London 1980

Approximately:

• 1 million council homes
• 2,000 estates
• 200-1,000 homes each
• Some much bigger
• 60%+ flats
Large council landlords

• 65% of all homes in inner boroughs
• Delinquent management, eg. Hackney TH
• No reinvestment funds
• Right-to-buy extremely low
• Problems of low demand
• Early experiments in ‘estate-based’ management
• ‘Inner’ distinct from ‘outer’
Harvist Estate
Harvist
Wenlock Barn Estate
Tulse Hill Estate
2010

• Right-to-buy very successful
• Transfers to Housing Associations attract reinvestment
• Arms’ Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) take over
• ‘Group’ social landlords dominate, i.e. large housing associations
• Council stock halved
• Pressures of demand intense
Large estates

- Very low income populations
- Concentrated in most deprived areas
- Much higher worklessness than average
- Concentrations of lone parent families
- Serious visible social problems
- Much greater management challenges
- Move to high-tech ‘remote’ systems
White City Estate
White City Estate
Edward Woods Estate
Edward Woods Estate
St. Luke’s, Islington
The flag of mixed communities

Assumptions:

• Social segregation is bad
• Concentrated poverty multiplies problems
• Mixed incomes generate resources
∴ Standards rise, services improve
• People value more attractive places
• Goal of reshaping social housing
‘Regeneration’

• A double-edged sword
• 100s of estates targeted
• Removes large affordable supply
• Displaces large low-income populations
• Relies on large private investment
• Difficult to raise ‘social’ to level of private
• So, mixed communities falter
• But affordable housing supply shrinks
• Blighting estates
Woodberry Down
Is there another way?

- Manage and repair block by block to the value of £200,000 per home
- Preserve and upgrade all estates as affordable housing
- Burden of proof on landlord to prove otherwise
- Tackle worst social problems through social interventions, minimise demolition and displacement
- Encourage community links
- Offer hand-holding and supports
- Extend social supply into private renting
- Acquire and renovate unwanted empty property
Broadwater Farm Estate
Broadwater Farm Estate
Clapton Park Estate
Can poor, unpopular estates be made to work?

• No alternative – still around 2,000
• Some examples:
  • White City, Hammersmith
  • Poplar HARCA, Tower Hamlets
  • Hornsey Lane, Islington
  • Harvest Estate, Islington
  • Clapton Park, Hackney
  • Broadwater Farm, Haringey
  • Edward Woods, Hammersmith
Poplar HARCA
How?

- In spite of poverty –
- All model estates work with three conditions:
  - intensive estate-based management
  - ‘custodial’ caretaking
  - resident involvement
- Modest continual investment
- Careful on-site problem-solving
- Direct communication between landlords and tenants
- Extensive social provision and support
- On-going repair, cleaning, security
Locally-based communal services for large community built estates are a *sine qua non* of success

- Works for the rich!
- Works for the poor!
  - Street police
  - Park keepers
  - Wardens
  - Door security
  - Odd jobs man
  
  someone to turn to
Park keeper
Concierge