

# **THE POLITICS OF HOUSING REHABILITATION IN GLASGOW**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Conventional wisdom stipulates that the Thatcher Government of the 1980s attacked the provision of public sector housing (Atkinson and Moon 1994, p.132) because of its belief in provision by the market and its dislike for local authorities. However, such accounts understate the true complexity of the policy making system and the role that local authorities play within the system. The improvement of the tenemental areas of Glasgow, and the ongoing improvement programmes in the peripheral schemes of the city, have principally been made possible by the actions of Glasgow District Council, Scottish Homes/Housing Corporation in Scotland and the Scottish Office. MacLennan (1987) acknowledged that these developments had an important impact on Scottish, and British, housing policies. This paper charts the processes through which issues relating to the rehabilitation of Glasgow were conducted and through which the actions of these actors were channelled. In doing so it will demonstrate that throughout the 1980s Glasgow District Council continued to play an important role in the development of Housing Rehabilitation policies because of its participation in a policy community that dealt with issues relating to rehabilitation.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF RESOURCE DEPENDENCIES IN POLICY MAKING**

Following Rhodes (1985, 1988) we contend that when an organisation is in possession of resources required by government, its potential to influence decisions increases; resources can be interpreted as information, knowledge,

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the power of implementation, political authority and money. The simplicity of this statement masks the complexity of the process through which governments conduct their relations with other organisations and, subsequently, through which public policy emerges. As Rhodes (1988) observed, being in possession of resources does not in itself guarantee influence. An organisation must successfully use the resources under its control before it can wield influence. Not all commentators are in agreement with such lines of reasoning. Page (1982, 1984) argued that the balance of resources between central and local government was so loaded in favour of the centre that there was an unequal relationship which undermined the dependency of central government on local government. Similarly Chandler (1993) maintained that because central government dominates the legislative process in Parliament it, in turn, dominates local government. This, he argued, denies local government the autonomy required to act within a resource-dependent relationship. However, by demonstrating the heuristic nature of the policy community concept, this paper will demonstrate the validity of interpreting the policy process in terms of resource-dependence, and will show the continuing role that local authorities can play in policy making.

#### **POLICY MAKING ARENAS: INCREMENTALISM AND POLICY COMMUNITIES**

Lindblom (1959, p. 86) argued that:

policy is not made once and for all; it is re-made endlessly. Policy making is a process of successive approximation to some desired objectives in which what is desired itself continues to change under reconsideration.

Thus, Lindblom argued policy making occurred in incremental stages, in which policy was the culmination of a series of small, successive, steps which built upon past developments. Similarly, Hogwood and Peters (1983, p.131) maintained that policy emerged from a 'successive process'. They argued that there were few areas of society that governments were not involved in. Thus current policies lead to the emergence of successor issues and policies. Consequently, government intervention in a policy area was rarely new, nor was it carried out in 'uncharted' areas. Indeed, as Wildavsky (1980) argued, policy is in effect its own cause. Wildavsky maintained that as government policies were implemented, problems, or unforeseen developments, arose and had to be addressed. Therefore, it is not new policies that emerge but rather a reconfiguration of previous policies; a cyclical process of reconfiguration and amendment occurs in policy areas as new issues, and circumstances, arise.

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The incremental/successive nature of the policy process, Richardson and Jordan (1979) argue, draws organisations external to government into the decision-making process. This occurs because, over a period of time, small adjustments to policy ensure that they will gain enough of what they seek to make their participation worthwhile. The policy making system in Britain is segmented into 'policy communities'. As Richardson and Jordan (1979, p.43 & p.73) pointed out:

policy-making is fragmented into sub systems, and ... the main boundaries are between sub systems rather than between the component units of the sub systems...we see policy being made (and administered) between a myriad of interconnecting, interpenetrating organisations. It is the relationships involved in committees, the policy community, of departments and groups the practice of co-operation and the consensual style that perhaps better account for policy outcomes than do examinations of party stances, of manifestoes or of Parliamentary influence

Policy communities are imprecise structures which are open to changing memberships concerning different issues. Each government department contains numerous policy communities, and they are centred around the level of the civil service which is covered by an assistant or under secretary. Indeed the bureaucratisation of the policy process is a key feature of policy communities (Jordan and Richardson 1982). The communities operate on the basis of segmentation between policy areas, consensus between members relating to the major issues facing the community, regularised contact between members, the desire to establish an exchange relationship that is of mutual benefit to members, integration of interests, the formalisation of contacts, a sense of mutual accommodation between interests, and a sense of predictability in terms of policy outcomes (Richardson and Jordan 1979, Jordan and Richardson 1982). Thus, decision making within policy communities is particularly susceptible to an incremental process, whereby the members of the community, over a period of time, will largely gain what they desire. Access to policy communities is determined by the possession of resources that are required by government before policy decisions can be made (Jordan et al. 1992).

Jordan et al.(1992, p.23) note that, while being stable sets of relations, policy communities can sometimes break up. Their structure can alter, while still retaining a degree of stability; that is, they can be dynamic while still retaining the features of a policy community. In applying the policy community model to the process of water privatisation in England and Wales,

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Richardson et al (1992, p.159) demonstrated the 'heuristic' value of the policy community model. They maintained that different models of the policy process should be applied to the study of an issue traversing the policy making system, because no one model could capture the complexity of the entire policy making process. This implies that, from time to time, the management of political issues can escape the confines of a policy community. Alternatively the government can, in certain circumstances, confine decision making to itself and pursue issues in a closed, internal manner without the participation of outside bodies (Hogwood 1986).

By employing the insights that the policy community approach gives us to the policy making process, our understanding of the processes which have shaped housing rehabilitation policies in Glasgow, over a twenty five year period, will be enhanced.

### **GLASGOW'S HOUSING LEGACY**

In 1801 the population of Glasgow was approximately 77,000; by the end of the century it had grown to 762,000. The rapid expansion resulted in an unprecedented demand for housing which helped determine the dominant building form in Glasgow - the tenement. Of the housing stock built before 1901, 88 per cent was tenemental. Historically Glasgow has had a reputation as an overcrowded city; however, by the 1960s population densities had reduced significantly, but remained high in tenemental areas. Despite massive post-war building programmes, much of Glasgow's housing stock remained in a poor state of repair, many of the worst houses being found in the private rented sector. In 1971 only 56 per cent of the total stock was above tolerable standard. Furthermore, 12 per cent of Glasgow's housing did not have an internal W.C. and a further 30 per cent had inadequate heating, ventilation or cooking facilities (Cullingworth and Watson Report 1971). The situation facing Glasgow was so severe that the Scottish Housing Advisory Committee (1967, p.22-23) commented that 'Glasgow has a reputation for bad housing conditions and, despite great efforts by the Corporation, we have found that this reputation is unfortunately justified'.

### **THE RENEWAL OF THE INNER CITY**

In 1968 a 'hurricane' hit West Central Scotland, causing approximately £18 million worth of damage to Glasgow's housing stock (**Glasgow Herald** 8/2/68 & 13/6/68). In response to this, Glasgow Corporation established the Housing Improvement and Clearance Section. Once the section began its programme, it became evident that the private rental sector was in a worse state of repair than had previously been assumed. The aftermath of the storm

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forced many prominent city politicians to acknowledge that there were great swathes of housing in Glasgow which were in dire need of repair. Of even more significance the enactment of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1969, for which Glasgow Corporation lobbied hard, shifted the focus of Scottish housing policies towards rehabilitation, rather than new build. The Corporation took the view that municipalisation should be a key element in any rehabilitation strategy. However, the initial rehabilitation schemes it undertook proved unworkable and unpopular with residents, the Scottish Office and even some Corporation officials. The experiences convinced many officials that they could not improve large numbers of tenements throughout Glasgow. Consequently, another mechanism for tackling the problem was sought. Eventually the Corporation turned to the activities of the Tenemental Improvement Programme (which later changed its name to ASSIST) in Govan, which pioneered the use of a locally based programme to carry out tenemental rehabilitation.

The ASSIST programme enjoyed initial success with the local community, but it faced two major difficulties: the lack of proper finance; and multiple ownership within tenements. A solution to these problems was seen in establishing a Housing Association which would purchase the homes of those who either did not want, or could not afford, improvements. This was to be achieved with loans from Glasgow Corporation, and the association would then improve the tenements with grants available under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1969. The association differed from established housing associations, in that it allowed full community participation in the improvement process via a residents' management committee. By December 1973, 150 of the 185 improved houses in Glasgow were improved by ASSIST in Govan (ASSIST 1975, p.6). Despite its success, it was clear that if housing rehabilitation was to succeed on a wide scale then problems of finance would have to be resolved. Glasgow Corporation did not have the necessary resources for a large-scale rehabilitation programme.

As part of the Housing Act 1974, the Housing Corporation underwent radical changes to its operations. When the Corporation offered to involve itself in developments in Glasgow, some members of the City Corporation were initially concerned that they would lose influence over housing matters in Glasgow. Largely as a result of the intercession of Theo Crombie, who was the director of the Corporation's housing improvement section, and also out of fear of the political challenge from the SNP in Glasgow at the time, the Corporation was persuaded that something had to be done to improve the tenemental areas. In 1974 the Housing Corporation opened its Glasgow office and quickly formed a partnership with the newly created Glasgow

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District Council, to pursue tenemental improvements via Community Based Housing Associations.

The formation of this partnership was significant because it illustrated the mutual interdependence of the Council and the Housing Corporation. The Council did not have the financial resources to pursue a large-scale rehabilitation programme, and was dependent upon the Housing Corporation to provide them. The Housing Corporation, in seeking to define a role for itself in the provision of housing in Scotland, was reliant upon the co-operation of the Council. Political opposition from the Council would have proved difficult to overcome because the Housing Corporation had to be seen to be tackling the housing problems of Glasgow. If it was seen to fail in Glasgow, the likelihood of achieving success elsewhere in Scotland would have diminished.

Notwithstanding the mutual resource dependencies between the organisations, both bodies shared a consensus with the Scottish Office that the problem of decaying tenements should be tackled via community-based rehabilitation. Through regular contacts and meetings, particularly at official level, throughout the 1970s and 1980s the three organisations worked together to pursue matters relating to the Community Based Housing Association programme. Operational activities were largely conducted between officials of the three organisations rather than elected politicians, who remained informed of developments but played only a limited role. Thus, bureaucratisation was central to the operation of the policy community. By December 1990 Scottish Homes estimated that, in Glasgow, 17,387 homes had been improved at a cost of £455.128M (data from Scottish Homes).

### **DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PERIPHERAL SCHEMES IN THE 1980S**

By the early 1980s Glasgow District Council was the largest landlord in Britain, owning approximately 170,000 houses, 40,000 of which were located in the four peripheral schemes of Easterhouse, Castlemilk, Drumchapel and Pollock (Grieve 1986). The Grieve report (1986, p.20) noted that:

The peripheral estates contain the single most serious set of housing problems facing the city...the problems of these areas are not nationally recognised and they do not benefit from major national policy initiatives as do inner cities.

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Glasgow District Council had to tackle the problems of these areas, despite a lack of financial resources. However, funds available for Non-Housing-Revenue Account expenditure increased in the early 1980s; that is expenditure for matters such as housing improvement grants to owner occupiers. (See Table 1.)

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**Table 1**  
**Glasgow's Non-Housing-Revenue Account 1979-85**

Year	£M
1979/80	13.4
1980/81	16.0
1981/82	17.7
1982/83	28.6
1983/84	73.5
1984/85	84.7

*(Source: Glasgow District Council)*

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Faced with this problem the Council decided to extend community ownership into the peripheral schemes. An internal working party was established to deal with the issue and it proposed par value co-operatives. That is a co-op where all tenants are members and all members are tenants. The tenants collectively own the properties of the co-op but they do not have an individual equity share in the property. The Council intended that it would sell properties to the co-ops at a price which would include the pooled discounts that the tenants would have received, individually, under the Right-To-Buy scheme, which allowed council tenants to purchase their home at a discount based on their length of tenancy. After purchasing the property the co-ops would be given improvement grants paid from the Non-Housing-Revenue Account. The grants would cover 90 per cent of improvement costs, with the remaining 10 per cent to be financed from a mortgage. The co-ops were to be free to determine their own rent levels, which would have to be higher than council rents to cover all management and maintenance costs. However, it was intended that the tenants would receive a double subsidy of mortgage interest relief and Housing Benefit to offset rent increases. Time was of the essence in establishing the co-ops, because improvement grant applications received before 31 March 1984 would receive 90 per cent grants, whereas after that date they would receive 50 per cent grants. By March 1984 the Council identified 17 tenant groups as potential co-ops and a

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pilot scheme was launched in three areas: Calvay, Broomhouse and Ballantay.

Initially both the Scottish Office and the Housing Corporation expressed little interest in the project. The Scottish Office saw little that would affect national housing policies and the Housing Corporation lacked the financial resources to participate. However, as developments took shape the Scottish Office was inextricably drawn into events. This reflects Barlow and Duncan's (1988) assertion that tenure diversification became central to the Government's approach to public housing in the late 1980s. The move also, in part, reflected both an acceptance of a need to tackle the 'crisis' in the condition of a great deal of local authority housing stock (Kintrea 1992) and also the widespread support for community ownership in Scotland (Clapham and Kintrea 1990, 1994).

At a meeting between the Scottish Development Department and the Council in July 1984 the Scottish Housing Minister, Michael Ancram, expressed his general enthusiasm for the scheme but stipulated some reservations. He was principally concerned with the tenants' loss of security of tenure, the loss of their statutory Right-to-Buy on becoming par value co-operative tenants and the legality of the basis on which the Council was acting: that is the Scottish Office maintained that the Council required its consent before it could sell properties to the proposed co-ops. Although never fully convinced by the Scottish Office's arguments, the Council recognised that it could not proceed without its co-operation and, consequently, it acquiesced and applied for consent in December 1984.

After numerous meetings between officials of the Scottish Office and of the Housing Corporation to study the Council's proposals, a Scottish Office News Release (19/9/85) stated that, although the Minister supported the idea of Community Ownership, he could not support the Council's proposals. The minister argued that the Housing Corporation should provide funding for co-ops to overcome 'the difficulties inherent in the scheme proposed by the local authority' (SDD News Release 19/9/85). The Council sought detailed explanations from the Scottish Office concerning its actions. Most surprising of the reasons given was the assertion by a Conservative government that:

substituting Housing Corporation funding for private borrowing offered, in his [the minister's] view, a more secure financial basis for these schemes (Scottish Office letter to Glasgow District Council 8/10/85).

There were several additional reasons for the government's actions. First, the government did not trust the tenants to set proper rent levels. Second, the

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Scottish Office wanted to control the direction of policy developments. Third, the Scottish Office was well aware that inner city developments were nearing completion, and the co-op programme offered the Government, and the Housing Corporation, access to the peripheral schemes where the general thrust of Government housing policy, the Right-to-Buy, had failed to make an impact. Therefore, because the Council could not proceed without the co-operation of the Scottish Office and the Housing Corporation, both bodies were able to exert considerable influence over the turn of events.

The Council knew that the Scottish Office's consent would have been withheld for its original proposals, thus preventing the project from proceeding. The only way for the co-ops to begin operations was for the Council to accept the Scottish Office's position and allow Housing Corporation funding to be used. Glasgow District Council was excluded from these key meetings because its resource base was undermined by the Scottish Office's actions in pursuing a new financial package with the Housing Corporation. Thus, we see the importance of resources in order to gain access to key decision-making arenas.

The Scottish Office wanted to have a pause in the programme, but the Council was anxious not to lose the momentum that had been built up. Consequently, the Council initiated a second wave of co-operative development, which became known as the Phase II co-ops. The Council recognised that the Housing Corporation would have to be involved in this second wave, but only to register the co-ops, allowing them to avoid Corporation Tax. However, the Corporation did not want to participate without first gaining the approval of the Scottish Office. Thus, within a matter of months of embarking upon the second phase, the Council found itself in familiar circumstances, in that once more it was dependent upon other agencies in order to proceed.

The Scottish Office raised familiar concerns about the Phase II co-ops. Significantly, however, a Council official sought to ease some of those concerns:

The apparent gulf between the Government and the Council in relation to many current housing issues is by no means as wide as some politicians would have the world believe and I am certain that at official level ways and means can still be found of improving Glasgow's housing and the lot of its citizens without prejudice to the rights or to the legitimate political differences and aspirations of our respective masters and that much can still be achieved through quiet diplomacy, frank discussions and unpublicised co-operation (GDC letter to SDD 25/6/86).

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In June and again in August 1986 the Council sought the Secretary of State's formal consent for the sale of property to the three new co-ops; consent was withheld and a decision was put off until early October. However, after negotiations the Council was able to offer the Scottish Office the assurances that it sought. Of particular importance was the Council's acceptance that the Phase II co-ops would receive priority funding from Housing Revenue Account transfers to the Non-Housing-Revenue Account; that is the Council accepted that it would fund the Phase II developments from money earmarked for its own housing stock (Glasgow District Council letter to the Scottish Office 9/12/86). In May 1987 the Secretary of State granted his approval to the Phase II co-operatives: 1100 houses were to be sold to the new co-ops and the total cost of the programme was to be £13.5m with 90 per cent of the costs being paid through the Improvement Grant Scheme.

From the initial decision by the Council to launch the community ownership programme, to its final approval, the issues were processed within a policy community. The Council was bound to other organisations by resource-dependencies and the resulting relationships were co-ordinated via policy-community procedures. However, the involvement of the Council and the Housing Corporation fluctuated. At times they were at the heart of the decision-making process while at others they were excluded, and the Scottish Office took decisions internally. Richardson et al (1992) found evidence to suggest that at times changes in the importance of the resource base of an organisation can open the decision-making process to that organisation. In this paper we have seen how that process can be reversed. Glasgow District Council and the Housing Corporation were excluded from the decision-making process because of a reduction in the importance of the resources which they commanded. However, in this example all the participants were eager to see the co-ops proceed; that is, a basic consensus of opinion underpinned their actions. This resulted in the reformation of the policy community to pursue developments in Glasgow's peripheral schemes.

### **THE ARRIVAL OF SCOTTISH HOMES**

In January 1987 the then English Housing Minister, John Patten, claimed that the Government held a long-term aim of limiting the number of houses owned by local authorities. In their place, he said, he wished to see pension funds, building societies, housing associations and co-operatives increasingly take over the ownership and management of rented housing (**Glasgow Herald** 8/1/87). A few days later Michael Ancram replied to an enquiry by the Convention Of Scottish Local Authorities on the matter stating that Mr Patten's comments were not Government policy in Scotland. However, he added that further diversification of tenure was the key to improving housing

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conditions in Scotland, especially in peripheral schemes (**Glasgow Herald** 23/1/87).

In Summer 1986 the Government carried out a review of the Scottish Special Housing Association, in which it expressed a desire to see extensive co-operation with the Housing Corporation. The report was an important precursor to the establishment of Scottish Homes. The Housing Corporation remained (officially) unaware of the full details of the Government's intentions until the day before the plan to establish Scottish Homes was made public. Neither was Glasgow District Council formally consulted on the Government's intentions. The formal decision was taken by the government without external consultation. Scottish Homes was to be formed by merging the Housing Corporation with the Scottish Special Housing Association. Both organisations offered a 'cautious welcome' to the proposal (**Glasgow Herald** 8/5/87).

The Government consultation paper stated that Scottish Homes 'would be primarily an enabling and funding body with wide powers and a wide remit' (SDD May 1987, p.10). In addition the paper envisaged a new housing role for local authorities in that, although they would continue to be the statutory housing agency within their area, the housing provided to fulfil this function would not necessarily be provided by them. (SDD May 1987, p.17). Initial public reaction to the Scottish Homes proposals was less than universally enthusiastic. Some regarded the consultation paper as 'an overtly political document in both content and timing' (**Glasgow Herald** 19/5/87). However, Glasgow District Council, which was not formally consulted on the Government's actions, adopted a pragmatic approach, accepting that the establishment of Scottish Homes was non-negotiable. The Council was prepared to approach the new body in a positive mode.

Throughout the Summer of 1987 officials from the Housing Corporation, the Scottish Special Housing Association and the Scottish Office met to settle the details of the role and structure of the new organisation, and, in November 1987, the Scottish Office published a White Paper, **Housing: The Government's Proposals for Scotland** (Cm 242). The main thrust of the paper concerned the introduction of private finance into the rental market. In addition the White Paper sought to provide more choice for those tenants who wanted to continue to rent a home; to revive the independent rented sector; to encourage further reductions in the role of local authorities as housing providers; and to establish Scottish Homes as a national housing agency. The Government also wanted to see housing associations expand their activities by increasing their use of private finance. When the Housing (Scotland) Act 1988 received the Royal Assent, the sections relating to

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Scottish Homes had largely passed unchanged. Scottish Homes was established on 1 April 1989, and its major function was to act as an enabling and funding body.

From the direction of these events we can see that not all decisions are taken within the confines of policy communities. Issues can, and do, arise when community members are excluded from the decision-making process. However, this does not mean that such decisions will not be open to the influence of outside bodies at a later stage in the policy process. As Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) noted, those who implement government policies can prove to be highly influential political actors, even if they took no part in an original policy decision.

Glasgow's housing situation at the onset of the 1990s differed significantly from that which it faced in the 1980s. The population of the city had declined from 1,055,617 in 1960 to 696,577 in 1989; the population estimate for the year 2000 was 636,693. The Council was also faced by an increasing number of voids (housing which the Council is unable to let). It was estimated that if the problem went unchecked the void level would reach 20,000 units by the year 2000 with the worst concentrations in the peripheral schemes. The peripheral schemes faced continuing problems of high unemployment and a declining population base. This had a concomitant impact on the provision of education, public transport, social work and other services in these areas. Consequently, Strathclyde Regional Council was drawn further into events than it had been in the past, although even before this the Regional Council's Social Strategy for the 1980s had been an important influence on urban and housing policies during the 1980s with its commitment to the retention of existing communities in Glasgow.

Therefore Glasgow balanced on the precipice of becoming a schizophrenic city in housing terms. On the one hand there appeared to be the prospect of an increasing number of well-housed areas, consisting of mainly private housing intermixed with good quality council stock. This contrasted with an increasing number of ghettoised areas, mainly in the peripheral schemes, which faced a future of continued decay and decline.

Between 1980/81 and 1988/89 the Aggregate Gross Public Investment in public sector housing in Glasgow was £976m. This compared to private sector investment over the same period of £1014m (both figures are in March 1989 prices) (GDC 1989, p.9). Glasgow District Council's 1989 Housing Revenue Account budget was £100m, an increase from the low point of the mid 1980s. However, of this, 50 per cent derived from the council's own Capital Receipts, compared to an equivalent level of 25 per cent in 1980/81

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(GDC 1989, p.9). The resources available for investment contrasted sharply to the estimated investment needs. The 1985 Glasgow House Condition Survey estimated that the council's stock required £728m of investment. By 1989 the estimated cost for the outstanding repair to the stock had risen to £2199m, half of which was required investment for the peripheral schemes (GDC 1989, p.11). Given the scope of the investment problems, not to mention the accompanying social problems, it is not surprising that the council had to look elsewhere to fund the required improvements.

From the outset Glasgow District Council sought to determine the agenda for Scottish Homes' Glasgow operations and use the financial resources available to Scottish Homes for its own purposes. Glasgow's Housing Plan 1989 outlined the strategy for the recovery of the city's housing stock by directing the actions of Scottish Homes towards the areas of greatest need. As part of this strategy the Council launched a Community Renewal Programme. It identified the five areas it felt were in need of priority attention: Castlemilk, Easterhouse, Drumchapel, Springburn/Royston and Pollok/Priesthill/Nitshill. These areas subsequently formed the basis for the joint development programme of Scottish Homes and the Council. Scottish Homes, subsequently, outlined its programme priorities in working with the Council as: the continued expansion of the community ownership programme; the completion of the inner city regeneration programme; and a greater use of private sector investment in order to achieve a greater diversity of tenure, particularly in the peripheral schemes.

The Council and Scottish Homes recognised that not only would they have to co-ordinate their activities to achieve maximum effect, but, more importantly, agreement would have to be reached over the division of responsibilities. It was decided that a formal strategic outline for development in Glasgow should be drawn up. The Council was concerned that by so doing the Government, through Scottish Homes, would gain a direct say in a major policy area in the city. The Council insisted that the Government allow Scottish Homes a free hand in agreeing a strategic plan. The Government, anxious to see Scottish Homes active in Glasgow, agreed and the two organisations began negotiations.

Throughout negotiations the Council maintained that investment by Scottish Homes in the five low-demand areas should be seen as additional and complementary to the council's. The Council also wanted to establish that it was responsible for determining the overall strategic development of these areas, while remaining the dominant landlord, and that development schemes would only proceed with the consent of local residents. Scottish Homes reacted in a mixed way. While welcoming the Council's willingness to work

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with it, it was critical of the Council's opinion that Scottish Homes was a junior partner. From 1989 to 1992 the Council and Scottish Homes committed themselves to direct resources to the five low demand estates. The expenditure committed is shown in Table 2.

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**Table 2**  
**Investment in The Five Low-Demand Estates 1989-92**

Year	£m
1989/90	55.8
1990/91	81.9
1991/92	82.1
Total	219.7

*(Source: GDC/Scottish Homes 1989)*

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The agreement reached by Scottish Homes and the Council resulted from a period of negotiations between the two bodies. The strategic aim of both organisations was to see the community ownership programme expand. To achieve that, regular meetings were arranged before the inauguration of Scottish Homes in April 1989, and they have continued to run monthly to ensure the continuance of the programme. Matters have largely been pursued through the process of consultation and negotiation involving the Council, Scottish Homes and the Scottish Office. Those negotiations have been underpinned by resource-dependencies. The Council requires the financial resources available to Scottish Homes. Scottish Homes requires the co-operation of the Council because, as with the Housing Corporation, it must be seen to be tackling Glasgow's housing problems if it is to retain credibility. The Scottish Office is eager to see Scottish Homes pursue developments in Glasgow and to ensure this it must work with the Council. It is easier to co-operate with the Council than to fight it on this matter.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Policy communities exist to ensure government action, or indeed inaction, within policy areas. In the case of housing rehabilitation in Glasgow, a strong policy community was formed as recognition grew for the need for tenemental improvement in the city in the 1960s and 1970s. As attention moved to the peripheral schemes, new issues emerged and they were tackled

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via a similar policy approach and within the confines of policy-community procedures.

This would offer some vindication of the description by Lindblom (1959) and by Hogwood and Peters (1983) of an incremental/successive policy process. Furthermore, the assertion by Richardson (1992) that policy making occurred in episodes would, it seems, hold true in this instance. At times a strong policy community has processed the issues under study in this paper. At other points the government acted in a unilateral manner. This occurred when both the Housing Corporation and the Council were excluded from the initial decision to create Scottish Homes. That was a decision taken at Cabinet committee level.

This would appear to offer evidence to support, to a degree, the notion that the Thatcher Government sought to exclude local authorities from the policy-making process. Furthermore, disagreements occurred between Glasgow District Council and the Government, particularly over levels of investment in the Council's own housing stock. Clapham and Kintrea (1990) maintained that the development of Community Ownership gave the Government greater control over financial resources and, consequently, over the direction of policy developments. However, resources must be interpreted in a wider sense than this (see above). Resource dependencies act as a restraint on the actions of Government and, as we have observed, local authorities can be important actors in the decision-making process. In order to achieve their aims in Glasgow, both the Scottish Office and Scottish Homes have had to work with the Council. Thus, despite its exclusion from the centre of the decision-making process in some instances, the Council remains a key actor in the housing-rehabilitation policy-community in Glasgow. Central government may possess more resources than individual local authorities, but, as Rhodes (1988) observed, it is more accurate to speak of the *centres* of government and not *the central* government. Government is fragmented at the centre and, indeed, this is a major reason for the emergence of policy communities in the first place. The coherence of the centre is undermined by fragmentation, as is its ability to use its potentially powerful resource base. The centre's ultimate authority, vested in Parliament (Judge 1993), was not an appropriate resource to be called upon in this particular instance. Existing legislation was usable via an incremental process of adaptation and change. Furthermore, there was a high degree of consensus among the actors involved in support of the idea of Community Ownership, which was fostered, and carried through, as a result of resource-dependent relationships. Thus the arguments of those such as Page (1982, 1984) and Chandler (1993) are somewhat inapplicable. The relationship between government and local authorities may not be one of equal partners but it is still one in which

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resource dependencies restrain and shape government action. The actions of Glasgow District Council, the Scottish Office and the Housing Corporation/Scottish Homes in this policy area offer some vindication to the resource-dependency approach to the study of central-local relations. By gaining an appreciation of the processes that lie behind rehabilitation policies, we can begin to understand the behavioural reality of the policy making process.

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