

# **LONDON - HACKNEY**

# **WOODBERRY DOWN**

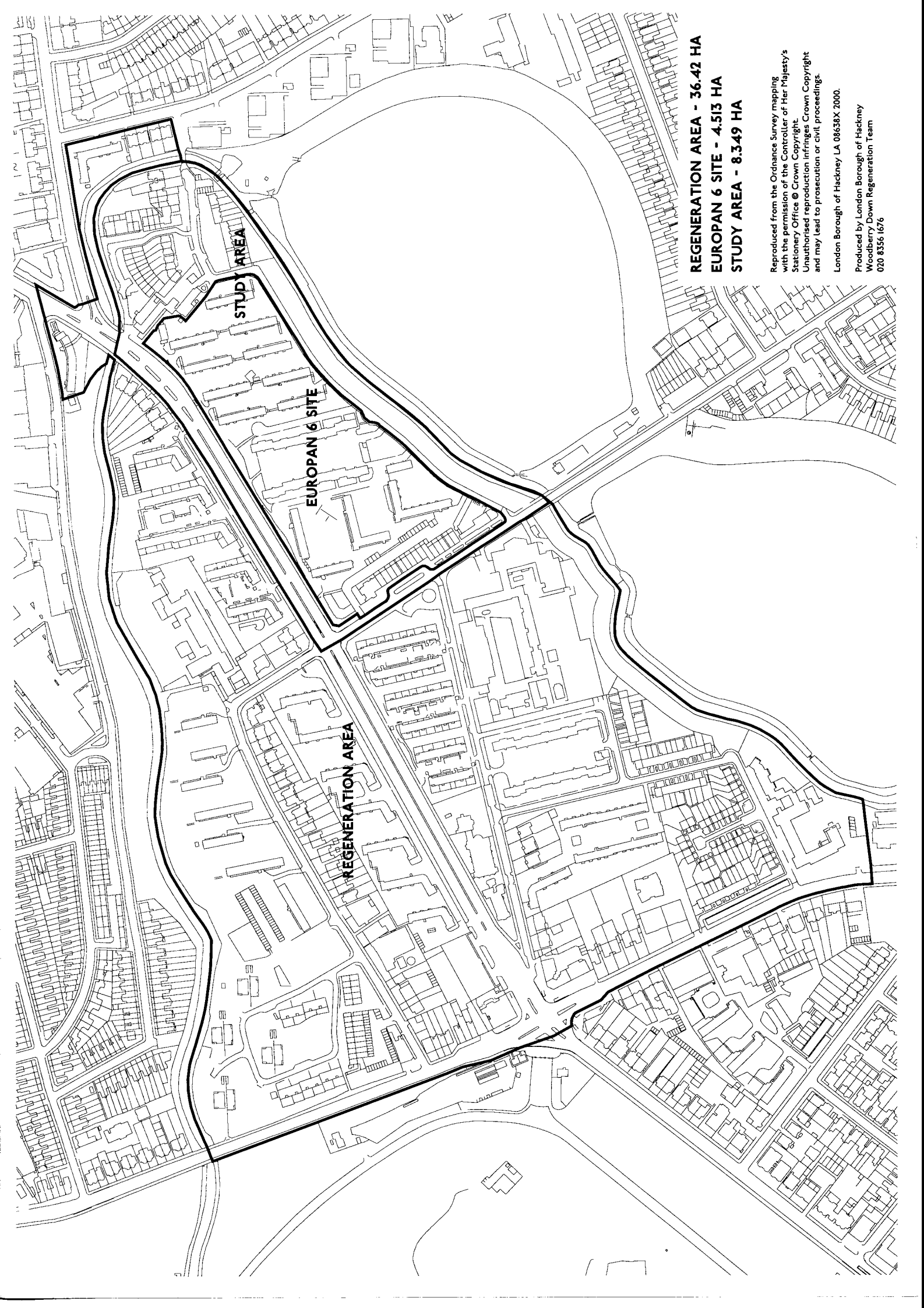
# **ESTATE**

DAS GELBE BUCH

Second Edition

# **das gelbe buch**

January 2001



**REGENERATION AREA - 36.42 HA**  
**EUROPAN 6 SITE - 4.513 HA**  
**STUDY AREA - 8.349 HA**

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## PREFACE

The objective of this Yellow Book is to provide a combination of inspiration and information. That is, to encourage competitors to submit schemes and to inform them about the study site. It has been prepared specifically as a EUROPAN 6 briefing document.

It begins with the EUROPAN brief. This is reproduced from the briefing document which has been prepared by the UK Architecture Foundation in conjunction with the Royal Institute of British Architects' Competitions Office using text provided by the Woodberry Down Regeneration Team (WDRT). It describes the characteristics of the study site within a wider context.

The next section describes the WDRT's Vision and Objectives for the estate and for the study site. This will be of particular interest to competitors especially those parts which describe the ultimate, intermediate and immediate objectives on page 15, and the attitude which has been adopted with regard to design which is described on page 8.

This is followed by a section on the history of the estate and the water and underground railway connections. It describes the influence of Peter Behrens and the ideas of the Bauhaus, and the historical development of the final built form on the estate.

The last section consists of a bibliography. This is a selection of some of the texts which the WDRT has used in the development of their ideas.

November 2000

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The first edition of *"Das Gelbe Buch"* was produced for the launch of EUROPAN 6 in Berlin in November 2000. The Woodberry Down Regeneration Team (WDRT) exhibited successfully in Berlin and *"Das Gelbe Buch"* was enthusiastically received. As a result a reprint is required. The opportunity has been taken to update the Vision and Objectives section to correspond with the WDRT report *"Vision, Objectives and Procurement"*. The bibliography has also been updated.

January 2001

## 1. EUROPAN BRIEF

### THEME

Woodberry Down Estate is a post-war social housing development in need of radical restructuring. With the EUROPAN 6 site theme of 'the interrupted town', proposals should aim to create an inclusive and sustainable urban community, enabling the residents to enjoy a good quality of life by taking advantage of the economic and social opportunities available in both Hackney and London as a whole.

### CONTEXT

As one of the capital's 33 administrative areas (Boroughs), Hackney is situated to the north-east of central London. The Borough has a strong manufacturing base and in recent years has seen a growing prominence of the emerging arts and media sector. With over half of its population living in subsidised housing, income levels are well below the London average. However, its residents form a vibrant community, with the Borough's diverse ethnic mix contributing to its unique character.

Although Hackney is currently experiencing steady economic growth, there are still pockets of deprivation remaining, mainly due to a lack of investment in social housing and physical infrastructure over the past 25 years. To counter this, the local authority has recently made a series of successful bids to the UK Government, which has resulted in additional funds being invested in the Borough.

Woodberry Down and Stamford Hill Partnership were successful in their bid for £25m from the UK Government's Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) of which £22.5m has now been approved. About two thirds of this budget will be allocated to housing on the Woodberry Down Estate to kick-start a ten-year regeneration and redevelopment programme. In addition to this, the WDRT will be inviting tender bids from investor developers with the aim to have identified the final two short-listed contenders by October 2001.

### INVITATION

The London Borough of Hackney and WDRT are committed to regenerating the Estate in such a way that a substantial contribution will be made to the community's welfare, health, education, self-esteem and quality of life. Innovative housing ideas are seen as the way forward to achieve this aim, taking an integrated and cutting-edge approach to design, sustainability, construction and information/communication technology.

Competitors are therefore invited to submit schemes for this site, with a view to providing a template for future development of the Estate. The London Borough of Hackney and WDRT are keen to identify innovative design solutions and, while a firm commitment cannot be made to build the winning scheme, or any scheme, the intention is to incorporate this thinking into the overall regeneration strategy for the Estate.

## SITE

Woodberry Down is a large council housing estate built as a landmark project by the London County Council in the 1940s. Located some 8km north east of the city centre, the Estate is bisected by a major traffic route (Seven Sisters Road) with an underground railway station (Manor House) located at its western perimeter.

The competition site forms the south-eastern district of the Estate, bordered by Seven Sisters Road to the north and Woodberry Grove to the west. Located to the south is an extensive expanse of water, known as the East Reservoir, which is cut off from the site by the New River. A public riverside footpath is proposed that will connect through to the neighbouring Boroughs of Enfield and Haringey: it is envisaged that this route will stimulate new leisure and recreational uses for the reservoir.

The site comprises 558 residential units of which 398 units will require demolition. The two remaining blocks, Ashdale and Burtonwood, comprising 80 units each will require refurbishment as they are of historical significance and likely to be protected by English Heritage. A parade of commercial properties is situated on Woodberry Grove, which may also be demolished, given their poor condition.

## PROGRAMME

The regeneration strategy for the competition site will focus on the creation of a mixed cultural and economic environment to meet the community's needs, serving as a model for the surrounding area. This should be achieved through the diversification of housing types, tenure, commercial and community amenities, as well as an overall increase in the built density. There are no restrictions on the orientation, height or materials for the new development, but particular emphasis should be placed on energy efficiency and sustainability issues.

Considerations for the site masterplan include the provision of improved public space, car parking and traffic flow through the estate. The integration of the East Reservoir is encouraged, with the water providing the stimulus for new activities as well as a pleasing aspect for residents. The southern access road (Newnton Close) can be relocated, together with the maintenance depot situated at its junction with Woodberry Grove, and the community centre marking the north-west corner of the site. It will also be necessary for measures to be taken to eliminate or alleviate the substantial traffic noise from Seven Sisters Road.

## HOUSING

Recent developments in lifestyle patterns (live/work, flexitime and jobshare, rise in number of single person households, and internet access) have necessitated a radical revaluation of social housing design. The scheme should reflect this changing need, including the full integration of information and communication technology as an essential part of contemporary life. These design principles should also be transferable to the remaining 90 blocks on the Woodberry Down Estate, thereby acting as an imaginative and innovative exemplar to other social housing schemes in the UK.

A breakdown of housing units and sizes required:

1-bed	30%	50sqm
2-bed	44%	70sqm
3-bed	12%	80sqm
4-bed	12%	90sqm
5-bed	1%	100sqm
6-bed	1%	110sqm

#### *OWNERSHIP AND TENURE*

The long-term strategy of the Council is to create estates with a more diverse ownership and tenure pattern. Currently all the properties are owned by the London Borough of Hackney with the exception of a few leaseholds. For the new blocks, it can be assumed that 15% will be for private sale, 10% in some form of shared ownership (with a new landlord or the Council as landlord) with the remainder built for social housing.

#### *DENSITY*

The current density for the site ranges from 340 to 423 habitable rooms per hectare. This should be increased to 550 habitable rooms per hectare, or 160 dwellings per hectare, in accordance with the UK Government's Planning Policy Guidance note 3 (PPG3). A minimum total of 725 units should therefore be provided, of which 160 will be refurbished units located in the two heritage blocks.

#### *RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL FACILITIES*

The existing retail area is located along Woodberry Grove forming the western edge of the site, comprising 15 shop units (including a post office) and an inn. The new retail accommodation should attract a main anchor tenant to trade alongside smaller retail businesses within the development. Provisions may also be made for studios and light industrial workshops to rent as part of the overall strategy for the community.

#### *COMMUNITY FACILITIES*

The existing community facilities, including administration offices for the Estate and its Regeneration Team, are housed in the Robin Redmond Resource Centre situated on the corner of Woodberry Grove and Seven Sisters Road. Proposals may reconsider this accommodation, and include new amenities for communal use by the residents.

#### *CAR PARKING*

The parking provision should be half a parking place per dwelling, in accordance with the Borough Unitary Development Plan.

## *STUDY AREA*

The zone to the north-east of the site, bounded by the bend in the New River at the end of Newnton Close, is included as a study area which may form part of the masterplan that incorporates the reservoir and river path.

## *SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*

The promotion of sustainability, in both social and environmental terms, should be a prime concern for all competitors. Schemes should demonstrate:

- A socially inclusive approach to design that recognises the needs of the whole community
- A strategy that stimulates economic growth and employment opportunities
- A prudent use of natural resources throughout the whole lifecycle of the development, and minimisation of energy consumption and waste
- An integrated design approach that allows for tenant consultation and participation so that their needs are addressed
- A commitment to innovative technology and construction techniques as a means of realising these goals

Population:	Municipality: London - Hackney 280,000 (site population 1,500)
Location:	Woodberry Down Estate (South East)
Site hosts:	London Borough of Hackney with Woodberry Down Regeneration Team

Surface area of study area:	8.3 Hectares
Surface area of site:	4.5 Hectares

Tours of the Estate may be booked through the RIBA Competitions Office.



## 2. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

### INTRODUCTION

This section describes the objectives which the WDRT has defined for the long, medium and short-term and also the procurement route which it is adopting to achieve these objectives. This report also does much more. It describes the context in which the WDRT is working and the key issues which are being considered.

Some of these key issues represent major departures from the norm. This is not a case of doing things differently for the sake of it but reflects the WDRT's continuous search for better ways of delivering government policy, the Council's housing strategy and the objectives which the WDRT has set. These are described in this report. The WDRT has done this against the background of a thoroughly researched position and with an informal consultation programme with residents starting much earlier in the process than is normally the case. Other key issues are familiar but will be packaged up in a more inclusive way.

The WDRT has made significant progress in a number of areas. It has developed new ways of evaluating the condition and ownership of assets and the timing and manner of consultation with residents. It has done this against its brief which is to secure the redevelopment and regeneration of the estates on a long-term sustainable basis to the benefit of the Council and residents.

The technical quality of what has been produced and the new ideas which have been generated are of universal application on almost any housing estate of a similar nature in the UK. The interest in the work of the team by outside agencies is evidence of this as is the interest in the work contained in the WDRT's Yellow Books.

The purpose of this report is to inform about the long-term future of the Woodberry Down estates and as a secondary issue to provide a link between the £150m of investment required in the estate and the comparatively, but understandably, small and vital contribution from Round 6 of the Single Regeneration Budget.

For most people living in deprived neighbourhoods in poverty and experiencing some form of inequality there are usually two main ways out: these are education and work. For education it means improving attainment at schools at all levels, and equipping people for work both during full-time education and subsequently. For work, that is some form of employment, this has to be full-time meaningful and capable of providing an income at which housing and other essential goods and services can be afforded.

The WDRT on the Woodberry Down estates has confirmed the importance of these two elements of deprived neighbourhoods. They have been correlated with the index of local condition. This theoretical concept is of course of no interest or consequence at all to the recipients of government and local authority services, that is the residents on the estates, and there is no reason why it should be.

The Urban Taskforce in its report *"Towards an Urban Renaissance"* set out a commitment to urban communities. The Urban Taskforce also said that an urban

renaissance should be founded on the principles of design excellence, economic strength, environmental responsibility, good governance and social well-being. The underlying themes which are fundamental to the work and thinking for the housing component on the Woodberry Down estates is based on these principles.

The WDRT will be insisting on design excellence in new and refurbished housing. It will be harnessing the huge advantages which the estates have in terms of transportation links, the strong sense of community which exists, and the benefits which new and improved housing can bring to education, health, and employment so as to generate economic strength. It will take environmental responsibilities seriously by encouraging the designing out of large energy waste in heating the homes on the estates. It will take advantage of one or perhaps more of the many good ideas which are now being considered elsewhere concerning the local government of large estates such as this. Last, and perhaps most importantly, it will continue to do everything necessary to enhance the considerable social well-being and community spirit which exists on the estates, and which must not be harmed.

The WDRT is conscious that estates such as those at Woodberry Down must change. The Urban Taskforce identified three factors as central to this process of change, and they are as applicable to the Woodberry Down estates as they are to elsewhere in England. The three factors which were identified are:

- The technical revolution. The way this will incorporate new developments in information technology into the new and existing homes and the establishment of new networks connecting the residents at the local and global level, will be a central part of the WDRT's developments in the long-term.
- The ecological threat. The estates, as with many estates of this age and type of building, are consuming huge quantities of energy. This is largely because the fabric of the buildings leak heat. The WDRT's report "*Energy Efficiency*" describes this. Designing out this waste will be a central part of the change programme for the estates.
- The social transformation. Changing life patterns are evident everywhere. The residents on these estates should be able to expect new lifestyle choices together with rest of society. This includes the management of their estates and the ownership of them.

## CONTEXT

A major element of the work of the WDRT has been focussed on devising more effective ways of organising and delivering integrated services. There is a compelling logic and need to this approach. Writing in the Observer in May 1998 the Prime Minister said "*Even the basic policies, targeted at unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown, will not deliver their full effect unless they are properly linked together. Joined up problems need joined up solutions.*" Indeed they do but the WDRT has concluded that delivering this is not going to be easy, or popular with some agencies.

Their work on this is confirmed by four of the issues referred to by David Wilkinson and Elaine Applebee in their book "*Implementing Holistic Government*". They are:

- The disconnection of land use planning from other forms of planning. The WDRT has found that land use planning, despite the best endeavours of the Council, fails to take account of planning requirements for education attainment, the application of social services, the implementation of housing development and management policies, and issues relating to crime and disorder and health. In this sense it is not as embracing as it should be. The approach which is being considered is that proposed by Nicky Gavron in her paper "*Modernising Local Planning*" and this will form part of the Planning Brief.
- It has also been concluded that these major joined up solutions cannot be carried out from the top down, and that it is unlikely they will be successful or sufficiently informed if they are implemented from the bottom up. Working from somewhere in the middle seems to be the sensible way forward and this approach is being adopted and this is reflected in the WDRT's consultation process.
- There must be much greater clarity about the differences, roles and purposes of public involvement, participation and consultation. Paying lip service to this is not an adequate approach and patronises the recipients of the information and services. Telling people what is going to be done no longer counts as consultation and will not be acceptable at Woodberry Down. The WDRT believe that the consultation process which it has started represents a significant change in the way this is normally carried out. It is not easy to do and the WDRT never thought that it would be. Even so it is taking time and energy to win the confidence and trust of residents and it is accepted that this will not be possible with everyone. Neither will all residents agree with what the WDRT has to say, or with its conclusions. Carrying out the consultation process in the way described in this report is very time consuming, and will require resources, but the WDRT believe it to be correct. The WDRT's report "*Review of the Round 2 Consultation Process*" also describes the work which has been done.

- The application of best value is going to be essential to the redevelopment of deprived neighbourhoods and their long-term regeneration. Applying these principles to all the participating public services will be a step forward. Applying it on an integrated service provision basis will be a powerful tool to encourage better service delivery and for improving the likelihood of deprived neighbourhoods moving from their current position of poverty and inequality. The WDRT are also aware that the application of these best value principles will also highlight major differences between parts of the same neighbourhood or parts of very large group of estates. There will be some parts where deprivation is not an issue, there will be others close by where it is most acute.

Part of the application of best value principles will result in a change of process or outcome and even in the nature of the service being delivered. It is acknowledged that this will require a change of culture and thinking and will not always be popular or welcome. J.K. Galbraith said, *"Faced with the choice between changing one's mind and proving there is no need to do so, almost everybody gets busy with the proof."* The WDRT consider that getting busy with the proof is inappropriate.

#### KEY ISSUES

##### *BEST VALUE, AND INSPECTION AND INTERVENTION*

The WDRT has concluded that it will be essential to use the best value principles to deliver and continuously improve the service provision in the long-term on the estates. This means delivering the services to clear standards covering both cost and quality, by the most economic, effective and efficient means possible. This will be to the benefit of those living in the area, and those in poverty or experiencing inequality will gain the most from this exercise. This is particularly so if the integrated service provision which is being considered is subjected to the best value approach also.

It is accepted that best value is more than just a process. It is also accepted that it may require a cultural change, a change in perceptions about the way that services are delivered, and about the relationship with stakeholders, that is the residents. This will be a good thing, and the cultural change necessary to implement an integrated best value approach is essential to the long-term of sustainability of deprived areas, and will bring benefits which can begin to alleviate some of the worst extremes of poverty and inequality.

The best value approach will be taken as an opportunity to reassess roles and functions which will lead to new and innovative ideas for the provision of integrated services from a variety of service providers, including education, health, housing, and the police and Probation Service. It will begin to integrate the regulatory services and the role of those who administer the planning system.

It will also enable the WDRT to maximise the effect and benefit of the resources which are deployed, and to work effectively in partnership with others, particularly the other service providers and with residents. It will give clear organisational objectives which embrace performance management and confirm accountability. Delivering these services to consistently high standards and at acceptable costs will require all service providers to have a clear vision, and be clear about the services the customers expect. Best value will be reflected in the procurement process.

#### *THE TIME TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT CHANGE*

It has been concluded that most government regeneration initiatives are of too short duration to have a long-term sustainable effect on communities. Programmes which extend to five or seven years are insufficiently long and often pay little regard to the main task of relieving the plight of deprived neighbourhoods. Programmes of 20 or even 30 years are required in order to make lasting positive changes to the way these neighbourhoods work and perform.

These long-term programmes which the WDRT are contemplating place particular emphasis on the quality of the management of the integrated services provided, and also on the integration of the planning function with other characteristics of managing the neighbourhoods.

There is no easy solution to this. The WDRT has concluded that these very long-term programmes require a higher order of clarity and vision than short-term programmes. It has also concluded that they require a level of management and organisation which currently exceeds the capacity of those whose responsibility it is to deliver them. It will take many years to deliver dramatically different outcomes, which is the long-term vision of what is being proposed. The WDRT is convinced this will lead to an improvement in the quality of life, changing in culture, and a resulting change in focus. This focus must be moved to dealing with deprived neighbourhoods, and issues relating to poverty and inequality and is one of the Ultimate Objectives disabled in this report.

#### *COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT*

Community involvement and capacity building are essential to the well being and long-term interest of Woodberry Down. A resident participation programme is being developed which aims to achieve this. It will maintain a general consensus throughout the lifetime of the regeneration process and beyond, probably up to 30 years, and remain focussed on the three inter-related component parts of this process which are physical, economic and social. The resident participation strategy achieves these aims by focussing on the following four key areas:

- , Active participation by residents
- , Full consultation with residents
- , Meaningful support from residents
- , Production and delivery of readily understandable information to residents

The WDRT has become involved in the life of the estates and has actively encouraged residents to drop in to discuss the regeneration proposals. This has been a very successful strategy to the point where the number of visitors are increasing. Some come singly and others arrive as a large extended family. Some residents stay no longer than 10 minutes, others for an hour or more. The range of questions which they bring is equally varied. For some it is to discuss worries and concerns about the regeneration proposals, or to get more information. For others it is to discuss a wide range of issues which are of concern, some personal and some connected with their tenancy, housing benefit, repairs and anything else which occurs to them. The WDRT deals with all these problems in the best way it can and never turns anyone away. It deals sympathetically and confidentially with all the personal problems, and has acquired a reputation for giving straightforward and honest advice on the issues which it is asked to deal with.

Public consultation and participation, by its very nature, involves a two-way information exchange with residents before decisions are made and the strategy described above has helped. It must be transparent and accountable. This is described in the WDRT's report "*Community Leadership at Woodberry Down*".

#### *A RESEARCH BASED APPROACH*

The WDRT has developed qualitative and quantitative research approaches to identifying how the estates work, and what the aims, needs and aspirations of the residents are. It has also obtained a very clear idea of the investment requirements has been established for housing provision. Reports have been written describing the results of this research and a fresh approach has been developed for the process of option appraisal.

#### NATIONAL APPRAISAL

For the new and refurbished homes on the Woodberry Down estates the WDRT has adopted the aims set out by government in the Housing Green Paper "*Quality and Choice: A decent home for all*". The government's aim is to offer everyone the opportunity of a decent home and so promote social cohesion, well-being and self-dependence. This is the aim of the regeneration proposals for the Woodberry Down estates.

The WDRT is also adopting the Housing Green Paper's key principles underpinning this aim. These are:

- Offering everyone opportunity, choice and a stake in their home whether rented or owned.
- Ensuring an adequate supply of decent housing to meet needs.
- Giving responsibility to individuals to provide their own homes where they can, providing help for those who cannot.

- Improving the quality and design of the housing stock, new housing and residential environments, helping to achieve an urban renaissance and protecting the countryside.
- Delivering modern, efficient, secure, customer-focussed public services and empowering individuals to influence them.
- Reducing barriers to work, particularly in relation to benefit and rent policy.
- Supporting vulnerable people and tackling all forms of social exclusion, including bad housing, homelessness, poverty, crime and poor health.
- Promoting sustainable development that supports thriving, balanced communities and the high quality of life in urban and rural areas.

The objectives of the housing component in the long, medium and short-term for the Woodberry Down estates are described below. These objectives are based on the government's key principles for housing policy, and are also based on the requirements of the Council's vision and strategy.

#### VISION AND OBJECTIVES

##### *VISION*

The long-term plan for the Council's housing strategy is described in the Council's Housing Strategy 2001 to 2006. It is that from now until 2020 the Council will:

- Improve the supply of good quality homes, in line with agreed London-wide requirements and the need for higher density developments.
- Improve the built environment, with regard to community ownership, global sustainability, adopting the Egan principles as described in *"Rethinking Construction"* and high quality innovative design.
- Improve housing choices, through revised lettings policies and an integrated tenure strategy.
- Improve life chances, by supporting the key areas of education and training, and employment.
- Improve access to services, especially through more integrated service delivery and Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

Delivering this vision will not be easy. It will mean making national, sub-regional and local policies and initiatives work. The report by the Social Exclusion Unit "*Bringing Britain Together: a national strategy for neighbourhood renewal*" summarised this and their guidance has been adapted in forming the objectives. The guidance, with the WDRT's local interpretation is:

- *Investing in people, not just buildings.* To do otherwise, particularly on estates with such a diverse population, will mean that the estates will revert back to the position they are in now within a generation or so. Also improve the access to the supply of housing to appropriate local communities so that the estate better reflects the society it is imbedded within and therefore responds to local housing needs that result.
- *Involving communities, not parachuting in solutions.* Consultation has taken place consistently and transparently with residents during the last year. This process will intensify and continue in the future. This is having a beneficial effect on the development of proposals and residents' input is becoming invaluable. To impose solutions in these circumstances would not be helpful
- *Developing integrated approaches with clear leadership.* This is a principle the WDRT is committed to. The idea of integrated service provision fits well with the needs of estates such as this. The option appraisal which has been started is a combined Education and Housing appraisal and could be expanded to include other service areas such as Health and the Probation Service for example.
- *Ensuring mainstream policies really work for the poorest neighbourhoods.* This has already been referred to. The WDRT is committed to making national, regional and local policies work on an integrated basis.
- *Making a long-term commitment with sustained political priority.* The ultimate objectives are long-term, about 20 years. In addition there are intermediate 10 year objectives. The WDRT is also considering different forms of local management such as Urban Regeneration Companies, Housing Regeneration Companies and the like.

This sets the corporate framework against which the following objectives have been developed.



## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the long-term regeneration programme for the Woodberry Down estates have been defined as precisely as possible. In order to do this in a structured way the hierarchy of objectives used by the Department for Education and Employment has been adopted. This distinguishes between ultimate, intermediate and immediate objectives in the following way:

- , Ultimate objectives are usually defined in terms of strategic issues. Examples such as satisfying long-term economic growth requirements, carrying out statements of government policy, and long-term local authority strategic plans fall into this category. A distinguishing characteristic of ultimate objectives is that they typically take 20 years or more to bring to maturity.
- , Intermediate objectives are one level below the ultimate objectives, and they will need to be met if the ultimate objectives are to be achieved. Usually, but not exclusively, intermediate objectives should be measurable. They usually have a time horizon of about 10 years. Intermediate objectives will not always be within the control of those responsible for delivery. It is recognised that sometimes events, and not those responsible for delivery, dictate the logic of developments.
- , Immediate objectives are short-term objectives directly concerned with outputs. They will normally be measurable and to some extent within the control of those responsible for delivery. The immediate objectives will usually need to be met if the intermediate objectives are to be achieved. They may however be one of several contributing factors to the success of the intermediate objectives.

## ULTIMATE OBJECTIVES

1. Satisfy the long-term aims of education and housing as described in *The Borough's Education Strategy 2000-2002* and in *The Borough's Housing Strategy 2001 to 2006*.
2. Harness the energy, spirit and enthusiasm of local people to develop a long-term sustainable community, which is confident, safe and secure.
3. Become a good place to visit and a place where people want to stay.
4. Provide new and refurbished housing, schools, and health and other facilities to modern long-term sustainable standards, in such a way that it will make a substantial contribution in terms of improved health, education, self esteem and other benefits.
5. Change the current uniform tenure and ownership pattern by providing new and refurbished housing with a range of different tenures, levels of affordability and ownerships.

6. Provide an integrated cross-sectoral approach to unified and joint ownership of assets, their use, and the use of relevant income, in such a way that it includes resident participation.
7. Unlock the value of land for the benefit of those who live on the estates.
8. Ensure the ethnicity of the estate is balanced in such a way that it reflects fairly the needs of all communities it should serve both from its existing population and any immediately identifiable local populations.

*INTERMEDIATE OBJECTIVES*

1. Provide a unified solution which improves the fixed assets and service delivery of education, health and housing and enables improvements in any of these services to benefit the recipients of the other service.
2. Re-provide housing, schools and health and other facilities in such a way that it will make a substantial contribution in terms of improving health, education and self esteem, care, crime and disorder, and environmental and other benefits.
3. Demolish buildings which are failing or which are too expensive to refurbish and replace with new, refurbish the remaining buildings to a standard to achieve a 30-year life, and comply with the latest planning guidance contained in *PPG 3* and *4*, the *Consultation Document on PPG 13*, and the LPAC report *"Sustainable Residential Quality"*. The design of new and refurbished buildings to comply with the DETR report *"By Design"* and the English Partnership/Housing Corporation's *"Urban Design Compendium"*.
4. Subscribe to the principles of the Greater London Authority (GLA) Spatial Development Strategy and in particular to the presumption against the loss of affordable homes as described in *"Homes for a World City"* by the Housing Commission of the GLA.
5. Adopt the design excellence principles described in the Urban Task Force report *"Urban Renaissance"*.
6. Provide non-housing fixed assets as part of an integrated funding service provision programme.
7. Produce a Development Planning Brief for public consultation.
8. Secure adequate private and public funding within a strong management and control structure related to the Government's planned reform of local government, and including the involvement of residents.
9. Encourage residents in blocks with a high proportion of leaseholders to participate in leasehold enfranchisement to enable them to purchase their

property so that these blocks can be transferred to some form of common ownership and management.

10. Increase tenant choice, including home ownership. This to include key worker accommodation, cost rent initiatives and starter homes, and various forms of shared ownership.
11. Arrange for the management of the estate to be by either statutory or non-statutory organisations to high responsive standards representing demonstrable best value.
12. Increase residents' influence and control in decisions which affect the estates.
13. Provide on-line ICT services, and promote their use.

#### *IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES*

1. Continue to develop the residents' participation programme.
2. Prepare a Delivery Plan for the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) Round 6 housing component.
3. Deliver the SRB housing programme.
4. Design, make available and maintain a dedicated Woodberry Down web site.
5. Obtain approval to the PFI Outline Business Case.

#### *CHANGE*

The WDRT plan is for a radical change to the housing in the area, and has a long-term plan which will enable this change to happen within the context of national, sub-regional and local policies. This plan is informed by the quantitative surveys which have been carried out into the condition of the housing stock and the cost of repair and improvement. Other qualitative surveys have involved 63% of homes and have measured the age and gender and economic activity profiles of the occupation of each of the 104 blocks in the area. Residents' aims, aspirations, dislikes, health, and some other matters have also been measured. The following WDRT's reports describe these results:

- *Qualitative Survey Results*
- *Quantitative Survey Results Part 1: Financial Summary*

The area has many contradictions. The surveys referred to above have revealed that some blocks are failing and becoming unsound and will have to be demolished and others are so expensive to repair and improve that demolition is the only option

which provides value for money. The same area however contains a strong community with a sense of belonging. It has many well-established families. It also has a large young population with two children to every three adults, twice as many as the rest of Hackney. Yet it has poor provision for those of pre-school age, and those at school. The area is bisected by a major dual carriageway road which creates a severe adverse environmental impact on the 30 or so blocks which border it. But because of the existence of this road the area has one of what must be potentially the best bus and underground interchanges in north east London on the Piccadilly Line. The station was specifically designed in the 1930's with this interchange arrangement and provides a valuable commercial opportunity.

The area has in the main a monotonous uniform alignment of the blocks, other than some of the perimeter areas, which give the area a dense feel although the actual density is only 330 habitable rooms per hectare overall. This almost over-bearing feel is in contrast to the large open space which is Finsbury Park immediately on the north-western edge of the area and within easy walking distance of most of it. It also has "wall-to-wall" social housing relieved by a growing number of leaseholders who have exercised their right to buy.

#### THE LONG-TERM PLAN

The long-term plan is therefore to preserve the best and to change the rest using funds from the Single Regeneration Budget to act as the small but important catalyst for this change. SRB funds will not be used for repairs and improvement to the housing stock, instead it will be used to:

- Provide resident support during the seven-year SRB programme.
- The acquisition of land to provide temporary and permanent decant homes.
- Provide temporary and permanent decant homes.
- Decant and demolish the first tranche of blocks too expensive to repair or improve thus creating a vacant area of land for new mixed tenure housing.
- Contribute towards procurement of a long-term development partner and the WDRT on-site costs.

The SRB programme is for seven years and the major draw down on it will probably extend for no more than five years or so. Because of the scale of changes necessary the long-term plans extend to 15 or 20 years. This will enable these radical changes to be carried out at a pace which residents can adjust to. It will also ensure an exit strategy which will secure a sustainable community with its strong sense of belonging intact and a secure future for the young people.

The value of the land cleared of defective housing has been conservatively valued by the Council at £5m per hectare. The land adjacent to the underground and bus interchange is probably worth half as much again. It is likely that these values will increase as knowledge of what is proposed becomes more widespread. One of the long-term objectives is to unlock the value of this land for the benefit of those who live there and this has already been referred to.

On the basis of the analysis contained in this report the long-term plan must include the following six elements:

- 30-year life housing. New and refurbished housing will be to current technical standards and the WDRT will champion good innovative design, manufacture and procurement.
- Diverse tenure. Diverse housing ownership and good quality affordable homes form part of the Council's vision for Hackney in 2020. It proposed that a combination of private ownership, shared ownership and cost rent, and affordable rental accommodation be considered.
- Principal Development Agreement. This will be used to encourage and control the long-term plan and "open up" the areas to internal and external opportunities. It will also be used to encourage innovation in design, procurement and construction.
- The Technical Revolution. New developments in information technology will be incorporated into new and refurbished housing which will connect residents at the local and global level.
- The Ecological Threat. The housing in the area is in buildings of an age and design which are consuming huge quantities of energy, which has also been referred to. This is because the fabric of the buildings leak heat. This is no longer acceptable in terms of national policies, international aspirations, nor in terms of affordability for residents.
- The Social Transformation. Changing life patterns are evident everywhere. Residents in the area should expect to share in new lifestyle choices. This includes the management and ownership of their homes. The process of consultation has started very early in the regeneration programme, much earlier than is normally the case. When the consultation started there was a fear that it was premature. Answers could not be given to many questions and many of the questions had not been thought of anyway.

### **3. HISTORY OF THE EUROPEAN 6 STUDY SITE AND THE WOODBERRY DOWN ESTATE**

#### THE NEW RIVER AND THE RESERVOIRS

The New River forms the southern boundary of the study site. It was built between 1609 to 1613 by Sir Hugh Myddleton to bring a supply of fresh water into the centre of London. At that time the population of London was 200,000 and the introduction of a supply of unpolluted water had a beneficial effect. The New River brought water 38.6km from near Ware in Hertfordshire to New River Head, near Sadlers Wells Theatre in central London, from where it fed into a system of wooden pipes. The waterway follows the hundred foot (30 metre) contour and forms the eastern and southern perimeters of the study site. The New River has not been used for the transport of anything other than water – boats, fishing and swimming are not permitted.

The reservoirs to the south of the study site were constructed in 1831 and 1833 to provide an additional supply of water to the periphery of London as the population grew and demand increased. The west reservoir is lined with stone from the old London Bridge. The reservoirs are no longer used to supply water on a regular basis but are part of the reserve system. The east reservoir is designated a nature conservation area and the west reservoir is to be used for sailing and leisure activities.

#### THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY

A key feature of the study area is its proximity to the Piccadilly line of the London Underground railway system. Manor House station was opened on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1932. The station is one of a series on the Piccadilly line designed by Charles Holden and represented the ideals of the railway's management.

The managing director of the London Underground from 1912 was Frank Pick. He was greatly influenced by the Deutscher Werkbund and the ideas of Peter Behrens. The amalgamation of the Weimar School of Arts and Crafts with the Academy of Fine Arts which created the Staatliche Bauhaus Weimar encouraged a return to first principles, "form follows function". London Underground adopted these principles and required excellence in the design of every element of the railway; rolling stock, lighting, engineering, graphics, furniture and so on.

The typeface used by the Woodberry Down Regeneration Team is that designed by Edmund Johnston for the Underground in 1916. It is the typeface used in this Yellow Book.

Frank Pick's interest in the design ideas of the Bauhaus was shared by his architect Charles Holden. Together they toured Holland, Denmark and Germany. They were impressed by the use of brick made by Willem Dudok in Holland and the wide range of control that Danish architects had over design. Holden developed the theory of town planning applied to railways.

Holden was commissioned to design the stations on the expanded Piccadilly line. The stations were built from 1931 – 34. Manor House, named after an inn on the site,

is the only one of Holden's stations that does not include buildings on the surface. Holden described the station as "an experiment in streamlined planning". The 400 square metres booking hall is designed around the movement of passengers to the platforms and the exits, realising the "form follows function" principle. Although the station is not part of the EUROPLAN site, it is considered of great significance to the area.

#### WOODBERRY DOWN ESTATE

Woodberry Down was the only substantial estate built by the London County Council in the late 1940s. Although on a more limited scale than had been planned, the estate realised some of the ideas of a neighbourhood community and mixed development that had informed the original plan. The London County Plan had been jointly produced by Patrick Abercrombie and J. H. Forshaw, the County architect, between 1939 and 1945.

The Woodberry Down area is bisected by the Seven Sisters Road, which was completed in 1832. At this time the land was in agricultural use. In the 1860s, some very large houses were built and the area was occupied by wealthy people. By 1930 some of the houses had been converted into flats, a process that continued after the opening of the underground railway station. Most of the land in the Woodberry Down area was owned by the Commissioners of the Church of England.

In 1934 the Labour Party won control of the London County Council for the first time. The new leader of the Council, Herbert Morrison, immediately wanted to develop new housing in the area. He commenced purchasing the site from the Church Commissioners, a process that was not completed until 1946. In architectural terms, the delay was a good thing.

Local residents did not welcome Herbert Morrison's plans to develop the area. The local newspaper reported that "mansion owners are being driven out" and the development was portrayed as an attempt to overrun a Conservative area with Labour voters.

The first scheme for the area was put forward by E. P. Wheeler in July 1938. It consisted of 1,660 dwellings in blocks varying from two to five storeys. The layout consisted of a giant central horseshoe shape of linked blocks. The design was based on the Quarry Hill estate in Leeds, the Viennese Hofe and Bruno Taut's Hufeisen Siedlung at Britz, Berlin.

In January 1943 J. H. Forshaw put forward an entirely different scheme which was discussed at a conference in March 1943. Forshaw's new design coincided with the detailed development of the London County Plan and included many of the ideas that were also in the plan. Forshaw's scheme of 1943 is in all essential detail the scheme that was built.

Forshaw's scheme abolished the "superblocks" and courts of the Wheeler scheme. Forshaw took a strict zeilenlau approach, with the blocks laid out on a north-south axis and at right angles to the street called Woodberry Down. To reduce the effect of traffic noise from Seven Sisters Road the blocks on the northern side had a short extra range towards the street which formed a semi-enclosed courtyard behind.

To avoid uniformity, Forshaw included four eight-storey blocks south Seven Sisters Road. These blocks included lifts, an innovation for the time. There were also some two-storey cottages. The scheme also included a shopping centre, schools and a library. Thus the Abercrombie-Forshaw principle of "mixed development" was first explored.

The proposed density was 148 persons per acre (366 per hectare). This was higher than the 336 per hectare standard set within the County of London Plan, but less than the density included in the 1938 scheme. Forshaw's scheme was approved at the conference with two variations – the location of the shops was changed and the eight-storey blocks with lifts were to be treated as "experiments". The conference spent some time debating the ways in which children would use the lifts and a "child-friendly" control system was specified. The conference also concluded that the rents would be relatively expensive and that the flats would be mainly offered to skilled manual workers.

A dispute arose between Forshaw the architect and Cyril Walker, the Chief Valuer. Walker was concerned with the high costs and potentially long building programme. Forshaw insisted that the high standards of design should not be compromised. In November 1945 the scheme was given to Walker to produce. Forshaw resigned, but as his scheme had been approved, it was his scheme that was built. Work on site started in August 1946.

The eight-storey blocks were built first, followed by the rest of the housing. The school was started in 1949, at which time 360 dwellings (including one of the eight-storey blocks) were complete and 1200 more dwellings in progress.

The London County Council had often debated the issue of building high but has always rejected the option because of the costs of installing and maintaining lifts. A lift had been installed in a block at Tabard Gardens in 1919 but not repeated. Many schemes had storey heights reduced. A maximum five-storey height, without lifts, was the standard of all council housing in London until the eight-storey blocks at Woodberry Down.

The original design of the eight-storey blocks at Woodberry Down had been a steel frame with brick facing. However, at this time both steel and bricks were in short supply. In order to proceed rapidly with construction, Forshaw decided in January 1945 to look at the possibility of monolithic reinforced concrete faced in render. Despite much discussion in the 1930s about in situ concrete it had rarely been used in blocks of flats.



There was, however, one built example which happened to be in Hackney, close to Woodberry Down at Evelyn Court. A series of 10 five-storey blocks had been built in 1934-35 by a charitable institution, The Industrial Dwellings Society. The blocks were designed by Sir John Burnet and the contractors were Holland, Hannen and Cubitt. The design involved load bearing external walls, flat slab floors and a rigorous system of reinforcement and shuttering. London County Council decided to try out this system on Woodberry Down, using the same contractor.

The first two blocks, Nicholl and Needwood Houses were quickly built. The second two, Ashdale and Burtonwood (included on the EUROPLAN study site) took longer and included some changes to the original design, mostly internal. The main change was a reversion to individual fireplaces instead of the central heating system powered by a communal boiler house used on the first pair. These four blocks were also built by Holland, Hannen and Cubitt.

The shortage of building materials at this time required a great deal of improvisation and re-cycling of materials. The formwork for the shuttering consisted of resin-bonded plywood on the exterior and permanent woodwool for the inner faces. The concreting was done in only three vertical sections, a scheme which is unlikely to be attempted today. The steel reinforcement for the floor slab was cut from Anderson air raid shelters and the aggregate from the crushed remains of other types of air raid shelter. The need for economy was so great that the perimeter fencing of the blocks was made from cut-up stretcher poles.

Despite Forshaw's departure, the team of architects who continued working on Woodberry Down was not changed. Great efforts were made to give architectural expression to the Holland, Hannen and Cubitt system. Examples of this are the breaks and projections in the blocks, the cantilevered balconies and the deep eaves. There is a strong Viennese influence on the design. The blocks were originally finished in cream and light blue, a finish described as Tyrolean Roughcast. These blocks are unique in that no others of their type were built. Two examples of these blocks are on the study site.

The lower storey flats are less imaginative but are well combined and varied. In most instances the design is adapted from standard 1930s patterns of London County Council flats. The variation between sand-lime and red bricks and the inclusion of some two storey houses adds to the impression of a mixed development.

Finally, it is worth noting that on subsequent housing developments the London County Council moved to building point blocks and concrete framed "Corbusian slabs". The Woodberry Down estate is the only built example of the original London County Plan and the expression of its ideas for urban housing.

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