The Management of Deprivation

Final Report of Southwark Community Development Project

Alan Davis, Neil McIntosh, Jane Williams

Polytechnic of the South Bank
The Management of Deprivation

Final Report of Southwark Community Development Project

Alan Davis, Neil McIntosh, Jane Williams

Authors:

Alan Davis Project Team Leader
Neil McIntosh Research Director
Jane Williams Research Fellow

Additional material supplied by:

Colin Roberts Research Fellow
Mary Hennessey Research Assistant
Nick Birch Photographer

Polytechnic of the South Bank
Contents

Foreword........................................................................................................4
1 The First Two Years
   The False Assumptions............................................................................6
   The Retreat in Community Services.......................................................9

2 A New Start
   The misleading profile..........................................................................11
   An impression of Newington...................................................................12
   Administrative Structure.........................................................................12
   Location.................................................................................................13
   Economic Activity..................................................................................14
   Housing.................................................................................................17
   Education...............................................................................................20
   Leisure and Recreation...........................................................................20
   Defining Deprivation...............................................................................22

3 Community Development in theory and practice
   The myth of ‘community’.........................................................................24
   Defining ‘community’...............................................................................25
   Defining ‘deprivation’...............................................................................25
   Objectives of community development................................................26
   Community Development in practice......................................................26
   The new role of CDP...............................................................................28
   The generalist component.......................................................................31
   Information and Advice Service............................................................31
   Issues relating to local authority services..............................................34
   Income maintenance work....................................................................35
   Dealing with public utilities....................................................................37
   Dealing with the private sector..............................................................37
   Effectiveness of the service....................................................................38
   Specialist or generalist – the community worker....................................39
   Use of a specialist skill – Community Lawyer.........................................40

4 The Decision Making Process
   The management system in Southwark..................................................44
   Corporate management in practice.........................................................48
   Resistances at member and officer levels.................................................48
   CDP’s experience of Working Parties......................................................50
   CDP’s experience of Programme Area Teams........................................53
   Effects of centralisation.........................................................................54
   CDP’s experience at Policy Groups........................................................55
   Decline in role of back bench councillors..............................................55
   Not inevitable..........................................................................................56
   Not only Southwark................................................................................57
During the past few years the problem of the inner-city area has increasingly been a focus of interest and subject of newspaper headlines. One result of this has been a tendency to reduce the subject to a list of cliches using an assorted ragbag of emotive indices rather than any clear analysis. In this way attention has focussed on — obsolete housing, a population reduced in numbers and rising in age, loss of industrial jobs etc. As with many other municipal authorities Southwark has long recognised the nature of the problems and attempted to deal with them within existing powers, albeit with limited success. The setting up of the CDP experiment in Southwark therefore marked not the discovery of a new problem but rather the search for new solutions, and this became the keynote of the experiment. As Chairman of the CDP Committee for the period covered by this Report, I was concerned for the Project Team to take a challenging stance and adopt a radical look at the issues in the project neighbourhood.

In particular, I felt, that CDP provided a good opportunity to look beyond the piecemeal approach to problems which in the past had so often resulted in a fragmented response to 'symptoms' rather than tackling 'causes'. I did not find it acceptable to look for solutions in terms of 'wheel-chairs' and 'social workers', nor merely building more and more houses. I was concerned to find out what was meant by community development and the potential it had to deal with the problems of Southwark.

I would recommend this Report to those wishing to know more about the nature of community development and how it relates to other associated concepts which are so often used but rarely defined. Such concepts as 'community', 'community spirit', and the key one in this context 'deprivation'. The emphasis placed by the Project on 'access to' and 'control of' resources helped me clarify my role as a Socialist Borough Councillor and examine afresh the type of management system being adopted in Southwark. It became clear to me that at present it is not only necessary to look at the problems of local residents wishing to obtain access to Council resources, but also to question the amount of control their elected representatives in fact exercise over resource allocation. Given the fundamental nature of the issues raised by CDP it was little wonder that throughout its life it attracted considerable hostility, not least from senior council officials. It was perhaps typical of this reaction that, at the end of the Project, there seemed to be a wish to turn away from the major implications of this work concerning a more accountable system of resource allocation and service provision, and instead concentrate on the minor features of the Project relating to small-scale service provision in the Project neighbourhood.

It would be wrong, however, and to miss the point of it, to regard the Report as being anti-Southwark. Southwark is only the example and can be regarded as typical of the majority of inner-city local authorities. There are, in fact, lessons in this Report for everyone, not least Central Government. It is interesting, for example, to note the role of the Home Office in relation to the CDP Programme. It was a source of concern to me that very little support was supplied from the Home Office to assist in clarifying the terms of reference and confusion which stemmed from the local attempts to interpret the original Home Office CDP papers. Similarly it is disappointing that at a time when Central Government needs to reassess its priorities, during the present economic crisis, it ignores any possibility of implementing changes in expenditure patterns other than through the crude departmental bargaining method. It does not inspire confidence
when in a tight budgetary situation the Government chooses to avoid looking at a more rational resource allocation method.

Whilst it is true that the prescriptions for the future put forward in this Report are untested, nevertheless, I feel that they should be used as a starting point for the major debate, which is now necessary, on the management of local government and the allocation of its enormous resources.

Councillor J. J. Lauder
February 1977

This Report represents the views of the CDP Research Director and the Action Team Leader. Southwark Borough Council wish it to be known that 'The Council of the London Borough of Southwark have reservations regarding the accuracy of the views expressed in parts of this report, but hopes that its publication will contribute to a greater understanding of the Community Development Project experiment'.
1 The first two years

The False Assumptions

In reporting the experience of Southwark CDP it is necessary to look at the first two years of the Projects' work separately from the more recent history. This is because there have been in effect two different Projects. For the first two years the Action Team was backed by a Research Team from Brunel University. This arrangement had, however, ended by early summer of 1972 by which time both the Action Team Leader and entire Research Team had withdrawn from the Project. There was then a considerable time lapse before a new Action Team Leader (February 1973) and Research Director from Polytechnic of the South Bank (January 1974) took up their posts.

As this report is concerned with the latter half of Southwark CDP work, it is not intended to describe in detail the problems and difficulties of the first two years. A detailed account of this period has been recently published [Research and Reform – Hatch, Fox, Legg] by members of the team from Brunel University. As a first step in re-establishing the Project after the period of disruption caused by the departure of Senior Staff, it was necessary to take stock of the factors which in retrospect, had determined the way in which the Project operated in the first two years. Given the virtual collapse of the Project, these factors can, in general, be said to have been constraints on the work rather than opportunities which needed further development.

The first of the constraints involved the original assumptions of the Home Office about CDP nationally. One of the major assumptions was that deprivation was derived from the social pathology of the residents of certain areas of our cities. As a result of the stress on this approach to the problem it was further assumed by the Authorities concerned that the aspect of the operations of local authorities with which CDP would be most clearly concerned would be the Social Services.

In fact two things became very quickly clear for the incoming Research Team. Firstly it became apparent that on most social indicators, far from being particularly disadvantaged the Newington ward was very typical not only of Southwark, but of substantial parts of Inner London. Secondly the local population soon made it obvious that Social Services issues were of almost negligible importance in relation to the vital topic with was the redevelopment plan for the neighbourhood.

This substantial change of emphasis had very real implications for the manner in which it was assumed that CDP would set about its job of community development. In particular considerable stress had been laid in the early documents on the concept of self-help. It was assumed that in all the CDP areas there were large numbers of people who would be willing to take more control over the processes by which the state managed various services if only there was sufficient encouragement to do it. This idea could no longer be sustained once it was recognised that the redevelopment issue took precedence in Newington. What had seemed a valid area of experiment in testing the extent to which local residents could either themselves replace or supplement the statutory social services became non-viable once it was established that the problem was one of providing new housing units to replace the obsolete housing stock. Self-help was clearly less relevant in meeting this particular need.

The organisational characteristic of CDP which derived most directly from these Home Office assumptions was the small area basis on which the projects were set up. This was a major constraint.
in that, although it quickly became clear to most of the Projects' that the Social Services issues, to
which they had been linked in the minds of the Local Authorities, could be confronted at a Ward or
Neighbourhood level, solution of the much more fundamental disadvantages suffered by the CDP
areas could not be tackled at a level so far removed from that at which the basic decisions were
being made. Indeed not only did the small area approach prevent CDP's from making an effective
input to the decision-making process in respect of major matters it also made it very difficult for
Projects' to avoid operating in a way which suggested the very pathological approach which they
were in the process of rejecting. Thus even those Projects' which were most vehement about the
ineffectiveness of the small area approach were led into activities which they realised were at best,
marginal to the problems of their area. Whatever the value of small area experiments in other fields,
application of this framework to CDP provided a dilemma and coping with this dilemma had been a
central feature of the CDP experience.

From the outset of the Project in Southwark the assumptions made by the Home Office and
accepted by the Local Authority led to a view of the Project and how it was to operate which
proved to be unhelpful. The early analysis of the Brunel Research Team indicated that
redevelopment was the most important issue for local people and thereafter the Project focused
attention on the consequences of the planning blight which had by then been in force for about five
years in Newington.

This emphasis on planning and housing issues surprised both members and officers of the Council.
The belief that CDP would concern itself with Social Service issues had led to the initial acceptance
of the Home Office proposal. From both the members and officers point of view the idea of a team
which sought ways to reduce the burden on the Council of the people who made use of Social
Services was an attractive one, particularly as there was somewhat ambivalent feelings towards these
clients anyway. Even the Social Services Department itself could give a qualified welcome to any
experiment which might ease the enormous everyday pressure on the Department's staff.

Concentration by the Project on planning and housing issues did not meet with such a positive
response. Instead of reducing pressures through self help schemes CDP released much of the tension
and frustration that existed in Newington. The self help principles which might have applied for
Social Services became transformed into the group demands for participation in planning the
redevelopment process for the ward. Organisation round this issue proved very straight-forward. For
the great majority of people the question was not the presently fashionable one of whether the
property should be redeveloped or rehabilitated but instead one of where and when they would be
rehoused and how the area was to be maintained in the short term. A large number of resident's
groups sprang up and although their long term effectiveness was always in doubt the early
enthusiasm and commitment was considerable. An exhibition was organised at the CDP offices to
show local people the Council's plans for the area and over a two week period, some 900 people
visited this exhibition.

The Growth of Conflict

The history of the six months after the exhibition seems to have been one of conflict between the
Project and the local authority. The reasons for this are still not entirely clear although they do
seem to be associated at least partly with the misleading assumptions on which the Project had been
accepted by Southwark. In addition the exhibition and its aftermath seemed to have left certain
Local Council members feeling that CDP was undermining their position.

The opposition from Council members to CDP's attempts to confront the vital redevelopment issue
was centred on the then Chairman of the Planning Committee who was a Newington Ward
Councillor who lived in one of the blighted houses about 100 yards from the Project office. The
advent of CDP brought about a situation in which he and other Councillors were under constant
pressure from often angry local groups.
It has to be said that the Council and the local members were, in some respects, in an impossible situation. Newington had been about the most marginal of the major development areas declared in 1965 and the fact it had been included owed much to the efforts of the Planning Committee Chairman. Because of its marginal nature the ward was put at the back of the redevelopment queue and compliance with the demands of Newington residents in 1971 would simply have meant that even worse off development areas in other parts of the borough would have been further postponed. It was therefore argued by the Council that CDP had encouraged community action on the redevelopment issue without being clear as to what the implications of that action were. Nonetheless these caveats simply suggest that the local authority had given very little detailed consideration to the short term consequences of their decision to declare much of Newington a redevelopment area. The way in which CDP exposed this lack of consideration may have been unstructured but the Project was, at most, a catalyst because there seems little doubt about the depth of feeling which existed before CDP came on the scene. In any case it was vital that, whatever the earlier mistakes, the Council reacted to this situation by having an open minded, public examination of the problems. Instead they took the opposite line and basically closed down all lines of communication between the planners on the one hand and the Project and public on the other.

As a result of these events it became the conventional wisdom in the local authority and, for a time, in the Project itself, that CDP had been placed in the wrong area, because of the dominance of the redevelopment issue in Newington. This indicates that the original assumptions concerning CDP involvement with social service problems still persisted and explains the residual battles that had to be fought throughout the life of the Project to get CDP initiatives accepted in housing, planning and other aspects of local authority work.

In addition to the problems arising from misplaced assumptions it is worth noting the added constraints which existed for the local Projects. Firstly there was a considerable time lag between the original conception of the CDP idea and its implementation. During that time the official at the Home Office who was responsible for CDP’s died and the officers in the Borough Council who had been most involved retired or moved on. The Southwark Project, and this problem was common to all CDP’s, therefore began in a situation where the principal officers in the Local Authority were not the ones who were originally responsible for the Project being brought to Southwark.

Secondly the Home Office had stated in the 1969 document – ‘CDP A General Outline’ that ‘the organisation of Local Authorities into departments with strictly defined terms of reference was a major dysfunctional factor in the analysis and meeting of social need by Local Authorities’. It was hoped that CDP would contribute towards a breakdown of these departmental barriers. However given the emphasis on a pathological definition of deprivation it was perhaps inevitable that the Southwark CDP Research Team began by examining the organisation of Social Services provision in the Borough. They looked at both the Childrens and Welfare Departments, but this was not a good time to examine the problems of organisation that existed in the agencies as they were then under threat of major re-organisation. With the passing of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 the various welfare agencies were to be combined to create the Social Services Department. This reorganisation on a large scale was a very disrupting factor and the timing of CDP in that it co-incided with this period was unfortunate.

After the first eighteen months the Southwark CDP found itself in a difficult position. Aware of the inadequacy of the brief they and the local authority had been given in the first place they were unable to replace it with their own conception of community development because of the opposition from the borough council. The frustration for the Research Team in particular was enormous because they were at one and the same time under pressure from the Action Team to provide the support which was required on matters like the redevelopment issue but barred from a working relationship with the council which was necessary if they were to perform that role effectively.

The difficulties with the local authority were greatly exacerbated by the failure of the two teams to discover some ‘modus operandi’ for an effective relationship. This failure was in no way peculiar to
Southwark. Indeed the tensions that grew up have been observed in almost all neighbourhood projects which have included an action and research element. This aspect of CDP is examined in appendix 'B'.

There were perhaps three possible courses of action in this situation. The first was to admit that, given the constraints, nothing positive was likely to come out of the Projects' work and that it should be ended. This was the conclusion which the Research Team came to in early 1972 and it was also implicit in the Action Team leader's decision to resign in April 1972.

The withdrawal of the Research Team and the Action Team Leader precluded the second possibility which would only have been possible if a carefully defined strategy had been imposed. With such leadership it might have been feasible to make use of the opportunities which did exist at that time though they were largely unrecognised. In other words the evolution of a new strategy was a possibility as is shown by the work of the team that came together in the last three years. We shall indicate what these opportunities were and how they were used when we discuss the working methods developed during the second phase of the Project.

The Retreat into Community Services

The third possibility for CDP in Newington in 1972 was that the team would fragment into different service programmes which were mostly individual or client group based. The tendency for this fragmentation to occur is in any case very strong in projects like CDP. In the absence of fully understood objectives there are bound to be pressures on locally based community workers to be seen to be making some impact even if they are aware that the action they are taking is by no means central to the real problems of the neighbourhood in which they are operating. Without any leadership or independent questioning of methods it was perhaps inevitable that the remaining team members would succumb to such pressures. The adoption of such activities also contributed to the breakdown in action/research relations as the Research Team felt that much of the Action Team did not merit a substantial research input.

A number of the CDP activities demonstrate how the idea of an overall strategy receded. For example the initial analysis of the needs of the ward had indicated that pensioners were particularly vulnerable in a redevelopment area. It was felt likely that the effect of the process of redevelopment on the neighbourhood as a whole including the rundown in consumer services and the disappearance of supportive family networks could have special dangers for old people living on their own. As a result it was decided to set up a section of the team to concentrate on the interests of the elderly.

It soon became apparent that pressure to change the redevelopment procedure to accommodate the needs of the elderly would be strongly resisted within the local authority. As a result the original strategy tended to be down-graded in favour of an approach where the problems of the elderly in connection with re-development were dealt with on a case by case basis. Attention was focussed on ameliorating specific individual problems rather than attempting to effect the process as a whole. This service-based approach very much accorded with the Borough Council's conception of CDP and received their support. There was therefore considerable pressure on the Project to elevate what was properly one of the goals of CDP into the major goal.

Similar comments can be made about the methods and experience of the Project in respect of education and play policies. In the course of their early work the Research Team had produced evidence (albeit only weakly supported) that the main concern of mothers with children was still with housing problems and facilities for the school age children of working mothers. Once again the need to establish credibility through action may have been the factor which led the Action Team to pay little heed to the information produced from the survey and to turn instead to topics which it was felt that CDP might be able to get some response on from the local authorities. The approach taken by the education team which was set up also seemed to have been basically derived from the
findings and recommendations of the Plowden Committee as made in its report on 'Children and their Primary Schools 1967' and subsequently tested by the Educational Priority Area initiatives. The approach is typified by the policy of 'positive discrimination' which Plowden specifically postulated as the best means for the end sought, namely greater equality of educational opportunity in terms of social class than policies to date had apparently been able to achieve.

Once again the methods used by the Project to cope with educational deprivation have concentrated on the education process itself along with the related topic of leisure and recreation facilities for children. The limited scope of such an approach has always been apparent to the team members, who were well aware that environmental factors such as poor housing were of considerable importance and that the unresponsiveness of the local authority to the projects attempts to confront the housing issues severely reduced the potential effectiveness of the other component parts of the action strategy. In this connection it is interesting to note that the involvement of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) as co-sponsors of the Action Programme with Southwark Council with an equal financial commitment, came at a time when the Project was encountering considerable resistance from Southwark to the authorisation of expenditure for innovative work. The ability to involve another Authority at this stage (June 1971) was important in allowing some work to get underway and the Project to gather some momentum, although it seems to have arisen as much from financial expediency as from perceptions of need within the neighbourhood. This also may account for the fact that EPA lines were followed even though much of the analysis of work already undertaken within EPA was not then available. It was not therefore realised just how narrow the potential gains were from a strategy which at its most far reaching tried to link the home and school and to involve parents in their children's experience of school. As with the elderly project the conclusion must be that, although the type of intervention adopted by Southwark CDP in the education field can at best achieve marginal changes and improve the day to day experience of local children, such action cannot constitute a significant contribution towards tackling the poverty and deprivation which are functions of the overall social structure. At worst this approach may only provide support for the status quo. For example the effect of the appointment of a Home/School Officer may be seen as a means of institutionalising the gap between home and school rather than a means of removing that gap.

This discussion of the education and elderly programmes should not be taken to suggest that no work was done in the housing field. In fact the first officer appointed for the Project team was a local Public Health Inspector who spent most of his time dealing with housing problems. However partly because of the nature of his experience as a PHI and partly because of the lack of clarity in the Projects' objectives the work of this officer, though often invaluable to the small number of individuals with whom he dealt, was, if anything, counterproductive to the development of an overall strategy for the whole Project. The PHI's skills were available to any of those who knew of his existence and many of the initiatives he took and the demands he encouraged further alienated the local authority. The Project was accused, often with justification, of stirring up demands rather than responding to demands worked out by local residents. Often, of course, these demands were well founded but the manner in which they were made allowed the council to more easily ignore those it wished to and, by providing constant pinpricks of irritation to the members and officers diverted attention from a more considered but ultimately more far reaching examination of the way in which the resources of the Council were utilized.

The experience of the first two years of the Project indicated to the second Team Leader and the Research Team from the Polytechnic of the South Bank two important issues which needed to be resolved if CDP was to make any progress. Firstly it was necessary to work out some means by which the Action and Research Teams could complement each other, rather than being seen as having potentially conflicting roles. Secondly, it was clear that working methods had to be evolved which recognised the limitations of CDP but made use of what opportunities existed in the structure which had been set up. This mean abandoning those assumptions which had proved counterproductive and imposing a structure on the various fragments of the team which had continued to operate in the period before the second Team Leader took up his post. It is the attempt to achieve these two objectives and the theory on which this attempt was based that forms the core of this report.
Once the second Research Team was installed at the beginning of 1974 it was possible to take stock of the Southwark Project and lay a foundation on which the work could be re-constructed. Until this time, within the Action Team priority had been given to maintaining and consolidating the network of neighbourhood services initiated under the first Action Team Leader. Details of these services, and comments on their development are contained in Appendix A, where they are set out chronologically. Clearly, however, it was not intended that CDP should be only a provider of supplementary neighbourhood service programmes if it was to fulfill its original brief of seeking new solutions to the problems of deprivation. It was then the task of the Research Team to re-examine the original concepts in order that the more fundamental issues could be dealt with. As a first step it was necessary to obtain an understanding of the nature of the area which had been chosen for the Project. It was anticipated that this would lead directly to an appreciation of the nature of the ‘deprivation’ existing in Newington and how this might be dealt with through an initiative such as CDP. This section of the Project is concerned with: the difficulties felt to be endemic in the conventional method of drawing up an Area Profile; a description of the Project Neighbourhood to provide the reader with some impression of its character; and finally the concept of deprivation accepted within the Project on which future thinking and planning was based.

The Misleading Profile

Conventionally an area profile is compiled from sample survey data which indicates physical features such as housing conditions and amenities open space and leisure facilities and also demographic variables including occupational status, household composition, age and sex. It is essential to realise, however, that such a profile is not an exhaustive description of an area but is simply one description of an environmental structure or framework, often only at a particular point in time. In other words no inferences can necessarily be drawn from the profile as to how that environment functions as a system. Nor can such a profile indicate how the environment interacts with the people who are using it whose attitudes towards it require more careful scrutiny.

In examining any area profile it is worth remembering that the methodology used to obtain the data and hence the results obtained and the understanding derived from that will necessarily reflect the overall purposes of the exercise. In other words it is essential that aims and objectives are understood and acknowledged because an area profile will inevitably reflect the value judgements of those compiling it. As well as the underlying purposes each stage of the process of data collection and analysis involves decision-making which in the end must be subjective.

It is, in fact, the aims and objectives of the exercise for which an area profile is being devised that can be of particular significance in influencing, if not actually determining, the form and content of that profile. This is because the reasons for an area having been selected for description and explanation will often have included the feeling, at least on the part of those with decision-taking and policy-making powers, that it in some sense constitutes a political embarrassment or threat to social order. To paraphrase C. Wright Mills (The Sociological Imagination, Pelican Books, 1970, pp.14-15), what were hitherto perceived as private troubles have come to be regarded as public issues. This process of identification can prove very important, in as much as the subsequent task of description becomes in effect a search for justification of preconceptions as to need, a danger all the more likely where the initiative has come from an agency already committed to particular policies.
Certainly one, if not the, major difficulty for the Home Office’s Community Development Projects has been the apparent requirement to confirm initial assumptions which their work led them increasingly to find untenable. Meanwhile, of course, all too many planners in particular still support a myth of ‘objectivity’ in describing the areas which are their professional concern.

Clearly in the present instance, the working context of Southwark CDP must inevitably constitute a major element in any picture drawn by the Project of the Newington area. In other words such a profile has to be viewed first and foremost in the light of the Projects own understanding of ‘urban deprivation’ and of community development as a means of tackling it. Thus CDP was launched on the supposition that ‘deprivation’ was a phenomenon to be accounted for as a condition pertaining to particular individuals of families constituting a deviant or pathological minority in a society whose own health was not questioned. These people were thought, moreover, to be concentrated in small areas then identifiable by their residence in them to such a degree that they could be conveniently reached on a ‘deprived area’ basis as objects of ‘positive discrimination’ in their favour. The Projects themselves, however, have sought to demonstrate both the theoretical weaknesses and practical limitations of this understanding.

An Impression of Newington

Rejection of the conventional approach implies the need to produce new definitions of central concepts like deprivation. These definitions would become key determinants of the sort of data which would be considered necessary for a new type of area profile. In subsequent sections these concepts will be examined in detail. At this stage the facts which are presented are designed to give an impression of the type of area in which the Project was operating. Although this draws on data from conventional sources it does not seek to throw up indicators which might show Newington to be especially badly off in particular respects. Indeed the lasting impression is of a very typical, decaying but stable inner city area. For convenience the description of Newington has been divided into six sections under the following heads; Administrative Structure, Location, Economic Activity, Housing, Education, Leisure.

Administrative Structure

As with all the Inner London Boroughs the system through which government is administered is complicated and tends to be confusing to residents. In addition to the nationally administered services – power, man-power and supplementary benefits etc. – local government is divided between three separate bodies. The Greater London Council (GLC) is responsible for Strategic Planning, major road networks, and some housing; Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) for educational and youth service provision; London Borough of Southwark Council (LBS) covers the full range of services, except education, and includes housing, social services, planning control, refuse collection, leisure and recreation etc. The fact that the Borough Council is responsible for the collection of rates levied on behalf of the other two bodies in addition to that levied on its own behalf is a source of further confusion to residents.

As far as the Project Area was concerned it was not only the complexity of the arrangements that was important but also the nature and character of the bodies administering the various services. We have already seen that the attempts by the original Project Leader to involve ILEA were not based on perceptions of need within the neighbourhood but rather on the ability of this rather remote body, concerned with the educational need of the whole of Inner London, to be prepared to authorise expenditure for innovatory work (Chapter 1 page 11). This demonstrates the importance to residents of the differing administrative structure, as it controls the way in which resources are made available to the neighbourhood. Thus although it may be felt that an Authority with a wide area of jurisdiction might be a more appropriate sponsor for an experimental community project, in fact the authority’s remoteness may have particular disadvantages for the neighbourhood itself. A simple illustration of this in the Project Area related to an area of housing designated for a school site and owned by ILEA. Although it was generally acknowledged that the site was not needed for a school building within the next fifteen years the Authority insisted as a matter of policy on treating the site as if the school were built there within the next two years. A consequence of this decision was that the houses presently on the site were ‘blighted’. As officially they were given only two
years life they could not be modernised by the provision of bathrooms etc. This was especially unfortunate as residents in the next streets, in similar housing, were being moved to new accommodation as part of the Borough Council's redevelopment programme. Even the offer of a nearby alternative site in exchange, by the Borough Council, as a means of them being able to deal with the inadequate housing was not acceptable to ILEA. Thus as a result of the split of powers between the two authorities, residents with identical difficulties in terms of housing, in the same neighbourhood, received very different treatment. This effect of the split in the administrative structure is rather more serious than the other problem, of confusion as to which authority is responsible for which service, which faces residents.

Location
The spatial location of the Project Area, notably its situation within Inner London is of obvious importance with regard to the opportunities actually available to or denied the local population. Needless to say, concern is ultimately with a system of resource exchange and communication which involves an interactive relationship not only between Newington, the Local Borough of Southwark and Inner London, but with the Metropolis generally, the South East Region and beyond. Meanwhile Newington's position within London in particular means that not least relative to the rest of Southwark it enjoys the option of good access to the resources and amenities including jobs, regardless of car ownership, of central London and especially the City and West End. Being adjacent to a major route intersection at the Elephant and Castle, offers a range of public transport facilities — rail, underground and bus. Important though the availability of good public transport networks is, in reality the choice then opened to Newington residents depends upon the extent to which they are able to avail themselves of it and the degree to which the opportunity corresponds with local needs and priorities. For example, it may be that, though there are plenty of jobs in central London, they are not suitable for the type of workforce that exists in Southwark. Moreover, the very convenience of Newington's geographical location is not without disadvantage, for residents are subsequently subject to on-street parking by commuters who leave their vehicles in the area before continuing their journeys by public transport. The geographical relationship of Southwark to London, and of Newington to Southwark is shown in Figure 1. The situation in Newington in planning commitment terms is shown in Figure 2. The separation for purposes of

Figure 1

![Diagram showing the location of the Project Area in relation to Inner London, Southwark, and other boundaries. The diagram includes the City of London, Surrey Docks, and other geographical markers.]
Figure 2

Development Areas
Comprehensive Development Areas
Details Not Decided
Redevelopment
Retention And Improvement
(Agency and proposed start date, where known, shown in brackets)
Improvement Outside Development Areas
General Improvement Area
Properties In Slum Clearance Programme
L.B. Southwark
G.L.C.
(Where redevelopment notation is within Development Areas, slum clearance is not shown separately)
Other Development Sites
Agreed Site Boundaries
Approximate Locations
(See notes on map for details of use)
New Open Space
Road Closure
New Roads (Agreed in principle)
Conservation Area
Listed Buildings
Statutory List (Grade I)
Locally Listed
Ecclesiastical
Tree Preservation Order
Protected Under London Squares Act (1931)

Walworth Commitments Map, September 1976
Commuter and commercial vehicles — Newington residents pay a heavy price for their inner city location.

description of the issue of spatial location from those of, for example, economic activity, housing, and recreational amenities is of course artificial in terms of the life chances and experiences of people in an area. In particular, the fact that Newington is part of Inner London means that it is especially subject to the activities of the City, to competition for scarce land and inflated land prices with their implications for housing provision, and to the shift in employment opportunities from manufacturing to service industries as well as the overall decline in jobs which have been a feature of London’s socio-economic structure in recent years.

Economic activity

In so far as we live in a mixed economy, access to economic activity (production and consumption) is obviously a crucial determinant of any local population’s life chances. Unfortunately, it is in the field of real incomes in particular that adequate data is lacking, the more so on a comprehensive basis or at the level of an area as small as the ward such as Newington. Census data is customarily used, in as much as it is at least gathered on a 100% basis and does comprise not only the ward but also the even smaller enumeration district. However, apart from the fact that the data may be seriously out of date especially for an area subject to rapid demographic changes and also may not in effect have 100% coverage, it does not include information on incomes as such. It is therefore used for what might be called proxy measures, including activity rates, occupational statuses, and the Registrar-General’s socio-economic groupings. These can then be correlated with other data on, for instance, housing facilities and demographic variables such as age, sex, household composition, and stage in family life cycle. It also indicates whether or not people work within the Borough.

If this Census data is then combined with information from the Department of Employment’s Record II (Census) for 1971 and 1973 (corrected to compensate for change in reporting practice by local education authorities as employers), a reasonably useful picture begins to emerge for Newington and its population in terms of economic activity. Thus, for the period June 1971 to
June 1973, Employment Exchange data on the numbers employed in the areas covered by the local Borough, Bermondsey and Camberwell exchanges shows both the overall decline in jobs and the shift from manufacturing to non-manufacturing industries:

### All industries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Employees</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>198,642</td>
<td>132,138</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>183,158</td>
<td>121,398</td>
<td>66.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ie, a fall in jobs of 15,484 (7.8%); Males 8.1%, Females 7.1%

### Manufacturing industries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% of All Employment</th>
<th>Total Employees</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>45,172</td>
<td>29,741</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>34,533</td>
<td>23,414</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ie, a fall in jobs of 10,639 (23.6%); Males 21.3%; Females 27.9%

Southwark Trade Unionists protest about the serious decline in jobs in the area.
Non-manufacturing industries

1971: 68.8% of all employment
1973: 73.0% of all employment

1971: 136,634 employees – Males 86,993; Females 49,641
Male percentage 63.7

1973: 133,752 employees – Males 84,437; Females 49,315
Male percentage 63.1

ie, a fall in jobs of 2,882 (2.1%); Males 2.9%, Females 0.7%

The utility of job opportunities depends, of course, on the extent to which they match the skills available within a local population. Whilst the Census does not list these as such, it does include data on occupational categories in terms of the Registrar-General's socio-economic groups, from which it can be seen that the overwhelming proportion of workers in Newington, as in Southwark, as in Southwark generally, are accustomed to and therefore presumably dependent upon the availability of jobs which are either manual or non-professional white-collar. Indeed, the recent experience of local school-leavers highlights this problem of potential workers who in the past would have found work in, for example, the docks but currently find themselves suited for only the most mundane of service occupations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Newington</th>
<th>Southwark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men Women</td>
<td>Men Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers and Managers</td>
<td>6% 3%</td>
<td>8% 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>2% 0</td>
<td>2% 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non-manual</td>
<td>19% 42%</td>
<td>19% 44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal service, manual, and own account</td>
<td>68% 50%</td>
<td>67% 48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, over a third of these economically active men and women from Newington have so far worked in Southwark (37% in 1966, 35% in 1971), the continued availability of which opportunity will however depend upon policies encouraging industry to remain in or return to the borough, providing the appropriate jobs, including for women, particularly those with children, seeking part-time work.

Economic activity also refers, of course, to consumption as well as production. Newington's location is significant here in that it enables easy access to the West End at least for those able to avail themselves of the opportunity. Groups such as the elderly and mothers at home with young children are certainly likely to be both less mobile and less likely to have sufficient purchasing power, with the result that they are particularly likely to depend upon local facilities. These include the main shopping centres of the Elephant and Castle complex and the Walworth Road (including East Street market), but like many other declining inner city areas there is considerable experience of a fall in consumer provision, particularly of certain types of facility like sub-post offices and chemists.

Housing

The two features which distinguish Newington in terms of housing provision and activity, themselves a function of the major process of redevelopment to which the area has now been subject for some eleven years, are physical blight and population decline. In 1966 the population was 17,410, 6% of the borough total, while by 1971 it had fallen to 13,595 (5%) and still falling as
Doddington Grove – Southwark’s earliest estate. Unmodernised and deteriorating.

Council Housing – Part of the Brandon Estate originally a G.L.C. show estate built in the 1950’s. Not now regarded as suitable for families although the recipient of architectural awards in its time.
a result of clearance which has yet to be followed by rebuilding. As for physical environment, this is typified by old and grimy buildings interspersed with more recent local authority construction. Perhaps the main characteristic of the area is that it is 'residual' rather than 'transitional', characterised by the insufficiency of the deteriorating buildings themselves but also by the fact that generally speaking families have lived over a lengthy period of time in the ward, there is a very small immigrant population and in a sense the area is more typical of what we might expect to find in a small, declining industrial town rather than the highly volatile centre of a major city.

Whereas at the inception of CDP the majority of local residents were private tenants, by the end of the project they were local authority tenants as a result of compulsory purchase prior to clearance or possibly rehabilitation. In other words, having hitherto been dependent upon access to the market if they wished either to improve their housing situation or move elsewhere, perhaps in search of employment, they are now dependent upon local authority policies and provision. The issues of deprivation and access, in other words, now refer to their right to participate in the redevelopment process which has been imposed upon them and in which they are inextricably entwined. It is this process of redevelopment which is the definitive factor, not the incidence of housing conditions or amenities as such, although these are customarily used to describe an area in terms of 'deprivation' not least because the details are available from the Census. Lack of amenities and poor structural conditions are of course important, and it was these which quite properly generated the allocation of resources comprised in the decision to redevelop. Nonetheless, although the 1966 Census showed that only a minority of households had all basic amenities Newington was put at the end of the very long redevelopment queue because conditions were so much worse elsewhere.

The inadequacy of statistics which show only proportions of tenants without particular household amenities is also demonstrated by the change in tenure patterns and the progress of redevelopment. In comparatively few years, lack of basic amenities will be very much the exception in Newington but deprivation in housing will not by any means have disappeared. The ability of local people to demand and receive high quality housing (which will be much more difficult to define statistically than simply counting WCs) will still be of paramount importance.

For example, it has become clear in the work of CDP that the quality of Council housing varied substantially depending on the time when it was built. This is not simply a matter of deterioration through age but is related to the generosity or otherwise of the subsidies available at any given time which affected both the density at which people now live and the population structure of individual council estates. Other analyses have suggested that particular types of construction, notably tower blocks, result in a severely diminished quality of life for residents. The Southwark research suggests that this can be over stated but there can be little question that the incidence in Newington and in the surrounding area of enormous, high density estates in which families with children are living in tower blocks constitutes a form of deprivation.

Similarly a factor which takes on increasing importance to residents as the proportion of Council owned dwellings rises in Southwark is the policy of the Councils themselves. Depending on which of the Authorities, GLC or LBS owned their accommodation residents in Newington were subject to very different treatment on such important matters as rents, caretaking system, and availability of access to management and councillors to deal with grievances. As might be expected the GLC tenants tended to be at a distinct disadvantage in dealing with their landlord whose area of jurisdiction was the whole of London and whose system of mobile caretakers removed a point of easy access to the Authority which had been provided by the resident caretaker. Relatively small differences in housing management policy tended to have considerable impact on the daily lives of residents. Control of vandalism, frequency of repair, support to residents' associations, became major issues which were not reflected in any simple catalogue of the physical state of the premises as presented in the traditional area profile and it was noticeable that many features of a paternalistic housing management approach evident in both LBS and GLC policy, came to be seen as problems endemic to municipalised housing rather than merely problems of management policy. With the renewal of the housing stock, these issues of housing management and degree of involvement of
tenants in decision-making assumes crucial importance. Otherwise the residents of Newington were likely to move from a situation of serious lack of physical amenities such as bathrooms etc, into one where they had little control over their accommodation or its surrounding environment, with the type of problems and disaffection now well known on large council estates.

Education
At primary level Newington was served by three ILEA and one Church of England school. On the Plowden index used by ILEA the three schools were regarded as meeting a level of need which was average for ILEA as a whole. In contrast the Church of England School scored higher on this index and was accorded some priority in resource allocation. This was despite the fact that it did not appear to take an undue proportion of children with special difficulties and had modern buildings and a more pleasant setting than two of the ILEA schools. The fact that one school could be given priority in what was largely a homogeneous neighbourhood in terms of income and social class emphasised the need to question the use of this type of ‘indicator’. As Secondary Education is not organised on a neighbourhood basis in London, it was felt appropriate that a project such as CDP with its neighbourhood focus could most appropriately be concentrated on the Primary schools.

At this level there appeared to be two major problem areas, the first involved improvements to the service so that within its own terms it could more effectively deal with local children. This aspect of the work was dealt with through an Action Team Programme based on work developed in the Educational Priority Area Projects and is detailed in Appendix A. The other problem area related to the broader issue of ‘control’ and investigation of ways in which the Educational System might serve wider community needs. Although ILEA have begun the debate on transforming the service into a Community Education Service there is little evidence of concrete change at the local level. In Newington there remained: the problem caused by the remoteness of the ILEA itself; head teachers held total control of their schools; expensive school buildings and equipment lay idle, in an area lacking many facilities for leisure and recreation, for evenings, weekends and school vacations. It was clearly unsatisfactory that what was one of the major areas of public investment in Newington should continue to be used in this narrow and inflexible manner.

Leisure and Recreation
With a density of 200 persons per acre and lacking any open space there was a deficiency in provision for outdoor leisure and recreation of children. Some relief was offered by the nearby public park across the Borough boundary in Lambeth but opportunities to visit it were restricted for children in the younger age range. The fact that the narrow streets of Newington were used by commuters for parking and as alternative routes to try and avoid congestion on the nearby main intersections during the rush hour, added to the hazards faced by children in the neighbourhood.

A range of alternative facilities to compensate for this deficiency in open space was not easy to arrange because of the multiplicity of bodies both statutory and voluntary, formal and informal, involved in this field of work. Traditionally the Local Authority and ILEA had tended to concentrate on providing direct services of the more formal kind. These included after-school play centres, evening classes, youth clubs for those over 13 years, One O’clock clubs for toddlers, and play areas on housing estates. In addition grants are available from numerous sources for leisure and recreation activities organised by voluntary bodies. The source of the grant will vary according to the type of activity and group it is intended to serve. In this situation it is crucial to know which is the appropriate body to approach for funds, and the correct time to make the approach. Funding agencies range from the various departments within ILEA various committees within the Borough Council, various Ministries at Central Government Level and a host of Charitable Societies. The complexity of this situation acts as a barrier to many worthwhile projects and often results in funds being obtained by those who are aware of how the system is operated rather than on the merits of a particular scheme needing funds.

Against this background of potential help for those unable or unwilling to rely on formal and commercial provision for leisure and recreation (disco, pubs, bingo etc) — and overwhelmingly this included children and the elderly — within Newington three main areas of difficulty needed to be
A deficiency in the provision for outdoor leisure was a marked feature of Newington. Tackled. These were: expanding the use of existing provision to allow more flexibility, as with library, youth club, and school premises; developing potential resources presently unused, as with derelict sites and disused houses awaiting redevelopment and involving parents in leadership roles; and finally some body needed to be created to take on responsibility for overall policy and rational use of available funds.

This brief sketch of Newington conveys an impression of the context in which Southwark CDP was placed. With its stable, in terms of length of residence, working class population and choice of accommodation between council estates and decayed privately rented terraces, it was typical of much of Southwark and presented an interesting test-bed for a project such as CDP. In the past similar exercises have concentrated on neighbourhoods with the more dramatic manifestations of inner city problems — large houses in multi-occupation, racial ghetto areas, large numbers of families lacking one parent and reliant on social security etc. In such areas pressure on the welfare services tended to obscure other aspects of the problem. In Newington emphasis on welfare work was clearly not appropriate and such need as there was could be dealt with through the service orientated work of the programme instituted by the first Action Team Leader.

There still remained, however, the majority of the people in Newington, and hence in Southwark, who although not being reliant on welfare services or payments still suffered the problems of the inner city area — lack of adequate housing, reducing job opportunities for unskilled, insufficient investment in schools, open space and leisure amenities, etc. In order to deal with the issues on this scale it was necessary for Southwark CDP to re-examine the basic concept of deprivation and build upon findings already available from the Department of the Environment and Education Priority Area Projects which questioned approaches that depended upon the view that problems were sufficiently concentrated geographically for solutions to be found in ‘positive discrimination’.

In the work at the Department of Environment the point was particularly made that the geographical distribution of small areas with large proportions of their populations deprived ... is
not the same thing as the distribution of deprived individuals' (Working notes on Census Indicators, No. 6, Great Britain) although this is still a commonly held fallacy. In addition, this exercise found anyway that the degree of spatial concentration of at least individual indicators of 'deprivation' was actually quite low, a finding which is clearly important if policies aimed at the symptoms of personal deprivation continue to be area based in terms of target populations. Moreover, this problem is not solved by simply extending the size of the area selected, as in the case of the proposed Comprehensive Community Projects. One of the important findings that emerged from the Educational Priority Area projects was likewise the inevitability of failing to reach some, even the majority, of children defined as at risk if policies aimed at meeting their needs are based either upon schools or areas — unless all are included, clearly a logical impossibility for a strategy of discrimination. Thus, examination of the Inner London Education Authority’s ‘positive discrimination’ policy revealed that ‘Although the proportion of children in EPA schools in the ILEA who were at risk of being disadvantaged was higher than in the total population of the Authority, they were outnumbered, even in the EPA schools, by children who were not at risk . . . (and) . . . although risk was high in EPA schools, the total number of children at risk was far higher outside them’ (J. H. Barnes, ‘A Solution to Whose Problem?’, in H. Glennerster and S. Hatch, ‘Positive Discrimination and Inequality’ Fabian Research Series 314 March 1974 p.12).

In other words, in so far as ‘deprivation’ is defined and then identified in terms of indices relating to people, such as socio-economic groupings or immigrant status (although the ILEA’s EPA index also included environmental variables, of course, the Plowden Report from which EPA thinking was derived never appeared to be quite sure whether the problem was one of physical living conditions or human behaviour), a policy of positive discrimination on the basis of preselected small areas must be both ineffective and wasteful. Ineffective as a means of reaching the people defined as in need, wasteful of scarce resources in as much as it includes people not so defined. At best, such an approach can only be one small part of any policy to tackle the problems of poverty and deprivation although they may meanwhile go some way to compensating for the effects of these processes.

Defining Deprivation

In searching for an alternative definition of deprivation, the problem remains of how to arrive at a definition which can be translated into testable measures of an environment over time. Clearly it is necessary to reflect those provisions and opportunities which determine the welfare and prosperity of local people. A number of difficulties of identification and measurement arise, however, and in addition there are the possibly even more important problems of the meaning then attributable to an area profile. Emphasis has already been laid on the danger of drawing inferences from such images, a warning that must apply particularly where associations are found of environmental and behavioural variables. For such a correlation, real as it might demonstrably be, can arise from each being a function of a third variable rather than because of any direct, let alone causal, relationship between the first two. Much would depend, in a given area, upon the incidence of other factors such as age, sex, stage in family life cycle, occupational skill, and real income or purchasing power. Thus in a South coast seaside town, for example, with a high proportion of its population retired from skilled or professional jobs and with no dependent children, low rates of economic activity could not be taken as necessarily suggesting, say poor housing conditions even though in other instances these might be correlated (perhaps as a function of low occupational status or large family size). In other words, statistical association can be useful guides to potentially useful avenues of further investigation, but cannot be assumed as explanatory statements in their own right. Added to these limitations and pitfalls bound up with the use of conventional economic and social indicators, was a questioning of the importance which should be attached to the characteristics of the local population. It seemed that under the present economic system, with its unequal distribution of goods and services, that there are problems endemic to certain areas which their populations will face regardless of personal adequacy. This is not to ignore that there are individuals and groups in need of welfare services but rather that meeting these needs can provide only a very limited and
inadequate solution. To deal with these points the Project sought to promote an understanding of
the process of deprivation not in terms of population characteristics but in a way which makes clear
that deprivation is defined by the socio-economic system of which it is a constituent expression.

Deprivation was then viewed as the gap or range of differences separating those who can and those
who cannot secure for themselves the living conditions generally regarded as necessary in a
particular society at any point in time. This is not to deny individual preferences and values — the
distinction is not between those who, for example, choose to eat breakfast and those who choose
not to, but between those who are able to act on their choice to eat it and those who, whatever
their wishes or needs, have insufficient resources to enable them to eat it. In other words,
depprivation is about relative access to and command of resources within the structure of
opportunities that comprises our society. The most obvious resource with which we are concerned
is earned income and the purchasing power that it confers. Equally important, however, are the
areas of public opportunity such as housing, education, health and welfare, leisure and recreation,
of an appropriate amount and kind. The symptoms of deprivation may thus be many (e.g. financial,
cultural, psychological), often found in combination and with the one reinforcing the other to
produce an all-embracing condition often impossible to resolve without a concerted attack on all
fronts. Basically, what we are really discussing is a political condition in the sense of relative
discrepancies of power within the existing structure of opportunities, discrepancies which at the
extreme leave a bottom stratum of society unable to secure even a minimum of those means which
the rest of society defines as reasonably necessary.

Expressed concretely the definition adopted by the Project was —

Deprivation is seen as an unjustifiable gap between those who can and those who cannot secure for
themselves the living conditions and standards generally regarded as necessary in a particular society
at any point in time. That is to say, deprivation is about relative access to and control over resources
within the structure of opportunities that comprises our society.

The 'gap' cited in defining deprivation, the basic relationship between the 'haves' and 'have nots',
the governors and the governed, is of course a function of the overall political structure of British
Society. In that sense, as the Department of the Environment investigations suggested, any small
area within the country is more or less deprived. However the process is likely to be expressed most
acutely in the large urban and industrial conurbations where pressures concerning competing land
use tend to be resolved against the interest of the working class people residing there and the
complex structure and scale of the decision-making involved also militates against any effective
expression of view of the residents of such inner city neighbourhoods.

Thus not only Newington but the greater part of Southwark and indeed Inner London may be seen
to be deprived, in that they demonstrate and are subject to structural changes in those areas of life
which are central to the well-being of their people. In this respect Newington is very typical of Inner
London. The overall decline in employment opportunities and the shift on their composition from
manufacturing to service, together with the widespread policies of redevelopment and housing
relocation are the major examples of these structural changes.

An understanding of deprivation was the most fundamental requirement for a team working in the
local neighbourhood context. It was equally important, however, to clarify the objectives of this
neighbourhood project particularly as a good deal of what is known as community work is
undertaken without a methodological framework within which the work can be assessed. The next
section on the theory and practice of the work attempts to fill this gap.
3 Community Development
In theory and practice

The Myth of 'Community'

With the production of a clear definition of 'deprivation', agreed by the Action Team Leader, and the Polytechnic of the South Bank Research Team, the Project was provided with a base from which the work programme could be re-constructed. The next stage involved the examination of further key concepts in order to derive a tight overall framework for the action programme. This had been lacking hitherto as in the absence of a research team input, the action programme had been formulated from a loose set of ad hoc assumptions and intuitive judgements. Central to such a framework was the need to indicate what, within Southwark CDP, was meant by the terms 'community' and 'community development'. Both are in common usage and widely used in the original documents setting out the objectives and strategy of CDP. An unfortunate consequence of common usage of such terms is the loss of precise meaning which they may have had originally. It was therefore necessary to examine them both in greater detail so that confusion might be avoided and common ground arrived at between action and research on how 'deprivation', as now defined might be dealt with through a programme such as CDP.

Turning first to the concept of community, from even the most superficial analysis it was increasingly clear that it was being used in a number of confusing and ill defined ways. Often, the suppositions made served only to support a representation of the idea which, while it might have been appropriate to some working class neighbourhoods in the nineteenth or early twentieth century could not be said to correspond with contemporary society. Thus 'community' can be used to denote a relationship voluntarily entered into and perhaps better described by the term 'communality' as in 'the academic community' or the phrase 'community of interest'. Secondly, it is often used as a loose synonym for 'neighbourhood', coupled with at least implicit assumptions that more or less systemic, more or less locally determined patterns of social relationships can be observed within this geographical area. Thirdly, the term 'community' is used adjectivally as in 'community work' or 'community development', referring both to a particular locality which is the focus of the work and to an ideal in collective living the attainment of which is the overall goal of that work.

These fairly concrete uses of the term 'community' have, however, increasingly been replaced by a much more abstract and more mystifying usage. The frequency with which phrases like 'a sense of community' or 'a lack of community spirit' were used by Council Officers and Members as well as local residents in Newington, and the fact that such phrases were used in the course of making very subjective judgements about the area and its occupants, indicated to the Research Team that not only did the term 'community' refer to an abstraction but that that abstraction was so entangled with ideological preferences as to itself virtually constitute an ideology. It became clear, in other words, that 'community' has first and foremost to be recognised and understood as a symbol rather than an object of observation, as a perception of or way of experiencing the world and, as such, particular rather than universal in its meaning. It derives, by definition, from moral judgement and political choice, so that subjective assessments and decisions must be accepted as implicit in the concept and intrinsic to its usage. Furthermore, these valuations refer on the one hand to perceived social and political structures and, on the other hand, to the powers and capacities of human beings.
Defining 'community'

It was this type of understanding of the term 'community' which led many people, including some of the most powerful figures in Southwark's political system, to attach major importance to the idea that council policy should be directed towards recreating 'a sense of community'. The CDP Research Team on the other hand saw their task as one of providing a definition in terms of locally relevant social systems, in the functional sense, which would be appropriate to contemporary urban-industrial society and which would in particular shift the debate beyond the fruitless task of seeking to recreate what some commentators believe were the life styles of traditional working-class neighbourhoods. In other words, how might it be possible to organise on a popular and local basis for such functions as, for example, mutual support in times of crisis, without recreating the constraints which were the concomitant and indeed cause of such collective enterprise.

The Research Team tried to develop a more realistic theoretical framework which returned to a less abstract view of 'community'. It accepted the definition of 'community' which sees it as a local social system providing for the meeting of residents major social needs on a local basis. Such provision depends on the amount of access which local people have to for example, employment, shops, support in times of crisis such as ill-health, social control agencies and other activities necessary in their day to day living. It is access to resources and how that access is determined which is the link between the concepts of 'community' and 'deprivation' so basic to the operation of CDP.

This was then an attempt to replace the former idea of community as a locality in which a set of supportive social relations was sustained, at least partly, by the lack of any alternative resources. These resources now exist in the form of the Welfare State and as such the old idea is no longer tenable. Clearly some local networks of support still exist to some extent, and the Welfare State is by no means all-embracing. Nevertheless it is important that a view appropriate to the contemporary situation is adopted if community development is to have any real meaning.

With the benefit of this new definition it became clear that we should examine the nature and dimensions of the existing structures which determine local access to and command of resources and opportunities. These structures were obviously central to any discussion of the concept of community development with regard to areas such as Newington and the problems of their decline in terms of such access.

Defining 'deprivation'

Furthermore this emphasis on access and those who control access was also basic to the Projects working definition of deprivation —

An unjustifiable gap between those who can and those who cannot secure for themselves the living conditions and standards generally regarded as necessary in a particular society at any point in time. That is to say, deprivation is about relative access to and control over resources within the structure of opportunities that comprises our society.

One result of this work on the concepts of 'community' and 'deprivation' was that it brought the issues into sharper focus and it was impossible not to be very critical of the approach which had been adopted during the first phase of the project. The dangers of this approach are perhaps best summed up in the words of R. E. Pahl — 'when the concept of a culture of poverty is applied only to the poor the onus for change falls too much on them, when, in reality the prime obstacles for the elimination of poverty lie in the economic, political and social structure that operates to increase the wealth of the already affluent'. Local action can thus be seen to make a significant contribution to the process of social change only insofar as that action is designed to effect changes in the controllers of resources rather than in those who receive them.
In summary, then, the three component parts of the re-examination of the role of CDP had come together as far as the Southwark team was concerned during the first year of the Research Team's work. The analysis of deprivation which identified causes which were basic to the structure of our society was backed up by a recognition that community development could only operate effectively if it rejected archaic definitions of the concept of community. Instead community development should be seen as a means of developing an intervention in the social system at the local level such that there is an increase in the access to, or control over, those resources generally regarded as necessary by society at large.

Objectives of community development

The objectives of community development for the Southwark team were therefore:

1. extend the options available to local people in those areas of public provision or responsibility which determine their daily lives, such as housing, employment, the physical environment, social security, welfare, education, leisure and recreation; and

2. strengthen or mobilise the authority and power of people themselves to both obtain and utilise these options, ideally to a self-sustaining degree.

More specifically, realisation of such an approach seemed to demand two distinct but complementary strategies on the action front:

(a) Greater access to and participation in the existing structures of authority and responsibility.

(b) The strengthening or creation of power bases at the local level, as with tenants associations, street groups, parent run playgrounds and the like.

Community Development in this context is a process not necessarily geared to increasing resources but is rather a means of altering the distribution of resources and access to them as between individual groups within society.

One constraint in translating this theory into practice was the ability of the two component parts of the project to establish an effective working relationship. The difficulties inherent in combining Action and Research have been well documented and were experienced in large measure by Southwark Project in its early years. The Report of the Brunel Research Team suggests that there are unavoidable structural conflicts in the roles of Action and Research. The manner in which Southwark Project finally resolved these problems is described in Appendix 'B'.

Community Development in practice

The clarification of the various key concepts with which CDP was concerned did not of itself provide a blueprint for how the project should operate on a day to day basis although it was an essential exercise if a methodology was to be satisfactorily laid down. Certainly the network of services which had meanwhile grown up in the project did not correspond to the revised analysis. In particular, they were aimed at the 'receivers' of resources whereas the Research Team was convinced that only by focussing attention on the 'controllers' of resources could significant progress be made.

Despite this, it would have been wrong to reverse completely the efforts of the various action projects some of which were, in their own terms, quite successful. The inadequacy of existing statutory and voluntary services meant that many of the CDP initiatives were well used by residents and clearly met some need. Moreover the services had helped the Project gain credibility with the Council and had allowed the team to build up a good relationship with the public through the many individuals who had been assisted. In view of this, the dilemma was resolved by maintaining these
services and accepting that they were ameliorative in character but were likely, at best, to make only a marginal impact on those areas of policy change now seen as critical in tackling deprivation. Such services can in fact play a useful role but only as part of an organic approach not as the main thrust of an action strategy. (A full account of the development of these services is contained in Appendix A).

Even with this decision that the local service components would be continued but no longer regarded as central to the problem of dealing with deprivation, the Research Team was still faced with many of the constraints which had caused the Project to become service orientated in the first place. Redevelopment remained the overwhelming concern of the people of Newington and the issue around which most local activity took place. At the same time the Council had still not accepted the legitimacy of the project's operations in this field. CDP had originally responded to this situation by appointing the specialist officer whose role has been discussed in an earlier section. (Chapter I p. 10).

His training as a Public Health Inspector and his subsequent tendency to deal with problems entirely on an individual basis would have been excellent if the project had been intended as a conventional welfare provision but in the context of an attempt to combat deprivation made little headway. The immense interest fostered in the area through the Exhibitions held during the first two years still existed but in a submerged state because of the frustrations which had built up following the Council's unwillingness to allow local people to make any contribution to the planning of redevelopment which was so vital to them.

Nevertheless there were certain positive features of the situation in which the Project found itself in 1974. The changed analysis for instance, allowed the team to make full use of its position within the structure of the local authority. Southwark CDP was responsible to a specially created full Standing Committee of the Council. This meant that constitutionally CDP had equality with the other fields of activity of the Council administered through standing Committees of Council, Housing and Planning etc. This permitted the Action Team Leader to operate as a Chief Officer reporting direct to the Chairman of his Committee rather than having to approach elected Members of the Council through more senior Officers. In the early days the advantages of this arrangement were by no means clear. With the realisation that the main problem confronting CDP was one of access and control of resources and that these depended on the decision-making processes of the local authority, the ability to work within and effect those processes allowed the Southwark Team to test certain propositions to a degree probably not open to most other CDP's.

Moreover the experience of the earlier years had been invaluable in pointing out the pitfalls facing an experiment like CDP. There seemed to be two strategies common to such projects and the Polytechnic Research Team was able to assess the results of both. The first type of action strategy was fairly common in the CDP's generally. A number of projects concentrated on making the resource which they represented available mainly to groups which had an explicit and often deeply felt grievance against the local authority. Though this is certainly an over simplified view of much of the CDP's work there did seem to be a tendency amongst some projects to provide assistance in direct proportion to the antagonism displayed by particular groups towards the local state apparatus. Certainly it is true to say that some projects proclaimed the need to be selective on the basis of the predetermined priorities of the team rather than the expressed needs and anxieties of the local population.

distribution of organised groups with whom the team was working convinced the Southwark Research Team of the danger of the strategy of working with such social change groups. There was a clear tendency to provide more resources for the groups which are best organised we the clearest perspective on the issues involved. In a situation such as that which existed in Newington, where redevelopment was the outstanding issue, there could be no guarantee that this approach would do anything more than advance the cause of the better organised at the expense of local groups.
Elephant and Castle — Modern Shopping Centre — maximum expense, minimum use.
The second possibility for a project was to emphasise the needs of the most acutely disadvantaged people in the area and to work more or less exclusively with them. Indeed, many of the local authorities' existing services are directed towards this group and the CDP schemes which had been set up during the earlier phase of the Southwark Project also tended to concentrate on those who seemed at most risk. This approach was an inappropriate way of responding to problems of a ward where the redevelopment issue predominated but even if this had not been the case the evidence was that such a strategy tends to drive a wedge between groups of tenants, as resentment is built up against those families which seem to be getting extra resources from both statutory and other agencies. Both these methods which concentrate on certain groups or a particular group have extra drawbacks in a redevelopment area. CDP found that redevelopment can be a very divisive issue, both at neighbourhood level where one street may feel aggrieved at being dealt with later than others and, as rehousing begins to be offered, at an individual level also.

A basic principle, then, on which the strategy of the second phase was based, was that all the resources of the project should be generally available to the area's population. The intention of the Project was to provide a neighbourhood resource which would perceive issues of concern to local people in the same way as they themselves do and respond accordingly. This approach is best differentiated from those which were rejected by describing it as 'community development', rather than the 'community action' of the alternative strategies. It might appear that this rejection of the explicitly conflict-orientated approach of community action is a move away from our belief in the need ultimately for fundamental change to deal with the inequalities of our present political and economic system. In fact it was the experience of the Southwark CDP that a decision by a team to be involved only with predefined groups results in the Project dealing in pressure group politics which can only be effective as long as a limited but specific objective is kept in mind. As soon as the objective is attained or, more often in view of the extent to which such an approach tends to
alienate the decision-makers, as soon as it is clear that the objective is not going to be attained, interest in the group collapses. In any case Southwark CDP would not share the view that community development seeks to create a consensus while community action is conflict orientated.

It is important to understand that this analysis is not trying to suggest that community development should be aiming at the growth of consensus on any particular issue. Rather, we are suggesting that attainment of limited objectives through community action is not fundamentally important if it leaves unchanged the relationship between the governors and the governed and therefore the basic allocation of resources. Indeed, sporadic community action which does not affect the process by which decisions are taken can be positively harmful because of its tendency to leave local groups very exposed. The growth of disaffection with the political process, as opposed to the particular political system, and the firm resolve not to get involved in it is particularly apparent amongst groups in Newington who have experienced the sort of failure to which a community action approach has led them.

The New Role of CDP

Having reached this understanding of what community development should be about, the Project was then faced with the issue of what the Team's attempts to increase local access might mean in terms of the day to day organisation of council services.

The need to encourage local access to and control of resources is partly the result of the growth of a number of specialisms in local authority services (e.g., Town Planning, Social Work, Housing Management) during this century which were themselves the product of social and technological changes. The expansion of the cities has caused an increasing demand for traditional services and the introduction of new ones. A characteristic of this expansion has been an increase in the scale of services and of specialisation of function in order to obtain efficient use of the scarce resources available. However, although specialisation within and between services may be efficient in terms of that particular function, problems arise because human needs do not fall into water-tight compartments. It is therefore necessary to organise the services in such a way that the advantages of specialisation are obtained and the negative consequences minimised. The latter are especially acute where the rigidity that tends to be associated with specialisation is faced by a changing set of demands from the public. It is at this point that Community Development can make a contribution through intervention not only at the point of contact between agency and consumer but also within and between agencies.

The main feature of the Southwark CDP Action Programme was the development of a series of services provided by a team drawn from different backgrounds and disciplines. What was important was that these individual services should be seen as constituent parts of an overall approach and should not be viewed in isolation.

In 1975 the Action and Research teams proposed to the Borough Council that in the long term a successor of the original Project should include three main types of worker; the generalist or front-time worker; the specialist worker; and clerical support services. The generalist worker would act as the first contact with residents and provide a point of entry for those seeking help and advice in its broadest sense. Although such workers need to have a wide knowledge of statutory and voluntary services and inevitably they develop particular skills and knowledge, their primary task in the proposed team would be to provide an informal, welcoming and efficient service in order to engender trust and confidence in the agency by neighbourhood people. Such trust and confidence is a vital ingredient if the users of the service are to increase in number. The value of a generalist worker also lies in the fact that it helps avoid concentration on one particular type of need and the consequent danger of stigmatisation, which restricts the range of people using the service.
In the CDP context of a small local team it can be possible for there to be only generalist workers but this does reduce the impact of the service and the multiplier effect of a multi-disciplinary team is not available. It is very important that hard specialist skills appropriate to the needs of the neighbourhood be readily available, in the form of either immediate availability within the same premises or ready availability from some central source. The ability to call on specialist skills increases the credibility of the service in local eyes and adds to the depth of response which the team can make to any situation. In community development terms the use of specialists such as teachers, lawyers, planners, researchers etc, is important as it extends the options available to residents and strengthens their ability to obtain and utilise these options.

Finally, within a multi-disciplinary team it is necessary to have the appropriate clerical support services. These often perform a dual role of great importance as they not only provide clerical services to members of the team but also provide specialist services to local groups and individuals where such resources are not easily available within the neighbourhood.

The Generalist Component

Information and Advice Service

The basic generalist resource in this type of team is almost bound to be an Advice and Information Service. This provides not only a point of access for the general public to the resources of the community development team itself but also a link to the full range of resources provided by other statutory and voluntary agencies. In Newington where the Project was based in former shop premises, the ‘shop front’ was an essential feature of the Project work. The Advice Service was able to act, in effect, as a clearing house for the needs of residents who contacted the Project. In order that this role can be performed effectively it is important that the Advice Service should be well known and easily accessible both in physical and psychological terms.

The value of the Advice Service lies in its open-ended nature and ability to deal with a wide range of problems and topics. Its effectiveness does not depend upon the encyclopedic knowledge of its workers but rather their sensitivity and ability to link the enquiry with the appropriate area of specialist knowledge and skill. The service must therefore have an action capacity and must not limit itself to a passive provision of information.

Because of the importance of the ‘Generalist Role’ it is vital that the Advice Service as the point of first contact with the general public is able to make a careful diagnosis at that stage and select an appropriate strategy for action. Thus a decision needs to be made as to whether the provision of simple information will suffice; or whether advocacy and support services need to be mobilised; or else the issue raised might be of wider concern and some form of collective action needed. Some illustration of this is given in Figures 3 and 4 which demonstrates both how a particular case was handled by existing services, and how a service organised on generalist/specialist lines might handle the same case.

As the CDP Advice and Information Service was already in being when the re-assessment of the Project produced the revised concept of community development, the way that it functioned did not co-incide with that now envisaged. It is therefore important to look in some detail at the way it has operated in order that the original role and its present function within a multi-disciplinary team can be distinguished. Observations on the early work are based on comments made by the Brunei Research Team.

Initially the advice service was staffed on an ad hoc basis by CDP officers in response to the frequent number of residents calling at CDP seeking information. The numbers accelerated after June 1970 following the exhibition of redevelopment plans for the neighbourhood at CDP premises. At this stage the service was put onto a more formal footing and local residents were recruited and trained to operate the service. The number of callers continued to increase. An indication of the
Difficulties which faced a pensioner seeking help from the existing services

Problem
Man aged 72 years given notice to quit from his furnished accommodation.

Social Services Department Area Office
Social Services unable to assist as he did not qualify for the special accommodation provided by the Department for the elderly. Referred to C.A.B.

British Legion give grant for floor covering

C.A.B. knowing that the man does not qualify for homeless accommodation, seeks a solution in the voluntary sector. As well as writing to voluntary housing groups also writes to British Legion as the man was in the Forces in the 1920's.

C.A.B. Information and Advice Service
Man obtained second-hand bed and furniture
Man arranged connection of gas and electricity
C.A.B. then refer the case to Borough Housing Dept. agree to re-house in a "bed-sitter" owing to "exceptional need".

Borough Housing Dept. agree to re-house in a "bed-sitter" owing to "exceptional need".

Voluntary Housing Group unable to assist

Man REHOUSED

Borough Housing Dept. agree to re-house in a "bed-sitter" owing to "exceptional need".

In the period following October 1972 figures for callers were maintained at virtually the same level. From August 1973 to July 1974, for example, there were 2,342 callers, only marginally below 200 per month. It is interesting that the numbers visiting the Centre remained relatively uniform even
Service procedure and arrangements as recommended by C.D.P.

The generalist staff would have responsibility for linking client with appropriate specialist skill and ensuring service is delivered.

In this case the lawyer will safeguard the client's present position by ensuring security of tenure is observed alternative housing opportunities can then be examined in both local authority and voluntary areas. If re-housing takes place the relevant bodies can be contacted to supply material help.

during the period when the population was reducing considerably through re-development. A break-down of the callers during the August 1973 to July 1974 period reveals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Callers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Redevelopment</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlord/tenant</td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPO/Home Loss</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary Benefits (Pensioners)</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners-general inquiries</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents/Rates</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Utilities</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenants Associations</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Facilities</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax/Indust. Injuries</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem with Neighbour</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although these categories are not water-tight and inevitably owing to the nature of the Project there was some under-counting in the areas of children's and pensioner's needs where specific project workers had their own responsibilities, they do give some indication of the spread of topics covered.
However, in a sense the categories indicated here, while useful for administrative purposes, do not show clearly the types of work undertaken. Looking at the work in this way, there are four main broad categories of work:

(a) Giving information about, or dealing with, complaints against local authority plans and services. The great bulk of these concerned Housing Department but a significant number dealt with Planning and Social Services.

(b) Involving income maintenance by assisting in getting maximum take up of means tested benefits. To the extent that some means tested benefits (eg, rent rebates) are administered by the local authority, there are small areas of overlap with the first category.

(c) Involving issues which relate to services provided by the public utilities and nationalised industries.

(d) Involving issues related to the private sector.

It should be clear that these categories overlap to some extent, as for example where the local authority has to be persuaded to put pressure on a private landlord to do necessary repairs to his property. Nonetheless there is a distinction as to which agency the Centre primarily requires to take the action requested. A feature of the work dealt with by the Centre was that at least half of the total work-load was connected with problems concerning local authority services. It had been anticipated that this would be a controversial aspect of the work in that it necessitated criticism of services provided by the Centre’s employing authority which would result in constraints being imposed on the Centre. In practice, however, although there were different strategies adopted to deal with cases within the different categories there was little reason to feel that changes in the sponsoring arrangements would have effected its mode of operation. It is in any case too facile a view to draw an absolute distinction between the position of a voluntary body and a council sponsored scheme when in both cases the major paymaster is likely to be the local authority. There is no reason to suppose that the position of an Advice Centre Worker concerned about her position as a Council employee is any more inhibited than a worker in a Centre run under the aegis of, for instance, the Council for Social Service, who is worried about whether the local authority’s grant will be renewed.

The view that the Advice Service should remain within the local authority structure was not determined on this dependence/independence issue but rather by the overall approach which was adopted. This contrasted with the position taken by the first Action Team where the view was that ultimately the Advice Service would be hived off. It would become a grant-aided body under the management of residents active in local associations. If the various services initiated within CDP were to be regarded as separate, then there were arguments for dealing with the Advice Service in this way. This was not the case, however, under the approach to Community Development where the Advice Service took over the generalist role within an integrated team. Seen from this perspective, it can be misleading to try and isolate the work of one component part of the team. The important questions needing to be raised extend beyond counting the numbers of those using the Centre, and cataloguing the issues that were raised. It is necessary to know whether the generalist role for the team can be adequately filled by an Advice Centre; is it a useful access point into the public services, can issues be dealt with on an integrated basis with necessary specialist skills being marshalled? A brief summary of some of the work which was undertaken within the four categories already mentioned, will indicate how the generalist role was performed in practice.

**Issues relating to Local Authority Services**

In this area of work three main strategies were used in dealing with issues raised.

1. Provision of straightforward information on the redevelopment process, home loss payments, removal expenses etc. This was extremely important in the Newington area. Indeed given the almost
inevitable lack of detailed information, the suspicions and rumours that are particularly rife and destructive of people's confidence in a redevelopment area and the sheer bulk of the information which was requested it is reasonable to conclude, that on these grounds alone, this type of service is indispensable in any major or redevelopment area.

2 Individual advocacy and support has been developed to quite a large extent in some sectors of the housing field. This occurs when it is necessary to press the local authority after a request for action on a problem has failed to obtain a response. Unless this is a case involving a simple procedure, it is likely to involve the generalist worker seeking the advice of a specialist officer. Thus where a local authority tenant failed to obtain repairs to his accommodation, he was first assisted in putting his request in writing, and finally assisted with advice from Public Health to take out a summons against the Council. Similarly in a situation where a householder was refused a home loss payment, after obtaining legal advice, the matter was referred to the Deputy Town Clerk and the tenant advised of his right to apply to the Courts. In both cases the Authority remedied the situation before the matter was dealt with in Court. In addition to acting as a pressure point, there are also examples where intervention has eased the system of communication with the relevant department. Thus for example the situation with regard to repairs on local Council Estates was improved through the setting up of regular meetings between Advice Service staff and a representative of the District Housing Office.

3 Use of a collective approach is the third strategy open to the advice centre. In this case although the first initiative in bringing together people with common problems may come from the Advice Workers, the task is soon taken over by other members of the community development team. There are of course additional problems in using collective action in respect of re-housing and re-development issues, as residents may find themselves in competition with each other. For example a decision to rehouse one area earlier will almost inevitably mean late rehousing for another area. Aside from these difficulties there was evidence of the critical role that the generalist team, as the point of first entry, plays in the ongoing success of the team as a whole in assisting groups in conflict with the local authority. In the case of one street which was due for re-housing there was a regular flow of callers seeking information on the timing of it. Unfortunately, however, the Council's estimate of the time involved changed considerably and has since remained very imprecise. As a result the credibility of the Centre in that Street was weakened and staff had to begin admitting that there was no hard information on dates. Gradually residents of the street gave up calling at the Centre. This illustrates the danger of an Advice service which sees its role as that of dispensing information which is available in an uncritical way, thus limiting itself to a public relations role on behalf of that Council. It is important for the worker to stand back to some extent and point out that the information that is being provided can only be verified by those who supplied it. The fact that the sequence of events resulted in less use being made of the Advice Service demonstrates that in this case the service was by no means serving as an 'access point'. This situation needed to be handled differently and demanded close support from other members of the Team. If a tenants group had been successfully founded initially then they would have been concerned to obtain definitive information from the Council and could have made some positive response when re-housing dates were changed in mid-stream. Assistance from community workers was needed to avoid the negative situation which was produced.

Income Maintenance Work

A significant minority (20-25%) of the cases dealt with concerned means tested benefits. The bulk of these involved benefits obtainable from the local Social Security Office, though a number are administered through the local authority.

In most cases the provision of simple information was only the first step in the helping process and rarely sufficient in itself. Detailed assistance was necessary for those making application, and this was especially true in the case of pensioners. As a result of circulating information on benefits to local groups and displaying material in the shop window, the number of callers was increased on those particular issues, which indicated the need for practical assistance in this field in addition to widespread publicity of benefits.
The massive upheaval which re-development involves for a neighbourhood has an alienating effect if communication with the authority is not good and residents feel the process is continuing without reference to them.
Initially the workers provided individual advocacy to assist those applying to DHSS and support for those appearing at DHSS Appeal Tribunals. However, owing to the very good relationship which was established between the local DHSS Supplementary Benefits Office Manager, the element of friction was reduced. The fact that DHSS were more receptive to referrals was of considerable benefit to the users of the service.

Attempts to use a collective approach to the problem of benefit take-up were also assisted by the co-operation of the local Supplementary Benefits Office. The Manager was available to address meetings of pensioners arranged by the Project and publicised benefits such as clothing grants which most of the pensioners did not know existed. This sort of work clearly supplemented the work with individuals that the Advice Service undertook.

Dealing with Public Utilities
This work formed only a small part of the total workload and apart from relatively simple information giving centred on the rather insensitive manner in which some public boards discharged their duties. Thus for example after several pensioners had contacted the Project because they found that they had been persuaded to enter hire purchase commitments beyond their financial capability, the Advice Service dealt with the matter both individually and collectively. It was discovered that the Gas Board were sending high pressure salesman into the neighbourhood at the same time as the conversion to Natural Gas was taking place. The elderly proved especially vulnerable to these men and unwisely agreed to purchase new appliances. As a result of representation to the Gas Board not only were the individual complaints dealt with, but also all agreements signed by pensioners were reviewed and they were given the chance to opt out of what was a legally binding agreement. Again this work involved close co-operation between the Advice Centre and the community workers in the Team.

Dealing with the Private Sector
The occasions when the Advice Centre is dealing with private agencies whether they be private landlords or companies are worth looking at separately because the fact that the Centre is not financially tied to the private sector means that the political constraints within which the Centre operates are far less obvious and the staff have been able to develop their method of working to a higher degree. In other words the move from the role of information giving to individual advocacy to support of groups facing common challenges was much steadier. An example will illustrate this fairly clearly.

A street which had originally been part of the Council's development plans was sold to a large Housing Trust. From a situation in which their rights had been fairly clear to them they found themselves with much less security as a result of becoming tenants of a housing association. The trust had decided to move the families, some at very short notice, a considerable distance from the area with no compensation, in order to convert the street into one bedroom units.

Individual tenants began to come into the Advice Centre expressing their anxiety and it soon became apparent that the problem could not be dealt with simply by informing individual tenants of their rights and making sure they got them if only because those rights (now extended under the 1974 Housing Act) were severely limited. The community worker was brought in and the tenants were assisted in forming a tenants association. There were two indispensable tasks which CDP staff had to fulfill in this situation. Firstly there was a good deal of fairly complex legal and financial detail which takes time, and familiarity with government documents, to collect, and secondly provision of the various practical facilities such as meeting place and duplicator which an association needs.

Having provided the initial thrust, however, the CDP staff worked very much as support to the committee which the Association elected and it was that committee which accepted responsibility for carrying out negotiations with the Housing Trust. Although none of the tenants associations had experience of such negotiations they were able to carry them out very successfully given the confidence of full briefing from CDP staff.
This case is in no way unusual either in the experience of the Southwark Information and Community Workers nor in other areas. It does indicate once more the need for back up to the front line Advice Centre workers. A much more important facet of this case however is the fact that the demands being made by the Tenants Association were not, as would be the situation in most Income Maintenance cases, simply their legal rights. If an Advice Centre confines itself, as do the CABs, to offering information as to the existing rights of particular individuals it has a very limited role to play.

Effectiveness of the Advice Service as a Generalist Component

In as much as the Advice Service was not designed as a generalist resource, attempts to convert it at a later date were not wholly satisfactory. Factors which limited this development were: the original site of the Project; the philosophy used in staffing; and the small scale of the area served by CDP. The net result of these restrictions was that although the service revealed the potential of the generalist approach, it was itself a very much scaled down version of what would be required to fill this role if the community development method was fully applied. Closer examination of the restrictions inherent in this particular Advice Service will illustrate this point.

A key feature of a service wishing to fill the generalist role must be its position of optimum accessibility to the general public. In this sense CDP was lacking, in that it was not on a main transport route or situated in a main shopping area where its presence would have been obvious. Instead it was placed in a less prominent position within a residential area. As a result it tended to serve a very localised area with the majority of callers living within a quarter of a mile.

Under normal circumstances it would be anticipated that the generalist team would contain very experienced staff in order to cope with the wide range of issues. This, however, contrasted with the philosophy adopted towards staffing at the outset of CDP. It was then policy, as with several other CDP’s to involve local residents in service operations where possible. It was intended to harness the ability of those whose previous experience was as consumers of public and welfare services. The expectation that there was sufficient latent ability within the neighbourhood to staff an information service was amply fulfilled. With in-service training, supervision and attendance at part-time courses in welfare rights, several local housewives without formal educational qualifications were recruited to operate the Advice Service. Indeed one of them attended a local polytechnic on a day-release basis and obtained a professional qualification. Thus towards the close of CDP the Information Service staff were nearer the standard which would be expected of a generalist team. However the experience of staffing the service showed that although the local neighbourhood could be a source of recruitment for staff who could perform limited specialist tasks, the experience required by generalists will by definition not be available amongst untrained residents.

The third limiting factors was the relatively small area covered by CDP. If the principles being put forward were to have wider application in Boroughs such as Southwark then the areas covered by the multi-disciplinary teams would need to be of larger size than Newington if the number of teams required was not to be prohibitively large.

It was accepted, therefore, that the Advice Service was a scaled down version of the generalist team which was being proposed. This did not effect the principles on which the scheme was based and indeed there was evidence that the basic requirements of a generalist approach were being met. The number of callers in themselves indicated a fair measure of success, especially in a situation where the population had fallen and when staff often found it difficult to get accurate information on the short term future of the area. This seemed to confirm that it was both a useful access point for the general public and dealt with issues on an integrated basis as befitted a generalist resource. The accounts of the work of the specialist sections will inevitably contain further examples of the work of the Advice Service. It would create the wrong impression to seek to distinguish the contribution of one part of what is essentially a team approach.
Specialist or Generalist? – The Community Worker

The community worker is fundamental to the introduction of a collective approach to problems which the Advice Centre receives on an individual basis. The relationship between the advice workers and the community worker is not clear cut in the way that it is between the advice worker and other specialist staff. Although needing to possess special skills in terms of the ability to work with groups within the neighbourhood seeking collective solutions, the community worker also has elements of the generalist role within his tasks. In the way that the 'shop front' is a point of access for the general public so is the community worker working in the neighbourhood at large. He is able to be approached on a wide range of issues and needs to be able to work closely with the advice service and call in more specialist skills where necessary. The importance of distinguishing between the somewhat hybrid role of the community worker and the more specialised team members was well illustrated in the first half of the Project.

It was clear from the outset of CDP that many of the problems of living in Newington were shared by residents and therefore called for some collective response. Initially, as the subject on which residents joined together was the redevelopment issue, much of the work was undertaken by the specialist environmental health officer employed within CDP. He was well qualified to assist residents in understanding the complex set of procedures which the Council had to follow when dealing with redevelopment, and to help them in articulating their own position. The use of such a specialist officer is not, however, wholly satisfactory and experience has shown that he is more effective when working in conjunction with someone who can perform the 'generalist' community work role. The 'generalist' can be expected to be able to assist in the formation of groups on a wide range of issues and then to service such groups in order that they can be effective in attaining their goals. In practical terms community work is then the process by which a worker intervenes in a neighbourhood situation to assist groups of residents deal with a problem they have defined. Specialist advice then may be called on at various times according to need, but distinction should nevertheless be made between the various roles as they are not easily interchangeable.

An important feature of community work is that it is necessary to work at the pace of the group itself rather than attempt to dictate the rate at which activity can develop. An important example of the failed attempt to impose ideas on community group was the attempt to form a Neighbourhood Council in the Project area. The stimulus for this development came from the Borough Council, as this seemed to be a logical means of dealing with the problem of trying to communicate with over twenty local groups who wished to discuss a range of issues with the Borough Council. Encouraging the groups to form an umbrella group clearly simplified matters as far as the Council was concerned. To encourage this rationalisation the Project gave a small amount of grant-aid to meet the expenditure of the umbrella group which formed and used this as a means of channelling information from the Council to the neighbourhood. Despite this, the Neighbourhood Council remained a weak organisation with little recognition locally and groups preferred to press their own issues directly rather than through a representative body.

The areas in which the community worker was effective not only illustrated how best that role should be performed but also highlighted how limited were the changes that were likely to be achieved through self-help efforts alone, of community groups. Thus the input of a community worker was seen as essential in order to facilitate the improved conditions within the group and between the group and the authority. In fact though such a relationship was necessary if greater local access to and control over resources was to be obtained, it was by no means sufficient on its own, to make progress towards such objectives.

In two cases the community worker achieved considerable success with residents' groups. In the first case in close co-operation initially with the Advice Service (as detailed on Page 37) residents were assisted in resisting the plans of their landlord, a Housing Association, to carry out a scheme of modernisation which would have resulted in their total displacement. On the advice of the Community Worker the residents, having elected their own committee, obtained the support of both Southwark and GLC in pressuring the landlord to alter his plans so that all residents who
wished were able to remain in the area. This was achieved when the landlord altered the pattern of the modernisation in order that a mix of dwellings was available, with existing tenants receiving first refusal.

In the second case, a group of tenants joined together, after seeking advice from the service, to oppose the attempts of a small group of owner occupiers who were objecting to the purchase of their homes by the Borough Council. In this case tenants and the Council were in full agreement and although the case is not finally resolved, the enthusiasm and commitment of the tenants organisation remains considerable.

Both these cases involved struggles with the private sector and in both cases the possibility of a victory for the tenants was greatly enhanced by the support of the local authority. For most groups in the area the position is a little different because they have been seeking changes in council thinking. The input of a community worker and the commitment (albeit short lived) of tenants to self-help seem to have been inadequate tools with which to achieve changes in the borough council, and indeed they create the risk of even greater frustration for those whose expectation are raised. This confirms the dangers of what amounts to pressure group activity which is not powerful enough to affect the basic decision making process.

The Community Worker then represents a role which spans aspects of both the generalist and specialist roles, and this duality necessitates very close working relationships between that worker and those in the Advice Service. The other members of the Team are specialists in the sense that they were recruited for their particular area of knowledge and expertise. In Newington the specialists in the team included - a lawyer, town planner, teacher and a youth worker. The work of the lawyer within the Team gives an example of how the particular specialist is selected and the role then played.

Use of a specialist skill – The Community Lawyer

By the time that the second Research Team from the Polytechnic of the South Bank was established, the composition of the Action Team was largely already determined. The one exception to this was the inclusion of a Community Lawyer. This post was not created until the final year of the Project and thus presented the only opportunity for the Research Team to be involved in the planning and implementation of a particular specialist service. The other specialist skills were already in existence, and like the Advice Service were subject only to modification in accordance with the new definitions during the latter stages of the Project. It is therefore important to examine the community lawyer in some detail as it illustrates the organic growth of the team in accordance with the generalist/specialist approach adopted in the project.

The need for legal skills within the team was identified by the number of direct requests from residents for help with legal matters and, by the work of other team members where important aspects of the issues with which they were dealing demanded legal expertise. In planning to fill this gap within the team it was accepted that there was little point in attempting to provide the type of service traditionally offered by the solicitor in private practice. This case work type of service was rejected because of the evidence from other experiments in areas like Newington where the provision of a lawyer had been rendered completely ineffective because of the heavy volume of case-work had swamped the worker. It did seem, however, that the team approach in CDP provided an excellent setting in which to test an alternative means of using legal skills to maximum effect. A job description was drawn up which attempted to integrate a legal resource into the multi-disciplinary team in such a way that maximum benefit could be obtained.

The job description was presented to the CDP committee in 1975. Apart from the assumption that the lawyer would avoid a casework approach the description was based on the desire to avoid duplication of existing services and it was recognised that the experiment should be monitored by the CDP Research Team. The description stated that:
(a) The post is seen as innovative and as such the development of the work will tend to be coloured by the approach and skills which the appointee brings with him. There are, however, broad areas of operation within which development might be expected.

(b) Provide support for existing initiatives in extending legal services. This will include help with co-ordination and quality control rather than direct service.

(c) Providing advice and support for both workers in the welfare field and neighbourhood organisations and pressure groups. Again this is envisaged as an educative function rather than the provision of a direct service. Such work should increase the dissemination of knowledge about legal aspects of local problems and how to use existing services.

(d) As an amplification of the latter point there is likely to be a need for the provision of specific training sessions for the various audiences involved. These are likely to involve legal aspects of such problems as Rent Acts, Industrial Law, Planning Law, etc.

(e) Through the day to day work with local agencies and organisations it is anticipated that a detailed picture of 'needs' will emerge. It should then be possible to examine the changes which are necessary in the provision of legal services in order that they can be used more effectively to improve the living conditions and life opportunities for people in the area.

It can be seen from the Job Description that the lawyer was seen as having two main areas of activity—dealing with work that was channelled to him through the generalist members of the team; and giving consideration as to future arrangements which were needed to provide a legal service on a wider scale for Southwark Citizens.

Inevitably in an area like Southwark many of the issues referred to the lawyer were in the field of housing. Assistance to tenants and their associations tends to differ between tenure groups. Problems relating to rent assessment and security of tenure predominated in the private rented sector and the CDP lawyer assisted both individuals and groups at various levels, with cases of differing complexity. An example of the more difficult work was where the Community Worker was assisting a group of tenants in privately owned property. Attempts by the Council to compulsorily purchase the property failed when the landlords successfully appealed that the DOE Inspector had followed incorrect procedure. Not only did this dash the hopes of the tenants that they would soon be rehoused from the old and decaying accommodation, but also the landlord seized the opportunity to seek increased rents once the threat of the compulsory purchase was removed.

The lawyer was able to counsel the community worker on the procedures now open to the Council wishing to renew the application for compulsory purchase so that accurate information could be given to the tenants who needed to work out a new strategy for their campaign. Direct intervention was also necessary on the question of rent increases with the lawyer representing the tenants at the Rent Assessment Tribunal. This is a good example of the importance of the availability of the hard skills of a lawyer to back up the generalist resource provided by the community worker. As complementary parts of a team each worker is able to reinforce the contribution of his colleague and the sum effect in terms of results for the tenants is likely to be greater than the parts.

Similarly in the field of public housing, the lawyer was able to provide both direct representation or advice and assistance, as appropriate. Issues which were dealt with involved testing the legality of the conditions of tenancy laid down by the Borough Council, failure to make necessary repairs, and difficulties over interpretation of the Land Compensation Act which provided for Home Loss Payments under certain circumstances.

In addition to this work with specific individuals and groups, the lawyer was called upon to deal with broader issues which arose from time to time. Thus he was asked to represent a federation of local groups and Southwark Trades Council at a planning inquiry to object to the change of use of a
site from manufacturing to office development. Although this particular issue was lost it did help those local groups who were involved to give further attention to the procedure for dealing with planning applications. They then prepared comments on this which were submitted to a Parliamentary Sub-Committee who were investigating the system for planning applications and appeals. The ability of these groups to involve themselves with policy issues contrasts with the lack of involvement which often followed at the local level when action was not successful. Both the lawyer and the community worker had an important part to play in the ability of the groups to sustain their involvement.

The other important aspect of the Lawyer's work related to the planning of a Borough-wide legal service for Southwark. The Action Team Leader, prior to the appointment of the lawyer, had worked with a group of voluntary agencies with the Council of Voluntary Service to analyse the need for further legal services. Resulting from this an application was made for Urban Aid to fund a Law Centre in Southwark. The form of the service to be provided was not finalised at that time and it was felt future planning should be co-ordinated by the CDP Lawyer. This provided an excellent opportunity to test out the validity of the CDP concept of a generalist/specialist team, given that there was a serious problem of inadequate resources which were likely to be available to meet a predicted high level of need. CDP and the community lawyer wanted to avoid the traditional approach whereby a group of lawyers and ancillary workers were placed in one centre in the borough. This has tended to be the approach adopted by most of the neighbourhood legal services set up in London but did not accord with the approach developed by CDP. It was felt that being placed within a team having generalist workers, the community lawyer would through them be accessible to the largest number of people and thus maximise the effectiveness of the specialist skill he represented.

The concept of the neighbourhood law centre had a number of disadvantages from CDP's point of view. Firstly by being located in one place it would tend to draw its clientele from only a very small portion of the borough. Secondly it was apparent that the many voluntary and statutory advice giving agencies ought to be fully utilized and to have a working relationship with the legal services. As there is likely to be a severe cash limit on the number of neighbourhood law centres which can be provided, it was therefore considered essential that the resource should be as widely available as possible.

The CDP concept was that the lawyers should each be allocated as specialist resources to existing advice centres where the need for them seemed to be greatest. It was recognised that relative need was likely to change and one of the responsibilities of the management committee was to make sure that the services' resources changed in the same way. This would also be the direct responsibility of the community lawyer, who would remain unattached to any local service and therefore able to allocate his time as needs arose.

Even with such a flexible approach coverage by the legal service was likely to be fairly thin and as such CDP considered it vital to use effectively other, voluntary resources. For example there are in many areas completely voluntary evening sessions provided by lawyers who are in private practice. Rather than leave such services alone, unintegrated and often unsatisfactory, the Southwark community lawyer saw it as part of his strategy to monitor such services, ensure that they are up to standard and help encourage them in areas which the professional legal service cannot cover.

Even more important in Southwark than the evening sessions was a voluntarily funded Settlement House Advice Centre. This was a long standing service operating on traditional legal aid lines. It represented a doubling of legal resources if it could be integrated with the publicly funded service. The CDP community lawyer had discussions with the Settlement House and the two groups produced proposals which made sure that services would not be duplicated and included representation on the Settlement House Advice Centre management body by the community lawyer.
It was interesting to note that the proposals for the legal service, when presented to the Lord Chancellor's Office responsible for vetting such grant applications, were not immediately acceptable. The proposed structure, particularly the potentially peripatetic nature of the lawyers, did not conform with the terms of reference for law centres which obliged them to be based in one place, with their own referral service (if any existed at all). Associated with this approach was the view that the siting of the centre should be governed by selecting an area which rated as high need on a range of social indicators, and clearly it was assumed that deprivation was such that it could be reduced by the concentration of resources in small areas. It was ironic that these were conceptions that had been expressly rejected by Southwark CDP. The objections of the Lord Chancellor's Department were overcome but only after prolonged argument and discussion.

The example of the community lawyer then illustrates many of the points made in this section on the implementation of the approach to community development adopted by the Project as a whole. It demonstrated how skilled specialists in local authorities can be used to greater effect if they relate to generalist staff. Clearly also there is a need to re-examine the way that resources in Southwark and elsewhere are handled in that, had CDP not existed, it seems likely that the Law Centre that would have been set up would have been severely reduced in its effectiveness by the organisational structure proposed. The fact that a government department such as the Lord Chancellor's Office should be using what can be termed as a misleading definition of 'deprivation' indicates the need for continued dialogue at this level. The approach of CDP does seem to offer a viable alternative approach which can provide, as suggested by the definition of 'deprivation' adopted by the Project, a means of offering greater access to and control over resources within the structure of opportunities that comprises our society.

Finally in closing this section on the theory and method of community development as interpreted by the Project, it is important to note that there is a further stage to be accomplished if the experience of CDP is to contribute to a more effective use of public resources.

The approach suggested by the Project involves easy access by the public to the specialist resources of the local authority through the generalist base. However the remit of the Action Team was simply to suggest how the tiny resources of CDP should be used in future. The creation of a small team of this type will, however, be of little or no value if the implications of the approach for the existing council services are not made clear. There is a very real danger that community development may be seen by the local authority as simply a matter of setting up small teams in various parts of the borough to complement more traditional services. The experience quoted above of the community worker trying to assist tenants in the redevelopment area shows how limited such an approach would be. It is therefore necessary at this stage to move on from our examination of how a small area team can work most effectively and to look at how the present means of distributing government resources may conflict with the principles of community development.
4 The decision making process

The Management System in Southwark

The methodology outlined in the previous section was designed specifically to maximise the access of local people to the available resources. However the amount of available resources and their distribution depends on other factors. In particular the local authority makes decisions relating to enormous sums of money and it is therefore the decision making process of the borough council which is vital to the operations of CDP. This is even more the case with respect to central government resources. It is vital that the way in which decisions are made and resources allocated reflects the priorities established at neighbourhood level if progress is to be made. Recognition of the need to examine management structures has been fairly widespread for some years with the main example, as far as local authorities are concerned, being the Bains Report in 1974. This had recommended the adoption of a corporate management approach and in Southwark the replacement of the former Town Clerk with a new Chief Executive in 1970 marked the beginning of the borough's commitment to the corporate approach.

As a concept Corporate Management has some similarities with Community Development as both represent a philosophy and an adherence to a methodological process over and above any detailed changes in day to day service delivery, management and policy formulation. Moreover the neighbourhood approach of community development and the local government corporate management system has a contemporary parallel at central government level in the 'Joint Framework for Social Policies' report produced by the Government's Central Policy Review staff in 1975. At each level there is an attempt to seek means of making more effective use of resources derived from a more rational system of deciding social priorities and at each level very similar solutions have been proposed. There has been a rejection of systems in which departmental bargaining controls the allocation of resources and policy priorities and a recognition of the need for an 'across the board' approach.

The need for each of these initiatives to be seen as complementary is crucial and indeed it is hard to avoid the parallels between the methods which we discussed in the last section and the conclusions of the Bains Committee who said:

'Local government is not, in our view, limited to the narrow provision of a series of services to the local community, though we do not in any way intend to suggest that these services are not important. It has within its purview the overall economic, cultural and physical well being of that community and for this reason its decisions impinge with increasing frequency upon the individual lives of its citizens. Because of this overall responsibility and because of the inter relationship of problems in the environment within which it is set the traditional departmental approach must give rise to a wider ranging corporate approach'.

In view of the conclusions of Bains and the commitment of Southwark to these ideals it may seem that it was a particularly auspicious moment for CDP to have developed the methodological focus discussed above. However the experience of the Project Team could not lead to such an optimistic assessment. This is not to say that the objectives of corporate management clashed with those of CDP. In the council's 'Guide to the Management System' in 1975 these objectives were:

'to provide arrangements for more effective policy making by Members, by giving them, wherever possible, a range of policy options, based on the best advice and information available.'
In simplified form this represents the typical structure of a London Borough such as Southwark. The Town Clerk and Borough Treasurer acted in an advisory and co-ordinating role without having any directional power as such.

to enable Members and Officers to work together, in partnership, in formulating and implementing policies tailored to the needs of the people and to the resources likely to be available.

to provide greater inter-departmental collaboration for the consideration of ideas and the implementation of policies.

to ensure the achievement of the Council's policies by appropriate control, monitoring and review procedures.'

The concern of CDP was with the extent to which these objectives were not being met or, in other words the extent to which, on the one hand, the old methods still prevailed or, on the other, how the introduction of corporate management had produced unforeseen and possibly undesirable results.

In order to achieve the objectives set out above a substantial number of institutional changes were made. In the traditional local authority structure there are a number of departments serving Standing Committees of the Council. A simplified diagramatic representation of the traditional structure is shown in figure 5.
In Southwark there are basically seven departments and, with the demise of CDP Committee, seven ordinary Standing Committees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committees</th>
<th>Departments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishment</td>
<td>Town Clerks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Purposes and Finance</td>
<td>Treasurers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways and Works</td>
<td>Engineers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries and Amenities</td>
<td>Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Development</td>
<td>Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On top of this structure the corporate management system has placed a Policy and Resources Committee on the members side and a Chief Officers Board on the administrative side. The Policy Committee is made up of all the chairmen of the Standing Committees plus three backbench representatives.

In the Council's 'Guide to the Management System', July 1975, the responsibilities of the Policy Committee are said to be 'the allocation of resources between committees including consideration of the Growth Programme, Capital Programme, proposals for new services or extensions to existing services involving significant additional claims on council resources.' Its other duties include co-ordination between Committees, especially in relation to major development plans and education matters. The Chief Officer Board is described as dealing 'with matters of major concern to the Council, all major reports for the Policy and Resources Committee are considered by the Chief Officer Board, as well as the major reports for other Committees. The Board is concerned with the whole range of the Council's activities. One of its main tasks is to formulate resource allocation recommendations, so that members have the benefit of the views of all departments in considering priorities, allocation of resources and rate levels.' The power of these two bodies is such that they represent a major change in local authority decision making. Indeed there is no doubt that the meeting of the Full Council is little more than a rubber stamp on most occasions, for it is extremely rare for the Policy and Resources Committee, much of which is held in private, to have its decisions overturned.

Although the committee structure still operates in a traditional way there have been major attempts to put committee decision making into a corporate structure by the creation of a number of inter-departmental bodies. Firstly at elected members level a number of Policy Groups have been set up. These are nominated groups of members drawn from each of the eight Standing Committees which meet at intervals to discuss in depth particular topics ranging from general objectives to specific problems. As stressed in Southwark's 'Guide to the Management System' it is important to note that 'A Policy Group does not make Policy'. Until the end of CDP which had its own Policy Group there were no less than twenty one of these bodies.
### Departments
- Town Clerks
- Engineers
- Housing
- Libraries
- Development
- Social Services
- Public Analysts
- Treasurers

### Programme Areas
- Internal Common Services
- Highways Management & General Services
- Housing
- Leisure and Recreation
- Planning and Transportation
- Social Services
- Environmental Health & Public Protection

At officer level the basis of the corporate approach has been the division of the authority's work into seven programmes areas. These areas correspond broadly with existing departments.

For each Programme Area a team (PAT) has been set up. These meet every few weeks and are attended by officers from various departments. For example the Social Services PAT is chaired by the Director of Social Services and is attended by his Deputy, Social Services Research staff and representatives from the Town Clerks, Treasurers, Housing and Borough Development Departments and a member of the CDP Research Team. The objective of the PAT's is explicitly concerned with avoidance of the excessive compartmentalisation which occurs within the traditional departmental structure.

The PAT's are concerned mainly with the planning function within the corporate system but parallel groups have been set up to deal with the implementation function with respect to capital works. These 'Project Implementation Groups' are set up under the Chief Officer most directly responsible for a particular capital project and their co-ordination function is more or less self-explanatory.

Finally there is a third type of group which involves middle ranking officers. These are Working Parties which can be set up by individual PAT's to report to them on particular issues. They are intended as occasional bodies which can be set up only with the permission of the Chief Officers Board.

In terms of officer and member time, there has therefore been very considerable commitment to corporate management.
Corporate Management in Practice

CDP is in an ideal position to assess whether these changes have affected the relationship between the local authority and the people of Southwark or indeed between the decision makers and the more junior officers of the Council. The best issue on which to test corporate methods is the predominant problem of the planning blight and redevelopment process.

It was known before the start of CDP that the major problem facing residents in the Project area was the existing planning blight and impending redevelopment.

Large parts of the Ward had been scheduled for redevelopment in 1965. At that stage it was hoped to begin building new units in Newington within five years. In fact the first new units have just begun in 1976 and it looks as if the first completions in the areas designated in 1965 will not be available for at least two more years. In the light of this situation it is interesting to look at CDP's treatment of the problem and the response from the Council to the Project's attempts to liaise with local residents.

In 1965 after the area was declared for redevelopment the effect on a number of the elderly residents was for them literally to pack up their belongings as they thought their re-housing was imminent. This was exacerbated by the fact that there was complete uncertainty about the dates at which starts would be made or which houses were to be included in which phase of the redevelopment, and much of this uncertainty has continued throughout the life of the Project.

The experience of CDP in working on redevelopment issues has been used in an earlier section of this report to illustrate the drawbacks in attempting to use community work methods on what is essentially a divisive issue at community level. It can also highlight deficiencies in the management system and decision making process of the Council.

Even with methods soundly based on the use of a multi-disciplinary team which CDP has developed, one of the major difficulties for any generalist project in trying to give residents greater access to and control over resources is the lack of responsiveness of the local authority, and in particular the departmentalised nature of the Council's operations. In the early days of the CDP operation there was no effective method of assessing priorities in the area with regard to redevelopment. The programme for the development area had been set out years before and there was no way of pooling all the Council's knowledge about the area in order to make up to the minute decisions. Redevelopment was seen as an administrative operation and CDP efforts to highlight the human factors seemed to have little effect.

Resistances at member and officer level

The attempts of CDP to draw together this sort of information and to make the council more aware of the needs of the area met with resistance from two sources. Firstly the officers in various Council departments have shown great anxiety about the fact that CDP's brief has allowed the project to become involved in issues which were formerly the exclusive preserve of one department or another. Opposition along these lines has been a recurrent theme throughout the project's life though it was strongest in the first two years. On two occasions one Council department threatened to withdraw its officers from CDP Committee meetings because of disagreements on Project reports. While anxiety about the role of CDP was understandable and while on certain occasions there was a good case for saying that the position of the CDP team had not been properly thought out, the idea that one department should withdraw its officers from a meeting of Council members in another committee is itself an interesting comment on the decision making processes of the Council.

The second type of resistance came from Council members themselves. Many local members saw CDP as a body that was trying to usurp their most basic function - that of being the representative of a particular neighbourhood. In addition the Project had the effect of organising and focussing the
Ten years of blight. The erosion of amenities.

Ten years of blight. The last resident holds on.
dissatisfaction of local residents and this put pressure on councillors. In so far as CDP operated as a sort of pressure group the resentment of local members had considerable justification. In the long run, however, much of the conflict has been dissipated as most members have recognised that they cannot maintain a close, individual relationship with thousands of constituents and, more importantly, as CDP had developed more as a resource team which can, potentially, be a considerable source of strength to councillors who, precisely because they are local representatives, find the Council bureaucracy as difficult to deal with as do many of their electors.

Given these constraints it is no surprise that the effectiveness of CDP in trying to rationalise council decision-making as it affected Newington has been very limited. The first attempts by CDP to overcome these problems and to give both the Council and local residents a better understanding of each others problems were along fairly conventional lines in that at various times between 1971 and 1974 public exhibitions of the plans for various parts of the area were held at CDP offices. In themselves these exhibitions were quite successful, they were well attended and officers of various departments found them quite useful. It became rapidly clear, however, particularly with the earlier exhibitions, that this sort of approach provided the flesh without the bones in that there was no way that CDP could ensure that the ideas expressed at these exhibitions would be given serious consideration.

CDP's experience of Working Parties

The difficulties faced by the Project are well shown by the involvement of Project Officers in Council deliberations on future redevelopment procedures. Since its inception the team has been involved with two working parties considering this subject. Both of these groups produced reports which were submitted to their superiors. The first report has completely disappeared and has never been put on any Committee Agenda. The second report having received the assent of the Chief Officers' Board will shortly be presented to the appropriate Committee. This second attempt to develop a new set of procedures for improving communication in redevelopment areas has taken just under two years of officer discussions.

There has been throughout the Project's life enormous dissatisfaction at the uncertainty of the position in which the people of the area find themselves. In an attempt to dispel this uncertainty and also to maximise the choice for local residents as to where their new home should eventually be, the Project team tried to get the Council to rationalise the development programme in the Ward so that a sort of rolling programme could be set up which would give a substantial number of local people the option of remaining in the area when the first new developments are completed.

The Council seemed to respond to these ideas very positively. In 1974 the Braganza Working Party was set up. This grouped middle ranking officers from a number of departments. All of these officers had been concerned with the day-to-day decisions on the Newington area. The need for this working party had been emphasised by the confusion which occurred during the setting up of the exhibition of the plans for the Newington Development Scheme in July 1974. CDP had only become aware that the sketch scheme had been completed when, without consultation with either the Project or local residents, it appeared as an item for decision on a Committee Agenda. Pressure from both the Project and local residents helped to make the point that it was preferable to obtain the views of residents before making a decision. An exhibition was therefore arranged of the plans and models at CDP office and a system of recording so that views of residents could be fed back to Members. It was ironic after all this confusion that as the time for the exhibition drew near, the relevant Council officers refused to release the necessary plans and models to CDP and two Chairmen needed to intervene before this matter could be dealt with.

The setting up of the working party was therefore timely and its objectives were exactly what CDP had felt was required in so far as they were very general and the brief was in no way restricted by departmental susceptibilities. Equally important the working party operated in a nonhierarchical way and was much easier for CDP to relate to because of that. Thirdly, of course, though generalist
in subject matter the Braganza Working Party was geographically specific which also allowed CDP to provide a much more coherent input.

These advantages do not mean that the Braganza Working Party was a child of CDP. Some of the features of the original brief showed considerable divergence between the Project and the Council on the definition of 'community'. The brief stated that one objective of the working party was to retain the 'community spirit' of the Newington area. CDP were unhappy about this ill defined term and did not feel that it was an issue of importance for local people.

Nonetheless the working party was a clear recognition by the Council of the ineffectiveness of their procedures and was greatly welcomed by CDP. Both the Project Leader and his assistant were closely involved with the deliberations of the working party from the start and it certainly took a much more total and considered view of the redevelopment problems of the area. It could be said that from the point of view of local people there was little apparent improvement because the working party had very little direct contact with the population generally. However we have already discussed the fact that CDP became the interface between the local people and the Council and that the main problem for the Project was not in finding a way to get local people to articulate their needs but in getting the Council to respond thereafter.

The plans for the Newington Development Scheme were well received and at a subsequent Braganza Working Party meeting in 1974 it was confirmed that the construction of the new estate would begin in the Summer of 1975. Shortly before the date for the start on construction arrived the CDP representatives on the working party asked for further details about the progress being made. They were informed by the working party's Chairman that the start on site had been reprogrammed and would now start one year later.

The consequences of this decision completely destroyed the original raison d'être of the working party. The delay of a year meant that, assuming other schemes are not similarly held back, the

*Braganza Street ten years after being declared a redevelopment area. A street with a future??*
Some residents are gone some remain. Yet ten years after the original decision to declare the area for redevelopment, no clear date for action had been set.
The possibility of rehousing the people of the later developments in the Ward in the completed Newington Scheme no longer existed.

The most remarkable thing about this decision was the way it was taken. Firstly nobody, including local councillors, was told that it had been taken. Secondly many months later CDP is still unable to elicit any reason at all why the delay was accepted. Project officers on the Braganza Working Party were simply told that the Chief Architect has decided to ‘reprogramme’ the development. The local population remain completely in the dark also because no attempt has been made to give them any information whatsoever.

These criticisms were first made in the Action Team’s Final Report to the Borough Council at the end of 1975. It quickly became clear that they had not sunk very deep. By the middle of 1976 the Advice Centre workers were once again concerned that the information that they were giving to clients on the timing of redevelopment was rather suspect. The multi-disciplinary team therefore decided that a request should be made that the Braganza Working Party be reconvened. Shortly afterwards it was discovered that the Working Party had been meeting but the CDP team had not been informed.

The Council’s Management’s Guide states ‘There is one simple test by which any management system can be judged, namely, the extent to which it really aids the elected Member in his onerous duties and enables him to get the job done.’ There can be no doubt that the corporate system in Southwark comprehensively fails this test.

The experience of the Project with the Braganza Working Party showed that the mere existence of ad hoc bodies that conform to corporate ideals is of little use if those bodies are powerless. It might be felt that to blame the failures of the Braganza Working Party on the management system reflects unfairly on an approach which is still at an early stage. However, it seems unlikely that the essential characteristics of the system will be changed by the production of the Community Plan which is the major part of the corporate system not yet completed.

At the end of the six year life of CDP in Southwark it was possible to identify features of the management system of the local authority which were inimical to community development as we have defined it. The first such feature was the continuing predominance of the departmental interest with the almost inevitable accompanying characteristic of a very hierarchical organisation within the functionally organised departments. The creation of interdepartmental bodies like PAT’s may have allowed more frequent dialogues between officers from various disciplines but the evidence suggests that the compartmentalised approach of the traditional local authority remains entrenched. This may be because the plethora of new bodies like the PATs have been grafted on to departmental structures which basically remain unaltered.

It is clear that without a much more far reaching breakdown of the departmental prerogative the prospects for a community development approach are bleak. The whole basis of the structure which has evolved in the Southwark Project is the generalist approach which permits simple access by members of the public to local authority resources. However that access is only meaningful if the generalists can demand direct response from the various specialists who are needed. The extent to which this can be done is minimised by the compartmentalised nature of the organisation.

CDP’s experience of Programme Area Teams

The PATs demonstrate how this situation cannot be changed without a more fundamental reorganisation than such bodies represent. Although the aura of departmental bargaining appears to have been dispelled it still exists in practice because each PAT is dominated by one department and the lack of bargaining in PAT meetings simply reflects the fact that it is the interests of that department which always prevail. The impossibility of thinking in a corporate way while still operating a strictly departmental system is perhaps best illustrated by the chief officers themselves.
We have mentioned the tendency of certain officers to feel that CDP had no right to get involved with matters which they considered to be the prerogative of their department. It was not simply antipathy to this Project which encouraged this attitude because on occasions in Social Services PAT it has been made clear that no Chief Officer would brook interference from outside his department on matters which he considered to be the exclusive concern of his department.

The hierarchical nature of the system is related to the departmental form of organisation and is probably increased as departments become larger, jobs become more specialised and professionalism increases. This characteristic of the decision making process increases the problems for community development because as roles become more narrowly defined the system becomes more complex and it becomes less easy to bring pressure to bear where it is required to solve a particular problem. In other words access and control are both more difficult to achieve in a large hierarchical organisation where responsibility is supposedly concentrated on the Chief Officer but in a way is also very diffuse because of the difficulty which both members and the public have in identifying the reasons why breakdowns in the system occur. A related feature of the decision making process and one which particularly applies to Southwark is the increasing concentration of power in a few people. This is both a political and administrative problem and differs from the existence of a hierarchical system in that whereas the latter protects the administration generally from outside control, centralization of decision making power is clearly against the interests of many officers as well as the councillors and public.

Superficially the suggestion that power is becoming more centralized may seem rather unfair. There have been institutions set up as part of the corporate management system which offered more opportunity. The first such feature was the centralized nature of the decision making process. It is true that the institutions set up as part of the corporate management approach offered more opportunity for middle ranking officers to exchange ideas with their colleagues and superiors in other departments. However these changes are strongly countered by the immense importance of the Chief Officers Board which tends to concentrate decision making at the top of the hierarchy because the views of the other bodies, like the PATs, are channelled to the Board through one of the Chief Officers.

The inclusion of CDP representative on Social Services PAT has given the Project an opportunity to observe this process at first hand. Often the PAT has very full discussions of issues and on occasions a vote is taken. There is however nothing to bind the Director of Social Services to even raise, never mind support the PATs decision at the Chief Officers Board. A minor, but revealing and typical example was the decision at one PAT to take a particular item off the agenda, without any discussion, because the Chief Executive, who does not attend these meetings, thought it should not be dealt with. The views of the Chief Executive were not made known to the members of the PAT who simply found that the section had been removed. Another case was that of the proposal to appoint a Welfare Rights Officer. The PAT discussed the need for such an appointment and where it should be based. Notwithstanding the reluctance of the Chief Officer the PAT decided that the post should be located in the Social Services Department. However at the next PAT the Team was informed that the Chief Officers Board had decided that the post should be put elsewhere.

We have seen also that the Working Parties operate on non-hierarchical principles which are highly effective in getting liaison between operational staff and those whom their operations affect. However these principles also break down when recommendations do not accord with the thinking of more senior officers.

Effects of centralisation

The maintenance of a strongly centralized management structure conflicts directly with the community development approach discussed in the last chapter. It tends to increase the frustration of members of the public who are trying to get information or assistance if the official with whom they are dealing has minimal discretion. Moreover the position of the ward councillor is increasingly
undermined by a situation in which his necessarily parochial input into the decision making process is lost because of the concentration of power at the centre. In other words the access to resources, which we have insisted on, will inevitably be reduced by a centralised system unless that system so greatly increases the effective use of resources as to make more available. There is, as yet, no evidence that corporate management has done this.

CDP's experience of Policy Groups

This examination of the corporate system has so far tended to concentrate on the administrative structures and how they frustrate both the representative role of local councillors and the objectives of community development. However the political institutions of the local authority seem to have very similar characteristics. This is perhaps not wholly true of the departmental divisions and indeed, it could be argued that the members of the council are in any case an important generalist element in any local authority seeing problems in the way that their electors do and avoiding over identification with departmental interests. To a large extent this is true for certainly the majority of back bench councillors are in this position. Moreover this tendency has very likely been strengthened somewhat by the creation of Policy Groups. CDPs experience of these bodies has been confined to its own Policy Group but from that Group it does seem we can draw the lesson that Policy Groups offer a worthwhile opportunity for members to discuss subjects in depth outside the restrictive framework of a Committee agenda. In other words this is one institution set up as part of the new management system which has gone some way towards meeting the systems objectives.

Decline in the role of back bench councillors

The positive features of Policy Groups are outweighed in the management system by the overall decline in the importance of the role of the majority of members of those groups, namely the back bench councillor. There appear to be a number of reasons for this decline. Firstly the official decision making procedures for members as well as officers have become more hierarchical and more departmentalised. The creation of a Policy and Resources Committee consisting largely of chairmen inevitably means that the tendency to go in for departmental bargaining is enhanced. The fact that this committee is the one where overall resource allocation decisions are made brings, almost by definition, a sharpening of the hierarchical divisions. Moreover within this close relationship between the Chief Officers Board and the Policy and Resources Committee is the key relationship in the council, that between the Leader and the Chief Executive.

From CDP's point of view the point at which the implications of these developments for the local councillor became clear was when a Newington ward councillor was physically ejected from a meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee, which was due to discuss a local issue, because he was not a member of the committee.

Of course the fact that the Labour Party has dominated Southwark for so long means that, in reality, the party caucus is the most powerful body in decision making. However the caucus also has means of reducing the influence of back bench members of the council. The Policy and Resources has its party parallel in the Labour Groups' Policy Committee which consists of Group Officers and committee chairmen. The decisions of that committee are binding on its members so that only a very strong move from the backbenchers is likely to overturn the Policy Committee's decisions. Moreover Group decisions are also binding so that council members can neither vote nor speak against the decisions taken in the party caucus.

A third feature of the corporate management system which tends to undermine the ward councillor is the apparent depoliticizing effect which the process has. Although there appears to be a recognition of the need for a political input there seems to be no awareness of the conflict which must inevitably accompany political decision making and there is more than a suggestion that the process will be essentially one of councillors being presented with detailed evidence from which
they will be able to agree rational and objective decisions. The debate which has taken place over home ownership in the borough demonstrates this. Rather than present a body of information against which members can test their existing values there has been a strong tendency to suggest that there is a clear and correct decision that should be taken.

This impression is strengthened if we look at one of the declared functions of the management system.

Planning is the process of deciding what is to be done by investigating the needs and wants of the community for the Council's services, translating these requirements into objectives, selecting the best way in the light of circumstances, and programming this solution in order that it may be implemented.

There is no mention in this definition of any value judgements. The idea that objectives can be decided on without political value judgements is surely erroneous. There is a distinct difference between a system which seeks to promote what is seen by officers as 'the best way in the light of circumstances' and using data as a means of highlighting the political choices which are available. Thus the growing and in some ways probably inevitable tendency to produce long, overtchnical reports which are only accessible to the most involved councillors (e.g. Committee Chairmen) has to be accompanied by major efforts to clarify the options if the production of such documents is not to have an anti-democratic effect.

Not Inevitable

To briefly summarize this section so far we can say that as soon as CDP ventured beyond the welfare role which was originally envisaged for the Project the team found itself faced by a decision making system which seemed to be developing in a way which was contrary to the objectives of the experiment. It is a hierarchical system with procedures which are increasingly bureaucratic in the sense that as departments have become larger and more complex in their organisations and specialization has meant officers performing narrower, less comprehensible roles, the departments have become more immune to outside pressures and the potential division between the interests of the organisation and the needs of the public has widened. It is a system which, as a consequence, tended to undermine the role of the representatives of the people in return for an increasingly suspect reliance on the expertise of professional social scientists.

These characteristics are not the inevitable results of a corporate approach. What appeared to have happened in Southwark was that attention had been focussed on adopting the rhetoric and technical machinery of a corporate structure without first securing the full commitment of the powerful Chief Officers of service departments. Not only did they not relinquish their existing power but the centralization of power under the new system seemed to facilitate the strengthening rather than the weakening of entrenched departmental interests. In CDP experience this is demonstrated best by the progress of the Redevelopment Areas Working Party and the Braganza Working Party.

It is important to note that the way in which senior management has reacted to the corporate management system is very similar to the way in which they reacted to CDP. In both instances there was pressure to absorb new resources into existing departments and any new organisational machinery, such as Programme Area Teams, became a means of rubber stamping decisions which were ultimately taken elsewhere. Though this hostility was less open in relation to the management system the logic of the Chief Officers' position did not change and in both cases significant changes have been resisted.

It is clear that the development of the community as we have defined it, that is the maximisation of local access to and control over resources, is not a realistic option with the decision making process as it stands. CDP has created a multi-disciplinary team as the basic neighbourhood service unit. Once
the method of work had been evolved which appeared to offer the best chance of dealing with deprivation at the neighbourhood level, CDP had gone as far as it could. Unless the councils' procedures match the new approach then hopes of improvement at local level will be frustrated and the situation of the early days of the Project repeated.

Not only Southwark

There is a danger that these criticisms will be taken to refer only to Southwark. However it is more likely that a more truthful conclusion would be that the decision making procedures in Southwark are not dissimilar to those of most local authorities and are a good deal more advanced than some. Moreover the extent to which departments in local authorities pursue policies which are in contradiction with each other pales into insignificance beside the efforts of central government.

Perhaps the clearest example of the lack of consistent thinking by central government is the conflict between housing and employment policies in Inner London. The vast capital expenditure on housing has been accompanied by considerable government encouragement for industry to move out of London. There has been no attempt to discourage the removal of the many small businesses and workshops which once provided an important source of employment in areas like Newington but have now largely disappeared as redevelopment schemes have proceeded. Clearly an alternative approach is required. Although a Project such as CDP cannot begin to tackle the problem at Central Government level, the experience of the Action Team does suggest practical means of changing the present decision-making structures of local government as typified by Southwark Borough Council.
5 An alternative approach

The starting point for any alternative approach was not an examination of decision-making at the top of the local authority hierarchy. Corporate management had been an attempt to create a more rational approach at the top which could then percolate down. CDP took a diametrically opposite view by concentrating on the basic neighbourhood unit with its division of officers into generalists and specialists. The Project re-asserted the belief that the relationship between the staff of the local authority and members of the public is vital and that therefore the specialist services should adjust themselves in such a way as to promote the effectiveness of the relationship rather than vice-versa.

The relationship between the public and the council depends to a large extent on the access of local people to the council's administrative resources. In addition however the public will continue to depend on an effective political structure as a means of controlling resources and the second fundamental objective of any alternative decision-making process should be to strengthen and encourage the representative function of local councillors. The last chapter indicated that the present management system manifestly fails in this respect.

The chapter on the community development process showed that at the neighbourhood level specific services and pieces of social action were less significant than the mode and rationality of decision-making and the system of control. It was in response to this that CDP began to develop its multi-disciplinary team as the basic neighbourhood service unit. Although this approach seemed to offer the best means of combatting deprivation at the level at which the Project operated it was necessary to inject the experience gained at the neighbourhood level into the parallel discussions which have been taking place, not only in the local authorities but also in central government [c.f. 'Joint Framework for Social Policies' by Central Policy Review Staff. HMSO 1975], as each tier of administration has sought ways in which decisions could be made to reflect more clearly social priorities rather than bureaucratic constraints.

The analysis of the decision-making process in Southwark has a good deal in common with critiques of corporate management undertaken by, for example, Stewart at the Institute of Local Government Studies and by consultants working directly for individual local councils. Many of the studies have concluded that it is necessary to devolve management to small areas within existing municipal boundaries. For example, consultants employed by the then County Borough of Stockport concluded that

'the role of elected members in representing individual constituents has always been in fundamental conflict with the organisation of departments on a professional or service basis. Consequently, exercising a representative function is difficult and the relevance of local government activities to neighbourhood level problems has been less than it might. But the logic of organising on a service basis is compelling where professional capability is high or efficiency is important.'

Areas as well as functions

Experience on CDP Committee confirmed the view that the great strength of members was their intimate and detailed knowledge of their own areas. This ability was not being harnessed within committees on whose agendas each item was inevitably relevant to only a minority of members in
their role as ward councillors. In the view of the CDP team the benefits of matching the
decision-making system to areas as well as functions far outweighed the argument of efficiency put
on behalf of the departmental approach.

There were two main reasons for this conclusion. The first was a very theoretical one in that it was
felt that the commercial arguments of private industry should not be applied in their entirety to
discussions of efficiency in local government. Economies of scale and increases in specialisation and
professionalisation are not necessarily desirable and need to be weighed against the increasing
alienation of the electorate from the local authority as the corporate body increasingly acts in its
own interests as much as those of the public. More practically the CDP approach of having
neighbourhood units of multi-disciplinary teams which attempt to provide a service which meets
needs as they are experienced and understood by local residents, may well allow for a more
effective and flexible use of resources.

At present in local authorities the means of deciding priorities are very crude. Within the constraints
imposed by central government, departmental bargaining is usually the way in which the allocation
of any incremental resources is undertaken, while existing expenditure can only be switched
between different departments with the greatest difficulty. The area based approach would have
much to commend it if it was possible to monitor much more closely the level of demand in a
particular area, and the amount of resources consumed.

Area management is a fashionable concept in local authorities at present. The best known example
in practice has been the Metropolitan Borough of Stockport, formerly the County Borough of
Stockport. Following experiments started in 1971, Stockport set up Area Committees of the
Housing and Community Services Committee. Initially the terms of reference of these area
committees were fairly limited but it soon became clear that it was not possible to restrict
consideration of problems along departmental lines, and the sub-committees were therefore allowed
to refer items directly to any Standing Committees of the Council. This also proved inadequate as
the flow of information was very much one way, with very little being referred to the area
committees from the centre.

More importantly the area based member organisation in Stockport was not complemented by a
similar locally based officer structure. This was changed after local government reorganisation when
attempts were made to decentralise services, and area co-ordinators were given the task of area
administration across departmental boundaries. In practice it seems that the changes have still not
secured the benefits hoped for because the functionally organised department has remained the
most important element in the organisation, and the area co-ordinators have not been powerful
enough to break this down. Liverpool, beginning their experiments with area management rather
later, set up area executives with a small staff directly responsible to the Chief Executive and the
Policy and Resources Committee. The job of the area executive was to draw up an area corporate
plan by which the activities of various departments would serve the areas needs.

Overcoming the Barriers to Change

The CDP approach has differed very considerably from this type of system. The experience with the
corporate management system suggested that, with the increasing size and complexity of local
authorities, the bureaucratic forces will always be powerful enough to nullify any piecemeal
changes. Certainly the attempt to introduce corporate management by an incremental approach has
not been successful. In the same way the use of CDP as a pilot project from which a more general
strategy for combating deprivation could flow was doomed to failure because the rest of the local
authority structure remained untouched and could afford to be unresponsive to the promptings of
the experiment. This is not to say that there is no room for small projects which can examine the
potential for change at the local level but only if action is taken subsequently to remove the barriers
to such change can experiments like CDP be seen as anything more than a way of avoiding
confronting the overall problem.
Rather than adopting an incremental approach the community development method envisages a completely new way of organising local authority services and accountability. The adoption of community development is nothing to do with the addition of yet another department or discipline to the already wide range of specialisms in local government. Community development is a process to which all the many disciplines in the local authority's services must contribute with the administration of those services located at the small area level.

The over-riding objective of community development is to increase the access to and control over resources by the people of the area under consideration. The multi-disciplinary team set up by CDP with its group of generalist workers responding to problems as they are perceived by the individuals or groups who raise them, bringing in specialists as required, was aiming at this objective. In some respects, however, this team may be somewhat confusing because the relative status of the various officers in the team was decided before the concept was fully developed. In particular, the model which is envisaged for the council as a whole requires generalist officers of very high status and skill. These will mostly be officers who have had experience as specialists and can therefore respond to public queries with authority.

The creation of neighbourhood resource centres will afford greater access to resources by the public. The objective of greater control may be promoted in a number of ways (e.g. the extension of co-operative principles to council housing), but basically the political structure should be strengthened and the representative role of councillors fully exploited.

There are four headings under which we shall examine the implications of trying to achieve these objectives.

The dismantling of the departmental system with its attendant emphasis on hierarchical structures.

The effect on professionals of changing to a multi-disciplinary system using the generalist/specialist classification for officers.

The relationship between the administrative structures and the politicians.

The relationship between the local authority and the general public.

Dismantling the Departmental System

There is a danger in examining the organisational changes which CDP thinks are necessary that the changes will be seen as impossible to achieve. Certainly there is little point in suggesting that an enormous organisation like Southwark Borough Council should completely revolutionise its administration. The inbuilt conservatism of large bureaucracies is such that it is extremely difficult for the organisation to change gear let alone change direction entirely.

In view of this it is important to understand that many of the CDP suggestions are a logical extension of changes that have taken place over the last decade. For example, the departments that exist in most local authorities differ radically from ten years ago and Southwark is no exception to this. The Social Services Department has been formed out of a number of smaller departments and the generic worker has become the front line member of staff. The narrow responsibilities of housing management are now only a part of the responsibilities of a comprehensive Housing Department. The Development Department covers a number of previously distinct sections.

Moreover because of the size and increasing range of responsibilities of these departments there is a tendency for each department to have officers whose relationship to the technicians in the department is in some ways similar to that between the generalists and specialists in the CDP proposals. For example, the social workers and community workers in each Social Services Team are matched in the Housing Department by such staff as estate managers whose role could be easily translated into a generalist one.
The third characteristic of the existing departmental system which shows that its replacement by the community development approach is feasible is the fact that the main departments are already organised on an area basis so that the officers and staff are, to a considerable extent already in existence. The problem is that, notwithstanding this decentralization, service areas often do not coincide, and co-ordination is inevitably patchy.

Having indicated that, in terms of organisation, the dismantling of the departmental system is a feasible proposition it is worth recognizing that in political terms it is likely to be exceedingly difficult. This is because the main tendency of the present system which the CDP approach seeks to reverse is the increasing emphasis on hierarchy. The locally based services may already exist but they are answerable to the central departments and the departmental Chief Officers. The CDP plan would revise this so that all locally based services were controlled at the area level by a co-ordinator.

In addition to generalists being responsible to the area head a substantial proportion of the specialists would also be controlled at that level. This does not mean that it would be necessary to physically locate all staff at the area level. Although there are many staff who should be based at area offices there are other scarcer resources, such as perhaps lawyers, who could not be available full-time to each team and would therefore more sensibly be located in a central office. This does not mean that they would be controlled in a different way. Although ultimately such staff would have to report to a borough level officer their task in a day to day context would be to respond to referrals from the area generalists.

Without going into great detail about each service there seems a real possibility of integrating a number of major services into this type of structure. Amongst the most obvious are housing management and maintenance, non-residential social services, many leisure services and development control functions. In addition there may well be a case for organising universal services such as street sweeping at this level although the arguments against doing so may be stronger.

The list leaves a very substantial area of local authority activity quite untouched. Firstly there is the development function of councils which will need to be retained at the centre although control over what is actually developed should be much greater at the local level. In addition there are certain departments such as Architects and Building Departments (Capital Works) which are in effect providing a service to other departments of the council rather than directly to the public and which are therefore less relevant to the community development approach. Thirdly there are the management services which any organisation must have which will remain more or less untouched by these people.

Nonetheless for the major revenue consuming departments of Southwark Council a wholehearted commitment to the approach advocated here would mean that only a group of the original departments would remain centrally organised. We will examine the implications for one particular department at a later stage in this chapter but in general we can say at this stage that leaving aside any services which might be retained at the centre, the main function of these ‘departments’ would be to provide small teams of specialist advisers to assist areas in maintaining a high standard of service and to advise on policy matters at the centre. Area offices would be in overall control of service giving as well as monitoring the level of demand for resources, and for budgeting, and making demands on the central budget.

The Effect on Professional Roles

There are two main ways in which the adoption of the community development approach would affect the employment of local authority staff. At present the management system with its emphasis on departmental boundaries and hierarchical structures encourages ever greater specialization and professionalization, and offers a clearly defined career structure for each specialism. Although we are not attempting in this report to produce a rigid alternative to the conventional system it seems clear that a decision to rely on the locally based multi-disciplinary
team would break down the existing career structures for many professionals and would in some cases call into question the status of particular functions in the local authority.

Once again the superficial reaction to any such suggestions might be to feel that there is no point in pursuing objectives which, ostensibly, threaten so many people. However there would still be a need within an area based, non-hierarchical, system for professionals from various disciplines to act as the 'specialist' worker. Their position would, once established, be little different from that of existing salaried staff in local authorities. However the change to such a system would involve examination of the function of particular groups to decide whether they were truly specialists or whether they should be more properly defined as generalists. At this stage it would be wrong to go too far in identifying which existing staff might be in this position but in order to make the distinction it is worth saying that such groups as lawyers, accountants and public health inspectors have well defined functions and are certainly specialist staff while some housing management staff, social services staff and planners are less obviously so.

The important change for officers who are at present protected by professional and bureaucratic barriers would be in their relationship with generalist staff. The generalists would require to possess considerable skill in that it would be their job to decide at what point anyone of a large number of specialist skills was required. This has implications for training which is at present not geared to the production of workers who have a range of skills which will allow them to make the inevitably complicated organisation of a local authority accessible to the general public.

The specialist workers would therefore have a very direct and often subordinate relationship with workers who would not always share their professional status. They should no longer be placed in large departments but in much smaller groups with an area focus so that their goals would be area goals rather departmental ones.

In career terms the placing of emphasis on creation of a team focussing on problem solving at local level might well increase the opportunities for officers to choose between an administrative career by becoming a generalist after gaining experience in one particular specialism, or continuing along more conventional career lines as a practising specialist. At present one of the major dysfunctions of the departmental system results from the need for an officer to take an administrative role, whatever his preferences and ability, if he wishes to gain promotion. The trade unions are naturally likely to be very concerned about the implications of many of the proposals in this report. There is no reason, however, why the increased quality of service which is the objective of the community development approach should not be accompanied by the same, if not greater job satisfaction.

The Relationship between the Administrative and Political Structures

The importance of strengthening the representative role of local councillors cannot be overestimated. At present the alienation of the general public is only matched by the frustration of many councillors at their inability to achieve the objectives which they entered local government to pursue. The increasing complexity of the machine which councillors are elected to control makes it increasingly difficult for them to be clear as to how decisions can be made and implemented.

All proposals for area management in local authorities include the idea of creating area committees and some of the schemes, like that in Stockport, start off as little more than the creation of area committees. However it is clear that such committees, by themselves, are little more than a forum for discussion of local issues and, useful though such a forum may be, the influence that it would be able to bring to bear on the upper echelons of the local authority is strictly limited.

The way of getting round this problem is generally thought to be to give the area committees specific powers. This may be desirable but the powers granted will necessarily be very limited themselves and it is questionable whether control by the general public through their elected representatives is maximised by the granting of such powers. After all the sort of items which a
councillor has to deal with each day as a ward representative are not generally the matters that would be considered by committees.

It is political control over the administrative structure that is more important and as such it is the creation of the area based officer organisation to which the area committee could relate that gives the scheme its importance. As the management system would be considerably easier to understand and more accessible the councillor would be able to fulfill his representative role more easily. If a member wanted to get a particular matter dealt with he would be able to identify the dysfunctional aspects of the systems which prevented him from doing so. If necessary he could then take the matter to his area committee and, if a policy decision was required, the area committee would pass the items with a recommendation to the centre.

It seems inevitable under any area system that all major budgetary control would be retained at the centre. Nonetheless it might well be that the area committees might be given substantial autonomy to adjust local services within the budget. For example in a Social Services budget it would merely be a matter for discussion whether the areas should be supplied with resources under narrowly defined votes such as home helps or luncheon clubs or whether an overall budget would be granted within which the area could decide, for example, to spend more on home helps and less on luncheon clubs.

By emphasising the frustration of the back bench councillor and concentrating on the need to reassess his role there is a danger of forgetting that important policy decisions do require to be taken at the borough level and that the role of the politician in these decisions is vital if the overall objectives of the community development approach are to be realised. Earlier in this report we questioned the growth of highly technical, supposedly objective, documents as the background to decision-making. Nonetheless there will remain a real need for officials who can produce data in which the options available to councillors are clearly set out.

The major change in structure suggested in this report should allow much of the administrative details of the council’s operations to be dealt with at area level which will tend to spread the load, at present concentrated on a few committee chairmen, across a wider number of members. The hoped for result would be that the central decision-making system would be released in such a way that corporate ideals could become reality. The central committees would be able to examine fundamental objectives and functions which are at present hidden by the weight of data required to control the complex bureaucratic structures with their mystique or professionalism. In such a situation the bodies like the present Policy Groups might be more important than the Standing Committees, that is as long as requests sent up from area committees accorded with the conclusions reached at Policy Groups regarding needs and resources the Standing Committee would often be little more than a rubber stamp. To put it another way Standing Committees, relieved of much of the administrative data, could become, in effect, Policy Groups.

The Local Authority and the General Public

The present relationship between most local authorities and their electorates seems designed to increase frustration and distrust. As an individual the Southwark resident, like those of other areas, is faced with a complex organisation which is organised in such a way that it is by no means apparent at all times where particular problems should most sensibly be taken. If he avoids the problem of being passed on from department to department and finds the right location he invariably has to put his problem to a very junior staff member who, whatever his or her competence, can never be held directly responsible for getting the problem solved because of the weight of hierarchy above. If, as a result, the resident approaches his local councillor he may well find that the ability of that individual to assist him is seriously impaired by the same conditions which he has experienced.

With the growth of community action the local resident may well find that the local authority responds to the demands of a local group of which he is a member by organising a public meeting.
Yet the frustration after this type of meeting is often greater because, for example, the one-off consultative exercise can have little effect on a redevelopment programme which has been decided upon long before and has become severely delayed.

Naturally many residents have their problems dealt with speedily and effectively but the frustrations described above are well known to local councillors and to the people who run advice centres and are in constant touch with the electorate. It is for this reason that CDP's approach emphasises strongly the relationship between the member of the public and the generalist.

With the adoption of the area approach advocated in this section there would be one major access point in each area (although very local sources of advice and information, perhaps voluntarily funded, would remain useful). At this point a local resident would have immediate access to an experienced officer with the knowledge to take responsibility for and process straightforward requests (e.g. housing repairs) and to assess the need for specialist assistance (e.g. Social Workers, public health inspector). If the service was not forthcoming from the specialists the generalist would be able to bring in his senior or, if necessary, the area co-ordinator.

This would mean that all sorts of specialist staff, particularly in social services and, to a lesser extent, housing, who were formerly in the front line, would no longer be directly accessible to the public. However this facility, which permitted occasional access to officers with narrowly defined responsibilities and who could often avoid direct responsibility by virtue of that degree of specialization, was often of little real assistance to the public. Instead they should be given access to staff who can, as far as possible, command the councils' resources, within the policy limits of the council and who can therefore be the responsible official, regardless of professional boundaries.

In addition the greater influence and understanding of their local representatives obviously permeates down to some extent to the electorate as a whole. As such a situation in which local councillors sit on area committees and are able to intervene on behalf of constituents in a more realistic way can only reduce the increasingly negative nature of the relationship between the council and the public.

Finally after examining in broad terms the likely effects which the adoption of community development might have it is perhaps worth looking at an individual department which would be greatly affected. This may perhaps illustrate once again that CDP was not rejecting the aims and objects of previous Southwark initiatives in management but rather was seeking to realise the aims behind these initiatives by working out a more effective formula for dealing with deprivation and breaking down those vested interests which act as a barrier to change.

A study in change — Social Services

Before dealing with the new shape of the resulting service it is important to examine the history of Social Services and those characteristics of it which are likely to be responsive to a changed approach. Failure to appreciate these and build upon them will necessarily be a severe obstacle to progress. Experience clearly demonstrates that abrupt reversals of policy and direction are usually extremely painful when involving large institutions and are rarely successful in achieving the intended goal.

In the case of Social Services there appeared to be several factors which were likely to be conducive to the area management approach. The Department was itself a relatively new creation resulting from an amalgamation of a number of individual services in the welfare field. It brought together, following the Seebohm Report, workers from a range of service settings — childrens, hospital, mental health, domiciliary, day care, residential, physically handicapped etc. Its creation was a recognition of the disadvantages of a fragmented approach to the provision of welfare services when so many of the problems were inter-linked. In addition to this emphasis on a ‘generic’ rather than
'separate' approach, it was also interesting to note that stress was placed on service decentralisation through the development of area based teams providing a range of services to residents.

A further relevant factor was the amount of responsibility devolved to the field-workers in Social Services. Unlike most other local authority departments which are highly structured in an hierarchical way, the field-worker has virtually sole responsibility for day to day decisions on their cases. The organisation of the Department tends to reflect professional needs for supervision and support rather than bureaucratic control. It is not coincidental that controversy should occur at regular intervals between the Authority and social service workers over failure to observe the strictly laid down procedure of the Authority. Such procedures are often regarded by social service workers as secondary to the interests of a particular client. This clash of values has been a common feature in many Authorities and by no means peculiar to Southwark. The ability to challenge bureaucratic procedures is a helpful attribute when attempting to achieve major organisational change.

These factors indicate that the trend of development within Social Services is likely to be by no means inimical to the Area Management Approach. Indeed in one sense the CDP proposals can be viewed as a logical development of the principals already widely accepted after Seebohm. Set against these positive factors, however, was the present situation which demonstrated that there was a need for considerable change if the long term goals were to be achieved. Placed as it was within a departmental orientated system, Social Services suffered the difficulties which accompanied that system. Symptoms of this malaise were:

- The Department's definition of need rarely coincided with that of the general public. This often resulted in some confusion with the wrong problems being presented to the wrong agency and consequent delays through the need for referral. One result of this, once the public became aware of the respective powers of the Department, was for the problem to be re-defined in an attempt to come within the category of those who were helped by the Department. Thus for example a problem of inadequate accommodation became a case of child maladjustment or mothers' mental health. This situation where the resident needs to fit his need for a service into the definitions of the department rather than visa-versa is clearly undesirable.

- A related problem was that rigid departmental demarcation often hindered the co-operation necessary for effective service. Questions of demarcation delayed urgent action in some cases. For example CDP workers dealt with cases where house-bound elderly people remained unaided for several weeks because it was not clear whose responsibility it was to help them when rehousing from redevelopment areas took place.

- The need for the generic approach was widely misunderstood. It was assumed initially that all workers should be able to handle all types of cases and specialist skills were downgraded. This resulted in a falling of standards to the lowest common denominator.

If we apply the approach favoured by CDP and attempt to use the resources of the Social Services Department to maximise access to resources a very different organisation is likely to be created. In trying to indicate how that organisation might appear it should be remembered that the department, as such, would cease to exist and that we are therefore examining how various services at present located within the Social Services Department would fit into a non-departmental structure.

We have already indicated that the existing area offices of various departments would be retained and in each of these areas staff would be divided into generalist, front line workers and back up specialists. The work of the generalist would include a good deal of the type of work at present undertaken by social workers though there would be many aspects of the generalists work which would be outside the scope of social workers. We could envisage that some experienced social workers, who had built up knowledge outside their field (e.g. in public health housing legislation) would be encouraged to take up posts as generalists. Certainly the existing training for social workers would not equip them for the generalist role without substantial experience in the field.
The division of work in this way would release the trained case-worker to take on the work for which he is trained and best suited. He would become one of a large number of specialists taking referrals from generalist officers. The need for experience on the part of the front line officers is made clear by the fact that he has to diagnose the problem and assess what resources are required to solve it. In terms of social services other specialists will include the traditional ones such as child care, mental health, home helps, court officers and a number of others.
6 Conclusions and recommendations

On the basis of the experiences of CDP, backed by the earlier findings of the EPA programme and similar projects in the USA there would appear to be no justification for further experiments of this type. A compensatory approach could only be effective if the belief that deprivation could be identified within particular individuals, areas or institutions, and could be remedied by the channelling of marginal extra resources, proved to be correct. The initiatives which have been based on such an analysis seem to have resulted, at best, in some amelioration of the situation to a few individuals (and then not necessarily those individuals most lacking in resources) and at worst in a continuation of the status quo with increased numbers of professionals recruited to maintain the situation (e.g. Southwark's home/school experiment).

This clearly has implications for present policies as much of present social policy is based on these false premises. From CDP's point of view the most obvious example of this is the Urban Aid programme as a whole. In addition to the theoretical shortcomings outlined above which prevent urban aid making any significant impact on deprivation the lack of clear criteria on which funds are allocated mean that, in practice, there has been duplication, funding of services which are anyway the responsibility of local government (e.g. £320,000 this year for day nurseries in Southwark) and lack of control over the use of resources at local level. The belief that Urban Aid is an experimental programme can then be seen as something of a fiction, and in as much as it simply supplements other major programmes, there is good argument for Urban Aid being drawn into the main rate support grant formula. A similar view has now been expressed by the Association of Metropolitan Authorities. Such a change would avoid the anomalies and inequity produced by the present situation. For example even with what was a genuine experiment in the case of neighbourhood law centres there is now the position that in three adjoining areas there could be three centres all funded in different ways, reflecting only the availability of finance rather than need for that resource. Law Centres at present can be funded from the Local Authority itself, from Urban Aid, and directly from the Exchequer through the Lord Chancellor's Department. Such a diversity of approaches in providing for what is now recognised as a necessary service in inner urban areas will only result in effective use of existing resources by chance, if at all.

CDP's alternative approach was based on an understanding of the term 'community' which recognised the impossibility of a return to the close, neighbourhood networks of mutual dependence which characterised the slums of Booth's London and were the result of the lack of basic support systems which the Welfare State now provides. Instead a 'community' was seen as no more than a local social system providing for the meeting of residents major social needs on a local basis. Coupled with this understanding was a definition of deprivation as an unjustifiable gap separating those who can and those who cannot secure for themselves the living conditions and standards generally regarded as necessary in a particular society at a particular time. The critical element therefore was the emphasis on relative access to, and control over resources, which CDP saw as just as important as increasing existing resources. With these definitions behind us Southwark CDP adopted working methods designed to maximise access to and control over resources, that is community development.

Access and control had therefore become the key concepts by which to judge the effective utilization and allocation of resources. The implications for policy are illustrated by the difficulties
faced by the Project, not in obtaining money for legal services, but in ensuring that this important new resource was used in such a way as to reduce deprivation. It is hardly surprising, given the present lack of clarity, that the Lord Chancellor’s Department should be so myopic, and demonstrates the need for changed criteria at central government level in respect of experimental programmes. The concept of maximisation of access and control should become the criteria to be applied to the use of resources presently administered by the Voluntary Services Unit, Intermediate Treatment Services, DHSS Social Care Projects, and allied programmes of other government departments such as the inner area studies and job creation schemes. For those resources distributed through the Rate Support Grant it would be the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure that the correct criteria are applied.

The alleviation of deprivation requires responsiveness on the part of the controllers of resources and a positive approach to the maximisation of access and control. The ability of government, both local and central, to make such a response is dependent on the decision-making process and style of management adopted. Local authorities throughout the country have been attempting, through corporate management to improve planning, resource allocation and service delivery, by replacing the traditional departmental approach with its emphasis on crude bargaining. Similar attempts are being made at central government level through the work of the Central Policy Review Staff on the Joint Framework for Social Policies.

CDP’s experience in Southwark suggests that, though the ideals of corporate management are consistent with the community development approach, there are considerable difficulties in translating theory into practice and the use of criteria of efficiency, which are based more on the needs of the bureaucracy rather than the expressed needs of the local population, detracts from the effectiveness of attempts to deal with deprivation. In particular the emphasis on the functional departments remains predominant as does the adherence to hierarchical forms of organisation. At the same time corporate management seems to have actually encouraged centralization of power and has also had a tendency to depoliticise the decision-making process. These organisational features all operate against increasing access to the local authority by local people and, indeed, by elected members through whom the electorate should control resource allocation.

The alternative suggested in this report envisages a breaking down of the departmental system by an area based approach allied to a division of labour into teams consisting of front line workers with generalist skills backed up by officers with particular, specialist responsibilities, rather than the functional division which is common to all local authorities at present. Access to the council’s resources would also be increased by the reduction of emphasis on hierarchical structures and the recognition that the generalists should be experienced, trained officers with a wide knowledge of the services and responsibilities of the authority. In this way they could assume genuine responsibility for the resolution of problems brought to them by local people, in contrast to the present situation where the point of first contact is invariably a low-grade officer whose lack of responsibility is a major source of frustration in the relation between the public and government.

The CDP proposals would create a system which would also be more accessible for the local councillor and, coupled with the setting up of area committees, would greatly strengthen the representative function of council members and the degree of control which they can exercise over decision-making.

Many of these ideas are not new. In particular the concept of area management could now be called fashionable and the need to break down departmental barriers is widely recognised. However the impact of most proposals has been diminished either by their exclusive emphasis on organisational changes amongst senior management or by their failure to try and match the political and administrative processes. Most commonly there has been a tendency to see policies to deal with urban deprivation as something to be grafted on to the existing practice of the local authority. In contrast the CDP proposals question the entire basis on which service delivery is undertaken in local authorities as a whole.
In the time available CDP has concentrated on developing the conceptual framework for an alternative approach to decision-making which could provide the basis on which deprivation can be tackled through increased access to resources. Although the initial reaction from some council members in Southwark to our proposals was a positive one and the lack of any review mechanism in the corporate management system reinforced in some members minds the need for an alternative approach, there appears to have been no progress resulting from the review of the existing management system which was authorised following the publication of the Action Team's final report to the Council. This lack of progress can probably be attributed to the much cooler attitude of the Council Leadership whose autocratic approach to decision-making is criticised in this report. This attitude is supported by the Chief Officers of the Council who were openly hostile to the Report thus indicating the problem of achieving change when the need for change is in the hands of the decision-makers themselves.

It may well be that the best hope of taking CDP's ideas further is in those authorities which are already experimenting with area management. There is a strong possibility that the inadequacy of some of the area schemes which have been proposed so far will become evident when they get under way and in particular the need to break down the departmental distinctions is likely to become clearer. Apart from this the approach outlined in this report will have to rely on central government departments acceptance of the basic concepts if it is to get any nearer implementation. Recognition of the failure of policies which add marginal resources to individual authorities would seem to be a pre-requisite of further progress though we should perhaps recognise the danger that the government will accept the analysis, scrap the marginal resources and disclaim responsibility for any alternative strategies which depend on major organisational changes within local authorities.

Even without a commitment by local councils to these basic changes the principles we have described can make an important contribution to the relationship between government, both local and central, and the public. Stress has been placed in the past few years on consultation and participation without any real analysis of how this is to be made meaningful and effective. In many areas where consultation has been promoted the resulting schemes have been unsatisfactory because they have generally been a way of either allowing pressure groups to express their own interests in one-off situations such as planning inquiries or have been simply a way of co-opting local activists, who may or may not represent a widely held view, as in some council's tenant management schemes. The CDP approach sees decision-making in government as an ongoing process into which the public as a whole should have the maximum possible access and this approach offers hope for making existing procedures for participation more credible by the recognition that the concepts of access and control are basic to the relationship between government and the public and that there are real opportunities in particular fields such as the development of co-operative principles in housing management to avoid the mistakes of the past.

In conclusion experience in Southwark's experiment in community development leads us to make the following recommendations:

(a) Compensatory programmes such as Urban Aid cannot be effective and should be replaced.

(b) Those programmes which can no longer claim to be experimental should be integrated into normal service provision.

(c) Genuine experimental programmes should allocate resources on the basis of achieving the greatest possible access to, and control over, those resources by inner city residents.

(d) Local Authorities should seek to develop alternative management structures designed to encourage community development. This will require:

1 A dismantling of the departmental structure.
2 A reduction of emphasis on hierarchy in decision-making.
3 A basic division of labour amongst local authority staff into generalists supported by specialists.
4 Development of area based decision-making arrangements for both Members and Officers of the Council.

Finally the implications of these conclusions should be taken into account in such experiments as Comprehensive Community Programmes which realistically may offer the best opportunity of introducing the major changes which are required if a contribution to combatting deprivation is to be achieved.
Appendix A

Services Provided through the CDP Action Team’s Programme

At several points in the main text reference is made to the network of services provided by the Action Team in Newington within its annual budget of £40,000. In retrospect it is believed that the services thus provided, though of some ameliorative character, were likely to make only a marginal impact on the areas of policy which came to be seen as critical in tackling deprivation. Under the revised analysis accepted within the Project attention needed to be switched from the ‘receivers’ of social and welfare services to the ‘controllers’ of these resources and the manner in which they reached their decisions. As a result the role of the services within the Action Team Programme were re-interpreted in order to provide a multi-disciplinary team within the community development approach used by the Team.

In general, however, it remains the conventional wisdom that improved, better co-ordinated and more concentrated, service provision will provide a solution to many aspects of the inner city problem. This is despite the accumulation of evidence to the contrary from special programmes, both here and in USA. Modified service provision and marginal increases in resource allocation are always a convenient smokescreen for lack of action on the more fundamental issues. Indeed the situation faced by CDP in Southwark was a good example of the pressures to deal with problems on a localised service basis. It was through the services that were provided for the elderly and the young, that the Project gained credibility both within the neighbourhood and the Council.

Experience of the Action Programme confirmed the view that in its fragmented service-oriented form, only marginal improvements, largely of a short-term nature were likely to occur. To illustrate this more clearly, contained in this section is a chronological description of the evolution of the services which the Project provided. This is divided into those services for children and young persons, and secondly those for the elderly. Where necessary extra comments are added in order to amplify the steps taken and set them in context. These are shown in bold type. Finally each section contains a summary of the assumptions lying behind the various approaches, underlying the action taken.

Services for Children and Young Persons

(a) Chronological Sequence of Events

November 1969  Inner London Education Authority accepted an invitation to nominate a Member and an Officer to join CDP Steering Group.

It was important that the ILEA was fully involved in the Project from the outset, as it and not the London Boroughs has responsibility for education and youth provision in Inner London.

January 1970  CDP Research Team from Brunel University began work.

June 1970  CDP Action Team Leader appointed.
December 1970

Application for grant-aid received, from ‘North Street’ Project Committee which consisted largely of local parents. Follow-up work allocated to the newly appointed Project Officer.

The group known as ‘North Street’ Project was in existence before CDP started. The members were largely local parents concerned at a lack of provision for younger children. The group depended very heavily on a local hospital worker active in her spare time in the neighbourhood but herself living in Outer London. It is significant that the first group to approach CDP for help should be led by a professional non-resident and that the help sought was financial. The follow-up work was allocated to the CDP project officer, a former public health inspector who in addition to assisting the group to articulate their need for facilities for young people also helped them to discuss the problem generally of deficiencies in their environment. At one stage this group became very militant about the problem of heavy and fast traffic, and several parents were arrested at the ensuing demonstration. The ad hoc nature of this contact and its allocation to a worker without community organisation experience or work on children’s needs illustrates a general problem of this type of situation; there is always the danger of interpreting problems in terms of the worker’s expertise rather than in the form in which it is presented. In this situation, with the general orientation of the worker to an ‘environmental’ approach, attention was focussed on obtaining land to set up compensatory facilities and using CDP as a funding source. An officer with a different approach might have spent more time developing an analysis of the situation and, for example, assessing existing institutions and the reason for their apparent failure to provide the necessary service.

February 1971

Meetings called by CDP with local professionals, including — Health Visitors, Head Teacher, Youth Worker, Play-Group Leader, Borough Pre-School Play Group Organiser.

The pressing need was felt to be for more pre-school provision, to allow Mothers to work; to offset the limiting effects of bad housing conditions on child development; and to compensate for a lack of opportunity for children to mix and play with others in a safe environment.

It was agreed:

to try and obtain premises for a play-group, to be supervised by two local mothers already in training.

CDP to institute a programme to concern itself with educating local mothers on the value of play in children’s development.

CDP to conduct a survey of Mothers with children 2½ years to 5 years, to discover the extent to which they felt a need to work and why, and their knowledge of and feelings about existing pre-school provision. This was to involve the Brunel Research Team, using names provided by Health Visitors, and was concerned with the northern part of Newington only.

It seems to have been characteristic of much of the early work at least that it developed from close contact with allied professionals serving the neighbourhood rather than with local residents. This may have been partly due to this being a chosen method, but difficulties were anyway placed in the way of a more ‘grass-roots’ approach: it took just over six months before an office in the project area could be obtained, and since the research team was already operating while the action team was still forming, a brief pinpointing a number of problems (redevelopment, traffic, etc.) was anyway available in advance. In any event, only a very low priority appears to have been given to working with local residents in defining needs.

March 1971

Work with ‘North Street’ parents continued, with Project Officer addressing their general meeting.
April 1971

The survey of young mothers was conducted. The Research Team felt that there were technical weaknesses in this survey, arising from the simplistic approach of the action team, but accepted that it would at least be a means of making contact with local mothers.

Following the survey, a student on placement and a research assistant took on the task of encouraging the formation of a group of mothers to consider both pre-school provision and environmental questions.

After three weeks there were the beginnings of a group interested in making use of an empty piece of land for children's play and in setting up a pre-school playgroup. The initiative failed to gather any parent support however, owing it was felt, to the influence of a rumour that all residents were due to be rehoused shortly. The rumour proved to be false but nevertheless prevented the development of interest in further action in the neighbourhood.

In the event, this survey seems to have been regarded as abortive by both the action and research teams. The research team was concerned that the survey was technically weak, but accepted that it could be a precurser to action. The action team, however, paid little heed to the information produced from the survey which tended to show that the main concern was with housing problems and facilities for the school-age children of working mothers. Instead, an attempt was made to link together specific mothers who had expressed an interest in pre-school provision, the issue that had previously been identified by other professional workers. This event thus marks both a point where the action team demonstrated its commitment to needs identified by other professional workers rather than residents, and also the problems that were developing between the action and research teams which shortly after led to the withdrawal of the research team.

As a footnote, the failure of this attempt to set up a pre-school group emphasises the need to appreciate the strength and direction of local concern if self-help methods are to be utilised effectively.

April 1971

Grant of £310 to ‘West Street’ Playground Committee which was organised by a group of parents who had been active before CDP was set up.

June 1971

Grant of £625 to ‘Arches’ Mothers and Toddlers Group. With CDP assistance a committee of parents was formed which administered the grant. A local mother was appointed as play-leader and she supervised sessions for Mothers and their children under 3 years.

The aim of this group was to attract mothers of young children who were isolated either on the large housing estates or in the older accommodation while awaiting re-housing. The Mothers were expected to remain on the premises although released from the immediate problems of supervising their children. This group was thus geared to meeting the social needs of both mothers and their below pre-school age children.

June 1971

CDP Committee agreed that the Social Action Budget of £40,000 of which 75% comes from the Home Office, should be equally divided between LBS and ILEA. This was an important decision as it enabled a full programme of work aimed at 0-18 years age range to be planned. ILEA being a much larger authority and more remote from local pressure than the local authority, LBS, the decision offered the advantage that money could probably be more easily used for experimental work which the borough could not support. Release of funds through LBS had indeed proved much more difficult just because of the opposition of some local politicians to innovation. The ability to involve another authority at this stage was thus important in allowing the project to gather momentum, although it seems to have arisen as much from financial expediency as from perceptions of need.
The second Project Officer (Education) was appointed with all costs to be met by ILEA.

Her brief was a wide one — to examine and provide for the needs of all children and young persons in Newington. She was expected to work with both statutory education services and local people. During the next ten months she was involved in:

- consulting with allied professionals on the needs of local children
- making direct contact with children through the provision of informal street games
- obtaining direct experience of the local school situation through regular teaching sessions at primary schools; organising outings; meeting with groups of parents, etc.

With the appointment of a second Project Officer, specifically for Education there were likely to be some difficulties as certain interventions had already been made in the field of children's needs, although these had tended to be ad-hoc measures without clearly thought out purposes. Thus already there had been attempts both at stimulating self-help and CDP provided services for 'play', albeit without clear distinction as to the preferred role. There had also been a strong reliance on the views and diagnoses of other professional workers when constructing any programme. This history, plus the deteriorating relationship between the action and research teams, left the new member of staff in a difficult situation. The problem seems to have been mitigated by avoiding clashes with the rest of the team and anyway developing a specialist area of work within the field of pre-school and primary schools.

A student employed as part-time detached youth worker, the project terminating after eight months.

The student was expected to make contact with children under 14 years of age who were not being catered for by traditional services. He was to arrange outings to parks, cinemas, museums etc., as part of a general programme of activities.

In fact this project did not complete its anticipated ten month period as the student proved to have insufficient skills to cope with the 'detached' role and tended to feel he needed a base and extra equipment. Also, during this period, many of the youngsters in his target area were re-housed as a result of slum clearance.

Grant of £95 to 'North Street' Adventure Playground, for equipment and materials so that it could continue beyond a summer project and be open during the Autumn/Winter period.

Playhouse No. 1 opened by CDP with a budget of £765, for the Winter holiday period.

The Playhouses represented an attempt to use empty properties within clearance areas to meet the needs in the short-run of children awaiting re-housing. They ended up being directly provided by CDP with no local involvement in terms of management. The original expectations were probably too high and experience would seem to show that they can be little more than very short-term provisions. Supervision as well as maintenance problems in an old and decaying building are numerous, and it is difficult to prevent a generally destructive milieu developing. There is a temptation to persevere in a situation where the most disadvantaged children regularly attend the playhouse, as in fact happened with Playhouse II. But with concentrations of these children in dilapidated buildings there is a danger of further stigmatisation of the group by the rest of the community. In general the disadvantages outweighed the advantages of this means of solving the problem of lack of facilities.
January 1972  Purchase of Minibus for use by local primary schools, and when not used by them, to be available to playgroups, playgrounds, etc.

The purchase of the minibus was initially for use by the schools and formal youth groups. It was conceived as being a valuable aid to the schools as a means of enriching the curriculum. As, however, it was not large enough to take a whole class it did throw an extra organisational problem on the schools as they had to provide a driver and supervision for the two halves of the one class. Despite this the five local primary schools did make regular use of it. CDP's main role was one of providing finance for the purchase. Control by CDP did allow for the development of a flexible use pattern. When not being used by the schools it was fully used by the local adventure playgrounds, summer playschemes, remedial education scheme, pensioner's groups, etc. Lack of official 'red-tape' facilitated this situation.

January 1972  Playhouse I extended to include ground floor of adjacent house. Further £500 expenditure agreed, to cover use at week-ends and half-term beyond original period.

January 1972  Support given to 'West Street' Adventure Playground Committee in its attempts to justify obtaining a larger site from LBS.

February 1972  Extra-curricular grant of £75 to local Infants School for purchase of a puppet theatre.

A number of these extra-curricular grants were made during this part of the project life. Although no doubt welcomed by the schools, there is little evidence that they served anything more than a public-relations purpose and they do not even appear to have been requested for specific purposes.

February 1972  ‘South Street’ Adventure Playground Committee granted £1,800 to cover cost of fencing, etc.

May 1972  Continuation of Playhouse I authorised, with a further grant of £560.

May 1972  Use of the minibus extended to a fifth primary school on the edge of the CDP area but attended by many Newington children.

June 1972  Grant of £630 to ‘Arches’ Mothers and Toddlers Group, for a further year’s operation. CDP arranged for a rota of secondary school girls to assist in their group as part of their social studies course.

Project Team Leader felt able to repeat the grant as this was now operating smoothly and was virtually independent of the relevant authorities apart from its financial needs. The attempt to involve secondary school children in assisting this project was not particularly successful in the long term, which was also true of similar work with pensioners.

June 1972  Grants totalling £3,340 made to the three adventure playgrounds in the area. The Project Officer also helped to co-ordinate the use of resources by the resident-run projects, e.g. staff-sharing arrangements, pooling resources, etc.

The development of adventure playgrounds seems to have been an obsessive feature of the programme. It resulted from the need for play facilities at low cost with the availability of derelict land for sites. Children’s play is also a relatively easy issue on which to involve concerned parents.

Experience in Newington has shown that this type of facility is a valuable adjunct to other play facilities but is by no means a panacea. Parent-operated Playgrounds are more appropriate when catering for younger age groups but in general are not able to cope with the older and more disruptive children. Adventure Playgrounds can accommodate a small range and number of children and need to be only one of a number of facilities available to children in inner city areas. Whatever the service provided, the crucial element still appears to be the quality of the leadership within the playscheme.
June 1972

Proposed 'Education Programme and Parent Advisory Service' accepted by CDP Committee. This proposal was the result of the experience of the Project Officer (Education) in her first ten months in post. It set out the aims of the CDP education programme and how these were to be achieved. It was viewed as a total education programme and was to consist of:

(a) Finance and other resources for schools and playgroups.
(b) General assistance to schools to promote exhibitions and publications aimed at parents.
(c) Advisory Service geared to the general information service of CDP.
(d) Development of parent and other adult groups to improve knowledge and understanding of education practice and activities and to promote adult education activities.
(e) Retail service of books and materials.
(f) Nursery teacher to work from School base and to visit the homes of pre-school families in order to advise on the needs of and activities for their children.

Staff to be:
1 Education Adviser — a nursery teacher to visit pre-school children.
2 Home School Officer — a primary teacher to work with four schools, organise retail services, etc.
3 Education Organiser — to co-ordinate playschemes.
4 Clerical Officer.

In the CDP Education Programme it was assumed that there was an imbalance in educational attainment in terms of social class, and a significant cause of this was seen to be lack of information and knowledge by parents. A 'parent advisory service' would then aim to increase and extend the interest in, knowledge about and involvement of the Education Service with the community and, especially, parents. The project having observed an imbalance in attainment, it thus chose to concentrate on one possible reason for this — parent/home deficiency — and on making good this deficiency through setting up a parent advisory scheme. Within the scheme itself, however, there was the problem that the work might result not in tackling the problem even as defined but rather in merely providing some compensatory service to children themselves. In terms of a 'parent advisory service', providing extra resources for children is to substitute for the symptom and not the problem.

July 1972

Following comments from ILEA on the proposed scheme, amendments were made and CDP committee accepted a revised scheme:

1 Home School Teacher - primary teacher, to work with five local schools and operate Parent Advisory Service.
2 Education Organiser — teacher, to be appointed by ILEA for nursery class at St Pauls. Appointment to be made one term before the class opened in order to work with parents, appointment to be made Summer Term 1973.
3 Education/Recreational Organiser — to be appointed on LBS staff.
4 Clerical Officer to be appointed on LBS staff (both of latter to be paid from ILEA budget).

31 July 1972

CDP Project Leader ended her service.

The Project Leader resigned after a long period of difficulty between the project and the local Council. In order to rectify the situation there had been changes made in terms of persons on the Committee, and notably the Chairman, but the Project Leader was not satisfied that there was sufficient re-commitment by the local authority to the project. The resignation left the project in a far from easy
situation as it was now without both a Senior Officer and an effective research team. The timing of this event had particular implications for the education project, which was just about to be set up. The general air of uncertainty and lack of support for the Project Officer caused both long delays in recruiting the necessary additional workers and allowed the work to develop in a poorly supervised and unrigorous way. This situation continued for over six months, at a critical stage in the project’s development, before a new team leader was appointed, and it was nearly two years before a new research team began operating.

September 1972 Extra-curricular grants of £50 made to all local primary schools and playgroups.

Autumn 1972 The Project Officer (Education) made contact with two secondary schools attended by Newington children. She helped to organise a community studies course where pupils were helped to become involved in assisting in local primary schools, nursery classes, pre-school playgroups and old peoples clubs. Speakers from various fields of social work also addressed classes. This exercise terminated when two teachers involved at the schools left in July 1973.

September 1972 Following discussions with a local Health Visitor who was concerned with a number of pre-school children who were poorly motivated and under-stimulated at home, CDP arranged a link with a local teacher’s training college. Mature students visited these homes, as part of training, to assist themselves in understanding the difficulties and also to provide some support for the mothers and children. This scheme did not involve financial expenditure but it required a considerable amount of staff time. It continued in various adapted forms till 1975.

Throughout the Project regular contact was made with a local teacher training college in recognition of the need to maintain links between experimental work in the field and teachers in training. The aim of setting up a joint project in which mature students participated was to provide both a service for some mothers with young children and a useful learning experience of conditions in inner city areas for the students. The need for this particular visiting service was identified by the local health visitors and it was they who selected the families to be visited by the students. Their criteria were those families where children were seen as being poorly motivated and not making use of pre-school opportunities. The students were to visit one afternoon a week and were given the tasks of: promoting the mother’s awareness of local pre-school facilities; stimulating interest in, and suggesting ideas for, play which the parents could continue within the home; and providing a social contact for the mother. After the programmed ten weeks of visiting, assessment indicated that the original aims were far too ambitious. The students were in no position to deliver the level of service which had been thought necessary and the short term nature of the contact reduced its impact. As far as the students themselves were concerned, it does seem to have been a useful learning experience. In a modified form the endeavour has been repeated with the main emphasis placed on the students needs rather than those of the mothers. The Training College is expecting to include this type of programme in its normal training curriculum.

September 1972 A Toy Library set up within a local infants school, with a first grant of £400.

The Toy Library was set up in a local infants school following a request from the Head Teacher. This was seen as a way of introducing parents and their children to a range of educational toys which are often expensive or not easily available in the neighbourhood and often only required for a short period of time. It was hoped that the ‘library’ principle would both bridge this gap and help educate parents as to the necessity for and availability of toys. This scheme has operated reasonably successfully for the past three years, although attachment to one school and the siting of the facility has restricted the numbers of parents and children using the
library. It is therefore intended in the future to relocate the project to a more detached site in order to make it available to more parents and young children, including pre-school. The principal of meeting apparent deficiencies in the parental/home situation in this way was consistent with the intentions of the 'parent-advisory service', and needs to be viewed in that way rather than merely a means of providing material compensation for the children.

September 1972 Continuation of Playhouse I, authorised to continue to 31 January 1973, at cost of £1,180.

September 1972 Authorised opening of Playhouse II, to cost £2,085 which was to cover expenditure until 31 March 1973.

October 1972 There was an attempt to set up a Mothers and Toddlers group in Playhouse II, which failed owing to lack of parental response.

November 1972 A grant of £934 to 'South Street' Adventure Playground, to cover the cost of special fencing.

January 1973 Home School Officer took up post.

The Home/School Officer was expected to fulfil an important role within the 'parent advisory service' as a means of developing and strengthening links between schools and parents. Improving communication between homes and school was seen as a key area within this type of approach, as part of the task of improving the educability of children which was felt to be necessary. The initial expectations of the work proved to be over optimistic. It took nearly twelve months for the Officer to become sufficiently acquainted with the five schools, the children and the neighbourhood before being able to make an effective contribution. Dividing her time equally between schools and visiting all the relevant agencies proved to be very time consuming, but essential if a concrete programme of work was to be devised from the original wide brief. Useful lessons have been learnt from this work and will be applied to a modified scheme covering a larger number of schools following the end of CDP. This particular scheme has of course only involved one means of tackling the perceived 'home/school' situation — i.e. employing a Home/School Officer who is also a qualified teacher. The success of this has depended upon the willingness of schools to accommodate greater parental involvement where it has been generated or arisen and the fact that the officer is seen as a teacher rather than, say, a social worker has doubtless been significant.

January 1973 Educational/Recreation Organiser took up post.

The area of work involving children's leisure activities did not fit easily into the idea of a 'parents advisory' service, and at the time the post was established ILEA requested that the appointment should be made by LBS (unlike the other officers in the programme). Until this appointment there had been no clear policy on the meeting of children's 'play' needs, and such work as was undertaken was either concerned with 'child development' in pre-school years, supporting locally organised playgrounds, or took the form of the unsuccessful detached youthwork project. With these antecedents, it was not surprising that the Educational/Recreation Organiser should have had difficulty in translating her job description — as co-ordinator of existing schemes and promoter of new schemes — into an action programme which related to other work within the 'parent advisory' service. It took several months before it was established that the work-load of this officer was rather more than being a minibus driver for the local schools and servicing the ad-hoc initiatives, such as the playhouses, which CDP was now operating. This type of problem typifies the difficulties which are likely to occur in an unstructured situation where workers are from different backgrounds and disciplines. It was never wholly possible to resolve the issue of policy as regards play-facilities as CDP had already generated commitments to
deliver a service. This prevented the new officer from developing a more community based approach as opposed to attempting a rather unsatisfactory mixture of the two. A more successful outcome was reached towards the end of CDP, however, with the appointment of a Borough Play Officer by London Borough of Southwark. This step recognised the need for an overall co-ordinator who would be involved with the full range of play provision. Such a policy was the one that CDP had felt necessary but which it did not wholly implement because of the internal problems resulting from ad-hoc rather than consistent interventions in this field.

February 1973  
2nd CDP Project Team Leader appointed.

The appointment of a second CDP Project Team Leader ended the period of eight months without one. With a background in Community Work and Social Work, he introduced yet another professional background into the team. At that stage it would have caused further disruption to have attempted a new series of initiatives, and thus a policy of consolidation of existing programmes was pursued.

April 1973  
A co-ordinating Committee of LBS and ILEA officers set up to look into the availability of existing school premises for use during holidays, including playgrounds at weekends. Despite many efforts by the Project Officer (Education), no meetings were called.

The difficulty in persuading the convener to call a meeting is probably a reflection of the difficulty in making satisfactory arrangements for dual use of educational premises. This may account for the low priority given to this matter by the relevant Council Officers.

April 1973  
Playhouse I – Grant of £110 to enable continued opening until 30 June 1973
Playhouse II – Grant of £385 to repair damage by vandals.

April 1973  
Report to CDP Committee on progress of the Toy Library. Further grant of £200 to cover cost till March 1974.

May 1973  
Grant of up to £2,000 to ‘North Street’ Adventure Playground, to renew fencing and replace play-hut.

July 1973  
Post of Playleader for Playhouse II established. This was to replace the existing staffing system of using ‘casual staff’.

Summary report on Education Project presented to CDP Committee.

July 1973  
Grant of £89 to enable CDP to employ local teachers to operate a holiday reading workshop from 23 July to 17 August.

September 1973  
Playhouse I closed as majority of families involved had been re-housed.

November 1973  

March 1974  
Child-minders Course operated for six weeks.

The need for this course was identified in discussions between the Project Officer (Education), Health Visitors and the Child Care Adviser (Social Services Department). It was felt that no attention was being paid to the problem of fostering good child-care practice amongst the mothers who performed this important community service. As a pilot project on five consecutive Mondays, ten child-minders were invited to attend special talks and demonstrations on simple toys and activities for young children and group discussions on child development. The children were cared for in an adjoining room by teacher training students. At the time this was felt to be a successful starting point from which a regular series of such courses could be given and from which a more dynamic childminding system could be developed, to replace the existing haphazard situation. Unfortunately there has been little follow-up work on the part of Social Services Department, where the lack of sufficient staff is cited as the limiting factor.
March 1974

Attempt to set up a Day Care Centre failed owing to lack of suitable premises in the area.

The need for special day-care provision emerged from discussions between the Project Officer (Education) and Senior Officers of Social Services Department. It was accepted in principle that such a facility was needed and that there was sufficient money from CDP to finance it. There appeared, however, to be no suitable premises in the Project area. After a delay of some months and the intervention of the Director of Social Services to obtain premises, the scheme still failed to be launched. At this stage owing to resignations both of CDP Staff and Social Services staff, suitably qualified staff to supervise the project were not available and the scheme therefore lapsed.

March 1974

Grant of £1,294 to 'South Street' Adventure Playground to meet cost of summer holiday project.

Having given advice and support in the early days to this playground committee, it was felt to be important to encourage the group to become completely independent. Instead of supplying a grant direct from CDP, the Committee were advised to draw up a full application and submit it to the Borough Council so that it could be considered for Urban Aid in the usual way. This intention was, however, foiled as the reaction of Council Officers was to refer the matter to CDP Committee and inform the group of this.

May 1974

Grant of £1,920 for the setting up of School/Visitors Aides Scheme in local Primary Schools.

This scheme was set up to test the possibility of recruiting a number of parents to act as school visitors/aides. CDP was to supply the finance (£1,920 per year) so that each school could employ up to three parents to perform the equivalent of half a day a week and be paid £2 per week. Their task was to liaise with other parents and pass on information to those whose children were starting school or transferring to secondary school; to do general escorting duties, etc. The Divisional Education Inspector pressed for the institution of this scheme as he felt it would fill a gap in knowledge and information which could be more satisfactorily filled by parents in this way, than by existing services. During the eighteen months in which this scheme has been undertaken, the various services provided by the parents employed, under supervision of the Head Teachers, have been both useful and welcomed. However, the issue of payment has proved contentious both by the parents and the Heads. It was felt that many of the services would anyhow be provided by a good neighbour and not necessarily merit payment. In view of the attitudes expressed it is not proposed to continue special financial support beyond the end of CDP and it will be at the discretion of the schools whether they apply their funds in this way. Set against the criticism of payment, it was noted that on occasions it afforded a measure of control over the work which is not possible with volunteers. Other areas of difficulty were practice differed from the original expectations was on the matter of Home Visiting. Many mothers employed in the scheme were reluctant to take on the work of visiting the homes of other parents.

This was perhaps understandable and highlights the need to avoid confusing the roles of untrained helpers and professional workers. Moreover, in at least some cases the mothers concerned were merely used as extra general assistants within the school setting, a possibility perhaps encouraged by recruitment taking place in some instances from among mothers already working as School Aides.

May 1974

A group of mothers requested the setting up of a Mothers and Toddlers Group. However attempts to achieve this within Playhouse II failed to attract many parents — it is likely that delapidated building was thought to be unsuitable as a base by parents.
June 1974  The Project Officer (Education) who like other staff was employed on a three year contract which now expired now chose not to renew her contract. This presented a problem of filling the vacancy at such a senior level with only eighteen months of the project period remaining. It was therefore decided that the Educational/Recreation Organiser be promoted to this post, and her own advertised. Concurrent with this staffing difficulty the Borough Pre-School Playgroup Organiser and Assistant resigned and this resulted in a much reduced professional backing for existing services. CDP support was supplied to existing groups on their request.

August 1974  A Summer Playscheme was set up on a newly built estate in the area. This was at the request of parents who had previously been connected with CDP while waiting to be rehoused.

November 1974  Grant to Southwark Forum to conduct a survey into the extent of the problem of homeless children in the area. The grant covered the cost of employing a research worker for six months and of publishing his report.

May 1975  Remedial Education Project commenced. Attempts to use Playhouse II as a base failed owing to delapidation of the building.

August 1975  Remedial Education Project operated for three days a week from a local youth club before switching to the ground floor of the CDP office.

It is as yet too early to assess the results of this work, which is programmed to continue until June 1976. It does however provide an explicit example of how the original policy shifted. It represented a movement away from working with the parent/home situation as such, and instead offering a compensatory service to what could be termed 'the victims' i.e. the children. In this sense, the Remedial Scheme is dealing with end-results and not causes, correctly diagnosed or otherwise.

(b) Discussion of the Assumptions behind the various approaches underlying the Action taken

The various activities of the Education Team, as outlined and commented upon in this report, have of course been only one part of a whole programme of action and research undertaken by the Southwark CDP. It is not sufficient, in other words, to consider and assess these activities solely in terms of their day-to-day operational goals. They must also be further reviewed (in terms of the theoretical assumptions on which they have been generally based) within the context of the task of the Project as a whole.

Southwark CDP's overall task has been to identify, understand and begin to tackle the processes of urban deprivation as they effect and are evidenced in such areas as Newington. Within this framework, the focus of the Education Team has meanwhile been to improve people's life chances through intervention at the local level in the education system which is seen as a major determinant of those life chances. The approach has been one of 'compensatory education' by means of 'positive discrimination' with particular emphasis on the child's home conditions including home-school relationships, which are regarded as crucial elements in defining the educability of children that is regarded as a key factor in the issue of under achievement by working class children.

The question that now arises is, on the one hand, whether such an approach is both theoretically appropriate and practicable as part of an endeavour to improve performance by maximising access to educational opportunities and, on the other hand, whether it is compatible with the definition of deprivation employed by the CDP: 'Deprivation can be expressed as an unjustifiable gap or range of differences separating those who can and those who cannot secure for themselves the living conditions and standards generally regarded as necessary in a particular society at any point in time. That is to say, deprivation is about relative access to and command of resources, within the structure of opportunities that comprises our society'.

81
The approach generally taken by the Education Team would seem to have been basically derived from the findings and recommendations of the Plowden Committee, as made in its Report on Children and their Primary Schools (1967) and subsequently tested by Educational Priority Area initiatives. Thus the approach is typified by the policy of 'positive discrimination' which Plowden specifically postulated as the best means for the end sought, namely greater equality of educational opportunity in terms of social class than policies to date had apparently been able to achieve. It is important to realise, of course, that while principles of social justice or egalitarianism underlay much of this concern, given the assumption that problems of poverty or deprivation could be effectively tackled through education, it was also felt that interests of economic efficiency demanded anyway a new approach. For before Plowden there had been the Crowther Report (15 to 18, vol. I; 1959, vol. II; 1960), suggesting that the then system of selective education for children over the age of eleven (primary schools, of course, were already comprehensive) was a far from efficient method of maximising the potential of the nation's future: it was found, for example, that 22 per cent of Army recruits to national service, and 29 per cent of RAF recruits, had had the wrong type of schooling (given their abilities), and that two out of five of the country's ablest boys had left school by the age of sixteen. In other words, changes seemed to be necessary if only to meet with maximum efficiency the needs of the labour market, particularly with technological advances and increased automation likely to continue and further reduce the relative demand for unskilled workers as against highly trained technicians and scientists in particular. (The implications of such shifts in employment opportunities for the education system have, of course, been more recently highlighted in the Bullock Report on literacy.) Greater efficiency in terms of increased national incomes may also be sought, moreover, for its contribution to necessary social welfare provision as well as to personal living standards among the economically active. Indeed, it was also in the early nineteen-sixties that the presence of poverty in the midst of the Welfare State was 'discovered', with the implication that it would continue as an inevitable correlate of economic activity rather than disappear, as was thought with full employment and higher earnings. Furthermore, it can be argued that at least in a hierarchically ordered society, there must be an eventual incompatibility between the demands of equality and of efficiency and social welfare.

Explanations given for the processes of poverty and, more particularly, urban deprivation have varied widely and prescriptions for remedial action differ correspondingly. The controversy continues still and, indeed, the history of the national Community Development Projects generally has been not least a record of this debate and the dilemmas inherent in it. Meanwhile, the inadequacy even within their own terms of liberal reformist strategies, as embodied in the 1944 Education Act but found wanting by Crowther and Plowden, has perhaps not even now been fully accepted although it has been widely demonstrated, not least by A. H. Halsey in the first EPA project report (Educational Priority: EPA Problems and Policies, Vol. I 1972). He concluded that 'the essential fact of twentieth century educational history in that egalitarian policies have failed'. Moreover, while 'the combination of equality of educational opportunity with the goal of national efficiency has led to policies designed to create and maintain meritocracy', 'the inexactitudes of psychometrics the capriciousness of late developers, the survival of the private market in education along with the continuous renewal of non-educational avenues to higher social positions — all these factors together have prevented the emergence of an educationally based meritocracy'. In other words, as Halsey concluded, 'The essential judgement must be that 'liberal' policies failed even in their own terms. For example, when, in a large number of the richer countries during the nineteen-fifties, a considerable expansion of educational facilities was envisaged, it was more or less assumed that, by making more facilities available, there would be a marked change in the social composition of student bodies and in the flow of people from the less favoured classes into the secondary schools and higher educational institutions. This has certainly not happened to the degree expected. While expansion of education was accompanied by some increase in both the absolute numbers and the proportions from poor families who reached the higher levels and the more prestigious types of education, nevertheless progress towards greater equality of educational opportunity as traditionally defined has been disappointing. It is now plain that the problem is more difficult than had been supposed and needs, in fact, to be posed in new terms'. Finally, Halsey also noted something which is perhaps increasingly pertinent to an inner London area such as Newington, namely that there appeared also to have been 'a general adjustment of the occupational
structure such that entry to it was in process of continued upward redefinition in terms of educational qualifications', and that while "it is now increasingly plain that the schools cannot accomplish important social reforms such as the democratisation of opportunity unless social reforms accompany the educational effort", 'it also became more evident that the schools are hampered in achieving even their traditional and strictly 'educational' purposes when, in societies changing rapidly in their technologies and in the aspirations of their populations, a comparable effort to make the required change in social structure and political organisation is lacking'.

At the more immediate and practical level of implementation, application of the ideal of 'positive discrimination' has meanwhile been sought through intervention at the small, local level. It is here that EPA and CDP clearly coincide in approach and methodology, yet it is also on this front that increasing criticism has come to be made even where explanations of the problems and the appropriateness at least in theory of the solutions posted are accepted. Thus Jack Barnes, for example, writing in the third volume of the EPA experiment report (Educational Priority: Curriculum Innovation in London EPA's, vol. III, 1975), particularly noted the operational limitations that exist anyway in a 'deprived area' approach to the problems arising from conditions of deprivation or poverty: 'It is our conclusion that, in as far as they were concerned to help poor children or children in disadvantaged or deprived circumstances, the analysis of the Plowden Council which led it to advocate an educational priority area or school programme was based on a methodological fallacy. The fallacy occurs when ecological methods of analysis are used—when aggregated or averaged data are used to characterise areas or institutions. It is caused by a concentration on the principal or dominant pattern, or a failure to recognise the variation or heterogeneity. The fallacy in this particular case does not take account of the diversity within any group of educational priority area schools, of the wide distribution of circumstances to which children inside any group of schools are subject, nor does it recognise the logical jump between a counting of separate problems and the identification of a condition of cumulative disadvantage or deprivation. In advocating a priority area or school programme to meet the needs of poor children, the Council went beyond conclusions which could have been borne out by analysis of its data'. Thus, it was suggested, 'The policy consequences are that, as a device for helping poor children, positive discrimination through schools can only be a disappointment' for, as the same author reported in a Fabian pamphlet on Positive Discrimination and Inequality (Eds. H. Glennerster and S. Hatch, Fabian Research Series 314, March 1974), 'Most disadvantaged children are not in disadvantaged areas and most of the children in disadvantaged areas are not disadvantaged', with the result that 'Policies of positive discrimination through schools are likely to bring most benefit to the children of non-manual workers who were born in the United Kingdom'. In other words, as already suggested, 'We must, therefore, ensure that area and school policies are only one part of any programme to tackle poverty. They can only be one part, and only a small part, of any such programme'.

The problem of failure to achieve equality of educational opportunity if not attainment across and perhaps in spite of social class differences between children's families, remains with us. The practical limitations of 'positive discrimination' on a small area basis within the context of structural poverty and deprivation are now becoming particularly apparent, whilst debate continues as to the intrinsic nature of the problem and its causes. One important recent study, for example (D. Byrne, B. Williams and B. Fletcher, The Poverty of Education, 1975) is a reminder of the major part still played by differential expenditure on education as between local authorities in determining outcome. Certainly, it can be argued that the emphasis on home conditions as the focus for intervention has distracted attention from the possibilities for change within the education system as such, including the institutions themselves and those operating them. It may even have confirmed the status quo, as where the appointment of a teacher as home-school officer may not only acknowledge but also institutionalise the apparent gap between home and school. Yet even this is to presume the possibility of a significant impact through education on the processes of inequality and deprivation which are inherent in the whole society which that system exists to serve. Thus while manipulation of the education system may considerably enhance the day-to-day experience of many children, and even provide significant compensation, the belief that progress is thereby being made other than at a very marginal level towards correcting the imbalance in the overall structure of
opportunities in society may only serve to in fact reinforce the existing situation by diverting from or concealing the real need, which is for redistribution of income as ultimately the only effective solution to structural inequality and the attendant poverty and deprivation. Recognition of this fact would also answer the contentions of those who dislike the application of educational means to the task of achieving equality, in that they see it as reflecting a basic misunderstanding of the term equality, a failure to accept intrinsic differences between human beings which, moreover, can be positively harmful to the very children for whose benefit the intervention is intended.

For CDP, in the light of its experience in the education field, the conclusion must thus be that while there is much to be said for this sort of intervention as a means of achieving marginal change and certainly of improving the day-to-day experience of many children, not least those with home conditions insufficient for their needs, such action cannot honestly be seen on the other hand as a significant contribution towards tackling the poverty and deprivation which are functions of the overall social structure, notably the economic and hence political systems. This distinction is particularly important, if we are not on the one hand to continue fostering illusions about the potential contribution of education to social change or, on the other hand, perhaps as a reaction to the force of these illusions, to reject all such intervention as a diversion or even a fraud and to thereby reduce considerably the opportunities for immediate amelioration of day-to-day conditions for many people.

Assessment of the education programme outlined here must therefore ultimately be made in these terms, rather than as to whether or not it has achieved what was never possible, namely tackling deprivation. The commentary given on the initiatives attempted does itself suggest the correctness of this conclusion, in as much as one particularly clear theme that emerges is the tendency of initiatives made after meetings between CDP and other professionals rather than on the basis of local people's expressions of need consistently foundered when it became apparent that local priorities were with issues of deprivation, such as access to adequate housing and a decent environment, and that such things as playgrounds were not perceived as contributing to those issues, albeit whilst being useful and welcome as ends in themselves or even as means to improving educational performance.

Services for the Elderly

(a) Chronological Sequence of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 1970</td>
<td>Research team from Brunel University appointed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1970</td>
<td>Action Team Leader appointed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1971</td>
<td>Preliminary study produced by Research Team entitled ‘Operational activities of a Social Services Department and the processes by which they are generated’ followed by a series of discussions with various members of the London Borough of Southwark's Welfare Department, leading to papers in March/April 1971 on Day Care provision for old people in Southwark which concentrated on issues such as Day Centres, clubs and transport.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of this work showed that:

Newington had about its share, relative to the borough as a whole, of day care facilities in terms of number of day centres, luncheon clubs, and voluntary clubs; that in terms of the number of meals sold per week in day centres and voluntary clubs combined, twice as many were sold in Newington as compared with Southwark per thousand old population (though this finding did not take into account the presence in Newington of a large Day Centre, providing lunches, which covered a wider area than the Ward); and that fewer old people in Newington per thousand of old aged population belonged to voluntary clubs as compared with the borough. The reports also suggested that the Day Centre lunch clubs and voluntary clubs were a vital part of day care work with the elderly. In
particular the Centre Social Worker was seen as the key worker: instead of being mainly involved with organising, as in the old days, they were likely to be much more concerned with enabling people who could help each other, hopefully groups which would have some viability or self-sufficiency of their own. Improved day care services were thus seen in the light of developing and expanding the services already in existence.

June 1971
A mature student on a three month part-time placement undertook an investigation designed to make contact with a number of elderly people in various parts of the Project area, as a means of uncovering any unmet needs. On the basis of a small sample of 41 people in three streets it seemed that:
- a sense of isolation was apparent among retired people
- many of them were concerned about the uncertainty of redevelopment plans
- some major effort was necessary to improve the image of clubs
- a continuing programme of visiting elderly people was desirable and that all agencies concerned with the needs of the community should co-operate by exchanging information about elderly people in need of any kind of care and support.

This initiative was made by CDP given the opportunity provided by the student’s placement. The investigations were in fact intended to cover a wide range: the use made by the elderly of public and voluntary social service agencies; the extent to which they knew about their various welfare rights; whether they were, or felt themselves to be, isolated; whether they were mainly long-term residents in the area; and their feelings about the care they received from the Health and Social Services. In the event, the findings were necessarily more limited. They were not immediately applied, but did become part of the general build-up of information on the elderly in Newington prior to the eventual establishment of an elderly programme.

July 1971
Report to CDP Committee on Social Action Expenditure, including section on ‘Needs of the Elderly’. It was suggested that, in view of the fact that: (a) the proposed local plans for the project area had now been published; (b) these were particularly complex, involving considerable variation between different parts of the area; (c) the whole replanning exercise was now beginning, ‘it would be extremely valuable to have as a special project the follow-up of, and assistance to, elderly people in, say selected parts of the area, right through the process’. A forthcoming recommendation was therefore suggested for the then financial year for social action expenditure to employ (or second) a special officer to set up and work on such a scheme, at a senior professional scale. The Committee agreed in principle to this suggestion.

It was felt that such an initiative would be of assistance not only to local elderly people themselves, but could also provide valuable information for departments and services in future planning. No such appointment was, of course, made until more than a year later and the emphasis of the work by then was defined in very different terms, being on welfare rather than housing, redevelopment or urban renewal issues.

August 1971
A report presented to CDP Committee by the Research Director – ‘Old People in Clearance Areas’ this suggested that the main problems were:
- Uncertainty and anxiety.
- Deterioration of the environment.
- Dilapidation of houses.
- Disappearance of houses.
- Departure of neighbours and relatives.
The presence of meths drinkers, vagrants and the like.

Difficulties in adapting to new accommodation after rehousing.

In the report it was suggested that — Old people should be given priority so that they could be rehoused more quickly; they needed to be provided with better information about redevelopment and the facilities available to help them; there was a need for better methods of identifying problems through a group worker in the Social Services Area Team; and assistance was required for old people in settling into new homes.

Again, this formed part of the general build-up of information prior to a specific programme being established. At the same time, when CDP came to a close, the Elderly Workers at least were aware that the needs which had thus been highlighted from the outset still existed, and that little or nothing had in fact been achieved to alleviate them.

Winter 1971

Research Team retired.

This was to be of considerable importance for the Elderly Workers when appointed the following autumn, in that they found little adequate preliminary research on which to base their action and thus saw themselves as having to develop and test their own theories at the same time as running an action programme which was thus inevitably 'ad hoc' in nature.

June 1972

The Action Team Leader proposed to the CDP Committee that, in the light of these research findings and of the many enquiries received through the Information and Advice Service concerning help for the elderly, a programme should be set up to work on the needs of retired people in the area. This would be in co-operation with interested groups of residents, the Social Services Department and other relevant agencies including doctors and voluntary organisations.

The aim would be to contact retired people in the Area and then attempt to:

1. Deal with any individual problems as far as possible within the community but with resources and appropriate aid, including financial, being sought through CDP or other sources as necessary.

2. Where particular problems and needs arose throughout the area which suggested a more concerted approach, attempts would be made to formulate and put into practice known methods of providing for such needs, in conjunction with relevant agencies but again using as far as possible the resources of the local community.

This proposal was the culmination both of internal enquiry and experience and of discussions with the Borough Social Services and Development Departments. It reflected an attempt to tackle issues which within the local authority structure came under separate consideration, namely the welfare needs of elderly people related to and arising from the urban renewal and housing redevelopment processes in which they were caught up. The assumption that these issues were in fact interdependent was never, of course, tested in that when the elderly programme got under way it found itself barred from issues of redevelopment and housing. Meanwhile, the Elderly Workers were to be seen primarily as enablers, with the main emphasis on maximising rather than substituting for the services already to be found in the neighbourhood whilst encouraging self-help within it. Similarly, it was felt that the posts should be filled not by professional social workers but by people with a community work orientation.

June 1972

Action Team Leader resigned.

As with the earlier withdrawal of the Research Team, the Action Team Leader's resignation in addition meant that when the Elderly Workers took up their posts shortly afterwards, they joined a Project from which the very people who had
initiated their programme were absent. Moreover, lack of leadership as such, with the common approach and unity within the Project this could have ensured, encouraged a fragmentation between programmes within it which was to remain a more or less consistent feature of the CDP for the remaining duration. More specifically, for the Elderly Workers, this left them with no alternative but to develop their own action programme as an independent entity, the more so as a new Action Team Leader was not in office until the beginning of 1973.

October 1972

Two further members appointed to the CDP Action Team specifically to work with the elderly, the junior one being a local resident who had already been working voluntarily in the Advice and Information Service. Detailed discussions were held in the first two weeks of the programme with other CDP Action Team members and with other professionals working in the Project area, including Social Workers, Health Visitors, Doctors and Community Workers. From these it was suggested to the Elderly Workers on the basis of existing experience that the problems of the elderly in the area of which they were aware were likely to include: low income, poor health; bad housing; loneliness and social isolation; and the problems arising specifically from being in a redevelopment area.

October 1972

Discussion were commenced with the Education Team of CDP to consider the possibility of school children helping old people with decorating, gardening, repairs, etc., the idea of pensioners helping in schools was considered. Although no immediate action was taken on this, various attempts during the next three years were made to involve schools and pensioners. These have included encouraging girls from two secondary schools to visit old people, children visiting Day Centre to help and talk to pensioners, elderly people themselves visiting a local junior school, and secondary school boys undertaking repairs for old people. These initiatives met with varying degrees of success, and certainly the attempts to involve secondary school girls proved both time consuming and of little value: given that children need anyway to be strongly motivated to work with the elderly, who may be difficult, there needs to be strong support and supervision from the school, to ensure that the children understand the implications of what they are doing and the need for continuity. Unfortunately, it was felt, teachers and therefore their pupils often regard such work as a soft option, an attitude which is likely to preclude success.

Even the holding of teach-ins at one school by the Elderly Workers did not appear to have any long-term effect. On the other hand, at least some of the schemes involving school children did appear to be more successful, notably those with junior school children who have visited the Day Centre or been hosts to elderly people in the classroom, but nevertheless extreme caution obviously needs to be exercised in any attempts at mutual involvement between elderly people and children.

November 1972

The Elderly Team updated the pensioners' directory which had earlier been drafted by the Advice and Information workers, and tried to distribute it as widely as possible through clubs, TAs and so forth. It was intended to explain to the elderly their welfare rights and the services and facilities available for them. On the whole, it was found that the Directory was of most value to tenants' associations and club leaders for their work with the elderly rather than of direct use to many pensioners as such. It may be that the approach of individual leaflets on selected topics, as later used in the Exceptional Needs Campaign, are better where the aim is direct impact on old people. Some sort of initiative in this field of information giving clearly seemed necessary, given the large number of both statutory and voluntary agencies offering a complex range of services and benefits, and often with different rules and regulations involved. Many people, including pensioners, are also undoubtedly unclear as to the nature and range of services available, and how and where to apply for them.
December 1972 The Friday Night Adventure Club was inaugurated. A social club for the elderly, it had grown out of a concern amongst some members of a local tenant's association to provide a service for the elderly. The senior Elderly Worker was closely involved in the initiative giving advice and support for the first eighteen months or so before withdrawing as the group came to feel itself to be self-supporting. At this stage, also, some local councillors became involved. This was the first example of the Elderly Workers helping to realise an initiative that had come from members of the local community themselves. However, they were part of a non-pensioner group, so that while the scheme can be correctly seen as a community response it should not be regarded as an example of pensioner self-help. While considerable support was sought from and given by the senior Elderly Worker during the first eighteen months or so of the club once its first objectives of securing a mini-bus and clubroom had been achieved it felt that it had realised its aims and no longer wished for such intensive CDP involvement. Links have been meanwhile maintained, not least in that the Club has continued to act as a useful source of referrals and contact for the Elderly Workers. Altogether, since its inception, this group has come to see itself as a strong element in the local community, a feeling reinforced by gaining the resource of the mini-bus.

December 1972 Consideration was given to the idea proposed by the first Action Team Leader and other professionals with whom discussions had been held from the outset of conducting a 100% survey of elderly people in the Project area. This idea was abandoned but as a result of the discussions held it was decided to make a detailed investigation of a small part of the Project area, namely that which was due for redevelopment under the next phase. The main issues which it was hoped to cover were: the take-up of benefits; contacts with family and friends; contact with Social Services; income; employment and leisure interests; and problems relating to rehousing. In fact the Housing Department asked that all questions relating to housing be omitted. The idea of a 100% survey was in fact then rejected by the Elderly Workers on the grounds that: it would involve visiting every household in the area and, with the limited staff available this did not seem justified; the information thereby obtained would basically only give the numbers of elderly and some limited general data, unless a more detailed questionnaire was used which would again have been too time-consuming; and it was felt that the function of CDP should be to introduce experimental methods of meeting needs rather than just establishing what these needs were, yet to do both would have required a larger team of Elderly Workers and, of course, the support of a research team. On the other hand, the detailed study of a small part of the Project Area which was instead proposed would have been much less time-consuming, whilst pinpointing the particular needs of the elderly in a redevelopment area and especially problems related to the rehousing process, together with the more general needs of the elderly and whether these differed from those suggested by other research. The fields actually selected for the questionnaire were not, of course, exhaustive but they were chosen as one in which action work could be carried out and because they were the subjects of most interest to the CDP as a whole. The most difficult issue to look at would have been housing, of central importance as it was. CDP was already under suspicion for its 'interference' in Housing Department affairs, and the Elderly Workers had therefore held discussions with members of the Department in the hope of obtaining their support and assistance. However, this was not forthcoming and the Workers were indeed asked to omit any questions relating to housing or redevelopment, on the grounds that they would merely serve to raise false hopes or create confusion in the minds of those interviewed.
December 1972  The Elderly Team moved from CDP offices to a nearby hall which also housed Southwark Day Centre and luncheon club for the elderly.

This move had in fact been planned from the outset and was strongly encouraged by the local Social Services Area Team leader. The idea behind it was: to provide the Elderly Workers with the maximum opportunity for getting to know as many elderly people as possible; to enable them to give support and help to the Day Centre staff; and to encourage the development of the Centre as a focus for activities for the elderly. This latter aim was never achieved in fact, owing largely to the day-to-day pressures on the incumbent social worker. The separate location of the Elderly Workers for most of the time from the main CDP office did not help to reverse the situation of fragmentation within the Project that inevitably developed during the period without an Action Team Leader in post.

December 1972  In order to better establish what needs the elderly themselves felt that they had an Information and Advice service was set up at the local Day Centre specifically for the elderly. Over the two years from January 1973 to January 1975 over 380 pensioners in fact called at the office, some 160 or so coming from outside Newington. A wide range of problems were raised, and over 50% in the first six months were concerned with social security questions.

After moving into the Day Centre, the Elderly Workers commenced the task of getting to know people, becoming known by them, and identifying the needs which the elderly themselves felt that they had. It was primarily as a means to these ends that an Advice and Information service specifically for the elderly was established and it was to be largely from the experience thereby gained that the subsequent work of the Elderly programme was developed, specifically in response to needs expressed by old people themselves as well as from discussions held with professionals in the field. In particular, it was felt, the advice and information work showed that: there was a need for improvement in the provision of information and advice to the elderly, particularly in the case of statutory benefits; the service had to be easily available and accessible, going out into the community through clubs, tenants’ associations and groups and also providing for housebound pensioners; and that such a service needed to be informal and friendly if pensioners were to overcome their initial embarrassment or fear that they might be asking for ‘charity’.

January 1973  Following an initial survey simply to locate the numbers of elderly people resident in the small area selected which found 76 households containing pensioners but including 11 where the husband was under 65 and therefore still working. A final draft questionnaire was drawn up after discussions with Coventry CDP and the Home Office. Ten pilot interviews were then carried out, after which the initiative was discontinued.

The survey was discontinued following the arrival of the second Action Team Leader, who felt it was not appropriate work for an Action Team, and should be held over until a Research Team was in post.

January 1973  An Over-Sixties Employment Bureau was set up (as recommended to CDP Committee, November 1972) at the local Day Centre where the Elderly Workers were also based, to offer opportunities for part-time employment to pensioners wanting such work either as a means of increasing their income (within the limits of the then earnings rule) or for the interest and mitigation of social isolation thereby provided. It was decided to operate the Bureau for Southwark as a whole, since Newington alone was obviously too small an area for practical purposes.

An organiser, who was himself a pensioner, for the Bureau was appointed in February 1973 and the service was operated for 20 hours a week from 12-4 pm, with no fees charged to either employers or applicants. By January 1975, a total of 980 people had applied and been interviewed at the Bureau, 615 men and 365
women, with 8 men and 6 women aged less than 60, 110 men and 210 women aged between 61 and 64, 373 and 120 aged 65 to 69, 94 and 23 aged 70 to 74, 22 and 5 aged 75 to 79, and 8 and 1 aged over 80. Against these, a total of 1,364 job offers have been made, some having been offered to more than one applicant by 357 employers. There have been 375 placements, whilst 150 have gone on to find their own employment.

Income maintenance and social isolation had been two problems specifically expressed by pensioners themselves during the first few weeks of CDP's work with the elderly, when they sought information and advice, as well as by the professionals consulted during the initial discussions by the Elderly Workers. The idea of an Over-Sixties Employment Bureau, as already existed in several parts of the country including London, therefore arose in direct response to these expressions of local need as well as from the evidence of their success elsewhere, particularly as the local employment exchange did not feel able to cater adequately for the needs of the elderly part-time work, and indeed supported the idea of a specialised service. More generally, the Elderly Workers felt that, in endeavouring to cater for the needs of the elderly, it was important not to consider only the day-to-day issues and problems that arose but also the long-term effects of being elderly and retired: the results of a sudden and complete cessation of economic activity obviously influence a person's whole life. Whilst it was felt that in an ideal situation there would be at least the option of a pension high enough to permit the elderly an adequate standard of living and the opportunity for leisure, in the meantime this seemed unlikely and so alternatives had to be considered. Moreover, an employment bureau could also provide contact with active pensioners not necessarily seeking paid employment but wanting to become involved and who could, for example, be channelled into a 'good neighbour' scheme. Finally, it was felt that it could provide a useful source of further information on the skills and interests of local retired people, which might in turn lead to further experimental schemes.

From the beginning, experience suggested that the impression of need was well-founded: the advertisement for the post of Bureau Organiser, to be filled by a pensioner, itself drew a heavy response. The Organiser's role was initially envisaged as day-to-day administration of the Bureau, initiating publicity, locating prospective employers, interviewing applicants, and effecting introductions. However, it soon became clear that he was going to have to provide a much wider and more intensive service to pensioners than originally envisaged. In particular, he found himself required to handle the problems arising from the complex network of regulations governing pensioners' earnings and financial entitlements, as with the impact of the earnings rule on their pensions.

A limited research exercise conducted at the end of 1973 on the first six months of the Bureau indicated that, in fact, for almost 90% of applicants during that period, the Retirement/Old Age Pension was their main source of income, and that 40% were in receipt of Supplementary Benefit. Of these applicants, over 80% were classified as manual workers upon retirement, which perhaps makes even more significant the finding that they on the whole preferred to find jobs similar to those held before retirement, which preference it has been possible to meet.

Whilst, allowing for lack of adequate follow-up, results do suggest considerable success by the Bureau in meeting a need, it is accepted that debate still continues as to the wisdom of the principle of employment for pensioners.

February 1973  
Appointment of second Action Team Leader.

March 1973  
It was decided to commence a series of campaigns on Exceptional Needs Payments, the first of which was aimed at encouraging pensioners to apply for clothing grants. This campaign, conducted with the full knowledge and support of the local DHSS office, continued for three months during which intensive
advertising took place by means of leaflets and posters and with the Elderly Workers talking to clubs, groups and tenants associations. As a result 59 applications for clothing grants were made of which at least 40 were successful and with the amounts awarded ranging from £1.87 to £47, thereby confirming the presence of need. The Elderly Workers were involved in all cases in helping to make applications. Arising from the campaign it was recommended: that there was undoubtedly a need for much more effective information and advice for the elderly; that this should preferably be based at Day Centres, clubs and clinics for the elderly and should incorporate a system of visiting the housebound; Day Centre staff could be trained for this job or it could be done by peripatetic specialist staff; the long term ideal however would be for pensioners themselves to be trained to take on this work on a voluntary or paid basis.

It is important to note that this was the first of several initiatives directly arising from experience with advice and information giving. The particular need for welfare rights campaigns arose from the perception that many pensioners needed encouragement and practical assistance to apply for benefits, especially where they felt either that they were not entitled to apply; that, as 'charity', help was unacceptable; or, that the complexity of the bureaucratic machinery involved made the task too difficult.

The full co-operation of the local DHSS office was of considerable importance, especially as such campaigns do not usually obtain the support of local DHSS offices and their staff. Yet, in this case, the Deputy Manager actually attended the Day Centre to talk to members about ENP's.

Experience of this and subsequent campaigns suggested that one of the major obstacles in applying for ENP's is the actual process of obtaining the appropriate forms, including writing an initial letter and then filling them in. Many pensioners will be unused to form-filling, even where not handicapped by poor eye-sight or limited literacy.

Thus, the main conclusions to emerge were that: (1) a very intensive campaign is necessary if pensioners are to apply for ENP's; (2) practical support and assistance, as with form-filling, will be necessary for pensioners in making applications and in some cases, follow-up will be required; and (3) once the intensity of a campaign has relaxed, interest will wane so that repeated exercises are necessary if issues are to be kept alive; (4) as long as pensioners remain reluctant to apply for ENP's, many basic needs will undoubtedly continue to be unmet; and (5) being in touch with a social worker by no means ensured that an elderly person would be advised of his/her eligibility for ENP's, since many social workers are apparently ignorant of welfare rights or benefit rates.

April 1973

£1,400 granted to Friday Night Adventure Club for a minibus on the condition that it be available for use by other groups in the area providing services for the elderly but with the Friday Club having first call.

Friday Night Adventure Club was an organisation of local people wishing to provide for the needs of the physically handicapped elderly. They provided a hospital visiting service, arranged outings and wished to organise a social club. They received assistance and support from the CDP Elderly Workers.

Spring 1973

The Elderly Workers had originally operated a policy of referring clients to the local Social Services office on a wholesale basis. However this had generated ill-feeling between the two agencies in as much as it highlighted the inability of the Area Office to cope with the demand. Attempts were made therefore, in Spring 1973, to improve relations by: holding regular meetings between the staff of the two offices; establishing a more personal contact between individual members of the two staffs.
The Elderly Workers were appointed at a time when the Area Team was still sorting out its priorities, following Seebohm re-organisation. The elderly constituting about 40% of active cases, they have however been mainly allocated to social work assistants and apparently considered relatively menial tasks. Both the Elderly Workers and the Area Team have felt there to be a considerable amount of unmet need though lacking adequate data to confirm this, while cases raised by CDP seemed merely to re-order rather than extend the list.

May 1973

It came to the notice of the Elderly Workers that, as part of the gas conversion programme then taking place, some pensioners were incorrectly being persuaded to purchase new cookers which they anyway could not afford. It was decided to ask the principal local newspaper to print an article advising that they were entitled to a free replacement cooker if their own could not be converted.

This initiative was in direct response to approaches made by two pensioners themselves, who called at the CDP office to ask if DHSS might be able to help with hire-purchase payments for new cookers since they could not afford them. The Elderly Workers approached the Gas Board itself in this instance, whose senior manager expressed concern, agreed that undue pressure had probably been put on the pensioners, and cancelled the hire purchase agreements. This type of situation can be cited to indicate the value of neighbourhood work and the advantages of having workers at hand to pick up local problems as and when they arise and deal with them promptly.

Autumn 1973

An attempt was made to find ways of ensuring the better implementation of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act. Contact having been made through the Over 60's Employment Bureau with a local pensioner who was a physical culture expert, and given the lack at that time in the Social Services Department of any qualified physiotherapists or other specialist staff to cope with aids, an approach was made by the Elderly Workers to Social Services about using the pensioner. The proposal was for a scheme whereby he would be employed on a consultancy basis by Social Services; a trial project being suggested in which CDP would give support and if necessary provide a base from which to operate. The scheme was, however, rejected by Social Services.

The scheme was rejected by Southwark Social Services on the grounds that in-depth discussions were being held within the Department and with the unions on the employment of fully trained, full-time staff and that these discussions would be jeopardised if unqualified staff were used in this way.

November 1973

An assistant, also a pensioner, began helping the organiser of the Over 60's Bureau, although administrative support continued to be provided from the main CDP office.

The purpose of this appointment was to allow the Organiser of the Bureau greater flexibility in order to pursue further employment opportunities. By this time, in fact, the pressure of work had increased to such an extent that it was anyway more than one part-time person could effectively handle.

Early 1974

The Elderly Workers began investigating the possibility of setting up a visiting service. This came as a result of their increasing concern at the need for a better contact service for housebound old people. The CDP visiting scheme is manned by active pensioners as well as by some younger people, recruited locally by informal contact and with the Elderly Workers providing a back-up service of support, advice and practical help. The scheme is voluntary although payment is made of £2 per week (the maximum earnings allowable when the scheme was started if visitors were not to have their supplementary benefit cut). Close liaison has taken place with the local Social Services and with other agencies over such matters as referrals, while the Elderly Workers themselves have been responsible for selecting visitors, assessing clients and ensuring the adequacy of the service. At any one
time approximately 6 visitors, all women, have been in operation, a total of
twelve having been involved over the two years of operation. By January 1976, 83
total of 33 people have been visited or are being visited including 2
married couples. Of these 18 are still being visited, 8 have died and 2 are in
hospital. The remaining 50 either did not want to be visited or were not

While the Elderly Workers had been hitherto primarily working with mobile
elderly people, they had for some time been concerned with the need to provide a
better contact service for housebound old people. In visiting numerous old
people, they had found many who were housebound and had no regular social
contact or neighbourly help for small tasks and errands although visited by their
home help, meals-on-wheels driver, and occasionally a doctor. Whilst this was not
a novel situation, it was felt likely to be a growing problem: people of pensionable
age are increasing as a proportion of the total population in Southwark even while
the latter decline, with improved medical care resulting in a longer life expectancy
while, on the other hand, married sons and daughters have been more likely to
move away from the area. At the same time, the effort to enable elderly people to
remain independent and in their own homes whilst ensuring everyday social and
practical support had been proving an increasing strain for the local Social
Services Department, and experience suggested that in a situation of staff
shortages and growing caseloads, pensioners inevitably had little or no chance of
being visited or allocated a social worker except in the event of an emergency. Yet
it was also felt that in many instances the need was less for the specialised skills of
a trained social worker than for the type of service that could in fact be provided
by local, untrained, non-professional workers if they were adequately supported
and supervised by such people as the Elderly Workers. The results of the CDP
experimental visiting scheme suggest that such aims are indeed practicable, whilst
not without limitations. The back-up advice and support of the Elderly Workers
has proved vital, of course, while they themselves have found the visitors to be a
valuable source of contact and local information.

When Task Force organised a pensioners day in various South London Boroughs
the Elderly Workers saw it as an opportunity to stimulate local pensioners to
become interested in starting an action group after having seen what others were
doing. It was therefore arranged for about a 100 pensioners from Newington and
surrounding areas to attend, after which a follow-up meeting was called at which a
Steering Committee was elected. This was called the Walworth Action Group
(WAG). The Group's objectives were eventually established as being: to take up
any pensioners problems such as rent, rates, social security, electricity and gas; to
organise social activities; and to take up any local issues of importance to
pensioners. In effect its role concerning the first of these objectives has been
limited to acting as a referral agency, given the lack within the group of the
appropriate expertise and experience. On the other hand, WAG has been active in
organising social activities and has also been involved in discussions of a number
of both local and national issues such as higher pensions and welfare rights and
local authority provision for the elderly.

Throughout their work the Elderly Workers had sought to stimulate pensioners
into participating in local and national issues and developing self-help initiatives.
This has not always been easy in as much as the values of many elderly people, acquired before the establishment of a welfare state system, made them wary of seeking help or thinking in terms of rights and society's obligations to them. This has meant that non-pensioners, including such groups as trade unions, voluntary bodies and statutory agencies, have usually been the ones to make the elderly's case for higher pensions, benefits, or a more significant role in society. WAG has thus been an example of helping pensioners to realise that they themselves can take up such issues on their own behalf. The endeavour has not been without difficulties, in that for example some members at least initially saw it rather as a power base from which to settle personal grievances with other local groups or centres for the elderly, or as just another social club. Alternatively, some members saw its function as being solely to concentrate on national issues. Despite these initial problems, and considerable difficulty in finding a meeting place, the group did commence holding successful social evenings which at the same time included talks by committee members on welfare rights and local issues. By January 1976 it had a membership of 80 and the club had become involved in taking up both local and national issues.

Summer 1974
The Community Work post of the local Social Services Area Team taken up as a Community Care for the Elderly appointment. The decision to use the post for this purpose was partly as a result of the success of the Elderly Workers activities; there has continued to be a close liaison between them and the Community Care worker.

December 1974
The CDP Committee agreed to finance for one year, two extra pages in the local community newspaper, which would be devoted to items of particular interest and concern to pensioners. A grant of £298 for a year was therefore made. All the articles concerned are written by local pensioners, assisted by one of the CDP Elderly Workers.

Beginning of 1974
Arising from the joint activity between the CDP Elderly Team and the local Social Service Area Team's Community Care Worker for the elderly, a liaison and support group was set up. This consists of the Area Team Leader, the Community Care worker, the New Careers officer from a local settlement house, an Area Team Social Worker and the senior CDP Elderly Worker. This group has met approximately every fortnight to discuss new approaches to work with the elderly and how the New Careers (i.e., using untrained local workers) concept might be included, and the continuation of the two Elderly Worker posts after the closing of CDP.

The aims of this support and liaison group was seen as being to achieve the eventual establishment of a community-orientated team within the local social services Area team, specifically to work with the elderly. The aims of this team would be to make existing approaches more effective and at the same time to develop new forms of intervention using community work/group methods as in the setting up of street warden schemes through involvement with tenants' associations or starting pensioners' self-help groups, whilst recognising the continuing need for some casework by professional social workers.

(b) Discussion of the Assumptions behind the Various Approaches Underlying the Action Taken

By definition, both the approaches envisaged in the original recommendations for a programme within Southwark CDP directed at the needs of the elderly and those which the action team subsequently sought to implement, were based upon perceptions of need and assumptions as to their meaning. It is in the context of these that the Elderly programme has of course to be viewed, including the different limitations which in practice also determined eventual activity, whilst the perceptions and assumptions themselves must be considered in terms of the overall task of the project as an experimental exercise in identifying, understanding and beginning to tackle the process of deprivation in which areas such as Newington are caught up and of which they are indeed an
expression. In other words, ultimate and overall evaluation, as opposed to assessment of the operational effectiveness as such of the particular services developed for the duration of CDP, will have to be made in the light of the Project's definition of deprivation, expressed as 'an unjustifiable gap or range of differences separating those who can and those who cannot secure for themselves the living conditions and standards generally regarded as necessary in a particular society at any point in time. That is to say, deprivation is about relative access to and command of resources, within the structure of opportunities that comprises our society'.

This broader context was in fact implicit at least to some extent in the initial definitions of need and recommendations for action on which the idea of a programme to be concerned specifically with the elderly was based. For the needs identified locally were recognised in many instances as being a function of the overall structure of our society and particularly the economic and hence political systems operating within it. As far as Newington in particular was concerned, the most important issue identified was its subjection to the processes of redevelopment and rehousing, with the elderly seen as constituting a chronically 'at risk' group and thought particularly likely to have inarticulated and unmet needs. Moreover, it was felt likely that the impact of the redevelopment plans on the neighbourhood as a whole, including on the provision of consumer services as well as on supportive family networks, was likely to be of particular significance for the elderly in terms of their needs for assistance and social contact, just at a time when old people themselves were experiencing serious changes in their daily lives as a result of these very processes of redevelopment and rehousing.

This original concern with the issues arising from Newington having been declared a redevelopment area was, moreover, common to the Project as a whole. It is possible, in other words, that had Southwark CDP not found itself unable to effectively tackle these core issues, then the subsequent fragmentation of it into different programmes which were moreover mostly individual and client-group based might have been either avoided or at the least offset by a shared concern which was arguably fundamental anyway if a community development approach was to be initiated and maintained. Allowance would have still have to be made, of course, for the contribution made to this fragmentation by other events including a gap of several months between the resignation of the first Action Team Leader and the arrival of her successor.

What can be more confidently noted is that when the elderly workers were eventually appointed, they from the outset largely concerned themselves with issues alternative to those which it had originally been envisaged they would tackle. The basic objectives on which their programme of work was established were: to recognise the need for pensioners to contribute to a dialogue on what their needs are and how these should be met, encouraging them to take an active interest in their own situation and, where possible, using pensioners themselves to provide help and service for other pensioners; and to encourage the statutory and voluntary bodies as well as the local community and society in general, to allow pensioners to make this contribution. These principles were derived from assumptions that the elderly in Newington generally had incomes too low for their needs; that many were unaware of the benefits and services available to them; that they were experiencing disturbance as a result of local redevelopment and rehousing activity; and that many of them were likely to be socially isolated or lonely and also restricted by the effects, including limited mobility, of ill health.

At the same time, it must be admitted that the Elderly Workers have also recognised the underlying causes of the specific problems which they have sought to alleviate, including the role of redevelopment and rehousing as well as low incomes, inadequate and insufficient housing, and lack of services and amenities, particularly where these could be seen as a function of Social Services policy and practice. The Elderly Workers have accepted also the often limited degree of amelioration which can be achieved at the local level. On the other hand, it has been their consistent assumption also that certain needs of the elderly can be met not only effectively within and at the level of the local neighbourhood but that they would indeed be best met this way. These needs are those that can arise regardless of environmental, including financial, circumstances as a particular function of being elderly and retired in our society, namely social isolation and lack of a functional
role often compounded of course, by the problems of ill health such as limited mobility. The Visiting Service scheme was obviously specifically based on this assumption, whilst also fitting in with at least the initial aims of CDP to develop on an experimental basis new ways of meeting the social needs of local people as expressed by them and using community resources. Moreover, in as much as the assumption underlying this scheme was that it provided an intrinsically better way of meeting the needs involved, it cannot be regarded either as inappropriate to CDP on the grounds that it sought to provide an alternative or substitute for a service which the Social Services Department was empowered to make available but which it was having difficulty in delivering, important though this problem undoubtedly was in highlighting the need.

The issues that arise from considering the provision of an employment bureau for the elderly are perhaps particularly important in that they would appear to be indicative of those which emerge from a review of the Elderly programme as a whole in the context of CDP and its task. They highlight especially the dilemmas and dangers inherent in any attempt to provide a service for individual clients under the auspices of a community development endeavour. Thus, specifically discussing Employment Bureaux for the elderly, one can argue that people beyond the statutory retirement age should not be seeking employment in as much as the need is for adequate pensions and that in so far as a service is provided to assist pensioners in obtaining work, it thereby diverts attention away from the real issue, at least if it is not accompanied by a clear acknowledgement that the primary aim must be to secure higher pensions albeit with simultaneous provision for the option of working where this is sought for non-financial reasons such as the social contact and status thus afforded. Even then, it can be argued, the policy of employment bureaux remains mistaken at least in a time of less than full employment nationally in as much as pensioners fill jobs that could otherwise go to younger people, a danger particularly likely if lower remuneration is accepted by pensioners who are, after all, concerned with acquiring a supplementary rather than sole income. Finally, one may also argue that pensioners are more likely to be exploited by employers than are younger workers, in that they are less likely to be Union members and are, again, looking for a supplementary rather than sole income. In reply to these arguments, it must be noted that the CDP Bureau at least has always acknowledged the basic need for higher pensions; has been concerned only with part-time employment (possibly less likely to mean fewer jobs for younger men at least), and has always sought not to refer jobs at less than the minimum wage. The basic issue of higher pensions has also, moreover, been a major concern of the Walworth Action Group. Finally, however, with reference to Employment Bureaux for the elderly, it has to be said that they are likely to be in effect making up a shortfall in provision by the statutory agencies, in this case the Department of Employment and its local exchanges.

By way of conclusion, it must be said of Southwark CDP's programme of work with the elderly at the local level (as of that with children and young people) that while the services thereby provided have undoubtedly achieved direct improvement for many elderly people in their day-to-day experience as well as possibly some marginal degree of change at the broader level, which only time will confirm, if they are considered specifically within the context of CDP and its task they cannot be viewed as able to bring about the fundamental policy changes required. The lessons that have been learned from the experience are, meanwhile, of use at the level of local service provision policies and practice.
Action-Research Relationship during the final two years of Southwark CDP

It can be argued that the inclusion of research is essential for any social action programme, on the assumption that the informed awareness and understanding apparently implicit in the designation 'research' must add an extra dimension to such a programme. The question remains, however, whether an effective model of positive interaction between the methods and perspectives of research and action can be developed and successfully implemented in the interests of social change. Experience to date, in Britain and the USA certainly suggests a number of problems as well as possibilities at least in the context of projects concerned to tackle the issues of poverty and deprivation, some of which will be considered here as pertinent to the assessment of CDP as an action-research experiment.

Ultimately, we are talking about the role of social science theory and research findings in the processes of public policy-making and decision-taking, and the potential contribution of the social scientist to the attainment of change either within or of social systems. The application of theoretical knowledge and criticism to the resolution of issues defined as social problems has, of course, been a conventional concern of social science as an academic activity. This has perhaps been nowhere more so than in Britain, with its tradition of social administration pursuing the path of Booth, Rowntree and the Webbs, the Fabian Society and the London School of Economics, sociology and psychology has frequently depended upon their capacity for meeting the demands of government planning and of industrial organisation, including labour management and consumer research. On the other hand, the implications of this role have all too often been concealed or evaded, not least among British empiricists and American 'functionalists', by the myth of a 'value-free' methodology.

As a formal method, action-research can be seen to have first developed in the United States. During the nineteen-thirties and 'forties, it emerged there as a means of investigating such politically or academically sensitive problems as racial tension: under the guidance of one or two professionals, members of local community groups could gather information on local issues in which they were interested and which they felt to be important. From the beginning, therefore, the three elements of sponsoring agent, usually a government body, professional social scientists and local community, defined the structure of action-research. The difficulties in combining these three elements, as a means not merely of acquiring knowledge but of then producing change, were also apparent from the outset. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that the approach was largely abandoned in the broad field of social policy and administration, subsequently being more typically used in the narrower context of industrial organisation, for the purposes of business efficiency and labour management and using in particular the tools of social psychology.

In the nineteen-sixties, government sponsored programmes were launched first in the United States and then in Britain with the purported aim of tackling poverty and its attendant problems of social discontent which it was clear that neither relatively full employment nor welfare services had banished. Once again, the social scientists were allocated a partnership role at the local neighbourhood level, to work this time with professional community activists. In particular, the attachment of researchers both justified and was justified by the claim that these latest initiatives
were experiments, a caveat that in fact probably arose mainly from the political restrictions on any wholesale attack on the problems of poverty and deprivation. The unwillingness to get fully to grips with recognised problems ensured merely local, small-scale intervention despite the global nature of these problems.

Having been included, researchers had to be given a role vis-à-vis both the action workers and the sponsoring agents. On the one hand, therefore, their task was to provide ideas for experimental action initiatives, to collect then analyse appropriate data for programme planning and generally to provide a framework of 'rationality' within the conventions of social science as an academic discipline. On the other hand, they were also seen as necessary for the sort of systemic monitoring and evaluation of programmes required if the claims that these were experimental were to be met, with a joint responsibility here to ensure feedback both to their action colleagues and to the sponsoring agents as policy-makers and, of course, decision-takers.

The formal context of CDP experience has already been well documented and need not be repeated here. The feature which stands out above all others is the complexity of on the one hand the administrative and political structures and on the other hand of the issues which it was intended that the Projects should tackle and of the aims it was hoped they would realise. Moreover, there was no overall direction from the centre, despite there being a central research directorate when the national CDP programme began, for it was soon abandoned. The problem for Southwark CDP, as for all the others was to simultaneously provide for what might be called the community development action principles of non-direction and responsiveness to local needs, as well as producing findings from which generalisations could be made as a basis for national policies.

Marris & Rein, in the context of the American scene, have concluded that experimental research on the one hand and social reform or change programmes on the other are incompatible and mutually exclusive. Yet we feel that the possibly limited ability of local action programmes to provide generalisations applicable in a wider context is not sufficient reason for abandoning the attempt to implement action-research. It is important to identify the limitations of action-research enterprises in tackling poverty and to distinguish between the problems which arise from the conduct of action-research itself and those which derive from an assumption that selective, small area initiatives are an appropriate means for action on this front. This is an assumption which has now been demonstrated to be ill-founded elsewhere in CDP and other similar enterprises as well as in the experience of this project.

The American and British experience, including that of Southwark CDP, testify to the many dilemmas and difficulties in the attempts of 'action' and 'research' to work together in tackling poverty and deprivation. Many of the problems are partly a function of the contrary definitions of the two activities and of the nature of the issues they are intended jointly to resolve and of the remedies considered appropriate. In this respect, some useful lessons have been learned, and are beginning to bear fruit, concerning the task of evaluation. The stormy history of many projects in terms of conflicts over the evaluation of action initiatives, is a good example of the different definitions held of both 'action' and 'research' by both the action and research teams. Much of the American experience and the early years of CDP demonstrated not so much an inherent incompatibility of the two approaches and their methods, as a need for shifts in definition that took account of the other's perspective.

There is no one model of action-research which Southwark CDP would claim would overcome the incompatibility suggested by Marris & Rein. However the experience of the team in Newington did confirm that certain approaches to social action inevitably conflict with the objectives of research and indicated that there was certain necessary conditions to be met before action-research could be effective. In particular the methods of experimental research cannot combine with an understanding of action based on evolving immediate responses to individual and group needs in the form of welfare services. This had been amply demonstrated by the first two years of the project's life. From the research point of view a basic demand was for the objectives of the exercise to be specified from the outset. Yet the nature of community development is such that the goals will
inevitably be subject to continuous change. Often too there will be a multiplicity of goals, both short and long term which may be both inconsistent and conflicting. As a result just as it is necessary for an action team to abandon the ‘social welfare’ approach if they are to work with researchers so it will generally be inappropriate for the researchers to try to apply a classical, goal-attainment model.

This problem of establishing goals is but one example: others might include ethical disputes over the use of control groups, and difficulties arising from differences in time spans. There are also the conflicts that can arise from seeking to combine in a multi-disciplinary team the backgrounds and skills of people with often widely different training and work experience. This issue further illustrates the need stressed above for definitions of ‘action’ as well as ‘research’ which are appropriate to the new setting of ‘action-research’ and to the working context of community development.

The incompatibility of conventional research methods to the CDP situation has been reflected in the experience of the twelve projects which have either altered their conception of the role of research considerably or, as in Southwark’s first phase, have recognised that the research team would have to pursue its own objectives without the agreement of the action team and vice-versa.

A number of the projects took the position that significant change at a local level was impossible to achieve and that, although local demands should be articulated and fought for, the prime purpose of this activity was to mobilise key sections of the working class in CDP areas and to help clarify their objective position in society. The distinction between action and research was seen as worthless in this context and in some cases the resulting strategy seemed to be a sort of community action, grassroots propaganda approach which involved making CDP’s resources available to those disadvantaged groups who had the most strongly expressed grievance against the local authorities. In this context both research and action team members concentrated on providing information, propaganda and other means of support to those particular groups which the projects felt it worthwhile to support.

Southwark of course did not share the analysis of the role of CDP which led to this approach. This was because it was felt that increasing access to and democratic control over the resources that are already available could more effectively create the conditions necessary for social change. It is important to note that this analysis was the result of protracted discussions, mainly between the Action Team Leader and the Research Team from the Polytechnic. The fact that it was possible to get a substantial measure of agreement was absolutely essential to the development of an action-research relationship. This may seem obvious but the ad hoc way in which each of the twelve projects began their lives suggests that the importance of early agreement was not fully appreciated.

The joint agreement between action and research in Southwark went well beyond the recognition that the Project should concentrate on making resources more accessible to local people. It involved agreement that the working methods to be employed by the project would reflect its role not as a pressure group outside the local authority but as a means of providing a model for a radically changed organisation of resources within the authority. This meant that unlike many other CDP’s each member of the Southwark team had a particular role which was interdependent with the rest of the team. This applied to a great extent to research as well. In other words research workers were seen as providing a particular skill which was needed if the project was both to develop its strategy in a consistent manner and be able to demonstrate the benefits of that strategy.

It could be argued that professional researchers are unnecessary to achieve these objectives. As long as the action strategy is clearly defined the task of information gathering and evaluating progress can be done by team members critically examining both individually and in team meetings the progress being made. In Southwark the Project rejected this option partly because of the sheer practical difficulty of performing that self evaluation in a satisfactory manner.
In any case the main advantage of having a Research Team is the much greater breadth of focus which a neighbourhood team can then have. While the action team provides the local base, research has an important task in relating the day to day work to the wider context. For example throughout the life of Southwark CDP housing and redevelopment had been the main areas of concern of the Newington residents. A great deal of work had been done with particular residents groups. The research team were able to relate the very specific local problems with which the action team were dealing every day to particular developments in housing finance nationally and to changes in the construction industry which it would simply not have been possible for a hard pressed action team member to do. Without such an analysis, however, it was extremely difficult for the action team to avoid operating simply as a community action pressure group.

Another example of a similar kind relates to the work of CDP in the employment field. In this case a specific request was made by the Southwark Trades Council through the Action Team Leader that CDP should examine the declining employment opportunities in the borough. Again the Research Team were able to make use of the considerable fund of knowledge amongst local activists and to collate that experience and relate it to the regional and national context, thereby considerably strengthening the local demands which resulted. (See 'Employment in Southwark' available from Southwark Trades Council).

Most importantly, perhaps, the CDP Research Team was able to put the entire analysis of the role of CDP as a neighbourhood based project into the wider context. Throughout the final two years of the Project's time in Newington the Action Team Leader and the Research Team were constantly clarifying the concepts which were central to the work of both teams. The provision of a Research Team which can stand back and examine how the day to day work of the project relates to, for example, the team's definition of community or of the community development process is often seen as a dispensable luxury. However the experience of the Southwark CDP is that without such a facility it is very difficult to develop working methods which are consistent enough to be capable of evolution except in terms of specific objectives which have very limited applicability or in terms of very far reaching aims which have a rather tenuous relationship with the work which actually takes place.

By the time that the Southwark Action Team ended in April 1976 the Project had developed a very effective action/research approach to which all the research work of the previous two years had contributed. However the claims that can be made for this relationship are severely curtailed because of the comparatively short period in which the two teams were fully staffed and working together. On the one hand much of the Action Team's work was reaching its conclusion by the time the Polytechnic Research Team arrived while on the other the initiatives which sprang from the agreed analysis which we have been discussing have resulted in research work which has only comparatively recently been available for the Action Team to put into effect.

The need for evaluation is fully accepted by the CDP in Newington but as yet it has not been possible to properly evaluate work which has been a product of the Action/Research relationship. The opportunity to do this was presented by the arrival in the Project in 1975 of a community lawyer. Since his arrival a researcher has been involved in a process of continuous evaluation in the sense that his working methods have been closely reported on and regular discussions have been held between the lawyer and the researcher to examine objectives and progress in meeting those objectives. This work is still going on but it provides perhaps the best example of the benefits that can be gained from action/research. In the first place such continuous assessment ensures as far as possible that an expensive resource such as a lawyer is used with maximum effectiveness during the life of the Project. Secondly it will be possible to evaluate very precisely the work of the lawyer as a result of the assembly of data that has taken place. Thirdly the constant interaction between the action and research worker avoids the situation in which the researchers appear at the end of a project, armed with claims of objectivity which the action team worker often views with grave suspicion, to evaluate work which they seem to have no other commitment to. In the Southwark situation the researcher would be evaluating an approach which was at least partly the result of a dialogue between action and research.
Southwark CDP has had an extraordinarily chequered history as far as the action/research relationship is concerned. From this experience we would suggest the following outline in setting up action-research enterprises.

1. Research Team and Action Team Leader and deputy need to be appointed together. There may be some advantages in terms of the relationship of the Action Team to its sponsoring authority if the Research Team is responsible to a different body.

2. The first year or 18 months should involve clarifying definitional problems and obtaining agreement on the approach — agreement of all authorities involved in the experiment — it is likely that part of this agreement will need to include the means by which residents are to be involved.

3. The action-research agreement needs to include explicit arrangements for reporting back from the action team to enable effective monitoring, on-going evaluation of results and commissioning specific pieces of research to forward action team strategies.