Social Housing Innovation in Lyon

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A Selective History

• Lyon Catholics oppressed by Rome
• A banking, printing and religious centre in mediaeval times (but religious wars)
• A centre for the silk industry from end of 16th century
• Now: chemicals, pharmaceuticals, biotech, software, financial services, tourism
• Early construction of tower blocks of social housing by Tony Garnier in the *Quartier des Etats unis* – 1938
Lyon – Enthusiastic about social housing
Transport Advantages
Lyon – Lots of People to House

• Population around 1.2 million in 2004 - a growing and comparatively young population
• A history of housing labour, often immigrant labour, and receiving refugees from the Algerian war in 1958
• Enthusiastic construction in the 1960s and 70s means a large problem of repair now
• 120,000 students to house
• 124,782 social homes in 2005
• Extremely large concentration of social housing in particular areas
Construction: Haussmanisation
60s and 70s: Concrete
Apparently Unpromising
Multi-level Governance

Political control in 2006

• Region - - - - - - - - Left
• Département- - - - Right
• Communauté - - - - Left
• Communes - - - - Varied
• Arrondissements- - - Varied but predominantly
  (in Lyon city) of the left
Le Grand Lyon in 2007

Creating the city
In the suburbs
Special Institutions
Communauté of le Grand Lyon

- **55 communes** and established since **1966**
- No housing duties but a major housing actor
- Provides shortfall in construction finance
- Promotes dynamic co-ordinated policy
- Allows:
  - Moving social tenants across the city for urban rehabilitation
  - Pauses in construction to allow access for the disadvantaged
  - Constantly leans on communes to facilitate other policies
Special Institutions Helping the Disadvantaged into Social Housing

• **Le SIAL** – a dynamic prefectoral stream for the disadvantaged

• **Le CIOD** – special inter-agency unit for moving families of the behaviourally challenged across town and re-housing victims of lead poisoning

• **Observatories** in *arrondissements* working with commissions to decide priority applicants

• **A single reception** for social housing applicants (normally fragmented)
Conclusion

• This presentation starts from the assumption that, generally, the disadvantaged are poorly catered for in France
• Despite local dynamism a majority of communes can still exclude non-locals
• Lyon always investigates and innovates and French housing policy often follows
• But this means they can also be the first to make new mistakes