do so, compared with 38% of all others. They are also significantly more liable to be able to name either the Mayor or a councillor (system cognition):- 27% compared with 19% of all others.**** There was a tendency (not significant) for them to be

* Chi-square - 5.56, $p < 2.5\%$

** This is not to be explained by any differences per sex, for there are no significant differences between men and women in voting claims.

*** Chi-square - 11.08, $p < 0.1\%$

**** Chi-square - 3.30, $p < 10\%$

aware of a recent activity of the council (input cognition).

This seems to lend support to the theory of the role of voluntary associations as mediatory institutions between government and the people (Kornhauser), through which members are able to gain information and express their views. Against this it could be argued that organisation membership and political knowledge stem from the same root cause.

Political Competence :

There is no indication that activists are more likely to be competent as subjects ("perceiving themselves as able to appeal to a set of regular and orderly rules in their dealings with administrative officials"). They are in fact no more likely to expect equality of treatment from officials.

However, there is a tendency (but not a significant one) for them to anticipate that they would attempt to influence the council if they disagreed with it. 49% of activists claim that they would or might do something, compared with 41% of all other people. This indication of a higher level of 'citizen competence' is as we would expect from Almond and Verba's study, but it is not nearly as strong as they observed. However some support is lent to the hypothesis that activism is associated with a participatory orientation to local government.

The rather weak relationship between the sense of citizen competence and activism seems likely to be due partly to the nature of

Byker organisations,^{*} and partly to the definition of activists in this study. Almond and Verba were concerned only with individuals who belonged to organisations; we have included among the activists, people who are only married to organisation members.

4. Community Attachment and Political Orientation

This study sets out to explain cultural differences in terms of structural factors. Specifically we are concerned to find whether the immediate locality has any significance for political behaviour, (1) in the sense of influencing the local orientation to politics (2) in the sense of providing certain institutional means as channels for political information and action. The locality is not taken to be the sole or the main unit of structural influence, but one among others, and more important to the degree that residents interact extensively within it. Without specifying the nature of the influence of the locality on orientations to politics, we hypothesised that it would have some influence and that this would be most evident among the group of people most attached to the locality (for whom it was therefore most a community).

This group we have already distinguished by examining both the range of the performance of certain roles, and the identification of the area by the subject. The 'strongly community attached' group scored high on both the Passive Community Attachment and the Subjective

* This will be examined later.

Identification scales. There were 122 of them, nearly one-quarter of the sample.

An examination of claims to have voted gives some indication that there are some differences in political behaviour (or attitudes) between this group and others. While 31% of the strongly attached claim not to have voted, 35% of the weakly attached claim that they did not. The relationship was, however, not statistically significant, and in this respect was indicative of the level of association between community attachment and political orientation measures.

On all measures of political orientation, the strongly attached were more inclined toward the democratic model of the informed participant, but in only one instance was the relationship statistically significant.

Political Cognition :

The strongly community attached group tended more often to be able to name a local government service and to have heard of a recent council activity (output and input cognition). They were also significantly more often able to name either the Mayor or a councillor* (system cognition).

Political Competence :

By a very slight margin the strongly attached tended more often to expect equality of treatment from the local government administration (subject competence). By a margin of eight per cent, they were

* Chi-square = 8.94, $p < 0.5\%$

more likely than the weakly attached to feel that they would do something to influence the council if they disagreed with it (citizen competence) -- but again, the relationship was not significant.

There is a paucity of significant relationships, but all of the measures point in the same direction: toward a slightly greater political consciousness and competence on the part of the strongly attached group. If this is true, then the group which is the most attached to the community deviates toward the national norm in political culture away from the locality's distinctively low level of political awareness and affectivity. The people who are most involved in the locality are not, then, also those who most reflect general local political attitudes. This suggests that a high level of social interaction within an area combined with a degree of local consciousness actually contributes to political awareness and self-confidence.

Table 51 Political Orientation -- percent of Activists and Strongly Attached Scoring high per Measure

	System Cognition High	Output Cognition High	Input Cognition High	Subject Competence High	Citizen Competence High	
Activists	27	55	30	60	49	(267)
Inactivists	19	38	25	61	41	(176)
Strongly Attached	34	53	30	61	52	(122)
Less Attached	20	46	27	60	44	(321)
Total	24	48	28	60	46	
(Base No.)	(107)	(213)	(123)	(267)	(203)	

5. Cultural Groups

We have found that in Byker (compared with national data), there appears to be a low level of political interest and a high level of disaffection. We have also found in the analysis of groups that greater political information and affectivity is associated with the middle-aged, and to some extent with organisation membership and community attachment. In groups with low political knowledge we have also commonly found a greater degree of disaffect (not mere neutrality of attitude). We will now go on to examine the relationship between affectivity and cognition in an attempt to isolate the pure types: participant, subject, alienate, and parochial.

Cognition and Affect and Evaluation

a) The System :

In an allegiant participant or subject culture people would both be well informed of and support their political system and its manifestations. In Byker more of those people who are informed of the names of their local government representatives interpret their motives favourably than do the ignorant (31% to 27%). The relationship is not significant however, and what is most remarkable is that only 33 people out of 443 can in this sense be called allegiant to the system. More are 'alienates' in the sense that, though informed, they interpret the motives of the councillors almost uniformly unfavourably (40). But the majority of people (241) are uninformed and of low or medium affect.

improve things or whether they expected equal treatment.

c) Input Process :

In Almond and Verba's typology it is a characteristic of the participant to be positively oriented to the input process.

Respondents were asked first if they had heard of a recent activity of the council. Second they were questioned on their evaluation of the 'liberal' assumptions: that voters are influential and that the parties offer a choice. Only 31 people were informed and also chose at least one liberal alternative and no disaffected alternative. More people (56) were informed and chose one disaffected alternative at least and no liberal alternative. There were again 21 people who were 'parochial' -- uninformed and unable to choose between the liberal and disaffected alternatives.

The uninformed groups were significantly less likely to choose the liberal alternatives in the question on voters' influence and party choice.* There was here (and also in attitudes to the 'system') a confirmation of the assessment made for Byker as a whole: a low level of political awareness tends to be associated with hostile (rather than neutral attitudes) to the council.

* Chi-square - 4.84, $p < 5\%$

Table 53 Affect : Cognition of Input Process (Numbers - Percent in Brackets)

Have you heard anything of what the city council is doing?	Affect - Evaluation				Total
	High	Medium	Low	DK	
Yes	31 (25)	34 (28)	56 (46)	2 (2)	123 (101)
No	50 (16)	80 (25)	169 (53)	21 (7)	320 (101)
	81 (18)	114 (26)	225 (51)	23 (5)	443 (100)

d) Citizen Competence -- The Participant

The democratic citizen would not only be aware of and favourably oriented to the political institutions and processes external to himself. He would also feel confident that an attempt by him to influence government would have a chance of success.

140 people (32% of all respondents) felt that they would try to influence the city council if they disagreed with it, and would have some confidence of success; a further 65 would try, but felt that the effort would be in vain.

Of these 140 people, only two were also able to answer correctly the questions on knowledge of the system, the input process and the output process of local government. Only these two corresponded to Almond and Verba's democratic model of the citizen as politically aware and self-confident. One of them was on the point of emigrating to Australia!

In fact, only 21 people scored high on all the cognitive measures. It is surprising that only 10% of these (2) were numbered among the 46% of the sample population who felt that they would try to influence

the council. A higher degree of political knowledge seems to be associated with a reduced sense of personal political efficacy* -- an indication of political cynicism or 'alienation'.

Rather more people felt competent both as 'subjects' and 'citizens', even if they were not always politically informed too. 136 (31%) both expected equality of treatment and also felt that they would (or might) do something to influence the council if they disagreed with it. Almond and Verba used additional questions but found that only about one quarter of their British sample definitely did not feel competent neither as subject nor citizen. In trust of the administration and confidence of their own role as political actors, Byker people therefore would seem to rate very low.

Conclusion

Several implications may be drawn from this study of political orientations, which will be applicable to the analysis of the actual local response to the slum clearance programme.

The low level of political interest and affectivity would indicate that the public is unlikely to be authoritatively informed of the programme. It is unlikely that much effort has been made individually or through elected representatives to gain such information from the local council. The local network of family, friend and neighbour relations seems likely to be far more important as a source of

* The numbers are too small for effective significance testing.

information for the individual.

We would normally expect the cognitively oriented to be more knowledgeable of a local political issue, but since they were actually less likely to feel politically efficacious we must modify this expectation in a situation where information is not readily available.

The group which described themselves as capable of acting on the council, we would expect to be the most likely to do so in the demolition situation. This assumes that they are similar to other people in their motivation to act in order to acquire more information or to object to the council's proposals.

We would also anticipate that the groups which are most favourable to the administration and to the system, would be more likely than other groups to estimate that their treatment in the demolition situation is fair and that the council takes due regard of them.

We have found that middle-aged people, activists and the community attached tend to be more politically aware, self-confident and affectively oriented to the local government system. Whether these characteristics are actually reflected in greater awareness of the slum clearance programme, and a more active response, will be examined. Of course in this instance (the demolition of Byker) we would expect those who are most attached to the community to have an added motive for informing themselves and possibly acting in defence of the area.



PART 5THE RESPONSE TO DEMOLITIONChapter 12PUBLIC ATTITUDES TO HOUSING AND DEMOLITION

Whether and how an individual acts depends partly on his view of the situation in terms of the satisfaction of his goals. This is the factor we will now investigate before we go on to examine how groups have actually responded to demolition in Byker. The various cognitive and normative factors on which political action depends have already been examined. A further factor which will be dealt with later, but which is really incorporated in the individual's view of the situation is his information on events (his knowledge of the programme and processes of slum clearance in Byker).

In this chapter, the situation will be viewed in terms of the expressed housing and residential needs and aspirations of Byker people. This will involve a study of their present housing satisfaction, their willingness to accept demolition, and their aspirations for the future.

a) Satisfaction and Existing Housing

The sample was asked "how satisfied on the whole, are you with your present house?" and "how satisfied do you think people around you feel about the area?" The second question asked for information about other people's feelings in the expectation that some interviewees

would feel less inhibited from indicating their own dissatisfaction this way.

Of the sample of 443, 53% claimed that they were satisfied with their home and 46% were definitely not satisfied. Only 39% however felt that other people were satisfied with the area; 43% felt that other people were definitely not satisfied; and 18% were not sure.

The ensuing breakdown of the statistics into groups (according to age, nearness to demolition etc) shewed that most groups estimated that other people on the whole were less satisfied than they were themselves; except for the youngest age group and the least subjectively identified who estimated other peoples' satisfaction at about the same level as their own, and the least community-attached group who rated other people as actually less satisfied than they themselves.

The following table shews that only 56% of the sample were 'consistently' satisfied or dissatisfied (i.e. consistent in the special sense that they felt that other people shared their attitude). The table excludes those 19% of the sample who were not sure on one or both occasions:

Table 54 Housing Satisfaction - Percent of all Respondents

	Other People are :		
	All	Satisfied 39%	Dissatisfied 43%
<u>Interviewee is</u>			
Personally satisfied	53%	27%	14%
Personally Dissatisfied	46%	11%	29%

(Base number 443)

Age:-

There was a continuous relationship between increasing age and increasing personal satisfaction with the home*, as might be expected. However, this trend was not displayed in respondents' assessment of other peoples' satisfaction.

Table 55 Age and Satisfaction - Percent of all Respondents

Age	Personally satisfied	Other people satisfied
21-30	37	37
31-40	39	37
41-50	46	38
51-60	61	39
61-65	63	41
65+	69	39
Total	53	39

(Base No. 443)

This indicates that many old people are correctly aware that their satisfaction is not shared by younger residents. Many old people in fact spontaneously made this point to their interviewer:

"The younger ones are sometimes dissatisfied but not the older ones."

"All the old people are satisfied."

"The older ones who have been here a long time are satisfied but the younger ones all want to be away to get newer houses with conveniences."

* Chi-square = 30.51, at 5⁰ of freedom $p < 0.1\%$

Many residents mentioned that young people often only stay in the area until, with the low rents, they have saved enough to move out when their families are growing and need more space. This argument should not be over-emphasised, however; it remains true that 37% of the youngest age group said they were satisfied with their homes.

Nearness to Demolition:-

It might be expected that those people who live nearest to demolition sites would be the least likely to be satisfied. In fact there is a tendency* for them to be more satisfied with their own homes, and no greater likelihood that they will feel that other people are dissatisfied with the area. Unless this group is inherently more satisfied, it might be deduced that they display a kind of defensive reaction to the demolition of their homes.

Community Attachment:-

One might similarly expect that the groups which seemed to be most attached to the locality would also be most satisfied.

Personal satisfaction was indeed found to be related (though not significantly) to higher levels of passive community attachment. Passive attachment was estimated from the extent to which people fulfilled certain basic roles within rather than outside the area.

* not statistically significant.

Of those strongly attached people who answered both questions (excluding those 134 people who were 'not sure' to one or both questions) 57% were personally satisfied, compared with 43% of the weakly attached (65 who replied to both questions positively).

But the position is reversed in the responses to the question about other peoples' satisfaction. In other words, each group tended to adjust its own feelings toward a correct assessment of the average level of satisfaction. Thus only 44% of the strongly attached felt that other people were satisfied; and 52% of the weakly attached felt so.

The other measure of community attachment related to people's own identification of the area and its distinctiveness. Subjective identification was found to be associated with both a lower level of personal satisfaction and, statistically significantly a lower estimation of other peoples' satisfaction.*

Table 56 Satisfaction and Community Attachment

Personal Community Attachment:	Personally Satisfied	Other People Satisfied	Table ** Totals	Totals
High	57%	44%	134	161
Medium	51%	47%	160	189
Low	43%	52%	65	93
Subjective Identification:			359	443
Strong	49%	43%	274	331
Weak	59%	59%	85	112
			359	443

* Chi-square = 5.85, $p < 2.5\%$

** Percents are of the Table Totals which include only those of each category who were definitely satisfied or dissatisfied to both questions.

Because the two attachment measures (PCA and SI) produce groups with differing feelings on housing satisfaction, we have to conclude either that housing satisfaction is not directly related to community attachment or that one of the measures gives a false estimate of the group which is attached to the locality. The latter seems likely in view of the non-existence of a significant relationship between scoring on the PCA and SI measures. Of the two the SI scale least corresponds to expectations of its relation to housing satisfaction, and therefore seems least reliable as a measure of attachment. As we will see later, reasons for home satisfaction less often concerned the physical qualities of the house than emotional attachment to the home and area. We would therefore expect satisfaction to be most apparent in the attached group.

Friends and Relations who have moved:

It seemed possible that those people who had acquaintances who had been moved out of Byker due to the demolition, would have been influenced by this to re-assess their own housing. They might have visited their friends' or relations' new houses and heard their judgement, or formed an opinion, which could influence their attitude to the Byker house and environment.

This group was slightly less likely to be satisfied with their own home, and significantly less likely to believe that other people were satisfied.* Only 34% of them (183 people) thought that other

* Chi-square = 5.10, $p < 2.5\%$

people were satisfied with the area, compared with 41% of the remainder.

It seems likely that the fact of their friend or relation moving had produced this effect on this group. In spite of the fact that most of them lived near demolition areas (as one might expect), they shewed the opposite pattern of satisfaction to the 'near demolition' group as a whole.

In conclusion: we have found that there is a higher level of personal satisfaction than of satisfaction attributed to others. This might be partly because the second question referred to the 'area' and the first to the 'home'. Many people who recognised the faults of the area and of local housing spoke loyally in satisfaction at their own home. The most personally satisfied groups were the old, the community attached, those near demolition areas, and those without acquaintances who had moved. The groups most likely to estimate that other people were satisfied were the less attached, and those without friends or relations who had moved. Those with acquaintances who had moved, together with those who rated high on the subjective identification scale, were the only groups who gave consistently dissatisfied answers.

Reason for Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction: /

All respondents, whether satisfied or dissatisfied, were asked if there was anything that they liked or disliked about their present home. No prompting by the interviewer was permitted so that all

answers were spontaneous.

Overwhelmingly the main reason for dissatisfaction was 'the house's physical qualities'. This included a wide range of complaints but most concerned basic factors like dampness, lack of household amenities, insufficient space and light, and disrepair. Respondents often remarked that their own housing expectations were rising just as Byker itself seemed to be slipping into decay:

"Things have changed. Its a funny atmosphere here - unless its we've changed. We feel we want to get settled. We want a garden and there's no bathroom or hot water here."

This theme recurred: Byker was changing for the worse while personal standards were rising. If people disliked the area, it was generally for what is was becoming:

"Its changed. It used to be quiet, but now there's all the traffic and there's noise and smell and the pavements are broken by the heavy lorries. And on top of that, there's the smell from the boneyard."

This sort of complaint came mainly from the part of Byker in the industrial corner between the rivers Tyne and Ouseburn. As industry develops, local houses, streets and back-alleys are oppressed by the rumbling of heavy traffic and lose their old neighbourhood character.

Some people had more general complaints at the area:

"The dirt in general - bricks, bricks, bricks, everywhere - nothing pretty to look at - no colour - drab and depressing."

However such complaints at the area's very nature (rather than at its decay) was rare.

"Most people like the area, but are dissatisfied with the housing."

The physical qualities of the local houses were not only reasons for dissatisfaction; they were also the features which were most often nominated as causes of satisfaction. Sometimes this was for some apparently minor feature like the coal-fires, but more often it represented a preference for this type of terraced house by comparison with the modern council house or flat which the respondent feared might be his lot. One person who was personally dissatisfied with her house and the area said of her colleagues at the Domestos factory, part of which had been moved from Byker to Gateshead:

"Dozens of the women have had to move out of Byker, and now they want to come back. They complain when they get out there; the rents are too high, and they miss the old houses."

Whether exaggerated or not, this impression that people once moved out wanted to return is prevalent in Byker.

The area itself featured very largely as a reason for satisfaction, whether for its convenience or for emotional reasons. Expressed flatly, as one man said: "You get used to a place and that's that."

In sum, most people clearly distinguished their dissatisfaction at the quality of local housing conditions, from their attitude to Byker as an area. Ideally, it seems, they would like to continue to live in Byker but in new houses.

Table 57 Spontaneous Reasons for Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction
Percent of all Households

Satisfaction at:	Proportion Satisfied	Proportion Dissatisfied	Dissatisfaction at:
Low Rent	9	1	High Rent
House's physical qualities (size, comfort, amenities)	32	73	House's physical qualities
Attachment to House	19	--	
Attachment to Area	21	14	Disliking Area
Attachment to People	10	3	Disliking People
Convenience of Area	27	1	Inconvenience of Area
Other	3	3	Other
Nothing	22	18	Nothing
Don't Know	2	3	Don't Know

(Base No. 443)

b) Attitude to Demolition

Those groups which are most dissatisfied with their present houses (the young, the less attached, and those not living near demolition areas) are generally more likely to approve of the demolition. This is hardly surprising. It is more surprising that the vast majority of even the most satisfied groups approve of demolition.

When asked whether "overall you approve or disapprove of the decision to demolish the Byker area", only 11% of the sample said that they definitely disapproved, while 80% definitely approved.

Approval was not always as unqualified as this: "Byker will be restored to its former glory. John Wesley said it was a little bit

of heaven." Quite commonly people felt decay had set into Byker as a result of the slum clearance which had already been achieved, and that the only proper course now was to proceed as quickly as possible.

"Because having started demolition, they should all come down. It looks derelict."

"Its a mess now. They've pulled houses down and done nothing about rebuilding. I think I'd like to leave."

Some old people approved of demolition in a rather altruistic fashion:

"For the younger generation, it'll be better when its done, But for us older ones, we might never see it done, and we would have to live through all the muck of the change."

Some people disapproved of demolition because they felt that their own house was in a basically good condition and fit for modernisation.

But even personally satisfied people often took a broader view:

"You must allow cities to get on; you must have improvements. This street has better conditions than many, but most of them must come down and you can't leave one or two standing."

There were slight tendencies for the following groups to approve more often of the demolition than did their opposites: men, those who did not live near demolition areas and those who were less attached to Byker. Approval declined continuously with increasing age from 95% of the youngest age group to 57% of the oldest (65 and over)*

* The over-representation of people aged 65 will therefore give a falsely high level of disapproval. If the over 65's are weighted overall disapproval is reduced to 9%.

But the break was clearly between those older and younger than 61.*

Table 58 Age and Approval of Demolition
Percent of each age group

	Approves	Disapproves	Not Sure and Don't Know	Base No.
21-30	95	3	2	97
31-40	94	2	4	49
41-50	89	5	6	65
51-60	88	9	3	89
61-65	59	22	19	41
65+	57	23	19	98
Total	80%	11%	9%	443

Approval was also significantly less evident among house-owners, and most evident among privately renting tenants** (comprising three quarters of the Byker population). Quite evidently owners have made a financial, and probably emotional, investment, which brings them more into opposition with the council. In an owner-occupier area it can be imagined that this would be a stimulant to organised opposition to change. 19% of owners (43 people) disapproved of demolition compared with 13% of council tenants and 8% of private tenants.

Reasons for Attitude:

Those 70 people who disapproved of demolition (or who were not sure) were asked why they disapproved. Their answers closely

* Chi-square = 67, $p < 0.1\%$

** Chi-square = 6.16, $p < 2.5\%$

reflected the reasons given for satisfaction with the home. 57% disapprove of demolition because they like the type of housing which exists; 47% primarily because they are attached to the area; 39% because they are attached to the people and community; and 21% due to the convenience of the area. Once again only a few mentioned the rent level (13%), though this seems likely to be strikingly low compared with what they would pay in a council dwelling.

Of course, these figures represent only a rough estimate of the real reasons which underlie people's judgements, but they are striking in comparison with people's reasons for approving of demolition. 91% of the 379 people who approve (or who are not sure) of demolition, do so because of the poor quality of the housing; 31% because of the poor quality of the area.

c) Aspirations

Nearly three-quarters of the sample population were dissatisfied at the quality of local housing, and even more approved of the clearance of the area. That there were factors which made the area attractive has already been seen, but it is evident that the quality of housing was of over-riding importance in determining residential aspirations.

Two questions were asked to gauge the degree of determination to stay in Byker, assuming that conditions there were to remain unchanged. The first asked bluntly whether the respondent would prefer to stay in or leave Byker "if Byker were not going to be pulled

down and you were entirely free to choose where you lived."

Table 59 Willingness to Leave (i)

Would :	Percent	Number
Stay	50	221
Unsure	4	19
Leave	44	193
Don't Know	2	10
	100%	443

(Base No. 443)

The second question tested the determination of those 240 people who answered that they would prefer to stay or who were not sure, by asking whether they would stay even if they were offered a better house somewhere else.

Table 60 Willingness to Leave (ii)

Would:	Percent of those asked	Percent of total asked
Stay	45	24
Depend on offer	27	15
Leave	27	15
Don't Know	2	1
	101%	55%
Base No.	240	443

The attraction of a better house outside Byker reduces the proportion of those people determined to stay in the area from one half to one quarter, and increases those who would leave to 58%. Given the low level of household facilities in the area, it is not

surprising that factors other than the quality of housing were emphasised as reasons for their preference, by those who were most determined to stay in Byker (including the 15% who were not sure). Compared with the reasons given by the whole sample for satisfaction with the home, this core concentrated their answers more than ever on social and emotional factors.

Table 61 Reasons for Wishing to Stay in Byker
Percent of People wishing to stay or who were not sure to leave.

Reason	Percent
Low Rent	11
Type of Housing	19
Attachment to Area	63
Attachment to People and Community	46
Convenience of Area	38
Fear of Move	8
Other	2
Don't Know	1

(Base No. 171)

There is, then, a large group of people living in Byker who would be unwilling to leave it, even if there was no prospect of an eventual improvement of their housing conditions there. But the majority of the sample population (58%) would be prepared to leave the area, either readily or on the offer of a better house. How far this represents a desire to sever social connections with Byker can only be judged by their choice of area and the reasons for their choice.

The vast majority of this group of 257 respondents (83%) would choose to live on an estate of council houses or flats. Very few of these putative council tenants would spontaneously consider leaving the east side of the city for the west side, or somewhere outside the city. 91% nominated a council estate on the east side.* The following areas were most popular:

Heaton	nominated by	31%
Walker	" "	21%
High Heaton	" "	9%
Benton	" "	8%
Shieldfield	" "	7%
St. Anthony's	" "	5%
Newbiggin Hall	" "	3%
Walkergate	" "	2%

(Base No. 215)

There are two main prevailing characteristics of these estates: firstly they are all on the east side of the city except for Newbiggin Hall; secondly they are all fairly old and well-established estates except for Shieldfield and Newbiggin Hall. A feature which is common to the two most popular areas is that both immediately neighbour Byker to the north and east.

If the areas which neighbour Byker, or which are within half a

* People could name more than one estate, so that total percents do not equal 100.

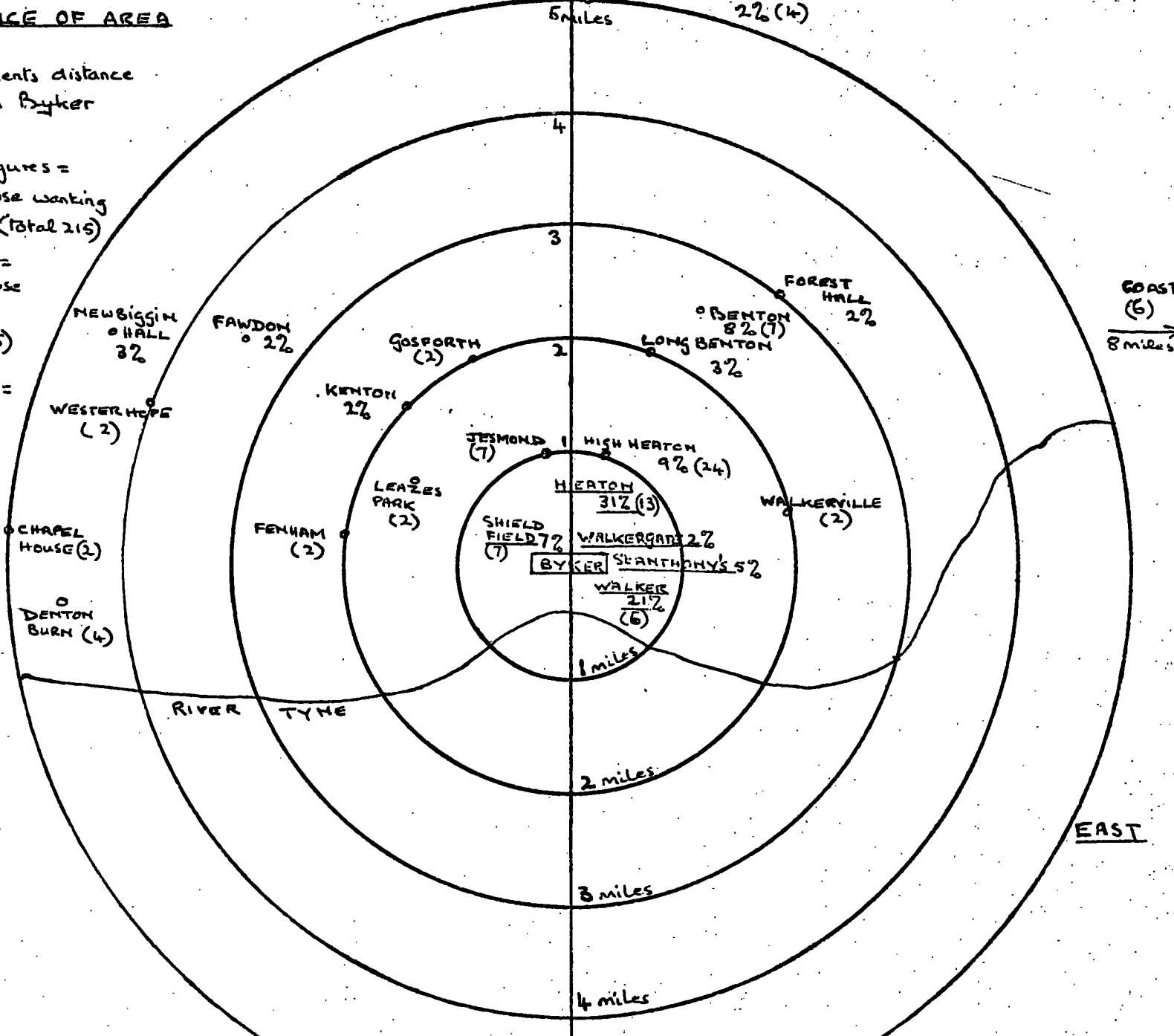
RESIDENTS' CHOICE OF AREA

- Each circle represents distance in miles from Byker

- Non-bracketed figures = proportion of those wanting council dwelling (total 215)

- Bracketed figures = proportion of those wanting private dwelling (total 45)

- Underlined suburbs = areas neighbouring Byker.



WEST

EAST

mile from it (Walker, Heaton, Walkergate, St. Anthony's and Shieldfield) are treated as a separate category, we find that they are mentioned more often than all the other areas put together. They receive 59% of all mentions compared with 44% for other areas.

In summary we can say that the majority of people prepared to move from Byker would choose well-established council estates in the east of the city and mainly within a half mile radius of Byker.

The minority (45) who would not choose to live in a council-owned dwelling would more often consider moving to the west of the city. 45% of them would choose to live in the west end or beyond the city's boundaries; 66% would remain in the east (the total of more than 100% results from the naming of more than one area). But still the most popular areas remain in the east-end, or (Benton and Whitley Bay) beyond the city to the east.

High Heaton	nominated by	24%
Heaton	" "	13%
Jesmond	" "	7%
Shieldfield	" "	7%
Benton	" "	7%
Whitley Bay	" "	7%

(Base No. 45)

Only Heaton and Shieldfield among these are direct neighbours of Byker.

What sorts of aspirations did these choices reflect? Each interviewer was asked to broadly classify reasons for choice of area into the four categories in the following table. This left much to

the interpretation of the interviewer and the distribution of responses can only be taken as an indication of motivations.

Table 62 Reasons for Choice of Area
Percent of Households choosing to leave Byker

Reason	Percent
Social Aspirations - Status etc.	4
Social Convenience - to be near family etc.	29
Physical Convenience - to be near jobs etc.	35
Physical quality of area and housing	55
Other	2

(Base No. 260)

The reasons given were reasons for choosing between areas outside Byker, and not preferring the chosen area in comparison to Byker. Respondents therefore tended to leave it as understood that they expected better housing, and outlined the other advantages of the area which they had selected. Most of them seemed to be motivated by three main factors. One of these was to get away from bad air and close-packed streets:

"Fresh air is what I really want. There's no smoky factories there, but fields and fresh air."

"I don't care how high a flat I have. I just want to be above chimney pot height."

"All my husband said was 'stick out for a house with a garden'."

A second main factor (and this was primarily expressed by older people)

was to move to an area where the respondent had relations. The most often mentioned relation was a daughter.

Thirdly, in large numbers, interviewees wished to stay in the vicinity of Byker because it was familiar and convenient for shopping and access to the city centre and place of work; also because the council estates around there were older. The older estates offered the likelihood of a house rather than a flat, and at a lower rent:

"You never see any people out on the new estates. They're all out working to pay for the rent."

A large part of these aspirations could be satisfied in a rebuilt Byker. Only those who wanted space in the form of open fields (and perhaps gardens) whose close relations had already moved, and who were only interested in an old house, could not then be satisfied. In fact when all respondents were asked whether they would prefer to live in the new Byker "or go to another council estate of your choosing if the rents were the same", a large majority (67%) said they would choose the new Byker. Only 28% nominated a preferred alternative.

The aspirations of the people who are prepared to leave rarely seem to represent a desire to sever connections with Byker. They would mainly prefer to move only a short distance, and they would mainly prefer to live in Byker when it is rebuilt. Overwhelmingly their motivation seems to be dissatisfaction with physical aspects of their housing and environment. Their feeling is shared by most people, but for a quarter of the respondents this is definitely not an adequate reason for leaving the area.

Group differences in Aspirations:

These are fairly predictable in the light of the examination of differences in satisfaction and attitudes to demolition.

Men were no less likely than women to wish to live in the rebuilt Byker. They were however significantly less determined to stay in Byker if it were to remain as it is now.* Only 16% of them would stay in the old Byker if they were offered a better house elsewhere, compared with 28% of women.

Older people who had been the most satisfied group were also more likely to wish to stay in Byker whether or not they were offered a new house.** Increasing age brought increasing determination to stay. But there was not the same continuous relationship between age and wishing to live in the rebuilt Byker. The two youngest age groups (21-40) tended slightly less often to be attracted by the idea of being rehoused in Byker. In the case of the group aged from 31-40, this may be accounted for by the higher proportion (10%) who would rather consider buying a house.

* Chi-square - 6.190, $p < 2.5\%$

** Chi-square - 58.39 with 5^o of freedom, $p < 0.1\%$

Table 63 Age and Determination to live in Byker
Percent of each age group

Age Group	Prefers to stay in old Byker	: Even if offered a better house elsewhere	Prefers to live in new Byker when rebuilt	Base Number
21-30	29%	: 9% (29%)	60%	97
31-40	37%	: 10% (25%)	61%	49
41-50	38%	: 17% (39%)	72%	65
51-60	56%	: 27% (44%)	64%	89
61-65	68%	: 34% (48%)	71	41
65+	72%	: 44% (56%)	72%	98
Total	50%*	: 24%* (45%)	67%*	443

The bracketed figures in the second column shew the percentage of those people (in the first column) who said that they would prefer to stay, who would still prefer to do so if they were offered a better house. In other words, it shews the proportion of the people in the first column who were really determined to remain in Byker. From these figures, it seems that older people are much less likely to be attracted from Byker by the prospect of better housing conditions.

People who lived near demolition areas (who had seemed slightly more satisfied with their homes) were no less likely than the rest to be tempted to leave Byker by the offer of a better house. This

* These figures are reduced to 48, 22 and 66 if the influence of the over 65's is weighted in proportion to their actual representation.

seems to support the hypothesis that their greater satisfaction was more a defensive reaction to the imminent possibility of having to leave the area, than a measure of their greater preference for their existing houses. The hypothesis is again supported by the fact that they were more likely than other people to wish to be rehoused in the new Byker.* Their exposure to impending demolition seems to have increased their emotional attachment to the area. The same argument may apply to those who had acquaintances who had already been moved from Byker. This group were significantly more likely to wish to be rehoused in the rebuilt Byker.**

Houseowners, who least approved of demolition (compared with tenants) were also most reluctant to leave Byker. Conversely they were the least likely to wish to be rehoused in the new Byker: 53% of them compared with 67% of all tenants. Home-ownership was an extra tie to Byker as it was, but it would no longer be possible after rebuilding by the Council. Thus, at every stage, home-owners more than other groups tend towards a greater opposition to the Council's plans.

The community attached group (the 122 people who rated high on the PCA and SI scales) were apart from the oldest portion of the sample the most distinctive group. Though they had approved of demolition hardly less than the more weakly attached, they were much

* Chi-square = 5.65, $p < 2.5\%$

** Chi-square = 6.26, $p < 2.5\%$

more ready to put up with present conditions in order to stay in

Byker.* They were also definitely more anxious to be rehoused in

Byker.**

Table 64 Community Attachment and Determination to live in Byker
Percent of each group

Level of Attachment	Prefers to stay in old Byker	: even if offered : a better house	Prefers to live in new Byker when rebuilt	Base Numbers
Strong	64	: 32	75	122
Weak	45	: 21	63	321
Total	50	: 24	67	443

It seems that the measures of community attachment produced a group which is not only objectively more attached in terms of the range of their social inter-action, but also which feels more attached to Byker than the population at large.

d) Conclusion

The widespread approval of demolition represents general agreement that the quality of local housing and the physical environment is inadequate. Most people would be prepared to leave the area to improve their housing conditions, but more than half would seem reluctant (and some completely unwilling) to do so. This reluctance is generally expressed in terms of an attachment to the area for

* Chi-square - 12.53, $p < 0.1\%$

** Chi-square - 4.85, $p < 5\%$

emotional reasons and reasons of convenience.

Few people would be prepared to consider areas outside the east of the city in their search for better conditions, and most people would limit their move to the immediately neighbouring areas.

The groups which seemed most determined to stay in Byker were women, the older age groups, people who had friends who had already been moved from Byker, those who lived near demolition areas, house-owners, and those who were rated as the most attached to the community. For the most part, these were also the groups which most wished to live in the new Byker, except that there were no sex differences in this choice and that house-owners were less willing to contemplate living there.

We have seen that even the most satisfied groups preponderately approved of demolition. It is true, however, that for the whole sample, approval increases with housing dissatisfaction.* Of those who disapprove of demolition, 83% are drawn from among the most satisfied people who constitute 53% of the sample. Housing satisfaction, as one would expect, influences the respondent against demolition, but the majority of even the most satisfied is still in favour of demolition.

Similarly there was a constant relationship between increasing personal satisfaction and preference for living in Byker.** While

* $p < 0.1\%$

** $p < 0.1\%$

84% of the most satisfied group would choose to live in Byker even if it were to remain undeveloped, only 24% of the least satisfied would do so. The most satisfied were also the most resilient against the temptation of a better house elsewhere. Most importantly, the more satisfied groups carried their favourable attitude over to the Byker-to-be: as present personal satisfaction increases so does the desire to live in the new Byker when it is re-built.* This seems to indicate that satisfaction with the home is an expression of a much more general satisfaction with the area. The two are probably mutually reinforcing.

We will now go on to examine the actual response to demolition of these groups bearing in mind their view of the situation; as it has been described. We will also examine the response of those other groups with which we have emerged from earlier analysis:- activists, and two most politically aware and confident groups (those which rated consistently high on the 'political cognition' questions, and those which claimed that they would attempt to influence local government if the need arose).

* $p < 0.1\%$

Chapter 13THE PUBLIC RESPONSE TO DEMOLITION IN BYKER

The description of local inhabitants' attachment to Byker, of their political attitudes, of their organisational activism, and of their aspirations can now be tested against the actual public response to demolition. We are concerned now to find whether structural factors (community attachment and activism) and attitudinal factors (political orientation) are demonstrated to have any significance for the extent and nature of political participation.

Clarence-Davies⁽¹⁴²⁾ suggested that cohesive neighbourhoods were more likely than unintegrated ones to project hostility towards change "outward against the city rather than consume their energies in internal struggle." We have found that there is in fact little hostility to demolition itself in Byker but widespread reluctance to leave the area. This reluctance for about a quarter of the population is distinctly stronger than the desire to live in a new house. It is most prevalent, as expected, among those sections of the sample who emerged from analysis as strongly attached to the community. It is expressed in terms mainly of the convenience of the area and of emotional attachment to the area and people. For these reasons it seems that there exists among these people a potential hostility which could become apparent if it were made evident that slum clearance necessitated the removal of the inhabitants from Byker, and among a much wider group if demolition were seen to require that they move

beyond the neighbouring areas.

We will first examine how far the inhabitants of Byker are informed on the slum clearance programme, and whether they have gained this information from authoritative council sources, through local organisations or via informal means. We will especially examine their knowledge of the timing of demolition, and of the plans for rehousing. Given their reluctance to move from the area, we might expect that rehousing plans would be of particular concern to the people, and that lack of information in this sphere would be a powerful stimulant to action to gain information.

1) The Level of Knowledge on Demolition

Knowledge on demolition was investigated at various levels. The most elementary was the awareness that there were demolition plans for the area; the next step was taken to be awareness that demolition would include the subject's home; and the highest level of information was taken to be knowledge of the timing of the demolition of the subject's home. A weakness of this attempt to measure the respondent's knowledge was that the demolition issue was more pressing on some than it was on others, depending on how far different compulsory purchase orders had advanced. However since no CPO had been, at the time of the survey, passed on any of the standing houses, it is true to say that no respondent could have by then received a visit from a housing inspector. In other words, where CPO's were more advanced inhabitants might have felt a greater urge to inform themselves

but no more information had been actually proffered to them by the Council.

Two questions were asked to estimate the extent of awareness that demolition plans existed. First, respondents were asked to name 'the most important thing now affecting people living in Byker for their future.' Any mention of demolition at this stage was entirely spontaneous since it had not been mentioned earlier in the questionnaire. If the respondent however mentioned some other problem, he was asked if he had 'heard anything about plans to demolish houses in the Byker area.' Those respondents who had shown an awareness of demolition in their responses to either of these two questions were asked first about the likelihood that demolition would affect their homes, and second whether they had any idea when this was likely to happen. The following table shews the progression of results:

Table 65 Level of Information on Demolition Plans - Percent

Most important problem	Respondents Aware that:-		Respondent has at least some idea when home will be demolished
	Plans Exist	Plans likely to affect own home	
Demolition	47	47	67
Housing	19	95	
Economic	7		
Personal	3	48	
Family	1		
Other	2		
Don't Know	29		

(Base No. 443)

The vast majority of the sample are aware that plans for demolition exist, and, for nearly half, it seems that it represents a problem which is uppermost in their minds. The level of knowledge declines as more detailed questions are asked, but still only three per cent of those who were aware of demolition plans were not also aware that the plans would affect their own home. Fewer people had any idea when their home was to be demolished: many of those included in the 67% were only able to hazard a guess based on neighbourhood rumour. Indeed no precise information was available to any respondent at the time of the information, since no compulsory purchase order had been passed on any of the standing houses in the area. 32% of the sample however claimed to have a good idea of when their house was to be pulled down, and these had mainly received their information from the visits of public health inspectors. As we have seen, these visits take place a number of years before clearance so that, although the public health inspectors claim to give as much information as they can, only estimates on timing can be given at this stage. Many of the 35% of the sample who said that they had some idea when their homes would be demolished had also received the information from public health inspectors but recognised that it was not precise. They learned this scepticism often by finding that their neighbours had been given quite different estimates, or from the fact that the estimated date had already been passed.

A further question was asked to elicit the degree to which inhabitants were prepared to base their claims to knowledge upon

* Chapter 3.

rumour. There was no way in which the population could know where they were to be rehoused after demolition: there was no council source which would or could inform them on this, so that unless they intended to make private arrangements, they could only guess. Only 3% claimed to have a good idea where they would be rehoused, 9% had some idea, and 88% said that they had no idea. It seems that the sample was not prepared to put any trust in their own guesswork or local rumour, where these were unsupported by information (however tentative) from council sources. This seems to indicate that the higher level of "knowledge" on the timing of demolition (on which no precise information could be obtained) owed much to the willingness of public health inspectors to provide tentative estimates and little to local rumour on its own.

2) Sources of Information on Demolition

At this stage we are concerned to find out what is the prevailing level of knowledge on demolition and from what sources people have gained their information; later we will come to examine how this varies between groups.

The sources from which residents gain their information must partly depend on the presence and accessibility of mediating institutions and partly on the readiness of the public to use them. Councillors, for example, are formally present in all wards, but in some they may make themselves more accessible to the public, and in some the level of political knowledge and competence will be such that they

will be used by the public. We have seen that political interest and affectivity are low in Byker, at least as far as existing political institutions are concerned. We have also seen that there is a high level of attachment to networks of friends, neighbours and relations developed partly through long residence in the area. These findings indicate that we might expect to find greater reliance on the local network than on authoritative council sources for information on demolition.

At each level of information -- from awareness that plans existed to information on the timing of demolition -- respondents were asked where they first obtained this knowledge. Of course, much here depended on the memory of the respondent; and it seems especially likely that informal sources will have been under-rated, both because informal contacts are less memorable and also because they may be considered by the respondent to be less worthy of mention.

Table 66 Sources of Information on Demolition Plans

Source	Percent of those having information on:-		
	Existence of Plans	Plans ¹ effect on own home	Timing of Demolition
<u>Authoritative</u>			
M.P.	0.2	0.3	0.3
Council announcement, meeting or display	10.5	6.6	4.4
Councillor	0.7	1.4	1.0
Public Health Inspector	27.5	54.0	56.4
Visit or letter to Council Dept.	3.1	3.4	7.4
<u>Mass Media</u>			
Press	8.4	2.3	1.0
T.V.	1.0	0	0.7
Radio	0	0	0
<u>Formal Organisations</u>	4.1	3.7	4.6
<u>Informal Means</u> (friends, relations, neighbours, landlord etc.)			
	50.0	33.7	28.9
<u>Other and Don't Know</u>	3.6	4.6	3.7
Base No.	418	350	298

It is evident that informal contacts are of primary importance in the passing on of the most basic information, but that less reliance is placed on them for more detailed information. The channels by which the council might communicate with the public -- councillors and public meetings -- are scarcely used at any stage. The public health inspector, who is not officially equipped to pass on information

appears to be the only 'authoritative' source with which a large proportion of the public have come into contact. Quite possibly the information which for most people first arrives through informal channels was often initiated by a visit by a public health inspector to another household. His informing role seems to become more important as the information becomes more detailed, though it is precisely the more detailed information which he is less equipped to give.

In effect the public health inspector becomes a part of the local network. He is present in the neighbourhood for a long period going from door to door. The householder first hears about his visits, and rumours about their significance spread; later the householder comes into direct contact with the inspector and attempts to gain (or is offered) more personal information. But at no stage need the householder make any voluntary effort to gain access to the inspector; contacts with him therefore cannot be taken as an indication of a public readiness to turn to the council for information.

There was in fact considerable doubt among respondents about the validity of what they had learned from the inspector. For some, the information which they were given had not been fulfilled:

"The investigator said it would be eighteen months before the place came down, but that was three years ago. We have been for more information but they can't tell you anything. I think they should be able to, even if they can't stick to it."

Others had compared the information they had been given with information

received by their neighbours:

"I was told two years, but I have heard three different times from other people around here."

The discrepancies which emerged certainly seemed to reduce the confidence of the public in the council, but so equally would a lack of all information except that demolition was to occur. What seems to be required is that a greater amount of more precise information should be made available in the same door to door manner. Council officials, as we will see, doubt that there could be any precision in predicting demolition dates.

It is striking that formal organisations (trade unions, political parties, churches, community centre, workingmen's clubs) are scarcely mentioned as sources of information at any stage, in spite of widespread organisational membership. This conforms with the earlier finding that the organisations which were regularly attended were mainly socially rather than purposively orientèd; that is, they are interested in providing entertainment and company to their members rather than in developing group attitudes on issues.*

What does emerge from this section is the great reliance of the people of Byker on indirect sources of information. Even those who claimed a council-origin for their knowledge had often only had indirect contact with the council through friends and relations. One man had learned about the existence of demolition plans from a newspaper report on the impending demolition of his mother-in-law's street; he had

* The nature of local organisations will be more fully discussed later.

learned that his home would be affected from his wife who had heard a councillor mention it in a talk to the local YWCA; and he had heard from a neighbour who had visited the council offices that his street was to be cleared in two years' time.

3. Information Seeking and Action

We have found earlier that a large proportion of the Byker population wish to continue to live in Byker: one quarter were determined to stay there, a further 30% would prefer to do so, and two-thirds of the sample would certainly wish to be rehoused in the new Byker. We have also found that 88% of the sample had no idea where in fact they would be rehoused. Given the doubt, it seemed likely that some people would be stirred to attempt to discover what was in store for them.)

In fact only 31% of those who had heard of demolition plans had tried in any way to get more information. A list of possible sources of information was introduced to the respondent as "a list of the sort of places that other people went to", in order to overcome possible reluctance to nominate simple, informal sources. Respondents were asked to say whether they or their spouse had used any of these sources, and the list included: councillors, council departments, organisations and clubs, and a wide range of informal sources (including friends, relations, landlord, rent-collector, shopkeeper etc.). Of these, only five were nominated by more than 1% of the respondents who were asked the question:

Civic Centre or a Council department	:	17.9%
Friends, relations or neighbours	:	4.6%
Landlord	:	2.6%
Church or clergyman	:	1.2%
Shop-keeper	:	1.0%

Base No. 418

Councillors and local organisations are strikingly absent from the listing. In fact only one person claimed that he had contacted his councillor for more information, and only ten people had contacted any local organisation other than a church. The dependence on the administrative machinery and secondarily on the local network reflects the earlier response to the hypothetical question which asked what the respondent would do "if there was something you felt strongly that Newcastle City Council ought or ought not to be doing."* It was noted then that few people supposed that they would turn to their councillors, in contrast to Almond and Verba's national finding that this was the first resort. On the issue of slum clearance in Byker, councillors seem neither to have acted as a channel for information from the council to the public, nor as a channel upwards for people's requests for information. This must partly be explained by the fact that only 15% of the sample could name a councillor, and that the prevailing attitude to them was found to be unfavourable.

The fact that local organisations are scarcely mentioned as providers of information adds weight to the earlier statements on Byker

* Page 196, Chapter 10.

organisations: they seem almost deliberately withdrawn from local issues.

Most of those people who had attempted to gain more information had been interested to discover more about the timing of demolition and rehousing. Very few had made enquiries about where they were to be rehoused:

Respondents wanting information on

Timing of demolition	48%
Timing of rehousing	33%
Wish to move immediately	16%
Demolition in general	10%
Other clearance problems	7%
Whether to be moved	6%
Where to be rehoused	4%

Base No. 128

The timing of demolition and rehousing (which amounts to the same problem) was evidently the most crucial issue, to which the place of rehousing was a secondary problem which could be faced later (or which it was felt was beyond influence). Other plans, such as whether or not to redecorate, depended on knowledge of timing, and many respondents seemed seriously worried by the uncertainty.

Perhaps the lowest level of attempt to gain and exchange information is by discussion with friends and neighbours. Respondents were asked whether they discussed "demolition and changes in Byker with

other people."

Respondent discusses demolition and changes:

often	:	28%
sometimes	:	29%
rarely	:	13%
never	:	30%
		<hr/>
		100%

Base No. 418

It seems that for most people the discussion of demolition is the most active form of participation in this issue which they achieve: 70% claim to be at least occasionally involved in this way. But when it is considered that most people have at least some day to day contact with others in the area, it is surprising that 30% of the sample claim never to discuss the issue. It cannot be from social isolation that this is so: for, more than 70% have relations in Byker, more than 60% have friends there, and nearly 90% know more than 6 of their neighbours well enough to speak to them. It cannot either be from ignorance of the subject: for, less than 6% know nothing about demolition plans.

Only four people in the sample had taken any steps to protest or make their views felt. We have seen that few people disapproved of demolition itself, except for the elderly and houseowners. But dissatisfaction at the lack of precise information might be expected to provide cause for protest. The fact that, at the time of the survey,

there had been almost none, must be due partly to the low level of political awareness and confidence that was noted in chapter 10 . There seemed to be an almost fatalistic attitude to events connected with slum clearance, reflecting the ignorance of the process of local government, and the apathy or hostility to its representatives and its output that we have discovered in earlier chapters. In spite of the fact that almost half of the sample claimed that they would act on the council if they disapproved of its actions, the following comments were more typical of the response in the real event:

"I was afraid that if I did anything it might hurry them up, and I want to stay."

"There's nothing we can do if its decided."

"We have no say in matters like this."

"Its no good; they want the land and you can't do anything."

"What can you do until you know what they are going to do?"

They are organised and so are the unions, and I think there should be a housewives union. [Why don't you organise one?]

Oh I couldn't. I couldn't with my bronchitis."

In spite of evident dissatisfaction, protesting action was felt to be impossible until the plans were made clear, ineffectual because the council would take no notice, and inconceivable as a form of behaviour. The fact that nearly 70% of the sample had not attempted to gain more information on the slum clearance plans, and that only four had launched any form of protest conforms with the prevailing

pattern of political attitudes that we have observed: a low level of political awareness and little sympathy for local government. But the absence of interaction between the residents affected by clearance and the politicians and officials who are responsible for it, might also be contributed to by the attitudes of those politicians and officials, and also by the inadequacy of local organisations to act as mediating institutions and rallying points for local feeling. These are two points which will be taken up in later chapters.

When those 414 respondents who knew about the demolition plans but had taken no action to express their views on the matter were asked to explain why they had taken no action, they replied as follows (spontaneously):

Respondent did not act because he:

Approved of the plans	:	37%
Felt powerless to affect them	;	30%
was not interested	:	6%
did not wish to bother/ no time	:	6%
did not know how to act	:	5%
had other reasons	:	8%
don't know	:	8%
		<hr/> 100%

Base No. 414

These reasons for inaction can be broadly grouped into three categories:

- (1) approval of the plans
- (2) disinterest
- (3) disapproval which was not expressed because the subject felt ineffective.

For the first group, protest was evidently not justified; it is therefore only the last two groups who can be called truly passive.

Evidently, for a large proportion of the population, approval of the plans was the most important reason for taking no action to protest or express a view. Yet, we have seen that knowledge of the plans does not extend, for most people, beyond knowing that demolition was to take place and that it would affect them. It seems, therefore, that general public recognition of the necessity of demolition and the desire for a new house (which we found in chapter 12 to be sufficient to halve those who wished to stay in Byker) have been effective in reducing the inclination to object to those points which have caused dissatisfaction: lack of information on the timing of demolition and the place of rehousing.

Though a favourable attitude to the clearance of Byker's housing and the desire for a new house may have induced an unwillingness to protest on any issue, the same attitudes seem to be associated with increased action in the seeking of information.

Table 67 Information Seeking and Attitude to Demolition Plans

Respondent:-	<u>Percent of Respondents who:</u>					
	Approve : Disapprove of Demolition		Wish : Do not wish to stay in Byker		Would : Would not stay if offered better house elsewhere	
Discusses plans	69	: 59	63	: 68	60	: 67
Has sought information	40	: 22	29	: 46	29	: 28
and if so:						
Went to council source for information	52	: 18	35	: 59	32	: 41
	(Percentages in this row are of those who have sought information)					
Base No.	356	: 47	221	: 193	107	: 64

Those who record that they approve of demolition and those who are least determined to stay in Byker are more likely to have sought more information on the plans and to have turned to authoritative sources for their information. The reference here is to deliberate attempts to gain information.

The survey was a static one so that it is not possible to state whether the approval of demolition and greater preparedness to leave the old Byker for a better house, are a result or a cause of the more vigorous seeking of information. There is, however, a tendency throughout for the two to be associated.

We have seen that the vast majority of the sample know that demolition plans exist and will affect them. Most are also able to make some guess as to when this will happen. The prime sources of information are informal, but the more detailed knowledge becomes the more the sample relies on the visit of the public health inspector for information. They have, however, little confidence in the information adduced by the inspector. Attempts to learn more about the plans had been made by about one-third of the population who knew that any plans existed. Most of these had gone direct to the relevant council department, and very few had resorted to their councillor or any local organisation. They had been concerned primarily to discover elementary information about the timing of the council's plans and not about

where they were to be rehoused. Protest and attempts to express views to the council seem hardly to have been made. In view of the general wish to be rehoused in Byker and the lack of information on the subject of rehousing, the absence of approaches to the council seems to support earlier findings on the political culture of the area.

In this examination of the general pattern of behaviour in the face of demolition we have explained the absence of participatory demands from the public in terms of prevailing political attitudes and of the majority's approval of one element of the plans (the demolition of existing housing). It has also been suggested that the attitudes of councillors and local organisation leaders to their roles in the area might be contributory factors.

Kaplan has examined conditions which are likely to turn the hostility of a community towards threats from outside into organised opposition, and has suggested as possible catalytic factors: home ownership, stability and cohesiveness of the community, and "status-preserving" rather than "status-seeking" objectives of the group.⁽¹⁴³⁾ We have seen that home-owners are indeed more disposed to oppose the council's plans than other occupiers, but in Byker they form less than 10% of the population and they are dispersed over the area. We have also seen that there is a ready awareness in Byker that outsiders regard them as 'low class.' Demolition may be a threat to the close personal relations which Byker people feel to be the most distinctive attribute of the area, but it is not a threat to their status. The

transitional phase during which clearance is being carried out may be regarded as a status-threat in as much as to be identified as a clearance area may be felt to confirm the outsiders' impression of Byker. This, however, would lead to a desire that demolition be achieved quickly rather than prevented. Two of Kaplan's factors are therefore lacking in Byker.

A threat to home ownership or status would provide the vested interests without which the stability and cohesiveness of the neighbourhood cannot become operative as the basis for local opposition. It seems that the local high level of community attachment is insufficient (or insufficiently appreciated) as an interest to provide the defensive motivation for neighbourhood organisation to acquire information or to resist change.

The study of the political culture of the area contributes a further explanation which Kaplan does not investigate.

4. Group Differences in Knowledge, Information-seeking and Action ^{* **}

The preceding sections of this chapter have resulted in several suggested explanations for the low level of popular involvement in the slum clearance issue in Byker. These and other factors can be isolated to test the validity of the explanations by comparing groups within Byker. In particular we are concerned to test the hypotheses that:-

- (a) Community attachment is associated with not only a distinctive pattern of political attitudes but also of political behaviour.

* See Table 69 for tabular illustration of group differences.

- (b) Activism (organisational involvement) is associated with more politically competent behaviour.
- (c) The measures of political orientation, based on Almond and Verba's model, correspond to political behaviour in a real situation.

(a) Community Attachment

In chapter 11 (section 4 -- Community Attachment and Political Orientation) we found that those who were the most attached to the community (i.e. highest on the PCA and SI scales) tended towards a greater political awareness and competence than the population at large. The difference was slight, however, and only reached the point of statistical significance in the case of system cognition.

When the behaviour of the community attached group in the demolition situation is examined, they emerge as not significantly more knowledgeable than others (though tending to be more so), and no more likely to have made attempts to gain more information on the plans. In terms of their knowledge and readiness to act they are not demonstrated to be any more politically effective than other groups. However, when they have made such attempts a greater proportion turned to authoritative, council sources for their information (61% as opposed to 55% of the weakly attached), and fewer turned to their friends and neighbours or local organisations. They were also significantly more likely frequently to discuss the issue with other people in Byker.* It seems that their greater social interaction within the area while

* Chi-square = 3.652, $p < 10\%$.

allowing them increased chances of exchanging news on the demolition with their friends and neighbours, did not limit them to these sources for more serious attempts to gain information.

This is supported if the original sources of information on the demolition plans are examined. It is found that at all levels of information (knowing that plans exist and that they will affect the subject, and knowing roughly when their houses will be demolished), the community attached group is more likely than the remainder to have gained its information originally from official sources: for example 69% of the community attached knew that their house was to be demolished against 56% of the less attached. This difference emerges almost entirely from the greater dependence of the community attached group on the public health inspector. The less attached group is correspondingly more likely to have gained its information from purely informal sources. This difference is less significant if it is considered that the inspector is in fact part of the local network as has been suggested.

It has been pointed out that the more attached group was no more likely to have sought more information. It is perhaps surprising that they were not less likely to have done so. The more attached group were found to be significantly more determined to remain in Byker, and such determination has been found to be normally associated with less readiness to seek further information.

There is some evidence that the response of the more attached

group to the council's plans is more aware and effective than that of the less attached group. This appears to result less, however, from any more active political orientation than from the greater frequency of contact with local acquaintances and officials within the area which is the benefit of their close involvement in the community. However, it is clear that close involvement in the community is not associated with more parochial political attitudes and behaviour.

(b) Activism (organisation attendance)

Activism was found in chapter 11 to tend to be associated with higher levels of political awareness and confidence. This tendency was found to be statistically significant in the case of output and system cognition. These findings indicated mild support for Almond and Verba's thesis that organisational membership increases the potential for political involvement and activity. It was suggested that the mildness of this support might be partly explained by the non-participatory and 'social' (rather than 'issue') orientation of voluntary organisations in the area.

When this association was tested in the practical situation, it was found to receive some validation. Though activists were no more knowledgeable about the demolition plans than inactivists, they were certainly more likely frequently to discuss the matter informally.* Rather more of them than of inactivists have made attempts to gain more

* Chi-square = 4.637, $p < 5\%$.

information, and when they have done so, they are more likely to have turned to authoritative (council) sources of information. -- 62% of activists compared with 46% of inactivists). In their original sources however, they are scarcely distinguishable from inactivists, either in the degree to which they depend on council sources or in their use of their own organisations.

This, however, was a local issue, and the above findings relate to all activist households, meaning households one of whose householders was a member of at least one organisation in or outside Byker. If organisations do act as mediating institutions by which members are made more politically aware and competent, both in general and on specific issues, we would expect that people who are members of Byker organisations would be most aware and active in the local demolition situation.

Members of Byker organisations are indeed much more likely than members of other organisations and non-members to be knowledgeable on the demolition plans.* They tended more often than others to discuss the issue informally. They were however less likely to have made any efforts to seek more information, than other members and less likely even than non-members: 29% of Byker members had done so, 32% of non-members, and 44% of members of other organisations. But the source to which Byker organisation members went was very much more often the

* Chi-square = 5.742, $p < 2.5\%$.

council: 70% of those who had tried, compared with 51% of non-members who had tried, 45% of members of neighbouring area organisations and 27% of members of organisations beyond the area. And this finding is reflected in their original source of information. Byker organisation members were much more likely than other groups to have first learned of the demolition plans from council sources. It is interesting that of the four representatives of the sample who had taken action to protest or make their views felt, all were members of Byker or neighbouring area organisations.

While Byker organisation members were found to be better informed than others and to have acquired their information from more authoritative sources, they were also less inclined to have made their own efforts to learn more about the plans. It seems likely that membership of local organisations provides a means by which community information is spread, both on demolition itself and on the places to go for further information: this seems to be supported by the reports of more intense discussion of the issue among this group. Perhaps this greater intensity of local interaction reduces the need for Byker organisation members to make deliberate individual efforts to inform themselves. Thus Byker organisations do appear to serve a function in the passing on of information, but it is by bringing residents together that they appear to achieve this, rather than by any efforts made by these organisations themselves (see chapter 15).

(c) Attached Local Activists

We have found that both Community Attachment and Activism are to some extent associated with greater political awareness, measured both theoretically and practically in the demolition situation. Households which are closely involved in the Byker area, both through their performance of what have been called involuntary roles (worker, shopper, friend, neighbour, family-member, resident) and through voluntary attendance at local organisation meetings, we might therefore expect to respond in a particularly effective fashion to the demolition situation. In fact the pattern is close to that of the community attached group, differing slightly on the side of a rather more positive response.

Attached local activists were more likely than the remainder of the sample to :-

- (1) be knowledgeable of demolition plans at all levels (slightly)
- (2) have acquired their original information from authoritative sources, in particular the public health inspector
- (3) seek more information on the council's plans
- (4) have sought this information from authoritative sources
- (5) discuss demolition frequently*

This was the group which, according to the early community analysis, emerged as the most involved in the locality. They appear more effective than less active and attached groups in the acquiring of information. This is some evidence that local activism and community

* Chi-square = 3.089, $p < 10\%$.

attachment reinforce the association which each has with more competent behaviour in the demolition situation.

Even though the attitudes and performance of the community as a whole have been characterised as non-participatory, it appears that more intense interaction within the community is associated with more participatory political attitudes and more effective and informed involvement in the demolition issue.

(d) Political Competence

Only two respondents emerged from the political orientation analysis^{*} as fully aware and confident citizens -- participants with knowledge of the political system and objects, and with a sense of personal political competence. For the purpose of analysis of the relation between political orientation and actual behaviour, we will therefore examine separately the respondents who are politically aware and those who are self-confident.

The confident, or theoretically competent, group consisted of 136 people (31% of the population); they both expected to receive equality of treatment from the council, and also felt that they would (or might) do something to influence the council if they felt that its actions were wrong (i.e. they were subject and citizen competent). There are indications that these theoretical findings have some practical validity.

The competent group are scarcely more knowledgeable of the demolition plans, but their sources of information are distinguishable from

* Page 220, Chapter 11.

those of the less competent group at more advanced levels of knowledge: they were more likely than the less competent to have acquired information on the timing of demolition from council sources (72% to 62%) and less likely to have depended on informal relationships (20% to 29%). This pattern applies also to deliberate attempts made to discover further information. The competent group was more likely to have approached authoritative sources than the less competent group, and particularly more likely to have turned to the council offices (rather than elected representatives) - 23% of all competents had done so, compared with 15% of the remainder. The competent group also showed some tendency to have made more attempts to gain further information from any source, but the difference does not reach the level of significance.

This 'competent' group consists of those who are both citizen and subject competent, the group which Almond and Verba call 'participant citizens'. It seemed likely that a closer relationship between competence and effective action would be discovered, if the measure of competence which was based on the willingness of the respondent to act on the council were isolated -- i.e. if subject competence were ignored and citizen competents only subjected to analysis.

Citizen competents (of whom there were 205) were, indeed, statistically significantly more likely than all others to have made efforts to acquire further information: 40% to 24%.^{*} The tendency to resort

* Chi-square = 11.36%, $p < 0.1\%$

to authoritative sources for this further information was also more striking among this group: in particular the citizen competents emerged as more likely than any other analysed group to have turned to council officers (25% of them did so compared with 13% of the remainder). The subject and citizen competent group had tended more often to discuss demolition informally than the remainder, but the merely citizen competent group were significantly more likely to do so.* It is also striking, though the figures are too small for analysis, that all four of the respondents who claimed to have expressed their views or protested to the council were citizen competent.

The other attribute of the citizen is his political awareness (cognitive orientation). Is the group which emerged as cognitively oriented to local government in the theoretical analysis, actually better informed in the real situation? We find that at all levels of information the cognitively oriented are better informed than the remainder, except in answer to the question on where they might be rehoused. Since in fact no information was available on rehousing, this marks perhaps the lesser willingness of the cognitively oriented to guess. The cognitively oriented were significantly more likely to be aware of the demolition plans as manifested either by their spontaneous answer to the question on problems affecting the people

* Chi-square = 4.563, $p < 5\%$.

of Byker* or by their answer to the direct question.** Of those who were aware of the plans they were also significantly more likely to know that the plans would affect them,*** and they tended more often to have an idea when this would happen.

Table 68 Cognitive Orientation and Knowledge of Demolition Plans

Proportion who:-	Cognitively oriented	Others
(a) Nominate demolition ⁽ⁱ⁾ or housing (ii) as most important problem, spontaneously	86% (71)	62% (372)
(b) Are aware of plans when asked directly - for those not replying as (a) (i)	100% (33)	87% (206)
<u>Proportion of (a) and (b) who:-</u>		
(c) Know that the plans will affect their home	92% (71)	83% (345)
<u>Proportion of (c) who:-</u>		
(d) Have an idea when the plans will affect their home	89% (65)	84% (285)
<u>Proportion of (d) who:-</u>		
(e) Guess where they will be rehoused	14% (58)	18% (240)

Base numbers in brackets.

A striking feature of this analysis is the evidence that all of the cognitively oriented are at least aware that plans exist, whether they demonstrated this spontaneously (as (a)), or in answer to the

* Chi-square - 5.61, $p < 2.5\%$

** Chi-square - 3.65, $p < 10\%$

*** Chi-square - 2.88, $p < 10\%$

direct question (as (b)).

The evidence appears to support the hypothesis that competence (and especially citizen competence) is associated with a more active and effective pattern of behaviour in the face of demolition plans. There is also a regular association between cognitive orientation and knowledge on this specific issue. It was suggested in chapter 11 that since the cognitively oriented were actually found to feel less politically efficacious (in answer to the theoretical questions), they might only be more knowledgeable than other groups in practical situations where information did not have to be discovered but was readily available. This seems to have been the case with the items of information on the demolition plans which were selected for examination: information that the plans existed and would affect the whole area over an approximate time scale was easily obtainable from the public health inspector and other members of the community.

The theoretical categories, or cultural group, deduced by Almond and Verba's methodology are shown to have some reality in practice; that is, the behaviour of these groups in a real situation bears some relation to the attitudes discovered by theoretical analysis.

5. Conclusion

Other factors which are not peculiar to the area of course contribute to the response pattern of individuals and groups. The middle-aged groups, who were most self-confident of their ability to affect the council, were in fact most likely to have made deliberate

attempts to seek more information. The oldest were least likely to do so. Since the oldest group was strongly represented among the most determined to stay in Byker and among the disapprovers of demolition, it seems likely that it is their age which accounts for the fact that such apparent hostility to the council's plans is not associated with protest or the more vigorous seeking of information.

Single people were strikingly more likely to have gained their original information from the visits of public health inspectors, and not from within the community, compared with married and ex-married groups.

As would be expected, residents who lived near demolition areas were found to be best informed of the plans. With the group which had personal acquaintances who had been forced to leave the area, they were also found to have made more frequent attempts to gain further information. Evidently social-psychological as well as geographical proximity to demolition provided a motivation to action which was lacking among those groups for whom Byker still appeared intact.

But the object of the study is not to explain the response of individuals. Analytic groups were isolated in order to explain the response of the Byker population as a whole. The area is characterised by a high level of community attachment and involvement in local organisations, and a low level of political awareness and confidence. Involvement in the community provides the resident with more frequent

opportunities to discuss events affecting the area and to learn from where more detailed information might be obtained. In an area where most people have strong personal contacts within the community, this perhaps explains the high level of basic knowledge on the plans for demolition. Involvement in the community appears therefore to extend the number and frequency of contacts with internal channels of information, but it does not seem to extend the political consciousness of the resident to a significant extent. The result is that internal information is disseminated fast, but that few residents leave the community to make direct personal or group contact with the council officials who affect their lives.

The response to demolition in Byker has been largely passive. Residents have received and circulated basic information, but have neither protested against the plans nor made serious attempts to gain more information. We have offered explanation in terms of:

- (1) General approval of the plans for demolition which pre-empted opposition to plans for the future of the area and its ex-residents.
- (2) Lack of information on the plans for the future of the residents which made specific comment impossible. The only appeal could be for more information.
- (3) The absence of conscious vested interests in the area -- e.g. Kaplan's houseownership and "status-preserving" interests.
- (4) The high level of voluntary and involuntary community involvement which aided the dissemination of basic information, and made it less necessary for the resident to turn to outside sources.
- (5) The low level of political awareness and competence.

Table 69 Groups and their Response to the Demolition Plans - Percent (cont. on next page)

Percent of Groups who are:-	Community Attachment		Activist households	Inactivist households	Interviewees members of:			Attached local activists	Others
	Strong	: Weak			Byker orgs.	Other orgs.	No orgs.		
1. Knowledgeable on plans	83	: 79	80	80	85	74	76	84	79
2. Discusses demolition	61	: 51	58	47	57	50	50	63	52
3. Has sought more information	33	: 33	35	31	29	44	32	37	32
4. Proportion of (3) who sought information from:									
(a) council sources	61	: 55	62	46	70	37	51	61	54
(b) informal sources	20	: 30	26	29	20	40	27	25	28

Table 69 cont.

	Political Competence			Proximity to Demolition		Households with:	
	Subject citizen competence	Others	Citizen competence only	Households: Near clearance areas	Far from clearance areas	Friends who have been moved	None
1. Knowledgeable on plans	82	79	--	86	77	--	--
2. Discusses demolition	60	51	61	54	53	--	--
3. Has sought more information	36	32	40	40	29	37	30
4. Proportion of (3) who sought information from:							
(a) council sources	64	50	65	48	63	58	53
(b) informal sources	23	29	22	31	25	29	26

These conditions are dissimilar from those found by Rossi and Dentler in Hyde Park (Chicago)⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ though superficially there are similarities between Byker and Hyde Park. Both were identified as 'strong communities' and in both there was a tradition of voluntary involvement in local organisations. But Hyde Park was a self-conscious community of professional and semi-professional occupational groups. These residents defined themselves as "living in an 'unusual community'"⁽¹⁴⁵⁾; 'community' was a value which they were prepared to defend, and which they were politically equipped to defend in a series of voluntary neighbourhood organisations. Byker is, in a sense, a researcher's community in which a close network of relationships is discovered and in which the residents are conscious of the friendliness of local people, but it is not an area in which community has become a sentimental value. Residents are attached to private aspects of community (knowing the area, having friends and family nearby), rather than to the idea of community which itself could form a rallying point of common interest.

Similarly, voluntary involvement in organisations in Hyde Park differs from that in Byker. In Hyde Park "there is a social climate in which it is assumed that one is a joiner and a volunteer."⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ The habit of joining and the presence of existing issue-oriented neighbourhood organisations provided a springboard for the creation of a Community Conference which could mediate between planners and public.

In Byker, membership, as we have seen, represents primarily the passive enjoyment of entertainment provided by socially-oriented organisations. Membership is found to be associated with greater knowledge of the council's plans, but not with more active 'interference' in them. It was suggested that this arises from the more intense social contact of organisation members in Byker, and not from any mediating role that the organisations might take on.

Hyde Park contained within it a multitude of different vested interests, in terms of the ownership of houses, hotels, institutions and businesses, in terms of a desire to preserve status, and in terms of the convenience of the area to the city and University. This both stimulated a continuing concern for the area, and a tendency to react to present developments which might affect those vested interests. As we have seen, many Byker residents are appreciative of the social qualities of the area and of its convenience; but set against this is the strong dissatisfaction with more tangible interests -- the physical quality of the area and housing. New housing would mean freedom from the low status which many residents feel attached to Byker. This seems likely to have muted opposition to the council's plans, especially as it was not yet apparent that the plans would mean a transfer to new housing outside rather than within Byker. In Hyde Park, on the other hand, the less attractive aspects of the plan (raised rents, the necessity for some people to leave the area) became more quickly apparent and dispelled residents' optimism at renewal, inspiring them

to project their own views.

Evidently, the cohesiveness and stability of a community can only provide the basis for neighbourhood organisation where interests are felt and common, and where there exists an attitudinal and organisational framework for action. Political attitudes in Byker are largely non-participatory. Local organisations, at first glance, are inward turned and ~~dis~~^{un}interested in issues affecting the community.

The role of local leaders and organisations will to some extent be determined by the demands that members make of them. Similarly the readiness of officials to make themselves accessible to and to communicate with residents, will partly depend on the view that local people have of official attitudes to them. How far, we next ask, does the public expect to be represented and to be heard?

PART 6LEADERS, REPRESENTATIVES AND OFFICIALSChapter 14THE PUBLIC'S EXPECTATIONS OF LEADERS, REPRESENTATIVES AND OFFICIALS

The framework within which the public and the council communicate is set by the expectations that each side has of the other. Councillors' and officials' expectations of the degree to which the public are concerned by the plans for Byker and wish to be informed and consulted will be dealt with later. In this chapter we are interested in the expectation that the public has that account will be taken of its views and that its members will be treated fairly by the council and its officials.

The earlier analysis of the political culture of Byker demonstrated that, compared with national attitudes, there was widespread suspicion of the local council. The Byker sample were significantly more likely to attribute self-seeking motives to councillors than the Maud national sample. They were also significantly less likely to expect equality of treatment from the council offices on problems which they might have, than were Almond and Verba's national sample. It was suggested that these attitudes might be partly due to a generalised suspicion of the middle class world which not only represents authority but which also reminds them of the tarnished image of Byker; and partly to the fact that it is the demolition programme which has brought about

the first important contact that most local residents have had with the council. If these factors have contributed to the suspicion, we would not expect them to be less important in influencing attitudes to the council on the specific issue of its plans for Byker.

Expectations of the Council's Attitude

In fact, however, trust in the fairness of the administration seems to be greater on the specific issue of demolition and rehousing. One quarter of the sample had answered that they would not expect equality of treatment to the general question, but when asked whether they would expect it when the council were allocating them a new house, only 20% of this portion of the sample remained pessimistic. Even so, there was a strong relationship* between answers to the two questions, and the group which generally expected fair treatment was particularly consistent. (See Table 70 on page 288).

In spite of the general swing to greater optimism on the specific issue of rehousing after demolition, differences between age groups and sexes widened. Men had been slightly more pessimistic in answer to the theoretical question, but now became definitely more so;** and the youngest age group (21-30) deviated even more conclusively from other groups than they had done earlier.*** However, while the

* Chi-square = 26.25, $p < 0.1\%$.

** Chi-square = 7.004, $p < 1\%$

*** Chi-square = 7.576, $p < 1\%$

relative differences had expanded, all groups were more optimistic of the council's fairness on rehousing than they had been of its fairness in general -- in no case does the optimistic group fall below 70% of the total.

Table 70 Expectations of Treatment

Respondents who in re- housing would:	Percent of Respondents who would generally				Base No. and %
	Expect equal treatment	Not expect equal treatment	Not be sure	Don't know	
Expect equal treatment :	88	65	74	71	554 (80)
Not expect equal treat- ment :	4	20	11	6	38 (9)
Not be sure :	3	4	16	2	16 (4)
Don't know :	5	11	0	21	35 (8)
	100	100	101	100	
Base No. and %	267 (60)	105 (24)	19 (4)	52 (12)	

System affect, measured by the interpretation of councillors' motivations, was found to be low in Byker. About half of the Maud national sample was found to interpret these motivations predominantly favourably compared with just over one quarter of the Byker sample. The Byker sample attributed mainly self-seeking motivations to councillors. This would imply that they have little trust in the council's readiness to set the interests of the public first. The sample was asked:

"Do you think the people who make the decisions concerning demolition and rehousing take account of what people like yourself want?" Most replies were at least sceptical:

Yes	- 36%
Possibly	- 12%
No	- 42%
Don't know	- 10%
	<hr/>
	100%
	(443)

The low level of system affect was strongly related to these answers; that is, those respondents who had been most suspicious of councillors' motivations were also least likely to trust that the decision-makers took account of their wishes. The relationship was continuous, trust growing with the favourable assessment of councillors' motivations,* from 26% of those making the least favourable assessment to 43% of those making the most favourable one.

There were no significant relationships between age or sex and the expectation that public wishes would be taken into account by the decision-makers. But, as with system affect, men tended more often to be sceptical -- 49% of men doubted that the public's views were considered compared with 38% of women. The oldest age-group (65+) was least likely to expect that their views would be considered.

* Chi-square = 39.573 at 9° of freedom, $p < 0.1\%$

The analysis of predisposition to political participation by the methodology of Almond and Verba has been shown to provide an indication of the response to a practical situation. To some extent, the relationship between the council and the public on an issue like slum clearance is determined by attitudes which exist before the issue and which can be identified. But it also seems to be the case that political culture analysis by its detachment from specific issues tends to overstate the strength of attitudes. In the case of this study of role expectations the public seems in the practical situation to move towards a more passive position, increasing its trust in administrative fairness and retaining its conviction that the council takes little account of the public interest. These attitudes 'permit' passivity: there is no point in expressing views or protesting if (1) the administration metes out fair treatment, and (2) it takes no notice of public views anyway. In this sense, these expectations of the role of the council allow public behaviour which is in conformity with the local level of political awareness and competence.

Expectation of Representation

The low level of confidence in the council's consideration of public wishes reflects the sense of powerlessness to affect the plans which was given as a reason for inaction by more than one third of the sample. As we found in the study of the sense of personal political competence, there is little faith in (and much indifference to) the

effectiveness of personal action to influence the council. This being so, we might ask whether, and by whom, the Byker sample expects its interests to be defended.

Respondents were asked first if they knew of anybody "who does try to make sure that those who are affected by demolition will be treated fairly". Then they were asked if there was anybody who should be doing this but was not. In each case a list of possible nominees was read to the respondent to encourage him to think widely. Answers to the two questions were exclusive -- if a respondent felt that a particular nominee was doing something he could not also be named as one who should be doing something.

Table 71 The Public's Expectations of Representation

Percent nominating:-	Is doing something	Should do something
Your councillors	29	49
M.P.	10	24
Church leaders	7	5
Leader of clubs	2	1
A Welfare worker	9	13
Anybody else	5	5
Yourself only	4	2
No-one	28	15
Don't know	22	7
	116%	121%
Base No.	443	443

Percentages do not total 100 as interviewees could name more than one nominee.

More than half of the respondents know of nobody who is doing anything to protect the interests of local people (54%), but only 24% of the sample feel that this is a proper state of affairs. This indicates that, at the very least, there is 30% of the sample which feels itself to be entirely unprotected against unfair treatment by the council and which would like to have this protection. And three-quarters of the sample (including the 30%) would like greater protection by other persons.

If we take the two columns together as indicating the proportion of people who attribute a representative role to the various 'leaders', we find that there are greatest expectations of councillors and Members of Parliament (even though the latter are not directly concerned with the council slum clearance programme). Leaders of local clubs and organisations seem hardly to be considered to have duties in this field. There are slightly greater expectations of church-leaders, and these expectations seem more often to be satisfied than frustrated.

If the public expects most often that the role of protecting their interests belongs to councillors and M.P.'s, it is also true that these expectations are most often unfulfilled. Even though it is councillors and M.P.'s who are most often felt to be doing something, it is with regard to these two groups that public disillusion is greatest. They are recognised as the public's formal representatives to government,

but there is comparatively low confidence in the extent to which they fulfill their formal role.

There is some difference between the sexes in these expectations. Men tend to be more self-reliant than women, and also to expect rather greater action on the part of club-leaders; women are slightly more confident that their councillors are busy protecting the public's interests, but they are also more likely to think that it should be nobody's duty to do so (19% of women compared with 8% of men).

From this brief analysis, it appears that Byker people are mostly confident of the fairness of the administration in the demolition situation, but are sceptical of the degree to which it is responsive to their own wishes. In spite of their confidence, most of the sample claims to feel the need for some degree of representation to ensure fairness of treatment. They are aware of the formal representative role of councillors and Members of Parliament, but most people appear to feel that this role is not being properly fulfilled. Even so, respondents manifest little inclination to turn to leaders of local organisations and churches in this situation.

This pattern conforms to our earlier finding that respondents wanting more information turn first to the relevant council department. Councillors are neither well-known, nor believed to be altruistically motivated, nor held by half the sample to carry out the representative-protective role which more than three-quarters of the sample attribute to them. Local organisations are not, we have

suggested, issue-oriented and this seems to be reflected in the finding that few people expect their club leaders to act as generalised leaders.

Chapter 15LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

The actual performance of local organisations depends not only on the expectations of, and the use made of them by, local people, but also on their own view of their role. It might be expected that, in an area which is too small to have its own political structure, voluntary organisations would be instrumental in consolidating local views and turning them into appropriate action. There has been little expression of local views by the people as individuals, and we might ask whether local organisations have taken on this function. We might also be sceptical of this possibility, after discovering the small reliance which local people place on their organisations for information and representation.

The next stage of this study will, therefore, be to investigate the view which local organisations have of their day to day role in the community and of their role in the demolition situation, and to examine their actual performance.

The principal organisations in the area, measured in terms of the proportion of households having at least one regular member were found to be:

Workingmen's clubs	- 26%	of households
Bingo clubs	- 19%	
Churches	- 17%	
Trade Unions	- 13%	

These were the most popular of all organisations attended by Byker people anywhere, and also the most popular organisations sited in Byker. No other type of organisation achieved a regularly attending membership of more than 4%. All of the more popular organisations were closely examined, except bingo clubs. Bingo clubs seemed likely to be functional to their members, in the demolition situation, only by bringing them together; their interest as organisations could hardly be expected to be representational. Two of the less popular organisations were added to the list of those studied: local political party branches and the community centre. Both of these set out to act partly as links between the community and the outside world.

1. Labour Party Branches.

Three wards converge on the Byker area: Byker, St. Lawrence and St. Anthony's. Chapter 9 explained how all three of these wards were, until recently, regarded as safe Labour seats. As a result, until the election of May 1968, the Conservative party was to all intents and purposes inoperative in the area. The Conservative who was then elected to Byker ward appears since to have revived his party branch, but through the course of this study (until about August 1968) its influence depended more on that of the councillor within the party than on its own membership and organisation.

There were, on the other hand, Labour party branches in each of the three wards. Even these appeared, between elections, to be

quiescent and shrunken to their core membership of councillors and office-holding party workers. This may be explained partly by factors specific to Byker: the political disinterest which we have discovered characterises the area must be partly responsible; and the lack of party competition in the area also reduces the need of local councillors and Labour leaders to maintain grass-roots supporting organisations (hence the success of the Conservative who acquired a Byker seat with the help of a well organised campaign). A further more general factor is the unpopularity of the Labour government at the time of the study, which sapped local party members of their enthusiasm.

It cannot be claimed that the research into the party branches in the area was exhaustive; there was not enough time for a thorough analysis of the past activity of the branches. But it appeared that two of the branches were almost totally inactive. St. Lawrence's appeared not to meet, and the regularly attending membership of Byker branch consisted only of two councillors, the chairman and the secretary. This situation is not exceptional: McKenzie records that:-

Estimates of the proportion of total membership which is continually active in party affairs between elections range from one to five per cent." (147)

In these circumstances the branches can perform neither of the two supporting functions which they are expressly designed by the Labour Party to fulfill. According to the Party's 'Constitution and Rules' for constituency parties, a ward committee is intended to provide "the necessary machinery for elections within its area, and with the

approval of the Executive Committee of (the constituency) Party (to undertake) propaganda work."⁽¹⁶⁸⁾ Even St. Anthony's, the most active of the three branches, failed to provide electioneering support to its council candidate in May 1968; the candidate was forced to rely on campaigning by his friends. And in Byker ward, according to a councillor, attempts at public propoganda meetings had been curtailed after a disastrously unattended meeting in June 1967.

A party branch represents not only a base of political action by a party within a ward, but also a means by which local members can influence party policy. The campaigning role was as dead in St. Anthony's as in Byker and St. Lawrence's, but the branch did hold regular monthly meetings attended by about ten members (including three councillors). Demolition and the ragged state of Byker were discussed at several of these meetings and resolutions for action were formulated.

To some extent then, St. Anthony's branch appeared to take on a representative role on an issue which affected the locality as a whole as well as some branch members. However, the proportion of each meeting which was devoted to discussion of local issues was small in comparison with the time spent on discussion of social and fund-raising activities (jumble sale, raffle, Christmas bazaar). That the issues of housing and demolition were raised seems to have had much to do with the influence of one member who was a college lecturer in government. He was both personally concerned at the situation in Byker and politically able to persuade the branch to discuss the issue and formulate

resolutions. As a ward representative to the City Party, he was also able to speak in support of these resolutions at higher levels.

In October 1967, St. Anthony's introduced into the party channels a resolution which called attention to the fact that, though demolition was proceeding in Byker, there was no sign of any building in the area: the derelict land and boarded-up housing was an eyesore, and residents were concerned about the prospects of rehousing. This was forwarded to the Constituency (Newcastle Central) Executive and recommended by the Executive for consideration by the General Committee of the constituency party. From there, it was passed to the Party Group (of Labour councillors and aldermen) and discussed at a meeting in March 1968. The Labour Party were in opposition on the council, so that it was unlikely that the resolution would effect a change in council policy, but the slow pace with which it proceeded through the party mechanism was hardly suitable to what was considered locally as an urgent issue. Such a pace could only be tolerated by those who were familiar with and loyal to party procedure. For this reason, the expression of local discontent by the party branch was an essentially private affair: the branch did not set out to be a public mouthpiece.

The leader of the City Party (Mr. B. Abrahart) replied back through the party channels in a letter to the Secretary of the Central constituency party. Since Labour had been in power until May 1967, accusations of delay in rebuilding might be partly levelled at the Party, so the letter recounted the reasons for the delay besides

promising that "we will press for the Housing Programme to proceed as fast as possible". The reasons given will become familiar later but briefly they were: the realignment of a motorway to cut through part of the area; the concomitant need to design a 'wall' of apartment buildings to act as a noise barrier for the rest of the area; the need to establish a road and footpath pattern for Byker before building could proceed; the fact that a part of the area was intended for industrial use.

The answers were not new to members of the branch. The value of the exercise lay in the fact that the Party Group was made aware of the dissatisfaction in Byker. The deleterious political effect of this dissatisfaction and of the concentration of building in the westend of the city (Byker is in the east) was emphasised in the Group discussion of the resolution by Mr. S. Peddie, councillor for Byker ward.

At about the same time as the matter came to the Party Group, it was also raised in the Annual General Meeting of the City Party during a debate on the sale of council land by the Conservative Council. One of the St. Anthony's ward representatives (the college lecturer) pointed out that there were large areas of open land ready for building in Byker. Mr. Abrahart and the Labour spokesman on housing (Mr. T. Collins) reported that they had planned rebuilding in Byker while Labour was in power but that the Town Planning Department had pointed out the 'overwhelming' technical arguments against doing so. They also argued that Labour was impotent to press on such an issue so

shortly after losing control of the Council.

Except for some direct complaints to the City Engineer's Department at the upkeep of the area, the ward committee was obliged to operate indirectly. On matters of policy, the branch could only attempt to influence local councillors and the City Party in the hope that they would press the Conservative Council and the officials for a change in their plans. However the Party's own recent history in power prevented them from pressing with much conviction.

If the branch was ineffectual on policy, it was even more so as an agent of public information. The information which the branch was able to acquire on demolition and rebuilding plans had no outlet to the mass of the residents of Byker. Not only was the active membership of the branch small, but also, as we have seen, St. Anthony's branch (like those of Byker and St. Lawrence) seemed to have withdrawn from any propagandising role. It has been suggested that this is not only due to political disinterest in the Byker area, but also to the traditional security of Labour there. There is some support for this in the Fabian Society finding (reported by Robert McKenzie) that "on average ... the larger the Labour majority, the smaller the Labour Party membership."⁽¹⁵⁹⁾

The account of St. Anthony's branch activities should not leave the impression that local issues were under constant discussion in meetings. These meetings seemed for the most part to be social events. McKenzie again quotes a Fabian document which shews that this practice

is unexceptional:

[ward parties] are social rather than political organisations, particularly in districts where the Party is assured of a majority. Between elections, people attend meetings rather as they would go to a club, to meet their friends and discuss the business of running a club. Their interest turns to politics only when this is forced upon them by local conditions or by a group of more enthusiastic members. (150)

Local conditions and an active member forced some branch activity, but the influence of the branch as a mediating institution between the public and the council seems to have been small.

2. Trade Union Branches.

The sample survey found that more households claimed membership of a trade union branch (44%) than of any other organisation. More than half of this membership (25%) was of trade unions meeting in Byker and neighbouring areas. The proportion of regularly attending members brought trade unions into fourth place after workingmen's clubs, bingo clubs, and churches, but still the proportion remained above 12% of local households.

Though trade unions are not oriented towards action on behalf of the residential community, it might be expected that under certain circumstances the members' role as resident might be difficult to distinguish from their role as local workers, and that a union branch might act for its members on a non-industrial issue. The special circumstances in Byker were:

- 1) the large local trade union membership.
- 2) the close link between the area and certain industries -- shipyards and engineering.

- 3) the proximity of Byker residents to their work. It was found that one half of male householders in the survey lived within about one mile of their work.

Leaving the area might imply finding work in a different industry or travelling much further to work. Not only the ship-building but also the engineering industry is concentrated heavily on the River Tyne, whereas the estates to which local people are likely to have to move are primarily on the fringe of the city away from the river.

However, the survey shewed that local residents did not expect their trade unions to take on any informing or protective role in the slum clearance situation. Nor had any overt approach been made to the council by a trade union branch.

Local workers belong to three main unions: the Electrical Trade Union, the Amalgamated Union of Engineering and Foundry Workers, and the National Union of Boilerworkers. Each of these have branches which meet in or near Byker. Interviews were conducted with committee-members of branches of the ETU and the AEF.

a) The Electrical Trade Union Byker branch

The local branch of the ETU meets fortnightly in the Blue Bell Inn on Shields Road in Byker. Meetings used to be semi-social, winding up in the bar below the committee-room, but they appear now to have a rather drily business-like air about them; with the branch-secretary a teetotaler, there is no lingering after meetings. Attendance is small (about ten), and most of the old enthusiasm for local union activity seems to have evaporated. According to members the drop in

attendance had occurred over the previous five years and was most apparent among younger members.

Committee-members attributed this local decay partly to the attitude of the national headquarters of the Union towards its branches. There was some suspicion that the headquarters was attempting to assert its control over the Union by by-passing the branches and working directly through shop-stewards. It was felt that the intention was also to expunge the influence of communists in the Union by reducing the importance of their foot-hold in the branches. As a result the branch secretary was often able to inform his branch of national union policy and directives, only, he said, because he was also a shop-steward.

The branch was, in effect, a centrally-oriented body which felt cut off from the centre. It had lost some of its importance as a channel of communication from the headquarters to the membership, and had not acquired an important role. According to the secretary, the local activity of branches and of shop-stewards had declined considerably as a result of the reduced influence of communists who were often the most active representatives of the union. In this state, it was unlikely that the branch would take an active part in the slum clearance issue.

Committee-members were divided in their attitude to the demolition of Byker and the problem of rehousing. But none of them felt that the dependence of Byker on certain local industries was any longer an important factor. Electricians were not limited to employment in the

shipyards and heavy engineering works along the river. But most important, proximity to work was no longer important: "workers have cars", and public and factory transport were adequate. Committee-members were also united in the view that trade union branches should restrict themselves to industrial issues. The demolition issue was not a matter which should concern them, except perhaps through the Trades Council.

The committee-members seemed, like the Byker public, to bracket council and councillors with a middle-class world with which they wanted as little contact as possible: councillors were "big knobs who just want to keep their jobs having dodgy committees." Employers were also a part of this world, but contact with them was institutionalised.

b) The Amalgamated Union of Engineering and Foundry Workers

There are two AEF branches which bear the name of Byker. However, according to the secretary of 'Byker Second', branches are not founded on the basis of either residential or occupational location. The two Byker branches include men who work and live in the surrounding areas, in particular Walker and Heaton; and several 'Newcastle' branches contain residents of and workers in Byker. The branch structure is intended primarily to give manageable union units (of about 500-700 members each), though branches do tend to draw their men from certain firms. In the case of Byker Second, the membership comes mainly from Parson's and also from Hawthorn Leslie's.

The employment system in Tyneside engineering factories and shipyards was, until recently, one which both emphasised the workers'

insecurity and encouraged his sense of local identification. Men were contracted by firms on a temporary basis to do particular jobs; often the men would group themselves and negotiate contracts as local teams, for example, of ship riveters. Competition between local firms led, however, to labour-hoarding and this gave the men greater security and better wages than the system might otherwise have produced. Employment is now on a regular basis and wage-rates are fixed, but the 'rationalisation' of the ship-yards on Tyneside in 1968 introduced a new element of uncertainty. The grouping of firms into one consortium, with specialised functions but partly interchangeable labour, has contributed to the end of labour-hoarding and has ended the local basis of employment: the employee must be expected to be mobile between the parts of the consortium.

In this series of situations, it seems that the branch has not been able to acquire an active interventionist role. In the days of separately negotiated contracts, the branch could not intervene; and in the days of the consortium the branch is made irrelevant by the scale of the operation. Negotiations and the defence of workers' interests are now conducted on the local scale by the shop steward and on the national and regional scale by the headquarters of the union. Between these two, the branch appears to act for the centre as a base for recruitment, the collection of subscriptions, and the dissemination of information.

If the branch represents neither a local unit nor an active arm

of the union movement, it is not surprising that the secretary of Byker Second Branch eschewed any intervention in the council's plans for Byker. He said that while individual members' problems might be referred direct to the council or to the city Labour Party, the union would not take on any representative role on non-industrial local issues.

The union branches represent some of the few local organisations which are issue- rather than socially-oriented, and which might therefore be expected to take on a representative role on an issue which affects the community as a whole. The view which they have of their own role, however, strictly limits their action to industrial issues. Besides, they are not truly local organisations, drawing their members from a variety of industries and firms and from a catchment area which extends well beyond Byker. Their orientation is also primarily towards the centre of the union rather than towards local issues. As Brian Jackson writes:

"The suggestion is that unions or churches or Labour Party not only attune dominantly to the national -- but fail as the [brass] bands fail, to root themselves broadly in the neighbourhood." (156)

Perhaps 'fail' is the wrong word; they seem hardly to try, and hardly to be intended by union headquarters to root themselves locally.

3. Workingmen's Clubs

Workingmen's clubs have a special place in Byker. They are not only the best attended local organisations, but they are also run by local people alone and share the fate of the community. The curious thing is that in spite of the fact that they are so closely bound up with the community, they seem hardly as organisations to have noticed that the area is condemned to change if not extinction.

There is a heavy concentration of clubs in and around the Byker area. Some are associated with movements, some with work-place and some with neighbourhoods as the names of the clubs show -- Legion, Conservative, Liberal, Buffs, Railway, Waterboard, Byker and St. Peter's, St. Peter's, Jubilee, Westbourne -- but their old associations seem to have become an irrelevance, except for the association with neighbourhood. The new Conservative Councillor for Byker set up his headquarters in the Conservative Club, but this represented more an unconscious play on words than an association of sympathies. Two of these clubs lie in the heart of Byker -- Byker and St. Peter's, and St. Peter's -- only 200 yards away from each other in Raby Street. The first is in the middle of the street and known as the Middle Club; the second is at the bottom and called the Bottom Club. The following comments are from observations of these two clubs.

Both clubs are well rooted in the community, in terms of time and in terms of the extent of their membership. The Middle Club was founded in 1897 on its present site, and has, very generally speaking,

gathered its membership from the northern part of Byker. The Bottom Club, though less sure about its origins, moved into its present premises in 1932 from the part of Byker known as St. Peter's in the south of the area, and this is its traditional catchment area.

The solidarity of members and continuity between generations is enhanced by the system of recruitment: candidates must be proposed and seconded and are only approved after some weeks. Members can usually trace a long association with their club, often through relations. This draws them back to the Byker clubs from areas to which they have moved. Due to this practice, the membership of both clubs had fallen only very slightly as a result of slum clearance, and this slight fall followed ten years of rapidly increasing membership so that it had little noticeable impact on the finances of the clubs. The Middle Club in particular had grown in membership from 1960 when its premises were expanded to match in size and excel in facilities those of the Bottom Club. Each of them claimed a membership in 1968 of around 1000 of whom about half were members who attended at least once a week. The importance of this membership in the locality as a whole is best illustrated by the survey finding that one household in four had at least one member who regularly attended a workingmen's club.

The clubs are run by elected committees. They employ a steward, but members emphasise that "his job lies behind the bar"; he manages the staff, and supervises the bar and the upkeep of the club. The

committee is responsible for the organisations of the club's activities -- their planning and their implementation. Thus committee-members are not only expected to take the slightly prestigious directing role, but also to serve other club-members by announcing performers, selling raffle and draw tickets, and running dances. The committee is not expected so much to provide leadership as efficiently and unassumingly to manage the club and its existing activities. The discreet nature of club organisation has been well described by Jackson: (152)

Club officials did not derive their authority from being leaders amongst the workmen in an assertive way. Their authority had to do with their office and the customs and respects due to it. Their rightness as officers of the club derived from their instinctive formulation of the members' desires and hostilities in an efficient fashion. There was no sign of the stream of leaders coming to an end. They were not concerned with breaking new ground but with preserving and with strengthening. Functional leadership went along with social equality. Members were in no way deferential to their officers as men, though respectful of the rights of their office. Hence the difficulty of picking out the secretary in a crowded club-room without actually enquiring.

The activities of the clubs continue from year to year and the office-holders are the managers of the tradition. That the clubs' activities are traditional is well indicated by the half-yearly balance sheets which year after year itemise expenditure under the same headings: Christmas Handicaps, Children's Party, Darby and Joan Party, Tournaments, Snowball, Entertainments. Even the expansion of the Middle Club, which represented not so much a 'breaking of new ground' as a 'strengthening' of the club, could not be attributed by committee-members to a decision taken by any particular office-holder or committee; rather,

successive committees had responded to a groundswell of feeling so that expansion seemed the natural next step for the club.

The reward for committee-members is therefore small as far as honour or personal effectiveness go. Office-holders receive some payment for their services: in 1967, £212 to the Secretary of the Middle Club, £30 to the Chairman, £15 to the Vice Chairman, £130 to the Treasurer, and £237 to the rest of the Committee of ten. This payment may encourage some to take on responsibility, but committee-members themselves claim that nomination for office results from popularity: it is understandable that they should accept if nomination does represent such an accolade. The status of committee-member is, in a sense, ascribed rather than achieved. Thus, in spite of the frequency of elections the 'leadership' changes slowly. Ordinary committee-members are elected for a year's term, half of the ten coming up for election each six months. There may in practice be up to four nominees for these posts, but the posts of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer are rarely contested and such office-holders are nearly always drawn from committee ranks. The table shews, however, that even ordinary committee posts change hands infrequently: the holder is usually re-elected. Even so, election meetings, it is claimed, are attended by about half (500) the membership. Elections seem to have the function of asserting solidarity with an expressive rather than instrumental leadership.

Jackson found that the leadership of workingmen's clubs seemed

often to consist of people who were 'activists' in other spheres too. This applied, in the Middle Club, only to two ordinary committee-members who had posts in their trade union, and to Mr. Bulman, the Chairman, who was also treasurer of his work social club. A more distinctive feature of at least the office-holders was that all four were office-workers. According to the Chairman the rest of the committee, too, tended on average to come from higher occupational groups than did the average of club-members.

Table 72 Occupations and Periods of Service.

-- Middle Club Committee-members

Post	Occupation	Period
Secretary	Printer	16 years
Chairman	Draughtsman Estimator	7 years
Vice-Chairman	Quantity Surveyor	7 years
Treasurer	Civil Servant	4 years
other members:		
1	Tradesman	10 years
2	Pattern-maker (joiner)	5 years
3	Labourer	6 years
4	Saw Doctor (woodworker)	7 years
5	Driver	8 years
6	Joiner	3 years
4	Insurance Agent	4 years
5	Welder	4 years
6	Tradesman	2 years
7	Corporation worker	7 years

The same pattern of re-election, of long periods of service, and of occupation presented themselves in the Bottom Club. There the

principle of long service had become enshrined, both in plaques for service which hung from every wall, and in the person of the Secretary who sat like granite in one corner of the club. Mr. Taylor was old and had served as Secretary for 29 years. His post had petrified into an honorary state and would only be put up for election "when we think fit."

The entire committee of each club, like the vast majority of the membership, lived within one mile radius of the clubs. The resultant familiarity between leaders and members, the discreet and reactive nature of the leadership, and the absence of unelected officials (except where they were powerless behind the scenes), all gave members the sense of running their own affairs. This is what distinguished clubs from pubs for members:

"There's nobody here can throw you out."

The clubs are both affiliated to the Club and Institute Union, but this implies no direction from outside. The Union acts rather as a cooperative pool for guidance on management, for the provision of welfare institutions, and for the running of regional breweries. The Club Breweries are felt to provide a further freedom for individual clubs, "our only bulwark against the monopoly of the big breweries."⁽¹⁵³⁾ The freedom from ties to any particular brewery provides a further distinction of clubs from pubs, and seems to be claimed as a symbol of their self-government. As Mr. Taylor aptly said:

"Here you've got a voice in your beer."

In the half year to December 31st 1967, the Middle Club spent £28,438 on 'Ales, Wines and Spirits' (mainly beer) which represented two thirds of the Club's total expenditure on its Cash Account. This liquor was transferred over the bar to their members at the cost of £38,814. The importance of beer in the life of workingmen's clubs is illustrated by this remark in the opening address of the CIU to the 1968 Annual General Meeting at Blackpool.

Beer is something we have had to deal with for a long time. The working man's food is a pint of beer. It replenishes the natural needs of the body. (154)

The Mayor closed his address of welcome to Blackpool with

Get on with the work, boys, and come and have a pint at the Bloomfield Club! (155)

On any evening at the clubs most members are to be found sitting in the long saloon-halls drinking beer and talking. Other activities take place, though always to the accompaniment of beer drinking. In the main hall, the only activities which are permitted are those which allow members to pursue their drinking and talking in small groups: dominoes, snooker and various draws which support club funds and minor benefits like gifts and outings for pensioners and children. Only men are allowed in this the main section of each club. Women, who cannot be members in their own right, may drink in a small mixed lounge provided in each club -- a recent concession to them. Noisier activities, and ones which require mixed and general participation take place in the Concert Room: bingo, dances on Fridays and Mondays,

performances by pop-groups and comedians. All of these activities are designed to entertain members. Most particularly committee-members explained that political and union activities were carefully excluded from the clubs.

Every Sunday before lunch there is a special entertainment 'for men only'. These consist mainly of comic performances in the Byker clubs; a strong sense of respectability excludes strip-tease which is common in some areas. At the Middle Club the Vice-Chairman said that they had once had a strip-tease performance but "never again. We try to keep the blue stuff down even in the comic turns." He and other members said that the most important reason for this self-imposed censorship was that "the wives wouldn't stand for it." The opinion of the wives, though they were absent, was evidently important to the men, but it seemed often that the members were indirectly expressing their own views. Bottom Club members were equally confident about the limits of decency:

"No, none of that stuff [strip-tease]. The members wouldn't stand for it.

Strangely each club accused the other of indulging in strip-tease performances. This seemed to be a part of their general rivalry which exposed more the similarity between their codes of conduct and beliefs than any difference:

"They are a bunch of old fogeys."

"They have no idea of progress."

"They are a rough lot up/down there."

"What you mean is, he says he's been Secretary for 16 years."

This rivalry between the clubs seemed to be the obverse of the strong sense of loyalty which existed within each club. Their recruiting system, organisation and activities encourage the sense of solidarity and self-sufficiency of members, which seem bound to have their counterpart in outwardly directed mild rivalry. Committee-members defined the role of the clubs in solidary terms: in both clubs they described their purpose as providing 'sociability' to their members. They rejected any issue-oriented or instrumental role, especially in the sphere of politics.

In conformity with this self-view, the clubs have taken no leading role in the demolition issue. Their only reaction to the council's plans has been to attempt to gain assurances from the council that their premises would be preserved or replaced. Both clubs made representations to the Planning Department, and out of these the Bottom Club learned that their building would remain intact. The Middle Club had received no such assurance, but was confident that a site would be made available and compensation provided to enable them to rebuild the club in Byker. It seemed to have struck neither of them that the social character of the area might be changed or that their members might have to leave the area. Neither, when these possibilities were suggested to them, did they consider it their business to act on their members behalf by representing their views or seeking information on the plans for demolition and rehousing:

"Its not our job to get involved in politics. The members wouldn't want us to."

Several factors made for this rejection of a mediating role.

First, the clubs had not yet been affected by slum-clearance -- their membership had hardly fallen, since members continued to return to Byker and others renewed their membership so as to be able more easily to join clubs elsewhere. The possibility that there might one day be none of the old membership left in Byker was unimagineable, and the committees were optimistic about the survival of their club premises in the new Byker. Second, the function of the clubs (both manifest and latent, or actual and intended) was solidary and expressive rather than instrumental. Third, the organisation of the clubs excluded an active role in the demolition issue. Leaders were expected to manage existing activities rather than to persuade their members to undertake new ones. Even members' pride in the cooperative self-government of their clubs often seemed to carry with it a rejection of the outside world in which they were not masters. The staunch masculinity of the clubs, similarly seemed to carry an inward-turned assertion of the private distinctiveness of club-life. In spite of their most important social role in the local community, the workingmen's clubs are peculiarly defenceless.

4. Churches

The survey shewed that more households (127) claimed membership of a church in Byker than of any other local organisation. The

proportion (17%) which had a regularly attending member of any church was smaller, but still enough to make this the third most popular type of local organisation. There are two qualifications however: regular attendance at a church (as opposed, for example, to a working-men's club) rarely implies more than a once weekly appearance by the member; secondly, the church-going public in Byker is spread over six churches and two missions.

The claimed 'membership' of the churches was as follows:-

Table 73 Church membership

	Church	Claimed Worshippers	Communicants
Roman Catholic	St. Lawrence's	800	
	St. Dominic's Priory	800	
Church of England	St. Michaels	196	127
	St. Lawrence's	150	
	St. Bilas's		95
Presbyterian	Byker Presbyterian	150	

Figures are included for worshippers and communicants, since some clergymen chose to claim membership in one form rather than another. In either form, the figures do not give a real impression of the numbers of people who attend church each Sunday. In some cases attendance at the Protestant churches at morning services could be as low as five adults and a number of Sunday school-children, and an attendance of 50 at an evening service was considered good. Only at Christmas and Easter did congregations approach the numbers given in the table. A further qualification is that only St. Lawrence's (RC),

St. Michael's, and the Presbyterian Church drew almost wholly on the Byker area for their membership.

None of these churches was purely devoted to organised worship. They each sponsored a range of welfare and social activities among their members. Mothers' unions, young wife's groups, youth clubs, and other groups which provided social activities for age-ranges within the membership were common to all the churches -- in many cases with limited success: St. Silas's social club failed because

...the young people came along and wouldn't join in with the old-time dancing. All they seem to want is pop stuff and the older people just don't like the noise.

While all clergymen defined their first responsibility as the 'religious welfare of the Christian community' within their parish, it was evident that the roles which the churches set out to fulfil were much broader than this implied. They were oriented to accept some degree of responsibility for the social and cultural needs of their members. Nor, in many cases, were their social activities limited to members -- most of the churches ran at least a scout group or pensioners' club which was open to all-comers.

The churches in Byker all accepted some responsibility for the welfare of members who were in special need. At the minimum level this involved the pre-death visits of the vicar of St. Silas's; at the maximum, perhaps, the over-riding commitment of the brothers of St. Dominic's Priory to regular welfare visiting of members of the Catholic community. All clergymen interviewed, however, placed a

clear limit on the range of their welfare responsibilities -- restricting them primarily to people associated with their church, and passing serious problem cases to welfare agencies, or to the diocesan authorities in the case of the Catholic churches. This was most clearly stated by the Reverend Bunker of St. Michael's Church who felt strongly that social welfare was a matter for trained specialists. In spite of this deliberately restricted welfare responsibility, it was from the churches that the only signs of community action on the demolition issue sprang.

Common to all the churches but St. Dominic's which was outside the area, was the direct concern with the survival of their own premises. The clergymen of each church had inspected the plans for the area and obtained some guarantee for their building's survival. However, only the vicar of St. Michael's and the Minister of the Presbyterian church were instrumental in taking any action on behalf of the community at large. The clerics of St. Silas's and the two St. Lawrence's felt that such action was outside the field of their proper responsibility.

Even before demolition began, the Reverend Clarke of the Presbyterian church reacted strongly in defence of the 'community' which he felt that the council's plans might upset. An article in the Newcastle Evening Chronicle, 9 July 1962, headed 'Minister Fears For Happiness of Byker' recorded the concern of Mr. Clarke and his church at "the possible effect on the happiness of a close-knit community".

While they were in favour of the renovation or rebuilding of the area...

We know that many Byker people wish to remain in the locality where they have spent their whole lives....There are practical difficulties, we know, in clearing a site and rebuilding on it without uprooting families in the district. But is it not possible to move out first those who are willing to live elsewhere and temporarily to rehouse those who wish to remain in the house they vacate?

This, as we have seen from the questionnaire results, was indeed the majority wish: to remain in the area but in new or improved houses. As the article went on to say, many people feared that if they were moved out of the area "all sorts of obstacles will be placed in the way of their return."

Shortly afterwards, in September 1962, Mr. Clarke called a meeting in Raby Street School at which a Labour councillor and an alderman spoke on the council's plans. At this stage, however, these plans were limited to the Parker St/Thornborough St area of Byker, designated as unfit by the Health Committee in 1953.

It was not until 1967 that the Newcastle Council of Churches provided a stimulus for the grouping together of local clergymen who were concerned about the effect on the Byker 'community' of the council's proposals, which were now for the demolition of the whole area. The Council of Churches called for joint action by the churches, and between the churches and social welfare workers, in dealing with social problems. A church unity group was formed in Byker, and in February 1967, met the council planners. This meeting seems to have

contributed little to clergymen's knowledge of the plans but from it seems to have arisen the idea of a regularly meeting 'luncheon club' of local clergymen, welfare workers, probation officers and school-teachers. The luncheon club was to meet every other month in Byker Community Centre to exchange information on the area and on particular 'problem cases'.

The club was only interested in slum clearance in as much as it gave rise to special social problems. In practice, it was even less concerned with the council's plans than this would imply; meetings generally consisted only of short talks by members, designed to introduce their work to each other. The club was refused affiliation to the Community Centre by the Council, and its members were unavoidably conscious of their own position as council employees: both of these factors prevented the club from adopting any sort of public position on the plans for Byker. The luncheon club did, however, act as the springboard for later attempts through the Community Centre to provide a forum for local people to learn about and express their views on the plans.

The Reverend Bunker was an instigator of the luncheon club and commonly acted as chairman at its meetings in the Community Centre. At one meeting he suggested that the club should discuss the relation between community development and architecture, and also that it should hold public information meetings. After it had become obvious that the club would never acquire such a practical role, he encouraged the

Community Association's warden to set up the Centre's own public meetings. Like Mr. Clarke, Mr. Bunker felt a strong commitment to the maintenance of Byker's 'community spirit' by rehousing people within the area, and by (somehow) reproducing 'the backyard mentality' in the newly designed Byker. He felt, however, that the first priority was to end local residents' uncertainty by acquiring information on the plans from the council.

Both Mr. Clarke and Mr. Bunker shared a strong motivation to defend the community, and both felt that in Byker the local people needed leadership from outsiders before they would act. Their role as clergymen, with an existing interest in the welfare of the Christian, if not the whole, community, made it possible for them to take on some responsibility for the welfare of the area in the demolition situation, without any serious contortion of their own view of their role. Their churches, too, were the only ones whose parishes lay wholly within the area, so that the interests of their congregations were especially close to those of the community at large.

Mr. Bunker's especially active role is perhaps partly to be explained by his professional training as an architect. The fact that he chose to act through the Community Centre was perhaps related to the fact that the premises of the Centre neighboured St. Michael's and formed, until 1963, the church's parish hall. The point to be made here, however, is that the role of clergyman permitted this sort of leading role in the demolition situation.

At least two of the churches it seems could provide an issue-oriented leadership, but only 7% of the sample of Byker householders felt that 'church leaders' were doing anything to defend the public's interests. In other words, in spite of the local goodwill towards the churches which all clergymen claimed, the activities of the church were not evident to most residents. Mr. Bunker reported information on the contacts of the luncheon club and Community Centre with the Council in his monthly church magazine, but the 'captive' audience which the clergymen could represent and report to was small. The later involvement of the Community Centre in the issue was welcomed by most clergymen both as a chance to contact a broader segment of the population, and because "this is a community rather than primarily a church concern."

5. Byker Community Association

The Community Centre occupies St. Michael's old parish hall at the top of the hill overlooking Byker. Its building is capacious and its site is prominent, but none of the sample expected it to take a leading role in the demolition issue (chapter 14).

The Community Association was first founded in Byker in 1950 and met in the class-rooms of a local school. Its membership fluctuated between 100 and 200 until the council bought the parish hall for it in 1963. Within four years the membership had risen to about 500. Even this, however, is a small part of the local population, and not all of the members live in the immediate locality. The survey shewed

that only about 4% of local households had a member who attended the Community Centre. But if the membership is relatively small, it is also faithful: we found that 94% of members attended the Centre regularly, a higher proportion than any other organisation could claim.

There is a national federation of community associations, and this sets the pattern for their structure, activities and objectives, but in almost all matters the local council is the authority. The Council through the Education Committee provides the premises, appoints and pays the warden, directs the finances, and decides on matters of policy. In Newcastle the local education authority is represented on the management committee of each association by an alderman, a councillor, and an official (the Community Services Officer).

The Management Committee of Byker Community Association contains, besides the three L.E.A. officials, the Warden and ten members who are elected annually. The local representatives occupy the posts of chairman, treasurer and secretary but the responsibility which goes with these posts is strictly limited, both formally and informally. The informal limitation is the self-confidence of the occupier. The tendency at the Committee's meeting was for the Warden, the council official and a councillor to dominate discussion. Perhaps this represents no more than a recognition by the local representatives of the formal limits to their authority: these are the financial and policy control of the council, the daily management of the Centre by the Warden, and the fact that the Centre is divided into semi-autonomous

clubs. This is in marked contrast to the leadership of workingmen's clubs which is responsible in all spheres to nobody but the membership.

The aim of the national movement is, broadly, to strengthen or create community bonds by building up a network of interrelated social groups with different interests. The interests which are to be encouraged are those which are believed to increase the self-dependence of both the individual and the community: sport, art, drama, dress-making, car-maintenance, education on local government and community affairs. There are in effect, two objectives here: one, to build a community, and the other to educate its members.

Morris and Moge⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ shew that in the area of their study the local community centre was effective in contributing to local integration in the early stages of a new estate, but this was at the cost of its educative function. It was 'escapist' activities (such as bingo) which were popular because they conformed to the working-class rejection of skilled, competitive leisure activities, and because they required no special knowledge so that new members could easily gain acceptance.

Byker Community Association, in contrast, provided a range of activities which were close to those favoured by the national movement. Non-competitive, non-educative leisure activities were readily available in a wide variety of other local organisations: workingmen's clubs, bingo-halls, pubs. Quite evidently, too, the prime need in the area was not for community-building: the close relations between residents in Byker had grown up over generations. Thus the two most recent

wardens were able to devote themselves primarily to what might be called the self-improving aspects of the Association's objectives. This was even sometimes at the sacrifice of membership, as the warden records in his Annual Report for 1966-67:

[Dancing] is the most popular activity in our Centre and, in fact, this has caused us some worry because, much as we enjoy seeing the happy crowd, we do not want to become a Dance Club; this forced us to suspend membership twice this year when we could have registered another one hundred members.

The Ladies' Circle too was not all it might be:

I still think that there is room for another group where a regular programme of speakers could be arranged.... Nevertheless, there is much to be said for the relaxation and hilarity to be found in our Ladies' Circle...

The warden was clear about the objectives of the Association:

Remember that the underlying motive of all our work is Education...

The new warden, Mr. Vlaeminke, who took over supervision of the Community Centre in 1967 also rejected a merely entertaining role for the Centre. Unlike his predecessor he was, in addition, strongly committed to encouraging members to run their own affairs: this he felt was one way of developing local leadership and responsibility. He had inherited "an adult youth club" in which the warden was expected to administer the activities and finances of each of the clubs within the Centre.

Mr. Vlaeminke also believed that the Centre should encourage interest in local issues. When he heard that the parliamentary Skeffington Committee on Public Participation in Planning was calling

for evidence he wrote to Mr. Skeffington,

... we hope that your committee will consider the part that Associations can play in arousing the interest of residents in the life of their neighbourhood.

The activity of the Association in Byker was however limited by several factors. The most important of these was the authority of the council. With the warden and the Centre itself dependent on the Education Committee for their official existence, it is evident that the limits of their independent involvement in local issues was the council's sufferance.

Mr. Vlaeminke's conception of the Community Centre was a departure from the tradition already established both in the Centre and in other local organisations. Members had joined a social and not an issue-oriented organisation and no leadership had been developed in the previous warden's paternalistic régime to support Mr. Vlaeminke. The membership was predominantly (2/3) female and predominantly old: 38% of members were aged over 60.

The demolition of Byker was obviously the most important local issue, and Mr. Vlaeminke was as concerned as Mr. Bunker and other clergymen at the impending destruction of the local 'community spirit'. He felt that the Centre could help to carry the 'spirit' over into the new Byker by involving its members in the replanning of the area, and by keeping them informed. This could not be achieved at second hand through the luncheon club, even if the latter had been prepared to adopt a representative or mediatory role.

By March 1968, Mr. Vlaeminke and Mr. Bunker had agreed that the

Community Centre should attempt to stimulate an exchange of information between the council and Byker residents. Between May and June 1968 the Community Centre held a series of talks on "Byker: Past, Present and Future". The speakers were a local historian, representatives of the Housing Architects, Housing and Planning Departments, and the author. What emerged most distinctly from these talks, and from questioning by the audience of up to a hundred, was that the officials could not give the information which the residents most wanted: on the timing of demolition and of rebuilding. The impression given was not that the plans were at a formative stage and open to influence, for the residents could see that demolition was proceeding. The impression was rather that the council officials were being deliberately evasive, each one claiming that decisions on timing were made in other departments. One speaker (a housing official) confided before his talk: "If they're naughty, I'll just tell them they should have put that question last week."

The author's talk, the last in the series, outlined the process of planning, the plans for Byker as far as they were known and the council's attitude to public involvement in planning. At the end of the talk, the author suggested to the meeting that the audience might follow up their interest by forming an association to put forward local views to the council.

The suggestion was not unpremeditated: it had already been discussed with Mr. Burker and Mr. Vlaeminke. They felt that the manifestly strong local feeling should be given expression, and that the initiative would

not come from among Byker residents. They hoped that after an initial period of outside leadership, Byker residents would come to manage their own residents' group.

The group was called "The Byker Study Group' to emphasise the co-operative role which Mr. Bunker and Mr. Vlaeminke hoped that it would fulfil, providing the council with information on local residents' wishes. The group's first action was to send a letter to the full council through the Principal City Officer and Town Clerk, Mr. Harris. The letter recorded three resolutions passed at a meeting in June 1968, that:

- 1) Information be supplied periodically and on a regular basis to the residents of Byker by those officials and elected representatives who have the most complete knowledge on the state of the plans for clearance and rebuilding in the Byker area.
- 2) Building and clearance be so planned as to make it possible for a high proportion of those now living in Byker to continue to do so.
- 3) Provision be made for the consultation of local groups and organisations on the plans intended for the redevelopment of the area, and the Byker Study Group be considered as one of the groups to be consulted.

The reaction from all those in authority was decidedly hostile. The letter was greeted with a twenty-five minute uproar in a full council meeting on 4th July. The Conservatives, who were in power and had recently acquired one seat in the Byker area, argued strongly that the Study Group should have acted through their local Conservative councillor and that above all Mr. Vlaeminke as a public official should not have signed the letter on behalf of the meeting. The Labour Party argued in defence of the Study Group that it was merely claiming a consultative

role which had been won by residents' associations in middle-class areas. A local Labour councillor identified himself with this demand and appealed for the consideration of the letter and the consultation of Byker area councillors by the Planning Committee.

The public positions of the parties left much unsaid. The Labour councillors as well as Conservatives were offended at the direct approach of the Study Group to the full council. They shared the resentment of the Conservatives at Mr. Vlaeminke's involvement. Representatives of each party accused Mr. Vlaeminke of a secret affiliation to the other.

Mr. Vlaeminke was interviewed by the Youth and Community Officer and two councillors and the author by the leader of the Council and the Principal City Officer, and both were reminded of the limitations of their responsibility. The complaint was that the future of Byker had been brought into the political arena, that the letter should have been addressed to the Planning Department and that the Community Centre should not have become politically involved.

After this first reaction, positions were adjusted. The Rev. Bunker took Mr. Vlaeminke's place as chairman of the next meeting of the Study Group on 16th July 1968. The objectives of the Group were discussed and it was decided that party leaders, chief officers and the Planning Department's 'linkman' (the Conservation officer) should be asked to give their view of the part the Group might play. Two Labour councillors and the new Conservative councillor were at the meeting and seemed anxious to demonstrate that they were in sympathy with the Study Group, agreeing that

more information on the plans should be given by council departments through the Community Centre. Members of other organisations - the local churches and workingmen's clubs - had been especially encouraged to send delegates to the meeting as a demonstration that the Centre made no claim to represent Byker alone.

At the following meeting of the Group, the Planning Department's 'linkman' (specially designated to act as mediator between the Department and the Newcastle public) spoke. Even allowing for the fact that the linkman's own role depended on the existence of such residents' groups so that he was personally predisposed to favour them, his tone was remarkably conciliatory. He claimed the Study Group was now "an officially recognised group" and said: "You vote, you pay your rates, and you have a right to have your say."

In the ensuing talks from chief officers, further commitments to the consultation of the public by the council were given. The Principal City Officer said that he had no doubt that "groups of you will be having meetings with members of the Planning Committee and officers". The City Planning Officer said on October 7th that by 1st November 1968 a brochure would be published setting out the council's proposals. He promised that, "We will come to you with ideas which are not crystallised. You can knock them on the head and throw them out of the window. My job is to present you with a range of choices."

In fact a year later there was still no sign of such a public discussion of the alternatives. The Planning Officer's statement may

have set out his intentions, but it was clear from the reaction of the leader of the council and the Principal City Officer to the Community Centre's request for consultations that the council's plans were to be finalised before they were subjected to public criticism.

The brochure which was eventually published in February 1969 offered no alternatives for the residents of Byker to discuss, nor did it shew much advance in the state of the plans from the first proposals in November 1966. But it did indicate that the Planning Department had taken cognizance of some of the points raised in the Community Centre's meetings:

- 1) It gave some indication of the likely timing of the demolition of areas of Byker, and of their rebuilding.
- 2) It for the first time recognised that "a strong community spirit exists among the 20,000 residents and there is a clear desire on their part to continue to live in an area where they have their roots, and to take part in replanning Byker."

6. Conclusion

The meetings which were held between May and November 1968 in the Community Centre were the only meetings of the Byker public with officials and councillors since 1963. It followed from Mr. Vlaeminke's own interpretation of the Centre's role that it should be concerned with the issue of demolition. Local clergymen who were already interested in the problem were pleased to see an organisation with a secular, community-wide responsibility become the focus of local feeling. This view of the Community Centre as an almost representative local organisation clashed,

however, with the council's view of the Centre's role and in particular with its view of the warden's role.

After Mr. Vlaeminke's exposure to council criticism, the Community Centre acted only as a forum for the expression of official views and individual residents' questions. Its tentative adoption of a political role as a kind of residents' association depended on an outside leadership which was free of the normative restraints on assertive leadership that were seen in workingmen's clubs. It performed instead and in a limited way the "transmission belt function" which Rossi and Dentler attributed to the 'Community Conference' in South-East Chicago, reporting the City's plans to the public and citizen's ideas to the planners. As Rossi and Dentler comment: "This process was neither political bargaining nor direct consultation with those being affected by the decisions of the Planners."¹⁵⁷ This function depended on the readiness of the council and its officials to communicate information. The flurry of public appearances by council officials and representatives between May and November 1968 was in direct response to the warden's invitations. Between November 1968 and February 1969 when the brochure was published there was no further contact between officials and the public. Shortly after the publication of the brochure which invited public comment, a team of Swedish architects was appointed to redesign Byker. With the plans back in the melting-pot communication was again at an end, while compulsory acquisition and demolition continued.

CHAPTER 16

LOCAL COUNCILLORS

We have seen in earlier chapters that local councillors are scarcely referred to by the sample in the slum clearance context. They are certainly not, in the public's view, the bearers of information on the demolition plans, and they are practically the least important of the sources to which people would turn for further information. Two factors which seem likely to be contributory to this situation and which we have already examined are: unfamiliarity with councillors and suspicion of their motivation.

Less than 15% of the Byker sample knew the name of one of their own ward councillors, compared with an average for Newcastle as a whole of 48%. When we came down to examining familiarity with individual councillors we find that only two were known by more than 10% of their ward:

Table 74: Percent of ward knowing each councillor

Ward	Councillor	Percent	Number of sample in ward
Byker:			135
	R. Gray	6	
	S. Peddie	17	
St. Lawrence's:	E. Harding	1	
			132
	T. Collins	5	
St. Anthony's:	Mrs. Collins	11	
	S. Foster	2	
			176
	A. McAndrews	2	
	B. Abrahams	7	
	Mrs. Stephenson	2	

In spite of the fact that councillors were familiar to so few of the respondents, the latter had little hesitation in answering the survey questions on the motivation of councillors. Their interpretation of the motivation of councillors was predominantly unfavourable: as many as 38%, compared with 19% of the Maud national sample, gave unfavourable answers to four at least of the five sets of responses. The unfavourable motivations which the sample most overwhelmingly agreed upon were the ones which imputed personal ambition to councillors: "because they want to make money for themselves", and "because they want people to look up to them". This ambition contrasts with residents' own reluctance to take on an assertively leading role in local organisations and on the demolition issue itself. It seemed that councillors represented for them precisely

those qualities of which they were themselves most suspicious.*

Even so, it is evident from the survey that the sample believed that councillors had representative obligations. As many as 78% of the respondents felt that councillors either were defending the public's interests in the demolition situation or should do so. No other group (MP's, local leaders, officials) was invested with anywhere near the same responsibility in this respect. However, as we have seen,** most of those who expected councillors to act representatively felt that they failed to do so.

The evidence in Byker points to a desire for representation in spite of the scepticism on the effectiveness of existing representatives. Although it was found in Byker as by Bonnor in Crewe that there was a much greater readiness to turn to council officials than to councillors for help, there is no clear support for Bonnor's finding that "the representative function [of local government] ... is seen [by the public] as secondary."(158)

This is the view of the Byker public and it must affect the part

* Jackson's comments on working class attitudes to leadership have already been noted in Chapter 15. There is supporting evidence from Broady in 'The Organisation of Coronation Street Parties' (Sociological Review N.S., 4, 1956) who found working-class families very reluctant to take on roles which involved the formal leadership of neighbours. Morris and Mogyey in 'The Sociology of Housing' find that the outward-going local representatives are distinct from the popular local leaders and relatively isolated.

** See p.292.

which councillors are actually able to play, especially as the view seems partly to be based on social and political preconceptions which the performance of individual councillors can only marginally effect. The councillors' view of their own role and of the public's role and interests in the demolition situation represents the other side of the relationship.

1. Councillors' Action

Some Byker councillors* were not as inactive as most of the sample believed. Chapter 15 showed that there was action by at least one Labour Party branch to affect party policy, and several of the councillors claimed to have waged a continuous campaign within the Labour Party.

At least six of the nine who were councillors before the May 1968 election had been members of one or more of the Planning, Housing and Housing Management Committees, but they all felt that the place to affect policy on Byker was from within the party. The councillors for Byker ward (Peddie, Gray and Harding) said that they had jointly pressed for immediate building in Byker as soon as clearance land was available and for the inclusion of a large part of conventional terraced housing in the plan. They proposed in fact that, as a first stage, existing small open

* The nine councillors who have already been named were interviewed between November 1967 and May 1968, except for Mrs. Stephenson who was replaced, on the initiative of the Party City Executive, by Mr. Webster at the election in 1968. Mr. Page, the only Conservative among those mentioned, also won a seat in the 1968 election (from Mr. Harding in Byker ward). These new councillors, who had won their first seats, were interviewed in July and June 1968.

spaces around the fringe of Byker and the border of a strip cleared in 1965 for the Shields Road Motorway should be used to build tall blocks of flats into which residents could be moved from Byker demolition areas. This would allow progressive demolition and rebuilding so that Byker inhabitants would be "decanted" within the area.

Whatever the merits of the plan they proposed, its objectives - an immediate start to rebuilding, and the rehousing of Byker people in Byker - certainly corresponded to those of the majority of residents (Chapter 12).

But, as Mr. Gray said in interview:

You have got to win the [Party] Group over.... When we've argued in the Group for our views, we've never had support from the majority.... Stan [Peddie], Harding and I have never been able to get them to support us.

Nevertheless he claimed that before Labour lost power in May 1967 the City Planning Department had "brought forward a scheme along these lines". Mr. Peddie agreed that if Labour had remained in power a scheme of the sort that he proposed would have prevailed over the ideas of the Planning Department: "we were going to do it our way." The Planning Department's plans, he felt, would make Byker "a terrible place to live", with high rents, high densities, noisy traffic and a bad street lay-out.

While most councillors were in favour of rehousing residents in the new Byker, it was the councillors from the ward of Byker who were most critical of the official plans. However, they were all agreed on one thing: the political argument for rebuilding. There was a strong feeling among the Labour councillors in the east end of the city that the west end had received more than its share of redevelopment and that this damaged

their own electoral support.

Only two Byker area Labour councillors, Mr. and Mrs. Collins, stood out against criticism of the official plan though they agreed with the others that its implementation had been delayed by the Conservatives since their accession. Mr. Collins had been Chairman of the Housing Committee until May 1967 and also a member of the Planning Committee. What plans there were for Byker were still in 1968 very much those that these two committees had approved under Labour administration. He regretted the attempts to hasten development of the area 'at the cost of good planning'. His attitude, and the position of the leadership of both parties, was stated in a meeting of the full council on April 5, 1967:

At a recent meeting of the Housing Committee, my Lord Mayor, it was suggested by a number of the members that a large scheme of housing development in the Byker area be carried out by a package deal with a selected contractor. But I am very pleased to say that the Committee, in their wisdom, realised that this was a site which with careful planning by the departments concerned could create possibly the finest housing development within the city, and while the package deal no doubt would have meant earlier completion, we would all prefer a scheme taking longer to complete but which would give everyone concerned greater satisfaction....

There was a basic agreement on Byker between the leadership of the two parties. Introducing the 1968 Development Plan Review, the Labour spokesman said: "I would point out that 95% of the time we have worked together as a Planning Committee and as a team." The Conservative leader of the council in 1968 agreed, in interview, that his party had no basic policy differences with Labour on planning, though the Conservatives would focus more attention on the rebuilding of the city and on private residential building. This agreement allowed little place for influence

from among the councillor ranks. Mr. Harding claimed that policy decisions were projected downwards without any corresponding feedback from the grass roots. Mr. Gray complained that the Planning Department had acquired too much authority as a result of the encouragement of the Labour leader until 1965, Mr. T. Dan Smith, and that "our people on Planning don't dare to question it".

The pressure from the councillors for rebuilding in the area was, even so, enough to be felt as an influence on policy-making. During a speech to the full council on 1 June 1966 in which he announced a local plan for Jesmond, the Labour vice-chairman of the Planning Committee found it necessary to emphasise that

... this report has not arisen because we think the residents of Jesmond are more deserving than any other residents, Byker or anywhere else. Furthermore it is not due to any pressure from the councillors of the Jesmond area. We have had far more pressures for work to be done from the councillors in the east end who feel they are being neglected....

It seems that the pressure by councillors was mainly felt within the Party Group. There is little direct evidence in the 1952-1968 minutes of council proceedings (which record only meetings of the full council) of intervention by Byker area councillors pressing for action on the housing problems of their wards. Two isolated instances are the introduction by Councillor Peddie into a council meeting on 3 June 1964 of petitioners from Parker Street in Byker who wanted quicker action on demolition, and the bold declaration by Mrs. Collins on 15 March 1961 that:

So long as I am a member of this council, I shall not cease from mental strife nor shall my sword sleep in my hand until every person in this city is treated as a human being and properly housed.

This research only covered the first three months of the councillorship (beginning in May 1968) of the Conservative, Mr. Page. During this period he appeared to be among the most active councillors at the local level, and seemed less inhibited by the need to preserve party unity than did the Labour councillors. He was critical both in private and in public of the delay in rebuilding and of the lack of information provided to the public. He attended the meetings of the Byker Study Group after its initial clash with the local authority in July 1968, declared himself in favour of such meetings - "it makes the life of a councillor easier if people get together to express their views" - and offered reassurances on the council's regard for local opinion. He also wrote on two occasions to the local press during this period, declaring to sceptics that a new era of cooperation between residents and the local authority had begun and that redevelopment would start during 1969. In fact these reassurances were not fulfilled - no plans were available for discussion until 1970, and the first building was then projected for the end of that year.

Mr. Page was enabled to speak fairly boldly about the council's plans by the fact that any failure in planning could still be attributed to the Labour Party which had lost power only a year before, and that as the single Conservative councillor for the area he was in effect the party's spokesman on its plans for Byker. It is probably true too that his youth (age 21) contributed to his freedom: he was an image-setter for the party, and this role permitted a degree of outspokenness. The

leader of the council, Councillor Arthur Gray said of Mr. Page:

We would always listen to him.... I expect a young man to have different views ... He's a bit of a revolutionary. He would burn the council down - in a decent sort of way, I mean.

2. Communications with the Public

However vigorous the local councillors were within the party and the council committees, there were no easy means by which the residents of Byker could learn of their action or of the position they adopted. The unanimity of the parties and the departments on the essential features of the plan served to reduce the chance that the public would hear anything of the discussion and campaigning within the parties. Neither party could make much political use of criticisms of the plan by publicising them. The Conservatives until 1968 had no political ambitions in the Byker area and were not therefore interested in the problem as a campaigning issue. Labour was too shortly out of power for any criticism which the party vented not to reflect primarily on its own régime.

Caught in a situation where the clearance of Byker was itself a 'non-issue', there were few ways in which the public could learn of the activities of their councillors. There were several factors which limited contact between Byker public and Byker councillors in both the political and in the social sphere:-

Political Contact: Until May 1968, the party political situation in Byker was stable (see Chapter 9). There was an air of comfortable security among the Labour councillors which it has been suggested contributed to

the detachment of party branches from involvement in the three wards (p.301). During election campaigns there was little door to door canvassing in the Byker wards and some Byker councillors spent most of their time helping their colleagues in other, 'difficult' wards. Campaigning was more vigorous and personal than usual in 1968 with the arrival of two young candidates - Mr. Webster (Labour - St. Anthony's) and Mr. Page (Conservative - Byker). They won their seats but both emphasised in interviews that it had been with the canvassing support of their personal friends rather than of their respective party branches.

The most regular political contact which most councillors had with the public was through their 'surgery'. Sessions were held weekly on Saturdays by Byker and St. Lawrence's Labour Party councillors and monthly in St. Anthony's. Mr. Page instituted his own weekly surgery in the Byker 'Conservative' workingmen's club. The object of these surgeries was to deal with individual 'cases', and 'patients' were interviewed separately about their complaints. The councillors would answer some complaints but more often they would promise to take the matter up with officials. According to the councillors most of the 'patients' came with questions relating to individual housing problems, and most made some request for specially favourable treatment. The surgeries provided no real opportunity for the discussion of problems which were not immediate and personal. The number of people seen on these occasions was relatively few - up to about 12 per surgery session - and most Byker residents were unaware that they took place.

For certain councillors their surgery case-work was supplemented by home-visiting and some saw this as the most important aspect of their role. This applied in particular to Mr. Abrahams who claimed to spend at least part of every day in St. Anthony's ward concerned with one or other of his constituents. Certain other councillors participated in local organisations in their formal capacity as elected representatives. First Mr. Gray and later Mr. Page represented the Council on the management committee of the Community Centre and Mr. Peddie ran a local club for the 'over-60's'. Both the home-visiting and the membership of local organisations, however, brought councillors into contact with only a limited range of residents: problem-cases and people with special interests. More general political contact seemed not to exist.

Committee Work Load: The Maud Report⁽¹⁵⁹⁾ found that councillors in county boroughs on average devoted only about 15% of their time as councillors to electors' personal problems. By far the greatest proportion of their time (61%) was taken up with council meetings or on work connected with council committee meetings. Byker councillors tended to belong to rather fewer committees and sub-committees than the Maud sample of county borough councillors: two of the Byker councillors belonged to six committees and the rest to three or four, compared to a national average of about eight. Even so, the pattern of distribution of working hours presented in the Report was so regular between types of council and councillor that it is likely to be broadly true for Byker councillors. It allows only a small proportion of the councillors time for political

contact within the ward.

The reorganisation of the committee structure by the Conservatives in 1967 appeared to concentrate each councillor on fewer functions of local government. After this reorganisation no Byker councillor appeared on more than two committees and certainly their heavy concentration on the Housing and Planning Committees was ended. Mr. Collins became the only 'Byker voice' on these two committees, and he, as party spokesman on housing, was not primarily concerned with representing the particular problems of Byker. It seems doubtful that the reorganisation significantly reduced the workload of councillors, allowing them to spend more time in their wards, since working-groups soon proliferated in the place of the old sub-committees.

Social Contacts: Byker councillors were dissimilar to Byker people in many characteristics which would affect the likelihood of social contact. Whereas Byker residents were predominantly skilled and semi-skilled manual workers, all but one of the councillors had non-manual occupations and only two of them did work which would bring them into direct contact with manual workers (the copper-smith and the trade union official). See table 75 on page 347.

Mr. Peddie who was the best known of local councillors had until recently worked in the local engineering industry. After he was made redundant in 1968, he launched his own copper-smith's business away from Byker in the city. He had also already moved out of Byker, where he was born, into a new council flat in neighbouring Walker. In spite of these

two breaks, he retained strong social contacts with Byker through his parents, parents-in-law and other relations. Councillor Gray felt that in a "strong community like Byker" this had been a greater advantage to Mr. Peddie - "local people" have a sort of pride in Stan's case" - enabling him more easily to win his constituents' confidence. No other councillor had lived in Byker, though Mr. Foster and Mr. Page lived in very similar areas nearby.

Table 75: Councillors' Occupations

R. Gray	Youth club leader
S. Peddie	Copper-smith
E. Harding	Book-store manager
T. Collins	Building inspector (Northumberland Co. Council)
Mrs. Collins	Civil servant
S. Foster	Clerk
A. McAndrews	Retired T.U. official
B. Abrahams	Welfare activities
Mrs. Stephenson	Housewife
A. Page	Teacher
D. Webster	Teacher

Their interest in local government was itself a factor which distinguished councillors from their constituents. We have seen that the Byker sample tended to be ignorant of the processes of local government and suspicious of those who participated in it. By contrast, the councillors not only were present participants in local government but also had felt strongly motivated in this direction throughout their adult lives. They had in most cases achieved their positions after years of

activity within their party or in the trade union movement. For example, Councillor Peddie had moved into council service because he found trade union activity too limited: "it seemed a natural step" to move into a sphere where "I can look after the interests of the people generally." Councillor Gray was influenced by his grandfather, a miners' leader, joined the Labour League of Youth, became seriously interested in left-wing politics in the army during the war and on demobilisation became secretary of the ward party in Walkergate (where his main interest still seemed to lie). Mr. Foster had been active in the party for twenty years before he became a councillor.

Two councillors appear to have been primarily motivated by less directly party political motivations - Mr. Collins and Mr. Abrahams. Mr. Collins felt that as a building inspector he had "some special knowledge to offer" to the council, and seems to have been influenced by his wife to offer it through the Labour Party. Mr. Abrahams had a chequered political history which had led to some suspicion of him in both parties. His main interest was in a variety of welfare activities (the Jewish Welfare Association, the Jewish Housing Association, the Newcastle Council for Social Service, the Prison After-care Committee, the Supplementary Pensions Board etc.) and it was because of his expertise in this field that he was first coopted on to the Health Committee in 1942 and asked to stand as Progressive Party candidate in 1957. (He fell out with the Progressives in 1963 over the 11-plus issue, stood as an Independent candidate but lost his seat, then joined the Labour Party in 1964 and won St. Anthony's).

This gap between the interests of councillors and the public, combined with the narrow range of social contacts between them, limited the informal sources of information which were open to the councillors on the public's views. It was informal sources which were found by the Maud Report to be the main way in which councillors got their information on the needs and attitudes of members of the public* : 67% of the Maud sample of councillors relied primarily on this source. (160)

It is not claimed that councillors must be socially typical of their constituents if they are successfully to represent them, but that their occupational and residential dissimilarity closed certain possible points of contact. These were not compensated by political contact through visiting, campaigning and surgeries which touched only a limited portion of the population. This lack of contact, by limiting the public's awareness of the activities of councillors, seems likely also to have contributed to the unreadiness of residents to turn to councillors for help and information. The gap between the public and elected representatives may also be accounted for partly by the very nature of the role of the representative: both the political involvement and the assertiveness of the man who puts himself forward as a 'representative' are, as we have seen, unfamiliar to Byker people and Byker organisations.

* The Maud Report findings on contacts between councillors and electors are summarised by Hill who concludes: "Personal contacts are in fact rather limited. They arise, to a great extent from the informal relationships of councillors with their ward or with local organisations. They are rarely due to an attempt by the councillor to meet his constituents by any formal or regular means." (161)

The councillors themselves were mostly well aware of the low respect in which they were held by their constituents. Only Mr. Collins felt able to claim: "They appreciate the councillors: that's shewn by the response to the surgery". Mr. Peddie's comment was more typical: "They have a low opinion of us. You can see that from the low turn-out at elections.... They don't think much of us." Mr. Gray confirmed the suspicion of councillors' motivation: "Half of them think you're on to a damn good thing, and they are all convinced you can pull strings for them and are disappointed when you don't." He felt that the problem of clearance and rehousing in Byker had aggravated this opinion as frustrations were heaped on to it: "Those who are not rehoused want to be; those being rehoused begin to regret it; the last ones left think they are getting a raw deal."

If there was a failure in contact, councillors tended to attribute the responsibility to the public. The Byker ward councillors said that they used to hold regular public meetings in a local school but that these had lapsed as attendance fell. The same councillors had distributed a newsletter for a time but gave up when they found that people still came to the surgery with questions which were answered in it. If the public would not attend meetings nor read newsletters it was impossible, the councillors felt, to contact them all in their homes. As Councillor Foster pointed out: "They complain they only see you at election times, but you cannot visit 5000 houses."

3. The Councillors' View of their Role

In spite of their limited contact with the public, the councillors seemed confident that they were aware of local wishes. They all agreed that local people saw their major problem as bad housing, and they all claimed to have a good idea of local people's feelings on the council's plans for the area.

There was some disagreement on the substance of local views on the council's plans, however. The differences were mainly differences of emphasis relating to questions like the extent of the wish to remain in Byker, and the relative importance to local people of having a new house and of continuing to live in Byker.

Councillor Peddie thought that "95% of tenants want to be included in the clearance programme" and that two-thirds of them would wish to be rehoused in Byker in a traditional council house with a garden. The survey did indeed find that the vast majority - 80% - of the sample approved of the demolition plans (not quite the same as wanting one's own house to be demolished), also that 67% of the sample definitely wished to be rehoused in Byker which is remarkably close to Mr. Peddie's estimate. This seems to justify his remark that "there is no need to find out what people want to know". But other councillors were equally convinced that residents were less enthusiastic about the clearance of Byker. Councillor Gray said: "They are definitely not eager. They are very happy in Byker, and they are used to that sort of accommodation". Councillor Harding felt that the people were against demolition and

would be until they saw signs of rebuilding in Byker.

Some councillors were persuaded that there was a general wish to be rehoused in Byker; others felt that this wish was restricted to the older residents. In fact there was very little variation between age groups on this score.

The councillors agreed on broad principles (that Byker should be rebuilt and that local people should have the opportunity of continuing to live there), and it is difficult to distinguish any relation between their different interpretations of local wishes and differences in their personal views on the plans for the area. In other words, local views did not seem to be a determining factor in the councillors' assessment of the proper policy for the area. On the one hand, their commitment to rebuilding the area seemed to be drawn from more generally applicable principles: councillors referred to "medical need" and "obsolete houses" factors which relate broadly to Parts 3 and 5 of the 1957 Housing Act.* On the other hand, commitment to retaining in Byker as many people as possible (the differences lay in what was considered possible) or to moving them in large groups to new estates seemed to stem from the "council's policy decision" (as Mr. Peddie put it) "to keep families and neighbours together where moves are necessitated" and to develop neighbourhood contacts. The councillors' position seemed to have more to do with these general policies than with local opinion and conditions specific

* See pages 40 and 41.

to Byker.

None of the councillors, indeed, regarded himself primarily as a representative of local opinions and interests, and most rejected this as an important aspect of their role when they were asked how they saw the "purpose of a councillor". In their response to this question they tended to emphasise: (a) that their responsibilities were city-wide rather than on a ward-scale -

"to look after the ratepayers of the city" (Mrs. Collins)

"Let's be honest, he's there for the whole town not just his ward"
(Mr. Harding).

"... after all he's called a 'city' councillor not a 'ward' councillor" (Mr. Abrahams)

"He should normally be concerned with the planning and running of the city" (Mr. Page)

(b) that their election granted them a mandate -

"... policies are publicised at election time. People vote for those policies" (Mr. Collins)

"You have the parties. I am put back by Labour people and people who agree with our policy" (Mrs. Collins)

(c) that they had a special responsibility for the problems of individuals living within their ward -

"... to look after individual cases from your own ward, but people come to me from all parts of the city" (Mrs. Collins)

"He does have a special responsibility [for personal problems] to the ward which elected him" (Mr. Abrahams)

"... he should be particularly concerned for the people in his ward, helping them with their problems" (Mr. Page)

Broadly speaking, they seemed to agree that councillors fell into

two types: the 'committee-man' like Mr. Collins who felt that each councillor "should decide on a particular subject "for special attention within the council, and the 'case-worker' like Mr. Abrahams who was well known for his work as "a buffer between the people and the officials" or like Mr. Foster who said: "Well you may think this sounds silly, but I think he should be like the local parish priest". Most of the councillors rejected the notion that they should represent local interests in the council and felt that this aspect of their work, if it existed at all, should be confined to campaigning within the party. Mr. Gray and Mr. Harding both felt that the councillor could "raise his voice for his ward within the party" but agreed that formulation of party policy by majority agreement tended to make campaigning for a particular ward a fruitless exercise.

If the public was unaware of their councillors' activities on its behalf, it seems, then, to have been to an extent the result of the conscious choice of the councillors themselves who believed that the only proper avenue of representation was through the party, away from the public view. Councillor Foster explained how he believed that it was his very position as councillor which constrained him from taking a public stand on local issues.

The prevalent view was that the councillors' job was not to represent the expressed interests of the ward, but to identify these interests and then to "convince people that you know best" (Mr. Peddie). This seemed often to amount to attempting to bring the public to terms with party

policy, which must often be long-term and city-wide in scale rather than short-term and parochial as local opinion was felt likely to be.

Councillor Gray felt that, in addition, a councillor got the "feeling of an area":

I believe I know what is best for them better than they know. I know that sounds arrogant, but if I didn't think it I wouldn't be a councillor.

Whether or not this view is well grounded, it both contributes to and 'justifies' a low level of contact between councillors and the public. It also aids an understanding of the councillors' suspicious reaction to the Byker Study Group, for, while disclaiming for themselves a merely representative role, councillors gave the impression of claiming the sole right to an understanding of local views. Either, they seemed to feel, such a Group represented sectional views in which case it was a threat to the welfare of the whole, or else it claimed to represent the whole in which case it constituted a challenge to their position. The whole tenor of the complaint against the Group was indeed that it had not attempted to operate through councillors - that it had interfered with their right to govern.

Only the two new (May 1968) councillors - Mr. Webster and Mr. Page - spontaneously mentioned the representative aspect of a councillor's work in their answer to the question on the purpose of a councillor. Mr. Page - the Conservative - felt that in a place like Byker where the whole community faced a single problem, the councillor had a special responsibility "to try to make his voice heard on behalf of the community and not just

for individuals", even to the extent of going against the party line publicly. The fact that it was the single Conservative councillor who, in theory at least, was less inclined to see his role as the projection of the party line ties in with the Conservative Party's traditionally less corporate, less programme-oriented stance. (162) The view of the Labour Party councillors was that membership of the party presupposed a loyalty to majority view so that dissent should only be expressed within the party ^{machine} ~~mediarism~~. Two of the Labour councillors felt that the party exerted too strong a hold, but one, Mr. Abrahams, who had learnt by bitter experience, said: "I've found out you've got to be in a party. You'd be a fool to step out of line."

4. Conclusion

The survey indicated that the vast majority of the Byker population expect that their councillors do or should represent the public's interests to the council on local issues like the clearance plans. Though the evidence would support Bonner's case that electors turn first to officials for information, * it is not through officials that they expect to be represented. In contrast to Bonner then, we find that it is the councillors themselves, rather than the electors, who see their local representative role as secondary. As did the Maud Report, we find that most of the Byker councillors are primarily directed to their

* In several studies of New York it was also found that elected politicians were turned to only after access to the administration had failed - see 'Neighbourhood Groups and Urban Renewal' by J. Clarence-Davies III.

council committee work and, as Rees and Smith found in Barking, they expect there to specialise on a particular aspect of the council's work. This removes them from the local arena where they might become more fully acquainted with local feelings.

Whereas Rees and Smith in England found that "the councillors do not regard dealing with people's problems as being among their most important tasks",⁽¹⁶³⁾ Kaplan in Newark (USA) found that "the politicians have appeared less interested in influencing over-all policy than in appearing to help out particular people".⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ In Byker we find that the position lies somewhere between the two, with several of the councillors giving particular emphasis to this latter aspect of their work, but with none of them - except, to a limited degree, Mr. Page - allowing this case-work to spread into a more general and openly representative role.

Hill has explained councillors' reluctance to consult and act as channels for specialised interest groups in terms of their (the councillors') view of their role as being representative of community, rather than sectional interests:

Councillors see their relationship with their community as one between governors and 'the electorate' or 'public opinion', conceived in terms of the whole rather than its parts. In the final analysis, councillors are bound to think in this way. They are the only body which represents the community as a whole. ⁽¹⁶⁵⁾

The same explanation could be applied to the reluctance of Byker area councillors to see themselves as representative of specific wards within Newcastle. Having, for the most part, no particular personal association with the ward which they 'represent', they prefer to see themselves as

city-wide representatives. Also within the wards themselves they probably find it difficult to identify any unity of interests in such matters as housing when two of the wards in Byker (St. Lawrence's and St. Anthony's) run well outside the Byker area into post-war council estates. Only in Byker ward were all the electors affected by slum clearance and it seems likely that the pressure on this ward's councillors to act representatively was consequently greater there. It is interesting to note that it was indeed the Byker ward councillors - Peddie, Gray and Page - who were the most active on this issue.

CHAPTER 17

COUNCIL LEADERS AND OFFICIALS

Chapter 3 has already given an account of the part which each relevant council department plays in the business of slum clearance. In this chapter, the situation in Byker will be examined from the point of view of officials in these departments and of the policy setters - the leaders of the parties and the chief officers who set the framework within which officers operate. We are concerned primarily with the implications of officials' views of the situation for the involvement of the public in the planning process.

What the public think of the officials and of their responsiveness to residents' interests has already been examined. There was ignorance of, and disaffection from, all aspects of local government including the 'output process' (the administrative process by which policies are applied). Respondents were abnormally (by national standards) disapproving of the impact of local government and pessimistic in their expectations of treatment by council officials. However, it is still true that more than half the sample were favourably oriented to the council administration on each of these two counts; certainly a higher proportion than the 28% who gave predominantly favourable answers to the question on the motivation of councillors.

Later it was found that when it came to the specific issue of rehousing or demolition the sample were more inclined to anticipate fair treatment from officials. It was also found that the majority (53%) of the one third of the sample who claimed to have sought more information on the demolition plans said they had gone to the relevant council department, while only one person had turned to a councillor for information. This matched the theoretical finding in Chapter 10 that respondents seeking to influence local government on any issue would turn in the majority to the "non-political" administration rather than to their councillors.* Officials certainly seemed to be regarded as more accessible or authoritative, or both.

If this implies relative confidence in the 'output' of the official administration, it is also true that the public were sceptical of its responsiveness to their 'input'. Only one third of the sample felt that those who "make the decisions concerning demolition and rehousing" took local wishes into account. The 'unresponsiveness' of the administration was given by many respondents as the reason why they had taken no steps to express their views on the slum clearance plans - "There's no point. They don't want to know". Whether or not this was the real explanation, it indicates an assumption about the closed nature of the official world.

Several of the councillors shared the public's impression that officials were unwilling to listen to opinion from outside the departments.

* See page 200, Chapter 10.

The main exceptions to this view were the councillors who had been most closely associated with council policy - Mr. Collins (Labour spokesman on housing and ex-Chairman of the Housing Committee), his wife, and Mr. Page who, as sole Conservative councillor, was firmly associated with the plans for Byker when the Conservatives won power. Not unnaturally those councillors who were most opposed to the council's proposals for the area were the most convinced that officials were too dominant and inaccessible. The three Labour councillors for Byker ward - Peddie, Gray and Harding - who had campaigned for immediate demolition and rebuilding in the area were resentful of the 'pre-eminence' of the planners:

"We send proposals into the Planning Department and they reply 'no, this shall be done'." (Gray)

"They've got set ideas on planning" (Harding)

They were also inclined to attribute to the City Planning Officer, Dr. Wilfred Burns, a sort of hypnotic persuasiveness which blinkered other officials and even their own party leaders to contrary views. Councillor Gray felt that this had arisen from the creation of the City Planning Department in 1960 by the authoritative ex-leader of the Labour Party, Mr. T. Dan Smith:

His big thing was the rebuilding of Newcastle. He gave Burns such authority and control our people on planning didn't dare to question it.... We thought they were not putting up a big enough fight against Burns.

The complaint of Messrs Gray, Peddie and Harding about the dominance of the planners may be seen as a myth created to justify their own failure

to influence the party Group, but it may be that an exclusive relationship had indeed grown up between chief officers and party leaders, perhaps on the basis of the Smith-Burns relationship.

Councillor Abrahams, who saw his role primarily as a case worker, also found that officials resisted influence from outside their ranks. He felt that they rejected approaches by, or on behalf of, members of the public as if a willingness to hear individual cases would threaten the rules established for the treatment of all. A close observance of standard rules of procedure is one of the features of the bureaucratic structure described by Max Weber. Operations are governed "by a consistent system of abstract rules ... (and) consist of the application of these rules to particular cases".⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ These rules, which Mr. Abrahams found obstructive, may also be seen as the condition of the public's confidence in "equality of treatment". As Etzioni writes:

Rules save effort by obviating the need for deriving a new solution for every problem and case; they facilitate standardisation and equality in the treatment of many cases. These advantages are impossible if each client is treated as a unique case, as an individual. ⁽¹⁶⁷⁾

If rules, by protecting the bureaucrat and his client from each other, are the condition of impartiality, they may surely also be used as a cover for lethargy and closed decision-making on the part of the administration, as Mr. Abrahams felt.

The Policy Setters

Newcastle's policy on slum clearance is the result of an amalgam of party and departmental objectives, government directives, personal values

and abilities, and physical circumstances. Policy can be attributed to no single person, but it does seem that the tenor and substance of council publications and debate were for a long period set by Councillor T. Dan Smith and Dr. Wilfred Burns.

Quick progress on slum clearance was made an important issue between the parties by Smith before Labour won power in 1958. This, and later the replanning of the city centre, seem to have been the focus of his interest. Councillor Ray Gray pointed out that "his big thing was the rebuilding of Newcastle", and Councillor Arthur Grey, the leader of the Conservative Party, said: "Smith got on the bandwagon of planning. He realised that Newcastle was shrieking for planning."*

Councillor Smith's conviction of its necessity was instrumental in achieving the establishment of a separate planning department to take over the planning functions of the City Engineer. The City Legal Advisor claimed that he worked closely with Smith to get the agreement of other departments and councillors to the proposal, and in May 1959, just a year after Labour had won power, the Council agreed to the formation of the City Planning Department. Though the leader of the then Progressive Party was against the proposal on the grounds of economy he seems to have had little support from his colleagues including Councillor Arthur Grey.

The Byker ward councillors were not alone in thinking that there

* Where opinions are attributed to no other source, they stem from interviews by the researcher.

existed strong links between Councillor Smith and the Planning Department. In his introduction of the 1963 Development Plan Review to the council, Alderman Russell said:

The essential build-up and success of the Planning Department - and there is little doubt that it has succeeded - is in some large measure due to the interest and drive of Councillor Smith. (168)

Councillor Arthur Grey suggested that Smith and Burns acted as an effective tandem: the first gaining publicity and the second political support from their cooperation. The City Legal Advisor came to the same conclusion:

Burns and Smith got on very well together. Burns was given a completely free hand to plan and develop as he wanted. Smith used his considerable political power to support him.

Even the Conservative leader, Mr. Grey, was reported in the local press in April 1967 (just before the Conservatives gained power) as saying that "since the departure from the council of Dan Smith planning had become like a drifting ship, getting nowhere". (169) On the same day in another local paper he was reported as qualifying this by the statement that he "had never doubted that Newcastle had a first class planning officer and staff". (170)

The public praise which was heaped on Dr. Burns up until his departure in February 1968 is itself an indication of his influence. Grey paid this tribute to him in his introduction of the Conservatives' capital works programme in September 1967:

... Wilf Burns is the best Planning Officer in England ... and his plan - the Planning Review of 1963 which was really his plan - has laid down the lines for the kind of city which we in the north-east would be proud to have. (171)

But the admiration for Dr. Burns seems to have been not only for his ability as a planner but also for his influence as a leading administrator within the council. Alderman Butterfield, then Labour Chairman of the Planning Committee, said in April 1967:

In the earlier time of which I am speaking, we were very concerned in this council by a lack of cooperation between our chief officers ... with certain chief officers who were not speaking to each other. [Since Dr. Burns appointment] not only have we had deep harmony amongst our chief officers, but we have had a very considerable measure of deep harmony amongst committees of the Council. (172)

The implicit suggestion is that Burns acted as a coordinator between the departments on planning matters and that he also exercised a degree of directing influence over the committees. Burns himself seems to suggest in his book on Newcastle that this authority had fallen to him. He writes that relationships between departments were "reasonably harmonious", that in different spheres different departments would naturally take the coordinating role, but that:

The planner, however, is concerned with the totality and though he obviously does not have outright powers of coordination, he still has the duty to work as best he can, by persuasion, by his vital interest, by constant thought and effort to ensure that the overall plan is achieved in as coordinated a way as possible. (173)

Among council committees, a similar key role seems to have fallen to the Planning Committee which had as its first chairman the leader of the council (Smith). Councillor Arthur Grey (then in opposition but a member of the committee) took a press report on the predominance of the Planning Committee seriously enough to reply in the full council:

I read in 'The Observer' a fortnight ago a remark which I felt was an unfortunate remark. It said that the Planning Committee in fact controls this city. That is not true. We don't profess to do so and we don't want to. (174)

A situation seems to have developed which was similar to that which Kaplan found in Newark. (175) A general commitment to planning and confidence in the planners led to an arrangement where elected representatives took the political credit for planning schemes which the planners had almost complete independence to develop. This independence was at the root of the antagonism to the planners which the Byker ward councillors felt.

Clearance Policy:- The advent of the Planning Department with this strong political support heralded a new approach to planning - a more 'positive' or interventionist approach. As we saw in Chapter 3, in the case of the clearance programme this meant moving on from the demolition of slum or unfit dwellings to ones which were considered obsolescent. The next step beyond this - the revitalisation of structurally sound buildings by the installation of certain amenities - became a part of the planning programme from about the beginning of 1965 after Byker had already been destined for clearance in the 1963 Development Plan Review.

Clearance policy had previously been in the hands of the Public Health Department which in 1953 had drawn up a programme of demolition based on ~~Part 3 of~~ the 1956 Housing Act. This lists the limited set of factors which should be taken into account in determining whether a dwelling is "unfit for human habitation" on grounds of public health. By contrast, the areas which were newly included in the clearance programme

under the Development Plan Review appear to have been designated by the Planning Department and only later referred to the Public Health Department for classification as 'fit' or 'unfit'. This programme was drawn up not so much on public health grounds as on the basis of certain assumptions about public expectations of amenity standards. The Planning Department expressed these assumptions like this:

Everyone today expects a house or flat to have for example a fixed bath, an internal w.c., hot water, and space for the modern household labour saving devices. Some of these facilities can be fitted into the existing structure, but the common type of two storey flat on Tyneside produces many difficulties in realising this aim because of its relatively small floor area. These dwellings are often tightly packed into an area that has no open space, no trees, few pleasant features and often many undesirable ones. These properties must be progressively cleared in the years to come. (176)

Some further justification for this extension of the clearance net was offered by the Planning Department findings on the association between poor housing and 'malaise' (which we found not to be substantiated for social or psychological problems in Byker).^{*} The use of this argument is indicative of the extension of 'social engineering' into clearance policy which occurred with the creation of the Planning Department. It went with a new emphasis on the development of 'neighbourhood'^{**} or 'community' in the areas which the council rebuilt. Alderman Russell, submitting the 1963 Development Plan Review to the council for Councillor

* See page 73.

** In the Development Plan Review (1963), para. 500, a 'neighbourhood' is defined as "Not necessarily homogeneous ... area with some physical, economic and social unity within the greater unity of the city".

Smith who was ill, said: "In working out the proposed residential development it will be necessary to consider each area to be part of the neighbourhood unit". (177) Dr. Burns himself in describing the 'Social Plan' for Newcastle wrote:

We decided, first, that the family and the neighbourhood should be regarded as of primary importance in achieving social stability and individual satisfaction. (178)

The planners were in effect claiming a role which not only sets social objectives but which also possesses the skill to achieve them - for example by the development of 'community'. This sort of position stood in danger of threatening another important principle which Dr. Burns did much to introduce into thinking on planning in Newcastle - public participation in the planning process. If the planners possess the skills to achieve the objectives which it is assumed are shared, then it is a small step to also assume that it is in the interests of all to leave planning to the planners.

Policy on Public Participation:- After the creation of the Planning Department there soon emerged a policy commitment to inform the public and also to encourage them to contribute to planning decisions.

Dr. Burns' position is clearly stated in his book where he describes the involvement of the public as an essential feature of modern planning. Not only does the council bear a responsibility to inform the public:

Town planning ... is about people. If therefore a great impersonal body such as a city corporation is affecting by its planning work, the houses, the livelihood and the environment of individuals, it has a duty to explain in as full a way as possible what is being proposed and why. (179)

but also, public participation should itself be regarded as a contribution to the successful redevelopment of neighbourhoods:

One further policy that will help in achieving these objectives is to bring the public into the design stage, even before the architect has finalised his ideas. (180)

This emphasis was consistent with Dr. Burns' membership of the government-appointed Planning Advisory Group which in 1965 laid the basis for the Town and Country Planning Act, 1968.* Mainly in their precision, these statements went beyond declared council policy. Nevertheless, even before the adoption by the government of the new procedure, the council had begun to adapt its own planning methods and in particular to espouse the cause of public participation in planning. This early commitment must be largely attributed to Dr. Burns' influence.

The new procedure was introduced on an experimental basis in 1966. It was to be applied initially to a residential area of Newcastle called Jesmond which was due for revitalisation. Jesmond was regarded as lending itself "ideally to this experiment" which it was hoped would be applied to other areas later since the Planning Committee was concerned to bring "the public into our planning". (181) The essential features of the new procedure were

- (1) that a local plan was to be drawn up for the area
- (2) on the basis of which public representations were to be made through contact with the Department, public meetings, and public hearings before a panel of committee members

* See pages 44-47, Chapter 3, for an account of the new planning procedure.

- (3) after which final decisions would be made by the Planning Committee.

Additionally, a new appointment was made to the Planning Department of a 'Conservation Officer' to act as 'linkman' between the planners and the planned.

Announcing the experiment to the full council, the Chairman of the Committee related it to Dr. Burns' influence as a member of the Planning Advisory Group:

I think it is a very excellent thing for us that Mr. Burns was a member of the Planning Advisory Group ... the eyes of the Town Planners and indeed the civil servants of Whitehall will be on schemes of this order. (182)

But even at this earliest stage of the council's commitment to 'public participation' it was apparent that councillors meant rather less by the term than Dr. Burns seemed to understand. The emphasis of councillors' statements at the introduction of the Jesmond scheme was on the benefit which the new procedure would bring as a means of persuading the public to accept the council's plans rather than as a means of persuading the council to modify its plans to meet local wishes. The Chairman of the Planning Committee said:

It is extremely important in Town Planning that we should educate people to understand what we are after so that they can get a proper idea of what it is and how it will affect them to relieve any anxieties they may have. It is also important that the principle of enforcement should be carried out with charity and good sense ... it may be by diplomacy, it may be by persuasion, but it is enforced in a way which secures the cooperation of the people. (183)

The first public meeting under the Jesmond procedure shewed council leaders that there was a conflict between their understanding of

'participation' and the expectations which it aroused among some members of the public. The dilemma is succinctly expressed by a newspaper report of a committee member's statement at the meeting:

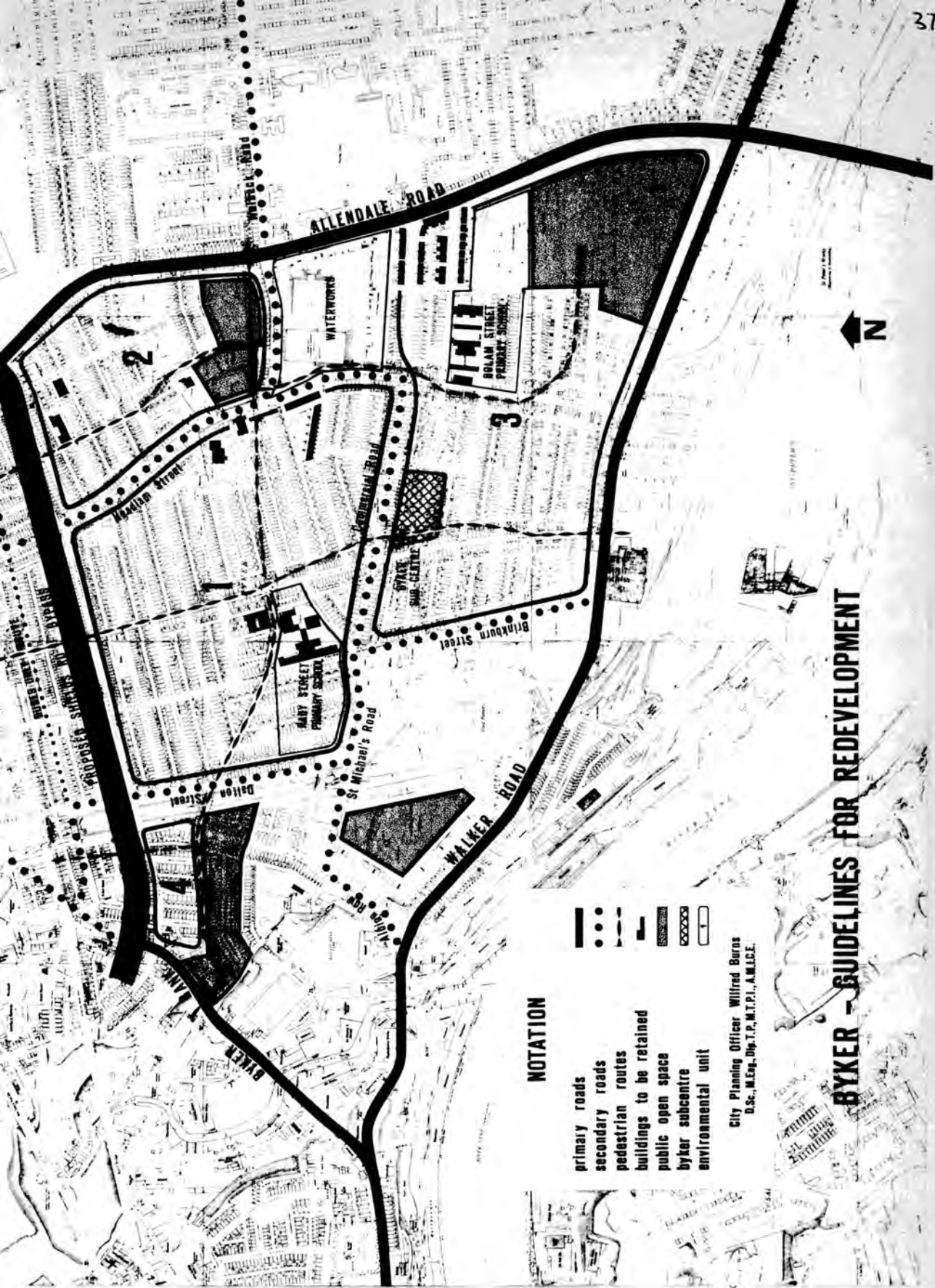
"We want to take you into our confidence right from the beginning. We want to hear your objections to the plans." He told one questioner: "We cannot give to you the responsibility for planning this city". (184)

The council's experience of 'participation' in Jesmond seems to have made both officials and councillors wary of the implications of the concept; together with this wariness, there was already a feeling that some areas and some projects were less suitable than Jesmond to the experiment.

The Plan for Byker - Published Information

A brief review of the official plan for Byker and of the main issues which emerged will provide a background to discussion of officials' attitudes to their own roles and objectives and to the place of the public in planning.

The first published information that the whole of Byker was scheduled for demolition came with the Development Plan Review (1963). This set out not only the streets which were to be demolished but also their expected clearance and redevelopment dates, though, as Table 4, page 54 of this thesis, shews, the dates were given in nothing like a precise form, e.g. 1962-1967 for the clearance of Burton Street. The number of houses which was expected to be demolished in Byker was given as a total of 6,290 (out of a city total of 24,600 for 1962-1981) which was broken down as follows:



NOTATION

- primary roads
- secondary roads
- - - pedestrian routes
- ▬ buildings to be retained
- public open space
- ⊗ byker subcentre
- ◻ environmental unit

City Planning Officer Wilfrid Burns
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BYKER - GUIDELINES FOR REDEVELOPMENT



1962-1967 --- 3,120

1968-1971 --- 2,060

1971-1976 --- 1,110

Other basic information given at this stage included population, density and the acreage which was to be allocated to residential use, primary schools and public space. Plans for these factors remained fairly constant in the ensuing years:

	1960	1981 (projected)
<u>Byker</u>		
Gross Residential Area	223 acres	195 acres
Net Residential Area - ex schools, public space etc.	137 acres	124 acres
Population	17,450	11,600
Av. Net Population Density - ppl per acre	127	93

There is no published evidence of change in, and development of, the plans until the appearance in November 1966 of a booklet intended for the public entitled 'Byker Neighbourhood Guidelines' and produced by the City Planning Officer. In thirteen pages it set out the clearance programme, the road and footpath network, the few buildings (churches and schools) which would be retained, and a rough estimate of the building programme. It modified the projected population to 10,280 people and the density to 100 per acre. The most significant change in the plans was, however, that while clearance dates remained the same the projected commencement of rebuilding was postponed. The Review Plan (see Table 4) had envisaged that the first building would occur in the same five year

period, 1962-1967, as the first clearance was achieved. Under the new plan, the first development was programmed for the five year period from 1966-1971, with the first dates given for any particular period being 1969-1971. Building in other words was not anticipated before the second phase of clearance (1968-1971) had begun and after half the streets of Byker had been destroyed. Assuming that the first completions under this plan could not be expected before 1970 or 1971, the only streets which would then remain standing in Byker according to the clearance programme would be Avondale Road and Solway Street. Even the Guidelines plan estimated that only 2,620 persons out of 10,280 would be accommodated in this first phase of building. Evidently it was expected at this stage that few if any Byker residents would be rehoused directly in Byker.

A determining feature of the Guidelines plan was the primary road network which surrounded the district. Two motorways were planned, one to the north of Byker dividing it from the Shields Road shopping centre which was to become a pedestrian precinct, and the other to the east running along the existing Allendale Road and over the River Tyne (see map). These motorways were 'determining' not only in the sense that they made for a very clear boundary definition of Byker, but primarily because their existence would require that specially sound-proofed buildings should border them. Given a reduced population density, the space they required would also contribute to the future reduction in population size.

No other information was published by the Planning Department before

February 1969 (after the researcher had departed). And, though published, the 1963 Development Plan Review and the 1966 Byker Neighbourhood Plan were scarcely easily available: they could be got on request from the Planning Department, and the Neighbourhood Plan was supposedly (but never when the researcher called) available at the local library. The local press did little to fill the gap by providing an account of the plans for Byker, though the Jesmond plan was covered at length throughout 1966. Indeed the only report on the plans for Byker in the two local newspapers (The Evening Chronicle and The Journal) between 1962 and July 1968 appeared on 10 March 1967: under the heading "Motorway Could Bring Deafness", it dealt with a report by the Housing Architect to the Housing Committee on the Shields Road Motorway noise problem. (185)

The only way in which the council did make a direct attempt to get information on its plans across to the public was by a series of public meetings held in September 1963 throughout the city to explain the proposals contained in the Development Plan. The public attendance at these meetings was small; one meeting was held for the three wards which converge on Byker but only 145 people attended.

It seems unlikely, then, that the published information reached many members of the public direct. Not only was little attempt made to publicise and distribute it, but also, as Chapter 13 shewed, few members of the public made any attempt to obtain it. Few respondents obtained their original information from council announcements or meetings* and

* See Table 66, page 254.

few (about 18%) turned to the council to seek more information. Residents relied primarily on the local network - personal contacts and visiting inspectors - and acquired in this way a widespread but basic level of information. This incomplete information was a source of local frustrations, some of which could have been alleviated by a general distribution of the "Guidelines" booklet. The timing of demolition and building, the general shape of the future Byker, the reason why building could not begin on the cleared northern part of Byker which was intended for the motorway - something of an answer could have been found to these questions in 'Guidelines'. The reasons for delay on clearance and, especially, building would not, however, have been found.

Two questions emerged as the main issues which concerned at least the more aware groups such as the church and community centre leaders:-

- (1) Why was building delayed?
- (2) Was it intended by the council that Byker people should remain living in Byker?

The second question which in effect depends on the first since clearance was continuing, was shown by the survey to be of central importance to most Byker residents, 67% of whom wished to live in the rebuilt Byker.

Departments and the Byker Plan

The need for a plan was not in dispute between departments, although there was some feeling in the Public Health Department that the whole programme of clearance and rebuilding would have been better conceived as a programme of revitalisation of at least some of the existing property.

There were, however, different views between departments on the state of the plans and the cause of any delay in their implementation. In public - for example in their 1968 talks to the Community Association - officials tended to blame the protracted process by which compulsory purchase orders were achieved and to shift the blame to delays in Whitehall. But this was an inadequate explanation when for a large part of the area CPO's had already been achieved and when demolition had left large open sites.

The Principal City Officer, who had overall responsibility for coordinating activities between departments, explained that the Byker clearance and rebuilding programme formed part of the City's programme and was therefore subject to a network of delays which were not directly to do with Byker: "Planning is a chancy business ... few plans ever come forward." The Chief Housing Officer said that he had pressed for the development of some of the available sites with multi-storey blocks on the lines which Councillor Peddie had proposed.* This proposal was adopted by the Housing Committee but, according to the City Planning Officer, then rejected under pressure from his department. The factors which seem then to have been taken into account by the Committee and which were fundamental to the posture of the Planning Department were first that no development should proceed until a coordinated plan for the whole of Byker was produced, and second that the building lots which were offered

* See pages 338 and 339.

must be of an adequate size to attract the large contractors.

The Chief Housing Officer felt that the planners would like to see the purity of their plans safeguarded by the entire demolition of Byker before rebuilding began. There seems, indeed, to have been a view that only in this way could Byker lose its old image and become an attractive place for outsiders to live in and for private developers - as the Conservatives proposed - to take a stake in. The Principal City Officer said that Byker would be "one big, green field" before redevelopment began. If this was to be so, then it was in flat contradiction to all the published information on the plans.

The Planners argued that they would happily see housing rise when the plans were ready but that these must not be prejudiced by premature development. The delay, they claimed, lay with the Housing Architect's Department which was faced with the problem of designing a wall of apartment buildings to insulate Byker from the noise of the motorways. Whether or not this could explain something like a three year delay, it was generally felt to be a major factor, though the Architect himself argued in 1968 that building could anyway not start since there were no available sites large enough. There is no final explanation of the postponement of the plans.

Delay made it less likely that Byker residents would be transferred direct to new housing in Byker - or, in planning terms, that they would be 'decanted'. Though all officials in the Planning and Housing Departments who were interviewed claimed a personal commitment to the

principle of decanting as a way of "keeping the community spirit", they also felt that there would be technical difficulties in the way of achieving it for any but the last few inhabitants of Byker. The main difficulty would be in operating a phased building programme which at each stage would correspond to the needs of those in process of evacuation, especially when building and clearance would normally proceed at different rates. But it is not easy to tell whether it was in fact ever the intention of officials that Byker residents should continue to live there. Certainly some would have to go since the population was to be cut and some private building (which most Byker residents could not afford) was to be incorporated in the scheme. Also the rents of the new council-owned buildings were likely to be higher than many existing residents could afford. Although rents are not directly related to building costs but to the rateable value of the property, new buildings earn higher rents than old due to their better amenity standards. Housing Department officials found that Byker residents were generally prepared to pay a rent of about £3 and felt that at this level most of them would go to old estates. Without any strong policy commitment to the rehousing of Byker people in the area, it seemed unlikely that the rent rebate scheme would be used to subsidise them, to do so when their amenity (if not social) needs could be satisfied in older, cheaper dwellings.

The positions which the departments adopted on the plan for Byker - the planners with their long-term commitment to an integrated plan for the area, the housing officials with their wish for an immediate start

to building - can be understood in terms of their view of their roles and in terms of the constraints by which they were surrounded. These will be considered next. But at this stage it is clear that the inclination of officials to engage in a policy of participation with the public must be considerably reduced by the fact that it was not obvious with whom they could participate. The interest of the present residents in Byker seemed likely to be shortlived if they were to leave the area.

Official Roles

Planners:- We have already described the development of more interventionist policies which came with the creation of the City Planning Department: the 'advance' from demolition for the achievement of minimum health standards to demolition for the provision of a better environment. We have seen also that Dr. Burns' objectives extended beyond the physical to the social: 'social stability and individual satisfaction'.

It was noticeable that the other officials of the Planning Department shared Dr. Burns' view. In interviews, they defined their objectives in terms of "extending human happiness" and helping people "to lead a fuller life". This was in sharp contrast to the mundane claim of a public health inspector:

We are conservative with a small 'c'. We have a piece-meal approach to clearance. Demolish unfit houses where they can't be improved economically.

But like the public health official, the planners defined their means in

physical terms - the improvement of the housing stock. They claimed "some idea which is not demonstrable about the amenities which are necessary to the full life" and also about proper levels of density of people per room and per acre. The official who was directly responsible for the demolition programme in Byker agreed that the official view of the 'necessary amenities' might not be the same as the view of the public. In such instances the planner with his superior technical knowledge, his awareness of long-term objectives and of the needs of the city as a whole would have to over-ride the opinions of the individual or the small community:

If Byker people are happy to continue living in their flats, it is difficult to say if it is they or we who are right ... But somebody has to make the decision that in the twentieth century they should have something better.... We have to be arrogant about this.

In the case of Byker, the survey shewed that there was, in fact, majority approval of the clearance plan and prevalent dissatisfaction at the physical attributes of local housing, but the council had no means (except impressionistic) of knowing this was so. It was indeed unnecessary to the planners in their own terms that they should know, for implicit in their position was the assumption that the assessment of housing quality was a matter for technical judgement which they were best equipped to make - the criteria for the judgement lying in the 1957 Housing Act and in the Parker-Morris standards* which Newcastle had accepted for its housing programme.

* See page 83.

On this basis, those factors in the assessment of an environment which relate to the subjective evaluation of the resident, in particular social factors and matters relating to physical convenience, seem bound to be overlooked by the planner or 'assumed' in terms of his own values. Dennis has accounted for this emphasis on physical amenities as the survival of the nineteenth century reformer's view of housing needs into a period when amenity factors are of relatively less importance:

But it is quite clear that the importance attributed by providers of mass housing to the amenities of the individual dwelling has tended to increase rather than diminish as compared with other housing values such as tenure, cost, the social character and behaviour of the neighbours and access to work, shops and relatives. (186)

These are all factors which we have seen from the survey were important to respondents' assessment of their housing satisfaction and choice of area to live in, and yet which the planners had no available techniques to assess against the wishes of the planned.

The Department's research officer was aware of the limitations of design and amenity in achieving the social objective of creating neighbourhoods. In a section, 'Sociological Aspects of Housing', of the report to the council, 'Housing: a Review of Current Problems and Policies', he argued that attempts to construct neighbourhood units by "the arrangement of dwellings" had not necessarily produced "a sense of belonging and attachment to community life". Indeed, he wrote, there was sociological evidence that residential areas were anyway becoming less cohesive on a family and neighbourhood basis. Nevertheless, he proposed, some attempt should be made to incorporate in new housing design, features which would

facilitate the development of neighbourliness. In addition, housing management should "eliminate as much self-sorting as possible between tenants by developing an interview technique" which would distinguish the 'respectable' (or 'reserved') from the 'ordinary' (or 'sociable') to make for compatibility between tenants. Although this steps beyond a focus on the amenity of individual dwellings to a concern with social attributes the assumption is still that techniques can be developed to achieve the desired end without reference to the preferences of residents.

Architects:- The Housing Architects Department works closely with the Planning Department "almost from the beginning" when the guidelines for a redevelopment area are produced. The City Architect is consulted on technical fundamentals like feasible densities, school sites and house-types. His later freedom of action is not only delimited by the plan which emerges and the given geographical/geological factors of the site, but also by the council's acceptance of modified Parker Morris amenity standards, by the range of housing types which the Ministry of Housing and Local Government is prepared to support with loans, and by the need "to be as economical as possible". Within these main constraints the City Architect felt that there was little scope for a flexible adaptation to the pattern of life of the tenants of a particular area. The demographic factors which influenced the distribution of dwelling types and sizes were not those of the redevelopment area but of the City since the building programme was designed to meet the City's needs. Even the incomes of prospective tenants were said to be scarcely influential since

rents were fixed by the rateable value of the property and not by the cost of building. The City Planning Officer described the Housing Architect as "a manipulator of yardsticks - he would agree with me if he were here".

Housing Officials:- The squaring of the individual needs of tenants with the available building stock falls to the Housing Management section of the Housing Department. Within the framework provided by the planners, it is not surprising that Housing Management officials see their role primarily in terms of the allocation of tenants on the basis of the level of amenity which they require and to which they are suited. The assessment of requirements and suitability is reduced as far as possible to a standard process which allows little scope for the expression of preference by the prospective tenant.

As Chapter 3 shewed the visit of the housing inspector is practically the last stage in the process which leads up to the allocation of new houses to slum clearance tenants. The inspector calls on each house in a compulsory purchase area and interviews the householder. He records on a card information which may be classified into three types:

- (1) A factual record of occupation, family size, housing history, number and types of rooms at present occupied, and whether a bath and an internal water supply are available.
- (2) The housing inspector's evaluation of the upkeep of the present house and furniture, of the rent capacity of the tenants, and his evaluation of the appearance and living standards of the tenants.
- (3) An expression of preference of area by the interviewee.

The two inspectors who dealt with Byker said that in addition to these

points they also often recorded the type of dwelling which the tenant preferred, though there was no space on the card for this. But it was apparent that the choices which the interviewee was able to make were not only limited but also heavily mediated by the opinions of the inspectors. The latter regarded it as part of their role to adjust the housing aspirations of slum clearance residents to what was in fact available at different rents. Inspectors would make it clear in asking for choice of area that to ask for certain estates would be "like asking for gold" and that it would be in the residents' interests to put forward a 'practical' choice. For the same reason, it would be out of the question for any resident to claim Byker as his choice since there had as yet been no building there, though temporary transfers from the clearance to the remaining heartland of Byker could sometimes be arranged. The effect of this mediation - which applied also to choice of dwelling type - was that the range of preferences which were passed back to the Housing Department presented a distorted picture of the real preferences of tenants, in particular giving an impression of a general readiness to leave Byker. But from the point of view of the Housing Department the mediation of the inspectors was functional in that it tended to produce a range of area-preferences which were capable of satisfaction.

The inspectors' visits oiled the machine. Their grading of the standard of tenants and the upkeep of their homes also sorted residents into categories which could be matched to the availability of new and old properties. The exercise of this judgement by the inspectors of course

ensured that there was no over-subscription for the one as against the other. Tenants were graded from A+ to D, those falling below B being counted as incapable of maintaining a new property.

This process for the rehousing of slum clearance residents oriented around the values of the inspectors and Housing Department, allowed little scope for the intervention of prospective tenants. Additionally, the means by which it was applied seemed further to reduce the possibility of coherent intervention by slum clearance residents. Inspectors would arrive for the interviews unannounced - "we just turn up" - although their visits would come to be expected as they worked up a street. Since they interviewed only during the day-time, they would also almost only see women householders who therefore had to make their original choice of area or modify their choice without the help of their husbands. Repeat visits were possible but rare. If, after the visit, householders wanted to make contact with the Housing Department about the visit or the choice of area, they would not be seen by the same inspector but by an office-based interviewer at the Town Hall. Although the inspectors seemed sympathetic to the feelings of slum clearance residents, the interviews were short - between ten and thirty minutes - and the inspector often went no further than the first room that they saw. The inspectors seemed to take pride in the speed with which they could make their assessment: "its amazing how fast an experienced interviewer can get down a street".

The housing inspectors are responsible to the Lettings Officer who

himself has the responsibility of allocating living-space to three groups of prospective tenants: those from slum clearance areas, those wanting transfers and those on the waiting list (in that order of priority).

The pressure on the inspectors to mediate the aspirations of tenants comes from the requirement on the Lettings Officer to allocate the existing stock which necessarily corresponds not so much to present demand as to the council's past estimates of future demand.

Although the Lettings Officer and his inspectors are, of all officials, those most closely in touch with the public's expressed wishes in housing, they regarded their influence on the building programme as limited. The Housing Architect's Department would occasionally ask for their assessment of housing requirements "but the planners and architects have their own ideas and they are responsible for what goes up". Nevertheless, the Lettings Officer (and the Housing Department in general) had strong views on the building programme - "we consider they are overloading us with five people houses when the demand of 70% of the people is for one or two bed-room houses". However suitable the programme to the long term interests of the city as a whole, the Housing Department had to cope with present, specific demands. For this reason, there was a general opinion in the Department in favour of multi-storey building in Byker (as proposed by Councillor Peddie) to meet the local wish to continue to live there. "It is no good forcing people to go to another area" since this would be only to create future pressure for transfers back to the rebuilt Byker. The officials of the Housing Department occupied a role

between the planners and the public which required that they both recognise public demands and also mould them to the planners' long-term objectives.

Principal City Officer:- Of all officials involved in slum clearance projects, the most insulated from the direct expression of public wishes and the most purely associated with the long term requirements of the city as a whole was Mr. Frank Harris, the Principal City Officer and Town Clerk. Appointed in 1965 from the Ford Motor Company, he described his role to the council as follows:

It is up to me now to provide the vigorous leadership under which your Council officials, your senior Council officials, can so organise and develop the train of their business here in the Town Hall, that in Newcastle upon Tyne we forge ahead faster than people can elsewhere.... It is my place so to coordinate the activities in which we are all now engaged together, that we act as a unified body of people, not a whole succession of individual committees or officers, but that our policies are coordinated and directed towards a single purpose, and that as I conceive it, is the welfare of the citizens of this City.(187)

In interview Mr. Harris reaffirmed his coordinating role and claimed that it applied to "policy-level" decisions. He brought department chiefs together to identify problems and discuss alternative solutions until "there is always a clear solution standing out". The solutions which emerged from this process would eventually be thrown up through political channels but Mr. Harris stated strongly that "they [councillors] have no influence at all".

The Principal City Officer seems to have had final responsibility for the more important decisions relating to the timing of demolition and rehousing in slum clearance areas. Even the Chief Housing Officer had

to refer the writer to Mr. Harris for the revised programme for the demolition of Byker. Mr. Harris saw his role in terms of his city-wide responsibilities: the timing for clearance in one area must conform to the city programme. The needs of the residents of one area could not be considered in isolation: "we are planning housing for the city and for the future". The tendency of this argument was to eliminate the need to consider local and present aspirations, and Mr. Harris appeared privately to subscribe to this view. He argued that there was no reason why Byker residents should have any special claim to be rehoused in Byker: "why the hell should they be able to choose to continue living there rather than anybody else?" For Mr. Harris, the city appeared to take on an existence irrespective of its inhabitants; the building programme and the anticipated living standards for which it was intended to provide must be pursued whatever their relation to the values of the public. The people, he argued, would have to adopt a more middle-class pattern of life:

They will have to give up some beer and 'baccy and spend more on their new standards.... What else is possible? We're trying to change the North.

Any adaptation of objectives, Mr. Harris argued, would have to come from the residents of Byker rather than from the planners who were oriented to the planning needs of the city as a whole: the satisfaction of these needs would be distorted by any attempt to adjust the building programme to meet the needs of a particular area.

Officials' Attitudes to Public Participation

In view of the authority's declared commitment to the close involvement of the public in planning decisions, there was surprisingly little contact between officials and the Byker public. The only traceable public information meetings were the city-wide series held in 1963 to launch the Development Plan Review, and the meetings held by the Community Centre in the summer of 1968. For most people, their only contact with the council was through the visit of the public health inspector prior to the declaration of the compulsory purchase order, and the visit of the housing inspector just before rehousing. Both sets of inspectors claimed that, during their visits, they gave what information they could on the timing of the demolition programme. But in both cases they were concerned that the tentative information which they gave was not only less than the public wanted but was also likely to be attributed undue weight: "People in Byker do tend to take any information which they get from an official as authoritative." The other side of this was the frustration felt by many survey respondents when the information they had gleaned from the public health inspectors (the most common source of information) was found to be inaccurate.*

There was, indeed, a widespread feeling among officials that rather than give provisional information it was better to give none. Even the

* See pages 255-56.

terms in which the policy commitment to 'public participation' was made seemed to assume that plans would be well advanced before they were exposed to public comment. From the start, as we have seen, there were seeds of doubt about the policy - How deeply should the public be allowed to involve themselves? Was it as feasible to inform and consult in some areas and projects as it was in others?

At the time that the interviews were carried out (1967/1968), the planners were the only group of officials who remained attached to the concept of public participation in planning. Even among them, it seemed to depend largely on the tradition which Dr. Burns had established. The City Planning Officer who succeeded Burns in early 1968 said of Burns' proposal for public involvement at the design stage: "I would like to try this ... we worked together ... I subscribe to Dr. Burns' views". The Planning Department was still regarded by other departments as the protagonist of public participation. It was the planners who persuaded the council to experiment with the Planning Advisory Group's 1965 proposals,* and it was the planners under Dr. Burns who urged the Planning Committee in 1966 to call a public meeting to explain the proposals contained in Byker Neighbourhood Guidelines - a suggestion which the Chief Housing Officer and City Housing Architect successfully resisted.

Almost certainly they had less to fear from the new City Planning Officer, Mr. Galley. He was sympathetic to their reluctance to attend

* See pages 44-47.

public meetings mainly on the grounds that they were still not prepared to answer the sort of detailed questions on timing and rehousing which were likely to emerge from such meetings in Byker. Housing officials seemed to fear them as occasions on which they would be expected to fulfil their day to day role of "squaring individual needs to the available building stock", a function which could not be carried out until the plans were finalised and the time had arrived for rehousing:

You can do more harm than good by calling public meetings before you can really inform people ... it is dangerous to make promises you can't stick to.

Paradoxically, the exposure to public demand which made the housing officials aware of the need to provide housing of the type and in the place required by the public also made them reluctant to allow the stimulation of new and perhaps collective demands which might upset the balance between supply and demand which they saw it as their role to maintain.

The Housing Architect's emphasis on the technical, 'objective' nature of his work was also reflected in his attitude to popular involvement in planning and house design. The public would not be technically competent to estimate design options - "it takes a long time to train an architect you know". Whereas the reluctance of the Housing Officer sprung from his department's exposure to public demand, that of the Architect seemed to spring from the distance from the public which he felt his department's technical specialism must imply.

The Chief Housing Officer argued that it was because planners were

not exposed to direct, simple demands from householders that they could adopt an easy posture in favour of encounters with the public: "Planners think it possible to let people know everything and to allow them to help replan. They have a bee in their bonnets about this..." Certainly, any commitment to the principle which the planners may have retained was more in keeping with their emphasis on social objectives than with the architects' and housing officials' emphasis on meeting the physical requirements of housing standards and house allocation. To some extent it followed logically from the advance by the planners into new, more 'interventionist' areas of planning. A 'revitalisation' programme requires the support of the public involved, because it is partially voluntary and primarily intended to improve the 'morale' of areas. It was no accident that the policy of participation was first applied to the Jesmond revitalisation area.

On the other hand, slum clearance requires no active cooperation from residents, especially if they are tenants, and have no property rights which might obstruct the programme. Perhaps for this reason and also because officials had found their first attempt to consult with local people in Jesmond "a terrifying experience", even the planners felt that Byker was unsuitable to the experiment. They ascribed this judgement partly to the nature of clearance projects and partly to the characteristics of Byker people.

It was felt that the changes envisaged for Byker were at once too complex to allow a useful contribution from the layman, and at the same

time so fundamental from the point of view of the individual resident that his intervention was likely to be merely on 'selfish' grounds: "They would ask questions which it would be impossible to answer until much later - to do with rehousing, rents and which estates they preferred." The immediacy of the problems of demolition and rehousing did indeed make it unlikely that debate would centre round the future physical structure and layout of Byker which were broadly the planning topics which the participatory machinery set up for Jesmond was equipped to deal with. The immediate problems which were thought likely to arise were matters for the housing officials and architects, and they were unwilling to subject themselves to collective pressures. The discussion of topics which concerned the Planning Department became even less likely, and in their view fruitless, when it was considered that few of the present residents of Byker were likely to live there after its redevelopment. This, as we have seen, followed from the phasing of the demolition/building programme, and seemed to be assumed by officials.

Not only was it felt that the problems and future of Jesmond were more suited to discussion by its residents, but also that the residents themselves were better equipped to take part in the debate than was the population of Byker. They were members of a "higher socio-economic" group and had the "habit of constructive thinking". It was indeed true that with private architects and university town planning lecturers among them, Jesmond residents' groups were able to present well argued alternatives to the council's plan. The City Planning Officer said that "the dialogue in

Jesmond was between public planners and private planners." Nevertheless, even in Jesmond, officials and councillors had come up against the difficulty of discussing complex alternatives with small groups, and were certainly no longer convinced that consultation was a means of "carrying the public along with you." This contributed to the retreat from the commitment to public participation:

They don't know the alternatives and can't take the needs of the City and the future into account. (Chief Housing Officer)

The public can never be made to understand the ramifications of options. Its enough to have to understand them oneself and to get other officials and councillors to understand them. (Principal City Officer)

The general lack of understanding, the Principal City Officer felt, would result in the interests of the "inarticulate majority" being outweighed by those of the "articulate minority", the "biased sample" who attended public meetings. A similar fear was concisely expressed by the Comptroller and City Solicitor to the Corporation of London in his speech to the London Conference of the Town Planning Institute in May 1969:

Citizen participation can lead easily enough to the intervention of nothing more than prejudicial pressure groups and cranky conservationists who fail to look at planning problems in the round....

This argument amounts in effect to a refutation of the value of public consultation on planning decisions: consultations would be fruitless since the majority were uninformed and the minority were biased. It was reminiscent of the situation the writer found in research on educational policy formulation in the County Borough of Gateshead where the

promised consultation of parents never materialised:

On the one hand, they were regarded as not sufficiently informed to be consulted, and lack of public response was taken to imply indifference or tacit approval; on the other, it was felt that no information could be supplied until the plan was approved, which effectively excluded the possibility of consultation. (188)

These views represent a retreat from the principle of participation as Dr. Burns had conceived it, with his emphasis on the importance of reducing the impersonality of the council. In interview, the Chief Housing Officer and Housing Architect argued instead in favour of the preservation of their impersonality or detachment:- if information were to be passed on, it should be via public notices; if public wishes were to be assessed, it should be by sample survey. But the participation programme had anyway not been conceived for Byker. The system of public meetings to disseminate information and panel hearings for public representations depended, in the view of officials, on the existence of a widespread public interest and of local groups which could transform the public response into coherent and responsible comment. These conditions seemed to officials to be absent in Byker and therefore to make consultation impossible: the possibility of adapting the procedure did not seem to strike them.

In danger of being left stranded by this retreat was the Conservation Officer whose role depended on the close contact with the public which Dr. Burns had foreseen. His role as mediator between the planners and the planned assumed that both would be prepared to act through him. It seems, however, that in Jesmond the public were loathe to accept such

arms-length contact, and, in Byker, not only was it not policy that participation should be encouraged but also it was difficult for the officer to see for whom he could mediate: there were no local residents' associations with which he could make contact. The emergence of the luncheon club of social workers, clergy and teachers at the Community Centre seemed to provide an easy way out: the Conservation Officer made contact with it, and planning officials talked about the need for outsiders to take on the representation of local interests in areas like Byker where people were 'inarticulate'. It seemed more likely to the researcher that in their contact with the luncheon club the Conservation Officer and planners found a desirable combination of the semblance of participation with detachment from the hard questioning of local people. The club consisted of representatives of the same world as themselves, the "middle class world" of "doctors, matrons, magistrates, council officials"⁽¹⁸⁹⁾ with which they could easily communicate. We have already alluded to the other side of this barrier, as it is experienced by Byker residents.*

The later emergence of the Community Centre Study Group and its representation to the council threatened a situation in which the Conservation Officer would be by-passed as he had been in Jesmond. In a talk to the Group, he was therefore at pains to establish his value as mediator and to institutionalise contact with the Group: "I have got

* Pages 189 and 286.

the ear of every chief officer in the civic centre ... you are now an officially recognised group...", and even to claim that he had been instrumental in the formation of the Group. In fact the Conservation Officer's involvement in developments in Byker was peripheral. Added to the difficulty of persuading the planners and the planned to communicate through him was the reluctance of the council to stimulate public comment in Byker.¹

If officials were unwilling to submit themselves to ill-informed comment and were suspicious of the pressures of the 'biased minority', it might be thought that they would favour the mediation of public demands by councillors. There was, however, a unanimous resentment of 'special pleading' by councillors which, especially by housing officials, was felt to upset the fair treatment of all. Some councillors, like Mr. Peddie, were respected for their local knowledge, but the intervention of councillors was for the most part felt to be disruptive and electorally motivated. Several officials commented on the eagerness of councillors to take up cases and to sign official replies around election-time. Officials seemed to feel impelled by their professional ethic to ignore the representations of councillors:

I have never let a councillor influence any decision in my 40 years here. Why should people who lick the councillors' boots get preference?

This seemed to confirm the councillors' impressions of official attitudes towards them.

Conclusion

From the point of view of officials, it can be seen that in most instances the involvement of the public in planning decisions could only hinder the proper execution of their roles as they saw them - the planner with his commitment to the achievement of social objectives by physical means; the housing official balancing limited housing resources against widely different demands; the architect manipulating inflexible yardsticks; and the Principal City Officer attempting to coordinate city-wide programmes. The planners' fragile commitment to public participation appeared to owe something to their utopianism but perhaps more to their need of public cooperation in projects, like revitalisation schemes, where success depended on public goodwill. Except in Dr. Burns' writing, there seemed to be absent a commitment to close contact with public demand as something which was necessary to the planners themselves. Dennis has described the need for this contact:

Without his own inbuilt sense of cultural priorities, without automatic feedback from a sensitive clientele possessing the skill and the self-confidence to initiate communication, advice and complaint, and without any apparatus for checking consumer response, the planner may remain in ignorance indefinitely about the actual effects of his design. (190)

The objective of public consultation, as most officials seemed to understand it, was "to tell the people what you are going to do" ... "so as to carry them along with you". We saw earlier that it was in these terms that the Chairman of the Planning Committee introduced the new policy of public consultation to the council in 1966: "... we should educate

people to understand what we are after..." Verba has described "participatory democratic leadership" used in this sense as referring "not to a technique of decision but to a technique of persuasion."⁽¹⁹¹⁾ If the policy of public participation was indeed designed to win the cooperation of the public rather than to learn from them, contact would ideally only take place after the plans had been finalised. In the case of a slum clearance project, it need, in these terms, never take place at all, since the goal is achievable under the statutory powers of the Housing and Planning Acts. Indeed, from the point of view of officials, even an information programme carried the danger that it might spur open hostility to a clearance project by making people aware of its effects and bringing them together. As the Principal City Officer explained, a slum clearance and redevelopment project forms part of a city-scale programme; difficulties in one area could cause repercussions on the demolition and building programmes throughout the City.

If this analysis is correct, officials had much to lose, in their view, by a participation programme in Byker. This contributes to an understanding of the hostile reaction to the intervention of the Study Group in an otherwise quiescent situation which would have allowed the development of plans and the process of rehousing to be conducted unimpeded by the complicating factor of public demand. It threatened to upset the fulfillment of their roles as they saw them and to force a premature exposure of their plans to a Byker public which they felt was ill-equipped to deal with them. The threat to councillors' role

expectations was even more direct: the Study Group seemed to challenge their representative role, and the challenge was the worse for appearing to be led by the Community Centre warden, a council employee. For this reason perhaps it was the elected representatives who reacted most vigorously to the intervention. As the Conservation Officer said: "The planners are much more with Vlaeminke [the warden] than the parties are".

The special factor which made Byker less open to the experiment than Jesmond was that consultation in a slum clearance project was not necessary to its implementation. Kaplan comes to the same conclusion in his study of Newark:

The active support of persons affected by renewal may be vital in the rehabilitation phases of the program, but nothing more than the acquiescence of those affected is necessary to clearance. This may be one reason the citizen participation requirement [of the federal government] ... has been more honoured in the breach. (192)

The principle was certainly honoured in the breach in Newcastle. In spite of their scepticism about the feasibility of participation in Byker, both the Principal City Officer and the City Planning Officer reiterated their commitment to the principle in their respective talks to the Study Group in summer 1968:

"I have no doubt that groups of you will be having meetings with members of the Planning Committee and officers."

"We will come to you with ideas that are not crystallised. You can knock them on the head and throw them out of the window. My job will be to present you with the range of choices."

At the same meeting, the Planning Officer also committed himself to a policy of phased demolition and rebuilding to allow 'decanting' of residents within Byker:

Its no good my coming to talk to you about participation if there is going to be no-one living here when we rebuild. That is not our intention.... One thing you have got over to the Civic Centre is that you are a community and want to be a community and, by God, you will be a community."

However, the hostility towards its intervention effectively extinguished the Study Group's activities. In the series of meetings held at the Community Centre during the summer and autumn of 1968, officials did describe the broad nature of the plans as set out in this chapter. But they viewed public consultation as something which could happen only after detailed plans had been prepared, and this they promised for later in the year. Meanwhile the rehousing of Byker residents continued. By the time that the consultant architects were appointed in spring 1969 to develop the broad aims and targets of the City Planning Officer and the Housing Architect " to the stage of implementation", no further public meetings had taken place and no detailed plans had been published. The team of architects came with a very strong commitment to the value of public involvement in each stage of the development and to allowing residents to remain within the Byker area. Whether these objectives were achieved goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

CHAPTER 18

CONCLUSION

After 17 chapters, there is a case for gathering together the objectives and the main findings of the study, and for relating the findings to each other in a broader context than has so far been done.

The thesis set out to examine the significance of the local community for the political involvement of its residents. It attempted to assess the impact of the community on the political attitudes of residents and on the organisational framework which is available to them for political communication. The concept 'community' was here used in a structural sense; the study therefore steps further back than most political cultural analysis (including Almond and Verba's) to explore the supposition that structural factors underlie attitudinal differences. It also steps further forward by proceeding to examine the relation between these structural and attitudinal factors on the one hand and actual performance on the other. As Almond and Verba write: "The test of this theory is in its usefulness in explaining the properties and performance of different kinds of political system". (193)

The approach which we have adopted for this study was based on an attempt to understand the experience of all the principal actors in a

social situation. Thus, the case study of the involvement of the public in the formative stages of planning examined not only the public's action frame of reference - its motivations, goals and interpretations - but also that officials, councillors and local organisation leaders. It was felt to be inadequate to study the public's readiness and willingness to involve itself in political decision-making without also examining the constraints on its ability to do so which may be imposed by the perception of other actors. This subjective approach to the analysis of a social situation follows from Weber's description of social action as "such action as, according to its subjective meaning to the actor or actors, involves the attitudes and actions of others and is oriented to them in its course". (194)

It is within this framework that we have explored, for each set of actors, their role expectations (of themselves and of others), aspirations and understanding of the situation, both in the general political context and in the context of the particular situation of the demolition of Byker. This subjective approach has a bearing for the study of the community. Given that we were interested in the influence of the community on the individual's attitudes to, and scope for, political action, it follows that we must examine community in terms of the degree to which it is experienced. The method which we adopted was therefore to examine both the degree of exclusiveness with which residents performed certain roles within rather than outside the locality, and their awareness of the locality as a distinctive area.

We found in Byker an intense web of social contacts founded, we posited, on a history of shared experience of common class, housing tenure and work situation. In residents' day to day lives in the spheres which we studied (the roles of family-member, resident, neighbour, friend, worker and shopper) there was an extraordinarily high degree of dependence on Byker as "a field for social action".⁽¹⁹⁵⁾ Byker people not only seemed to perform these roles as if the boundaries of the locality were significant but also to be aware of Byker's distinctiveness, even to the extent that the majority believed that their association with the area affected outsiders' expectations of them. The first indication was, then, that living in Byker seemed to have significance for local residents' behaviour, and this seemed to be supported by indications that the area enjoyed a low level of 'social malaise' (or social-psychological disorder). The web of contacts was not restricted to what was termed 'passive community attachment' (the performance of involuntary roles) but was intensified by a high level of membership of local organisations, a feature which we would normally expect to be associated (after Kornhauser as well as Almond and Verba) with a readiness among members to involve themselves in political decision-making.

Nevertheless, Byker emerged from the analysis as an area in which participatory political attitudes were distinctly absent. There was extremely low political knowledge, little confidence in the local government administration and elected representatives, and an unwillingness for the individual to see himself as an effective political actor. In

this sense we can say that the community supported a distinctive set of political attitudes.

The patterns which this analysis indicated were to a great extent borne out in practice. Certainly any expectation that there would be demands for information and attempts to organise the expression of local views had to be modified by the finding that there was already widespread information on the demolition plans and general approval of the clearance of the area. But the information was only of the most general nature and the approval was for one element only of the plans - the demolition of existing housing. It is perhaps surprising that residents' suspicion of the validity of their information, their uncertainty on the time and place of rehousing, and their majority wish to continue living in Byker did not lead them to make organised demands on the council. The cultural analysis offered one explanation. The largely passive response to demolition in Byker corresponded to the finding that the Byker population was very much less politically aware and less attached to the institutions and processes of local government than were national samples. More specifically the analysis seemed to be validated by the finding that there was a relation between attitudinal categories and actual performance. Thus, the group which was identified as theoretically the most competent, or confident of the effectiveness of their political action, was actually significantly more likely than others to have made more effort to acquire information on the council's demolition plans, to have sought this information from more authoritative sources and to have

discussed the problem with their fellow residents. Similarly, the group which was found to be more positively cognitively oriented to local government in a general sense, was also more knowledgeable specifically on the demolition issue.

Community attachment was found to be only marginally associated with greater political knowledge and with a sense of personal competence. In the practical situation, too, the community attached group were demonstrated to be no more politically effective than other groups in terms of their knowledge of the demolition plans and their readiness to act. And yet involvement in the community did seem to be significant in other ways: quite naturally it increased the likelihood that a resident would be in contact with fellow residents and other internal sources of information on the demolition issue. We suggested in Chapter 13 that the local network of contacts had in this way had the effect of aiding the fast dissemination of the basic information which was available within the locality. Concomitantly, it perhaps had the effect of reducing the need to turn outwards to the council for more information. Much depends in this case on the input of information into the local network by external agencies or leaders of local organisations. Community is here important for political behaviour not so much in terms of the attitudes which it supports as in terms of the information channels which its structure provides.

Those American studies with which we have made comparisons throughout the thesis have examined the propensity of a locality to respond to

urban renewal in terms largely of the "stakes" which residents have invested in the survival of the community. For the most part, they have not been concerned with residents' attitudinal propensities nor with the scope which the community provides for local interaction. The factors which they have pointed to as influential are : economic stakes in business and home ownership, affective stakes in tenancy, social stakes in the community, and the institutional stakes of churches and clubs etc. (Clarence-Davies III); home-ownership, population stability and cohesiveness, and status preservation (Kaplan); community consciousness (Rossi and Dentler). Pinco, who worked with Rossi and Dentler in Chicago, has emerged from research in Hamilton, Ontario, (196) with a similar range of factors which again concern the residents' investment in the area: length of residence and number of friends in the locality, home-ownership, expectation of relocation, house satisfaction and car ownership. In this sense, Byker had little to lose and little to fight for. Some of the stakes were absent: economic interests and status preservation; others were rare and dispersed: home ownership; others were already satisfied: local institutions like churches and clubs had been guaranteed survival or replacement; even those who were most satisfied with their homes and the area agreed preponderately that demolition was necessary; and community attachment, we posited, was not the self-conscious value in Byker that Rossi and Dentler discovered in their middle class suburbs of Chicago. What is more, Byker residents did not have sufficient information to know that their attachment to the

area and the community was threatened by their likely removal. Any objection or request for information which they may have raised on this score was pre-empted by their assumption that they were to remain in the area.

In this situation we might have expected local organisations to play an important mediating and representative role, as Kornhauser, Almond and Verba, and Scott Greer (among others) suggest.* But local organisations have local people as members and (for the most part) leaders, so that it is not surprising that their attitudes and action were similar to those of the community at large. It was suggested that membership of local organisations constituted, in effect, an intensification of involvement in the community. On this analysis, it was the increased interaction with other residents, rather than their involvement in a mediatory organisation, which caused members to be better informed about the demolition plans. This conclusion was reaffirmed when the organisations were themselves studied. The public did not expect local organisations to act as mediators with the local authority on the demolition issue, and in most cases the views of organisation leaders were in conformity with this attitude. Organisations with a local leadership which might have acted as mediators were found not to be issue-oriented and the function of their leadership was not instrumental. Only certain churches and the Community Centre had a leadership which was both

* See pages 21-22.

'constitutionally' able to take on a guiding rather than reactive role and which itself expected to do so. As outsiders, clergymen and the Centre's warden were free of the constraint of local attitudes, though ultimately they were dependent on local people for support.

Clearly, we cannot understand the failure of communication between the public and the local authority merely in terms of the attitudinal and organisational framework of the community and the stakes which members have in its survival. The authority was, after all, in principle committed to the informing and consultation of the public. Councillors are usually thought of as the proper channel of communication, and indeed we found that Byker people seemed to expect them to fulfil this role. To some extent the public's own suspicion of councillors made it difficult for them to do so, but it seemed also to be true that councillors did not see themselves in the main as representatives of the local community's interests. Their campaigning on local issues was almost wholly reserved to discreet attempts to influence party policy. They saw their public role primarily in terms of responsibility for the city as a whole and in terms of their special responsibilities as committee members. At the same time they were conscious enough of their nominally representative status to be suspicious of attempts by local organisations to take a stance on this local issue.

If the public are neither involved in politics nor "influential so as to enforce responsive behaviour by the élites"⁽¹⁹⁷⁾, and if they have no evidence that their interests are being represented, then they

can only rely on the inherent sympathy and efficiency of officials.

To some extent, they were prepared to do this. They turned more often to council officials than to any other body for information on the plans, and they displayed very general confidence in the fairness of the administration. However, there was little confidence that officials were responsive to local interests. These attitudes were compatible with those of officials. In spite of the commitment of the council to public participation, officials in effect argued that it was impossible to be responsive to the 'special pleading' of residents and councillors if they were also to be fair and efficient. The theory of bureaucracy throws some light on this position. Weber's definition of bureaucracy⁽¹⁹⁸⁾ requires that there should be sufficient autonomy for the organisation to pursue its goals, that decisions should be made by those who are technically qualified to make them, and that officials should be bound by standard rules of procedure to ensure standard treatment to clients. The commitment to public participation was thus perceived by officials as standing in direct contrast to their own conception of their role as professionally objective and detached from outside pressures. Eisenstadt has observed that a bureaucratic organisation of technical experts will for these reasons be highly resistant to the supervision by their clients which full participation in decision-making would imply:

Any such direct supervision by the clients which goes beyond some minimal, well-defined measure is very often seen as a very serious infringement on the autonomy of the bureaucratic organisation. (199)

The bureaucratic model is an ideal type which cannot be applied rigidly

to the attitudes and actions of officials. But it points out the consistency in officials' attitude to aspects of public participation: their reluctance to pass on information before the plans were settled; their tendency to routinise contacts with the public via the Conservation Officer; and their tendency to interpret public participation as a means to persuade the public of the validity of their own plans.

Almond and Verba argue that the democratic civic culture is a myth which can only be effective in maintaining the balance between governmental power and governmental responsiveness as long as both sides (citizens and government) believe in it. Thus,

the very fact that citizens hold to this myth - that they see themselves as influential and as obligated to take an active role - creates a potentiality of citizen influence and actuality. (200)

This potentiality which could cause "governmental ineffectiveness and instability"⁽²⁰¹⁾ is itself constrained, first by the citizens' own lethargy and second by the fact that the decision-maker, sharing this myth, moderates the exercise of his own power to avoid the pounding on his door. In Byker we found a situation which looks very much like the mirror image of this. On the one hand, citizens both attitudinally and actually rejected an active role, assuming that their action would be ineffective and that public policies were beyond influence. On the other hand, decision-makers were at least sceptical that the democratic myth - "that ordinary citizens ought to participate in politics and that they are in fact influential"⁽²⁰²⁾ - was applicable in this case.

SOME PROPOSALS

The ensuing stands outside the thesis but follows from it. The research has indicated several ways in which communication between the public and local authority on planning matters could be improved. These are presented here without extensive argument which for the most part lies in the text of the thesis.

Official Attitudes to Participation

Newcastle City Council voluntarily committed itself to a policy of public participation but decided that this was not fully applicable in Byker. The law, in the shape of the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act, now makes it a legal requirement that in some way the public should be informed and consulted. It leaves the evolution of the means to the local council, although the Skeffington Committee has since made some suggestions. It also puts more power into the hands of councils by making them the final arbiter of local 'action area' plans except in very exceptional circumstances when the Minister may call one in. This places a heavy responsibility on the council especially when it is dealing with areas, like Byker, where the public are not normally inclined to intervene and where channels of communication are not well established.

Public participation cannot be sustained if it is regarded merely as a "technique for persuasion". This would assume that planners have taken into account all the factors that matter and have arrived at the right decision which others will accept if it is explained to them. As the planners found in Jesmond, there is always room for disagreement about relevant factors and right decisions. On the assumption that the purpose of planning is to provide an environment which is acceptable not just in the sense that it meets certain technical standards but also that it meets the requirements of the people, there must be a point at which there is an input from the public. Rossi and Dentler have argued in these terms for some level of citizen participation:

In their direct form, the basic reasons are that without participation the public interest cannot be defined and planning efforts must fumble about to work out an acceptable proposal... (203)

And Dennis has pointed out that in decisions which affect their homes and neighbourhoods it is the public "who are knowledgeable about their own housing and local conditions in a way and to an extent which cannot be matched by the outside decision-maker":

At its most indispensable, most simple and least controversial, 'popular participation' means, then public contributions to a particular fund of knowledge. (204)

Similarly Gans has called on planners to begin at the beginning and "...ask how people live, what they want and what problems they have that need to be solved". (205) Officials are only likely to see popular participation in this way as a "technique for decision" essential to the effective performance of their own task, if they can be persuaded to see their goals

in terms of the satisfaction of the felt needs of their 'clients' as well as of their own professional standards. If this could be achieved, the intervention of the public could be seen by officials as potentially functional rather than as damaging to the interests of all concerned.

Popular participation is not a thing that can be defined in absolute terms. The "act of sharing in the formulation of policies and proposals", as Skeffington defines it,⁽²⁰⁶⁾ is something that there can be more or less of. Among planners, there seems often to be a fear that there will be more rather than less, a fear of the usurpation of their role by "the idea of the citizen getting completely and personally into the picture himself",⁽²⁰⁷⁾ and a consequent belief, as Rossi and Dentler say, that "At some point a line must be drawn, beyond which the authority of technicians must prevail."⁽²⁰⁸⁾ It is impossible to define such a point, but there seems little reason for local authorities to fear that it will be approached as long as the legal authority, the technical expertise and the direct access to information lie with the council. This power is increased by the new stage by stage process of decision making which the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act enshrines: objections at the local plan level can only be within the context of the broad principles already approved at the structure plan level. And, ultimately, after the discussion on a local plan, the authority is judge of its own cause. The danger is rather that areas like Byker from which public demands do not emerge will be overlooked in favour of middle class areas like Jesmond where, whatever the opportunity given for

participation, local interests are likely to be strongly asserted.

Supply of Information

The first requirement in either sort of area is that the information must be supplied on which a constructive response can be based. Without information, intervention by the public can only be critical. The public must know as much as possible about the council's plans at each stage of planning if they are to intervene before the council makes a commitment to any particular set of proposals and is forced to react defensively. A report prepared by the Department of Civic Design at the University of Liverpool has argued that:

If [the public] do not respond to plans which have already been prepared, one can see how difficult it would be to obtain a response to a plan which has not yet been formulated. (210)

But in Byker we found that it was precisely the feeling that the plans were beyond influence that led many people to consider that there was no point in intervening.

A danger which officials often indicated was that they might be bound to information given at an early stage which could only be tentative since the local plan depended on external factors which were not easily forecasted - e.g. progress on the city-wide programme, and ministerial decisions on compulsory purchase orders. Bull, in his study of Manchester slum clearance areas, has commented that "the reputation of any local government department is always at the mercy of people who misconstrue what officials tell them and then complain at being misled

with false promises."⁽²¹¹⁾ It seems as arguable that the absence of information may cause as much complaint and that, at least from the point of view of the public, delays and inconveniences can be more easily borne if they are explained and if proposals are carefully presented as possibilities. This problem may be alleviated to some extent by the fact that, under the 1968 Act, greater authority in the detail of planning is passed to local authorities. Their ability to plan the timing of demolition and rehousing further ahead might be further strengthened if local authorities were able to use the comprehensive development area procedure for designating slum clearance areas instead of proceeding by piecemeal compulsory purchase orders, or if authorities were freer to use the more sweeping Planning Act for the achievement of CPO's.*

Communicating Information

The problem then becomes one of communicating the information to and gathering it from the public, assuming on the part of officials and councillors a readiness to inform and a willingness to learn. This, in the case of Byker, is the problem of breaking into the efficient, internal network of communications: Jackson has described "the way information has to be filtered through unobtrusive leaders if it is to get inside primary groups within the working class."⁽²¹²⁾

One Way Channels Downwards:- Channels of communication are not neatly

* See pages 38 and 55.

separable into channels downwards and channels upwards, and indeed the most effective are likely to be those which encourage a two way exchange. There are, however, some channels which are only operable one way. One of the most important of those which the council can employ to inform the public is the visit of the health inspector before the declaration of the CPO. We have seen that this was one of the most important sources of information in Byker. However, both the public and the inspectors themselves seemed sceptical at the validity of the information which is passed in this way. Steps could be taken either to brief the inspectors on the current state of the plans, or to adopt the same door to door manner for visits by a planning official (perhaps the Conservation Officer). Other means of informing the public might be the use of press, radio, local billboards, leaflets and letters to publicise at least basic information on the plans and perhaps the address of the council department and councillors who should be visited for further information. In his study of Manchester, Bull suggests that a sub-office of the Housing department be sited locally, in order both to overcome the reluctance of the public to seek out information and "to enable the officers to build up a knowledge of the area."⁽²¹³⁾ It might, at least, be possible to open a temporary or mobile office which at crucial stages in the planning process could direct people to the proper source of information or seek out the information itself.

One Way Channels Upwards:- There are also some one way channels which the council could employ to collect information on residents' wishes.

Already, the housing inspector is used to gather information on the needs and wishes of residents, but at such a late stage in the planning process (after the confirmation of the CPO) that it is impossible for them to do much more than to persuade the demand to fit the supply. It seems reasonable to suggest that the same door to door approach could be adopted at an earlier stage to assess real demand - perhaps at the same time as information on the plans is passed to the residents as suggested in the previous paragraph.

There is probably also some scope for the use of sample surveys to collect basic data on the patterns of life and wishes of people who are to be affected by planning. The Liverpool University Study has characterised this as "indicative participation" and has pointed out that "this information does not, strictly speaking, contribute to participation, since the population is an object of enquiry, not a direct contributor of ideas."⁽²¹⁴⁾ Surveys have the advantage for officials of preserving their detachment by reducing public demand into a manageable input, but it has the disadvantage that it allows the intervention of the public only at times and on points chosen by officials. It excludes the possibility of detailed, collective comment and seems likely to confirm in the public's mind the impersonality of the planning machine,

Two Way Channels:- Direct contact would not only be of benefit to the residents but also to the planner who, as Dennis has written must make "an effort of imagination and sympathetic understanding of the way of life of the families for whom his scheme will be home and community."⁽²¹⁵⁾

Such contact could be achieved partly through existing local organisations. Workingmen's clubs with their wide membership offer an unexploited opportunity for the council to break into the local communications network. This could be attempted partly through notices posted in the clubs but also through meetings of councillors and officials with members or committee-members alone. The clubs may find this involvement in community affairs antipathetic to their conception of their role. It is especially unlikely that they would adjust sufficiently to allow them to formulate collective opinions, though the publicising of information on the plans through the clubs may stimulate them to participate in this way. We saw in the study that the initiative for the group action which did eventually emerge from Byker came from outsiders. There is much similarity between the role which the Community Association took on under the new warden and the role which Skeffington⁽²¹⁶⁾ envisages for the proposed community forums. It attempted to bring together local organisations in the Study Group and to stimulate a two way and continuing exchange with the council. The consequence of its first, perhaps too strident demand for information and consultation, was however a hostile response which led the Association to confine itself to act "only as a forum for the expression of official views and individual residents' questions".* If a policy of public participation is to have any meaning in an area like Byker, councillors and officials must surely react

* Page 334.

encouragingly to this sort of expression of local interest rather than admonish it: "the problem is not to suppress and fear such limited political activity as may emerge from slum-clearance proposals".⁽²¹⁷⁾

It is suggested that Community Association warden's should be encouraged to stimulate and coordinate the local response to planning proposals where a local leadership which could do this is lacking.

The position of the Conservation Officer to some extent conforms with the Skeffington Committee's proposal that there should be a 'Community Development Officer' to promote local groups and to act as a channel of communication especially for 'non-joiners'. We saw that the officer's part in events in Byker was slight, but the part he did play points to the danger inherent in using a Planning Department employee to foster a local response. The danger is that he will see his function primarily in terms of the immediate objectives of the department - maintaining the isolation of the planners, filtering the information the planners and the public receive about each other, restraining local opposition and restricting contact to the more amenable local groups or local 'notables' (e.g. the Community Association's luncheon club). This danger is most likely to be fulfilled if he is seen as a sole contact for local groups and as the representative to the council of the views of these groups. The Conservation Officer might be seen better as the Planning Department's local representative for day to day matters. His familiarity with the area would allow him to advise on ways of transmitting information and, between public meetings, to report on the state of local opinion.

A two way flow of information is often assumed to occur via councillors. As we have seen, this can only be true to a very limited extent where councillors see their role at best secondarily as representative of the ward. If they are to have a part in the new planning process beyond that of committee policy-makers, the representative aspect of their role must surely be strengthened. Without wards whose boundaries are drawn to reflect any sort of local identity, however, councillors have little stimulus to regard themselves as representatives - there are rarely issues on which the ward itself has definable interests. Of course, the community interest will differ from issue to issue, but on planning and housing matters at least residential groupings are often affected similarly. There seems to be a case for redrawing ward boundaries to correspond with identifiable residential areas, and also perhaps for encouraging the representation of wards by local people with an interest in the area. This would have the additional effect of making local government representation more comprehensible to electors.

Both the Maud Report and Redcliffe-Maud Commission proposed reforms of local government which would allow a much more representative role to local councillors. The first suggested that by concentrating policy decisions on fewer committees, the majority of councillors would be left freer to act primarily as representatives of local interests. Perhaps this reform is too slight to have much impact on the way councillors conceive their roles. In Newcastle, where it has been introduced, committees and sub-committees have given way to a proliferation of working parties which provide a considerable, if lesser, work load. One aspect

of Redcliffe-Maud's more profound reforms was that, beneath the executive unitary authorities, there should be a system of neighbourhood councils. The then Labour Secretary of State for Regional and Local Government, Mr. Antony Crosland, introducing the White Paper 'The Reform of Local Government', stressed the primarily representative role of these councils which he felt could help to satisfy "the vague but real discontent with the channels open to influence events and perhaps an inchoate but often real demand for 'participation', if that word has not been over-used". (218) This, however, is a proposal which may well not be implemented by the Conservative government elected in 1970.

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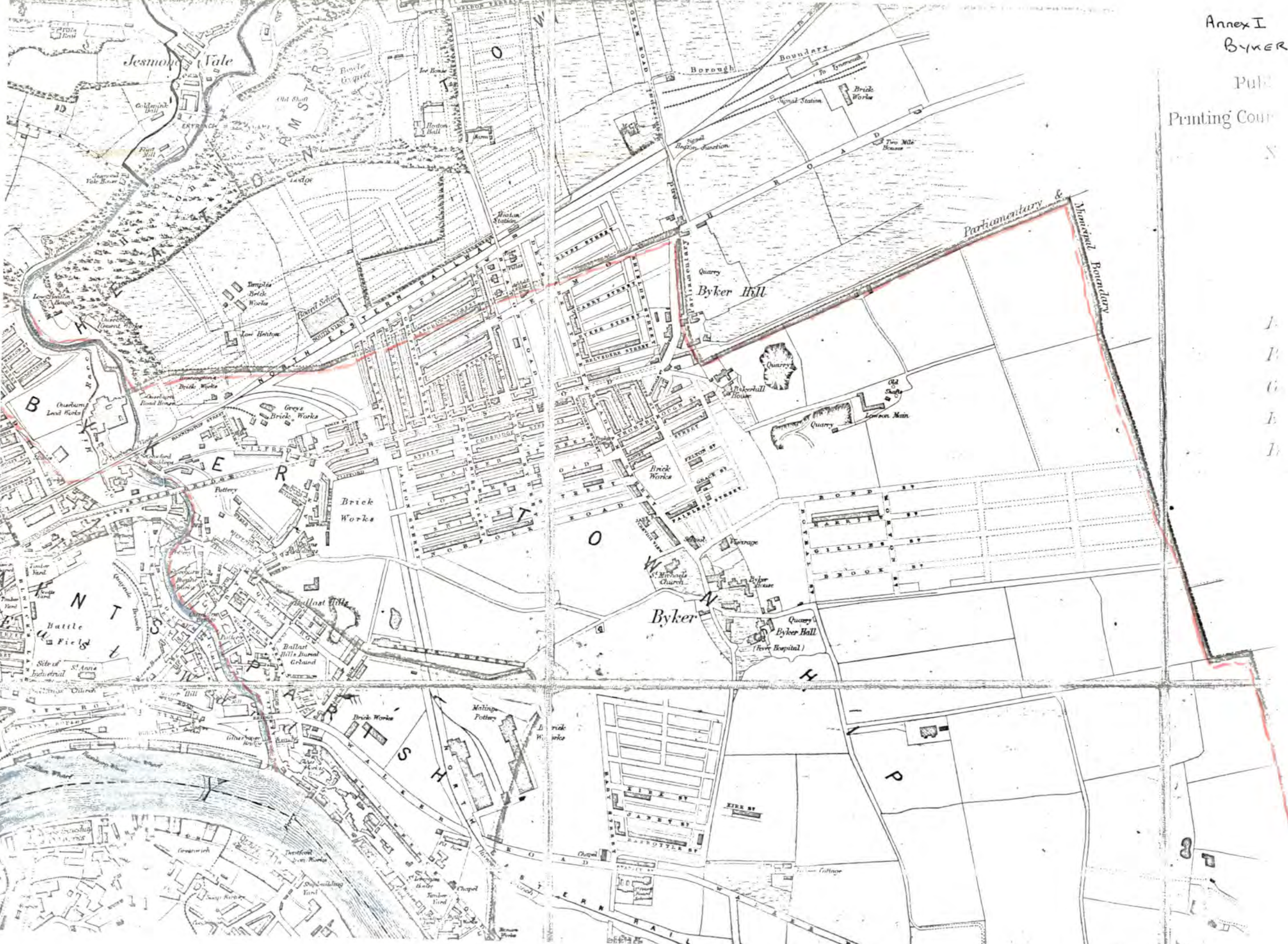
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Seragg House Farm

Statement as to Sales of Property in
 Cumberland belonging to Sir W^m Lawson

Name of Purchaser	Amount of Purchase Money		
Mr. Matthew Plummer -----	105	"	"
do ----- second purchase -----	9500	"	"
Mess ^{rs} Gibson and Bolton -----	20	"	"
Mr. William Vasey -----	120	"	"
do ----- 2 ^d purchase -----	81	"	"
Mr. John Beckington -----	70	"	"
Mrs. Isabella Mowbray -----	80	"	"
Mr. James Rutherford -----	160	"	"
Mr. George Palmer -----	70	"	"
Mrs. Mary Hills -----	80	"	"
Mr. Robert Hindson -----	35	"	"
Mr. John Laws -----	35	"	"
Mr. George Bell -----	80	"	"
Mr. John Stuart -----	175	"	"
Mr. Joseph Wilkinson -----	70	"	"
do ----- 2 ^d purchase -----	44	14	"
Mr. John Middleton -----	70	"	"
Mr. George Davison -----	50	"	"
Mrs. Isabella Hall -----	95	"	"
Mr. Thomas Rankin -----	35	"	"
Mr. George Bolton -----	200	"	"
Mr. John Crawford -----	85	"	"
Mr. George Anderson -----	91	"	"
Newcastle upon Tyne and North Shields Railway Company -----	140	"	"
do do ----- 2 ^d purchase -----	356	7	6
Mr. Hudson -----	40	"	"
Mr. Thomas Thompson -----	570	"	"
Mr. Robert Harrison -----	70	"	"
do ----- 2 ^d purchase -----	100	"	"
Mr. Joseph Grey -----	2169	5	6
Mr. Robert Winship -----	201	"	"
Carried forward £ 11978		7	"

Annex 4