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Rubbish, Rubble and Rodents: Post-War Slum Clearance and the Resident Experience of Demolition in Salford

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Rubbish, Rubble and Rodents:
Post-War Slum Clearance and the Resident Experience of Demolition in Salford.

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Figure 1: Demolition in the shadow of new development, Shirley Baker

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MA by Research in History

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Acknowledgements

Statement regarding previous study in this area

In 2016 I conducted a historiographical review of the topic of slum clearance as part of a preparatory module named Research Skills at the University of Huddersfield. This module served as a precursor to the third year Dissertation and required assessed work based on research and preparation for the topic chosen for dissertation. I later chose to save this research topic for my MA studies, to allow a greater depth of research and time for thorough investigation and analysis. As such, the historiographical review in this research project is a development of my previous second year research assessment, which has been reworked and expanded to establish the existing literature found in this area of study.

Dedicated to Jack Lansley for inspiring my love of history, and Eileen Lansley for always believing in me.
Despite all my relocations, I have always had a home thanks to you.
I love you both.

Abstract

The use of slum clearance in the post-war period by local authorities radically changed the fabric of the urban landscape in Britain forever. These programmes of wholesale demolition of entire neighbourhoods removed 1.48 million houses from the built environment, and in doing so displaced over 3.5 million people from their homes and established community networks.

This analysis begins by establishing that the societal context of post-war Britain was essential to the enactment of slum clearance programmes, with central government's idealistic visions of modern life providing the ideological motivation to remove dated housing in poorer areas. It then goes on to demonstrate that a pervading discourse surrounding slum clearance areas sought to degrade the neighbourhoods and residents in question, both to justify and enable the progressive plans of demolition. This discourse produced a pervasive representation of the slum dweller who was in need of improvement, who was to be limited to being a recipient of charity and therefore denied agency in the discussions of their existent housing and planned new homes.

Furthermore, whilst the slum clearances of the twentieth century were undoubtedly hugely impactful, their study by historians has been left inadequate, with the topic being merely considered as a precursor to social housing development, or by discussing only data and figures of relocation from clearances, stripping away the human experience of demolition. This analysis therefore approaches slum clearance from a resident point of view, utilising contemporary sources which held resident opinion and testimony, as well as documentary film footage and street photography to provide an in-depth analysis of the conditions and issues endured by those living in earmarked slum clearance areas. The evidence shows that residents faced prolonged periods of uncertainty and lack of information about their relocation and during this time were subjected to structural deterioration, rubbish build up, increased vermin, danger from their unsafe environment and fears of crime and antisocial behaviour.

Finally, the replacement social housing that was built to rehome those displaced from demolition will be shown to have been a failure, creating further issues for residents rather than providing them with the ideal home promised to them by local authorities. Newly built housing complexes are scrutinised and show that the exclusion of residents from housing plans and design led to an abject failure of the modernist state housing experiment of post-war governments.

Introduction

In only three decades between 1955 to 1985, almost one and half million designated slum properties were demolished in Britain by local councils, this colossal reshaping of the built environment of urban Britain was unprecedented in its scale and displaced over 3.6 million residents.[1] Despite slum clearance having such a huge effect on twentieth century towns and cities, the history of this huge area of local authority enacted and government led activity has been greatly overlooked by scholarly works, and the lived experience of the conditions in those areas has barely begun to be exposed. The Second World War had seen mass destruction of urban Britain, decimating the already insufficient level of housing, estimates suggest that almost half a million houses were lost in aerial bombing, and Britain now faced an acute national housing crisis.[2] Further to this, six years of war meant that the existent housing stock was also suffering from a period of a severe deficiency in maintenance work and house building had been almost non-existent for the duration of the conflict, further depleting the quality of housing. When the Labour Party came to power at the end of the war, they sought to take responsibility for housing, and urgently began to address the problem with their plans for a bold, modernist vision of the future of housing.

The post-war housing policies that followed can be divided into four stages of development. As outlined by Balchin, the first stage commences with the end of the Second World War and lasts until 1955, and is characterised by an urgency to reduce massive housing shortages after the war, and this was largely done by the public sector.[3] The second phase, spanning from 1955-1971 sees housing policy shift focus from increasing housing stock to improving the quality of the housing stock, once again largely undertaken by the public sector, with improvements being sought in projects of building programmes, slum clearances and redevelopment.[4] The next phase, from 1971 to 1985 saw a huge reduction of the role and

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[1] Yelling, J. (2000). The Incidence of Slum Clearance in England and Wales, 1955-85. *Urban History. 27* (2), 234-254. p. 234

[2] Shapely, P. (2007). *The Politics of Housing; Power, Consumers and Urban Culture.* Manchester: Manchester University Press. p. 34

[3] Balchin, P. (1999). Housing. In B. Cullingworth (Ed.) *British Planning: 50 Years of Urban and Regional Policy* (pp. 14-30). London: Althone Press.

[4] *ibid.*

involvement of the state in housing and a promotion of free market enterprise, changing the overall approach to housing from supply side expenditure to demand side subsidies.[5] Finally, from 1985 onwards the fourth phase of housing policy saw a reappearance of the old issues of qualitative and quantitative housing shortages and an increase in the involvement of the state. The focus of this analysis falls into the second phase outlined, which saw the greatest numbers of demolitions and had the biggest impact on the movement of residents from their former homes into new developments. During this period, huge areas of towns and cities were flattened by bulldozers during the demolition of earmarked slum clearance areas.

Whilst slum clearance has undoubtedly had a significant effect on the built landscape of the nation, and the housing policy of the twentieth century, it is first essential to establish the context in which such a widespread and drastic social upheaval could be enacted. To do this, the first section of this work will highlight through government information and contemporary planning sources the inherent drive for modern living demonstrated by all post-war governments, and the vision of what that modern life should look like through the eyes of the authorities who would attempt to create it through policy and planning, and the wider public who were to experience it. This will establish the end state that local authorities and central government wished to achieve and displays slum clearance as a tool for achieving these ideological goals, rather than a bespoke and appropriate solution for Britain's specific post war housing problems. Once this ideologically motivated plan has been established, the second section will then turn to the discourse surrounding areas designated as slums and the residents who lived within those communities. The representation of clearance areas and their residents will be scrutinised in a similar way to previous examinations of the representations of 'housos' in Australia and the Victorian slum as laid out by Mayne. This analysis will establish that the creation of the 'slum other', both in the form of physical areas and communities, gained the support of wider society which in turn allowed the enactment of the ideological modernist plans of government and local authorities.

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[5] *ibid.*

Examination by historians has been lacking in its representation of the experience of the resident throughout the programme of clearance, and this will be redressed through a few key sources of contemporary accounts. The first of these sources are the documentary films *The Changing Face of Salford* parts 1 and 2 produced by Michael Goodger from 1967-1970, at the height of the national drive for slum clearances. His films and Goodger's additional footage of Salford display the conditions of a demolition area after it has been earmarked, providing a rare glimpse into a neighbourhood that has been condemned and is only partly or sparsely inhabited. Goodger details his research methodologies which contain fascinating glimpses into the rapidly disappearing world that he was investigating, and gives an insight into the prejudice and stereotypical view that outsiders had when approaching areas designated as slums, and their inhabitants. Secondly, as part of Goodger's research he conducted a variety of oral history interviews with residents of the Ordsall clearance area, whose earmarked homes made up the footage of the documentary films. The transcripts of these interviews provide a rare glimpse into the lived experience of life in the clearance area, detailing interactions with council workers, the process of Compulsory Purchase, and the ongoing trials of residing in an area doomed to meet the bulldozer. By analysing these eyewitness contemporary accounts it will be possible to create a more resident focussed perspective on the incidence of slum clearance and demonstrating the effects it had on those who experienced it. Thirdly, the street photography of Shirley Baker also provides eyewitness documentation of clearance areas in Salford during the height of demolition in the 1960s and 70s. Her work, intended to capture life without staging or poses highlights the life and characters of the areas undergoing demolition, and by so doing has created a visual account of the conditions that Salford residents were forced to reside in from once their area was earmarked, throughout demolition until their ultimate rehousing. Once again, this invaluable contemporary visual evidence of the situation within a clearance area will demonstrate the experience of the resident rather than simply presenting numerical and statistical data as seen before, and uncover this overlooked part of the history of Britain's housing.

What this will produce overall, is a renewed examination of the programmes of slum clearance carried out in the post-war period. These programmes will be seen to be the enactment of an ideological plan to shift British housing into the modern age, by breaking

with tradition, an age that had no room for the industrial residue of older housing. Government and press accounts of the life in the slum and the resulting degraded slum mentality of residents who lived within these areas created an environment in which no one would argue with the wholesale demolition of neighbourhoods and the displacement of their established communities. Within this context, the lived experience of the clearance area resident will be explored, detailing the appalling conditions under which communities were forced to live for protracted lengths of time, using their own words and visual contemporary evidence of their surroundings. Finally, this work will briefly touch upon the replacement housing into which residents were rehoused. This area has been greatly examined as discussed, but in this context it is juxtaposed with the existent housing stock, to juxtapose the success and appropriateness of the housing policies of central government and local authorities in the post-war period. This will highlight the site-specific issues replacement housing developments have created in the Salford area following the programmes of slum clearance, in the social housing which was to replace the terraces of the industrial age.

Historiography

An overview of the literature written on the topic of slum clearance reveals to the scholar that the area has been largely overlooked by historians as an area for analysis in its own right. A wealth of publications can be found that look into the politics, theory, ideology, practice and consequences of the history of council housing and this area has been thoroughly revised and faced analytical scrutiny throughout the late twentieth century up to the present day. But aside from this particular area of study of social housing, the specific niche of the history and impact of the slum clearances of the post war period is in great need of being expanded and utilised to assess the effects of large scale demolitions and displacements on communities, heritage and social networks. It becomes clear from existing studies that the residents affected by slum clearance programmes are not seen as an important factor in the history, but merely as numerical data in the wider story of social housing, and a shift to a socially focussed historical analysis is needed to redress this oversight in the representation of this group of people. Slum clearance must be explored as an event in its own right, not merely as a precursor to social housing, and residents as individuals in the event, not as just a steady stream of new tenants for the experimental housing projects being built by local authorities. What this historiographical review will reveal is a much needed area of analysis into the communities affected from a standpoint of social history, rather than an overall large-scale view of political and data-based analysis, to demonstrate the personalised experience of residents and hellish conditions for those living in clearance areas for extended periods of time.

John Burnett, a social historian, defined the many schools of thought that have shaped the interpretation of the historical analysis of slum clearance. He suggests that the area of study falls into the histories of economics, the vernacular, architecture, urban history and the examination of the intervention of the state.[6] Burnett's overview of the many lenses of analysis in this area go some way to demonstrating the complex position of slum clearance within a wider area of housing history study. During the period where slum clearance was still taking place, histories on housing in Britain were slow to incorporate the practice into their analysis. In 1972, during the height of the slum clearance campaigns, Chapman

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[6] Burnett, J. (1986). *A Social History of Housing, 1815-1985*. London: Methuen. p. *ix*

published *The History of Working Class Housing*, stating that up to that point "there [had] been nothing on housing beyond an article or two in academic journals and a few pages in more general works" and included no information regarding the slum clearances that had been taking place on a large scale for the previous two decades.[7]

During the same period, the public opinion of social housing had become exceedingly critical, especially after the collapse of the Ronan Point high-rise block in 1968. Stigma and social problems were becoming emblematic of the experiment into council housing and Yelling has highlighted that historical writing during this time falls into the "critical context of the 1970s", where analysis is heavily influenced by the perceived failure of the social housing project. Despite, as discussed, this was the period in which slum clearances were at their height, the critical era does not see an inclusion of criticisms of the process of demolition, focussing instead on overall housing policy and the housing built to replace earmarked slums. Berry's *Housing: The Great British Failure* systematically shows the flaws of central governments inept policies and the incompetence of local authorities, suggesting that the latter only reluctantly dealt with housing issues, and did not want to admit to having slum housing in their area.[8] Berry puts the process of classifying slum housing under scrutiny, claiming that local authorities declared the amount they wished to deal with, rather than a larger, more realistic account.[9] However, this seems to be in opposition to the context of the period Berry was writing in, where to meet government quotas local authorities increased demolition and arguably over estimated slum housing rather than downplaying the figures, as will be discussed in detail later. When addressing the residents of areas of designated slum housing, Berry highlights that local authorities saw these communities as subhuman, and unworthy of a provision of good quality housing, and ignored the possibility that better housing would improve the life chances and behaviours of these poorer households.[10] Despite his clear opposition to the way in which both government and local authorities acted upon housing issues, Berry neglects to focus that critical analysis towards the effects on displaced communities from demolished

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[7] Chapman, S.D. (Ed.) (1972). *The History of Working-Class Housing: A Symposium*. Newton Abbot: David & Charles Publishers Ltd. p. 9
[8] Berry, F. (1974). Housing: The Great British Failure. London: Charles Knight & Co. pp. 3-4
[9] *ibid.* p. 4
[10] *ibid.* pp. 106-7, 159

neighbourhoods, instead choosing to focus on housing policies and their political context to demonstrate party differences in approach. [11]

During the 1980s larger debates surrounding the origins of social housing had begun to emerge. Daunton, argued that the introduction of subsidised housing was simply an ad-hoc attempt to address the failure of the market, whereas Byrne, Damer, Melling and Swenarton suggested that it was working class action that had secured victories such as rent controls and state housing.[12] This demonstrates that within the literature the rehoused clearance residents were having their actions considered in a little more detail, however still only in relation to social housing and their personal experience was still not being addressed. During this period Right to Buy was brought in by central government, and the era of the original form of socialised housing came to a close. 1945-1980 was now being seen by historians as a fixed period, book-ended by the end of the Second World War and the introduction of Right to Buy. By defining this period of post-war social housing, historians could now reflect and examine the period as a closed era from the past, rather than an ongoing narrative. Examination now scrutinised largely the design failures of developments, and the stigmatisation, social problems and dangerous issues associated with them, with more of an interest on the effects of tenants than previously seen.

From this viewpoint John R. Short published his *Housing in Britain: The Post-War Experience* which "present[ed] a general exposition of the *broad* picture of post-war housing… [with] emphasis is on the whole of the experience rather than its constituent parts."[13] As with previous works, by creating an overview of the whole area of housing in Britain Short does not go into detail on the topic of slum clearance or the lasting consequences of the programmes, however he does succinctly state that he believed the relocation of slum residents by local authorities as "better housing in the wrong areas."[14] Short also touches upon displacement of residents, arguing that their only options were "unpopular" high-rise

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[11] *ibid.* p. 53

[12] Jones, B. (2010). Slum Clearance, Privatization and Residualization: The Practices and Politics of Council Housing in Mid-twentieth-century England. *Twentieth Century British History, 21* (4), 510-539. p.2

[13] Short, J.R. (1982). *Housing in Britain: The Post-War Experience*. London: Methuen. pp. xiii-xiv

[14] *ibid.* p. 163

flats which were a "design failure", or new housing developments far from their previous neighbourhoods.[15] He also suggests the clearances had an element of social cleansing, and argues that "housing was demolished, low-income residents were displaced and the few units of housing which were constructed were invariably very expensive ones for richer households."[16] However, these areas pertaining to slum clearance are brief and without in-depth analysis. That same year, *The Future of Council Housing,* examined in greater depth the theme of social cleansing touched on by Short. Pam Gallagher argues in her chapter "Ideology and Housing Management" that lower-quality housing was used by local authorities to rehome "rough" residents of slum-clearance areas in the 1930s.[17] Gallagher believes that government policy directly intended to break undesirable habits from clearance areas by breaking up these established neighbourhoods and retrain the people into desirable tenants, and therefore begins to analyse in more depth the destruction of working class networks through clearance programmes.[18]

Alice Coleman's 1985 *Utopia on Trial* furthered the examination of resident experience by analysing the design flaws that created negative social issues through vast amounts of quantitative data. She created a damning repot of the relationship between the design of social housing and issues such as litter, family breakdown, vandalism and children placed in care.[19] She is able to demonstrate that the physical environment that residents were rehomed into had direct negative impact on their quality of life and was an important factor in the development of stigma surrounding of social housing projects. Coleman however still focusses on social housing, and not slum clearance, and with the exception of a brief comment on the trauma of residents having to leave "their little terraced houses", clearance is once again overlooked in this discussion of later redevelopment.[20] However, her work is an excellent tool for establishing the outcomes of redevelopment on a grand scale, and her meticulous research into disadvantage points and their relation to social issues provide a

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[15] *ibid*. p. 209
[16] *ibid.* p. 209
[17] Gallagher, P. (1982). Ideology and Housing Management. In English, J. (Ed.) *The Future of Council Housing* (pp. 132-153). London: Croom Helm. p. 136
[18] *ibid*. p. 136
[19] Coleman, A. (1985). *Utopia on Trial: Vision and Reality in Planned Housing*. London: Hilary Shipman Ltd. p. 2
[20] *ibid.* p. 6

useful juxtaposition of what problems replaced the problems of the designated slum areas that came before. In a similar view to Coleman, *The Problem Housing Estate* by Frances Reynolds states "slum clearance did not eradicate concentrations of relative material depravation, delinquency and other social problems", but argues that developments of social housing have increased social issues than "rundown city areas" previously saw. [21] These works expanded on Berry's argument that better housing would improve quality of life, and through analysis of design failures can demonstrate the overall failure of the social housing project, and the reasons for that failure. While lacking a full examination and consideration on the impact on working class neighbourhoods and social networks that were relocated, these texts do attempt to highlight the resident experience of life after slum clearance and relocation. However, in this same period, Burnett held a starkly different opinion on the clearances of designated slum areas. *A Social History of Housing 1815-1985*, published in 1986 stated that relocated clearance area residents wanted to forget their previous life in the slums, and that the sociability characteristic of the working class communities in designated slum areas simply declines with rising affluence, implying this sociability was gladly left behind for more privileged circumstances. [22] Burnett suggests that the "mateyness" seen in former neighbourhoods was unwanted by residents in new housing developments who were "busy developing bourgeois tastes and attitudes." [23]

Described by Ben Jones as having "singlehandedly narrated the story of slum clearance from the 1930s to the 1980s", Jim Yelling's *The Incidence of Slum Clearance in England and Wales, 1955–85* was a revisionist examination of the entire process of slum clearance programmes." [24] His work has greatly influenced later research by Shapely, Rogaly and Taylor and examines the "main methods of clearance procedure, the nature of compensation and the relation of clearance to 'unfit' housing" and attempts to provide a "general account of the incidence of slum clearance" which he notes there have remarkably been none. [25] His article began to finally examine this period which he states had suffered "very little

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[21] Reynolds, F. (1986). *The Problem Housing Estate*. England: Gower. p. 1
Burnett, J. (1986). *A Social History of Housing*. p. 1
[22] *ibid.* pp. 284-5
[23] *ibid. pp. 284-5*
[24] Jones. Slum Clearance, Privatization and Residualization. p. 3
[25] Yelling. (2000). The Incidence of Slum Clearance in England and Wales. p. 234

historical interest" and by creating an account of the incidence of slum clearance overall within England and Wales, provides a wider scope and a more thorough analysis than previous discussions "of annual national totals and generalized remarks on location."[26] In so doing, his work tries to provide an overview of the links between local and regional patterns of slum clearance programmes to demonstrate "overall national results".[27] However, despite being the most thorough and methodical overview of the slum clearance programmes, it neglects any social impacts, only remarking they may have been some "bureaucratic and social insensitivities", and clearance had "mixed results even for those residents in favour," and highlights the importance to assess clearance's wider social ramifications.[28] He also does not, due to this being an overall account rather than a study into particular instances, discuss any lived conditions of residents during the process of clearing a designated slum area. Alison Ravetz's *Council Housing and Culture* was published soon after Yelling's detailed analysis of clearance. However, her work reverts to the earlier perspective seen in the 1980s where apprehension by local authorities for housing "rough" slum tenants is examined.[29] Arguing that residents were "prone to manipulation," Ravetz declares clearance residents naïve and passive throughout the process of relocation, naming them "ignorant, confused and traumatized by the prospect of losing their homes".[30] This text is a return to the inclusion of clearance only as a feeder source of residents to social housing developments, does not consider the communities or residents affected by the programmes.

In opposition to the approach of Ravetz, *The Politics of Housing, Power, Consumers and Urban Culture* by Peter Shapely examines thoroughly the role residents and their experiences of clearance. He suggests that instead of being treated as consumers, relocated clearance residents were seen as recipients of charity.[31] Shapely establishes that local authority house building was a top-down hierarchy which "never bothered itself with the

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[26] *ibid.* p. 234
[27] *ibid.* p. 235
[28] *ibid.* p. 254
[29] Ravetz, A. (2001). *Council Housing and Culture: The History of a Social Experiment*. London: Routledge. p. 132
[30] *ibid.* p. 133
[31] Shapely, P. (2007). *The Politics of Housing*. p. 1

encumbrance of meaningful consultation" with residents.[32] The perspective of residents relocated to new housing estates are thoroughly discussed by Shapely, who states that residents experienced "loneliness, dislocation and 'suburban sadness'."[33] In direct opposition to Burnett, Shapely goes on to prove that contemporary surveys showed that many residents wanted to return to their original neighbourhoods and lamented "poor social facilities [which] compound the general sense of dislocation."[34] Shapely highlights that the ignorance of tenant feelings by local authorities created a breach of trust, and states that the compulsory eviction and subsequent relocation of residents of clearance areas destroyed "intricate economic and social patterns of their lives" and broke up entire close-knit communities.[35] Shapely's research and analysis gives a voice and platform to the resident perspective and experience, and the social ramifications of clearance which have been largely ignored in the past.

In 2010, Ben Jones approached the analysis of slum clearance from a *long durée* perspective in his *Slum Clearance, Privatization and Residualization: The Practices and Politics of Council Housing in Mid-Twentieth-Century England,* which looks at the period from 1925-1975. In a similar critical approach to Shapely, Jones scrutinises through a new periodical lens the cultural representation of relocated clearance residents on new social housing developments, building on earlier work by Mayne and Doyle.[36] Jones states that disinvestment and selective allocation encouraged stigma and "socio-spatial polarisation" between residents moved from clearance areas and residents who came from elsewhere, establishing a rump of the lowest quality housing stock and the poorest residents. Jones skilfully investigates the prejudices against clearance residents who had been displaced by and situated it within the context of declining social housing complexes, giving a deeper insight into the experience of residents removed from designated slum areas.

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[32] *ibid.* p. 19
[33] *ibid.* p. 4
[34] *ibid.* p. 69
[35] *ibid.* p. 128
[36] Jones. (2010). Slum Clearance, Privatization and Residualization. p. 4

Moving towards the present day, the last decade has seen a move towards exploring the social ramifications of slum clearance. At the University of York in 2012 a "study and information sharing day" named "Breaking up communities? The social impact of housing demolition in the late twentieth century" was hosted to analyse the ongoing impact of clearances.[37] During this event, academics alongside residents' associations and activist groups discussed the lasting legacy of clearance programmes, the effects of clearances on communities and tenants, and making clear that these effects are ongoing, and still impacting social problems of the day. In the same year, the issues of slum clearance were given national publicity as the television series *The Secret History of Our Streets*, told the story of clearance around Deptford High Street using oral histories and memories of current and former residents. The resident experience and testimony was used to demonstrate the destruction of their community, finally giving a voice to those who were actually affected by the clearance programmes. Director Joseph Bullman also demonstrated that under the guise of slum eradication, houses which were found to be "solid, well maintained homes… [with] no need for demolition" still fell prey to the bulldozer.[38] This highlights issues within the process of declaring housing unfit, and how accurate local authority reportage was. Examination of the topic has been moving towards a resident-focused assessment of lasting impact, rather than just a discussion of policy and numerical data.

A review of the literature written on slum clearance demonstrates the way in which the topic has been mostly explored due to its position within the overall study of housing policy and social housing development. Because of this, slum clearance appears within the indexes of a wide variety of texts, but rarely due to a thorough examination of the clearances themselves, but as a side note to social housing plans and the provider of fresh tenants for these new developments. It is clear that a redressing must take place in this area of study, and the impact of this huge displacement of people and drastic alteration of British towns and cities must be examined as an event in its own right. By exploring the unaddressed area of resident views, and the period in which they lived during a slum clearance programme, it

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[37] Tunstall, B. (2012). [Conference Notes] Record of a Study and Information Sharing Day November 2nd, 2012, York. In *Breaking Up Communities? The Social Impact of Housing Demolition in the Late Twentieth Century*.
[38] Bullman, J. (2012). *The Secret History of Our Streets*. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/tv/2012/06/secret-history-of-our-streets.shtml.

will be possible to fill in the much needed personal lived experience of this mammoth compulsory alteration of British towns and cities. It is clear to see from the historiography of slum clearance that there is a serious imbalance of study, almost completely focussing on large picture statistical information and numerical discussions of clearance programmes. Local studies, although honing in on a more in-depth analysis of the effects of clearance on a particular area, still strip away the majority of the human experience of clearance, and there is a tendency to examine the later movement of residents, and rehousing, rather than the actual clearance itself. This leaves the personal lived experience of those residents who went through the clearance programmes as a largely untapped resource for exploring the narrative and effect of post war clearance, with no in depth study into the actual day to day experience of the programmes. Utilising contemporary primary materials from Salford during its post-war clearances, this work intends to redress this imbalance of study and highlight the processes and experience of clearance and the day to day life as a resident in an area earmarked for demolition.

A New Jerusalem; Visions of Modernity in Post-War Britain

"I want to see the guts torn out of our older cities."

- Edward Heath, 1964 [39]

The cessation of the Second World War in 1945 signalled the beginning of a new era in British history, not simply an era defined later by historians, but one keenly felt by the British people at the time. This date saw a pivotal moment of change in British society, and with the Labour victory and Clement Attlee's post-war government, came a wave of hopeful anticipation of the "great advance in the human race" which Labour promised to deliver to a war-weary public.[40] The 1945 election manifesto produced by the Labour Party promised a repayment to those who had won the war, "the gallant men and women in the Fighting Services, in the Merchant Navy, Home Guard and Civil Defence, in the factories and in the bombed areas" and stated that Labour "regards their welfare as a sacred trust."[41] This meant plans to improve welfare and services that intended to create "a land fit for those who won the war to come back to."[42] Labour also intended to ease the burden of taxation on everyone in society except those with the very largest incomes, who they believed owed the continuance of that income to those who secured victory.[43] The new society Labour wished to build was intended to break ties with the world existent before the war and turn "its back on the cruel, unplanned, capitalist miseries of the past."[44] Optimism was widespread throughout Britain, and there was a belief that "victory could be translated into broader social and economic achievements" to create a 'new Jerusalem'.[45] This was to be done with a socialist, modern administration whose involvement within major industries

[39] Lund, B. (2016). *Housing Politics in the United Kingdom; Power, Planning and Protest*. Bristol: Policy Press. p. 74

[40] Kynaston, D. (2007, May 18). Dual Britannia. *Financial Times.*

[41] Politics Resources. (2012). *British Labour Party Election Manifesto 1945*.

[42] British Pathé. (April 13th 2014). *Chancellor's Budget Speech (1945)* [Video file].

[43] *ibid.*

[44] Kynaston. (2018). Dual Britannia.

[45] Gourvish, T. & O'Day, A. (1991). Decline or Resurgence? Post-War Britain. In T. Gourvish & A. O'Day (Eds.) *Britain Since 1945* (pp. 1-10). Hampshire: Macmillan. p. 1

would prevent the rampant exploitation which had come before. Attlee's government was steering Britain onto an egalitarian and socialist trajectory that aimed to end the terrible conditions of poverty and want experienced before the war forever, and create a welfare state that would establish a standard of living that previous generations could have only dreamt of. As George Orwell observed of the electorate at the time "they look to a Labour government to make them more secure and, after a few years, more comfortable."[46]

Addison argues that it was a direct consequence of the events of the war which created the societal context which in 1945 saw people strive for a more equal, and less hierarchical post-war world. Richard Titmuss also wrote extensively on the power of unity as a result of the social changes that occurred during the war, such as an increase in women workers, social levelling and a reduction in the gap between wages at the top and bottom of the social scale.[47] Professor Arthur Ling, an architect and planner stated that "people were much more together. They met in air-raid shelters, in the tubes at night…Everybody really lost their inhibitions about talking to their next-door neighbours… this was the spirit that I think a lot of people hoped would continue after the war."[48] Ling maintains that result of this attitude was not a total collapse of the social structure, or indeed social revolution, but a radicalisation of the British people, which meant "the relationship between the classes began to shift in favour of manual workers."[49]

While the idea of a nation united by their survival of wartime sufferings is appealing, there is great debate surrounding the extent of political and social unity fallowing the ceasefire in 1945. Since the 1960s it has been widely agreed that the war did not produce an entirely changed society, ripe and ready for an egalitarian state, but by the end of the war the products of long-standing developments begin to emerge, such as plans for universal healthcare and the growing strength of the Labour Party.[50] Laybourn, when writing on this debate, highlights that often within culture and media in this period "there was often a marked disparity between the official line and the grass-roots responses" but Attlee's

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[46] Kynaston. (2018). Dual Britannia.
[47] Laybourn, K. (1999). *Modern Britain Since 1906*. London: I. B. Tauris & Co. p. 190
[48] Addison, P. (1985). *Now the War is Over*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation. p. 3
[49] *ibid.* p. 2
[50] Laybourn. (1999). *Modern Britain Since 1906*. p. 190

elected government at least, championed fully the vision of a modern, unified and more equal society.[51] The election of the Labour government in 1945 showed the public will for a seismic change to the structure of society, based on the combination of Keynesian economics, Fabian socialism and social liberalism to create the social reformist consensus which would form the basis of social policy until the late 1970s.[52] The administration began making reality its manifesto pledges and provide for the British people a National Health Service and welfare state that would benefit everyone in the nation. Kynaston argues that "six decades on, 1945 remains for many the great, good date of the 20th century… to forever leave behind the sufferings that had come before.[53] There was a spirit of 'never again' and this was especially true in the case of housing, as Peter Hennessy states "never again would the people of Britain be housed in slums".[54] No longer were the conditions which the majority of society faced in the days before the war acceptable, and to repeat the actions of inter-war governments, by ignoring the problems facing those at the bottom of society would have caused significant unrest within Britain like that seen in the 1920s.

The societal changes of the 1945 administration were to be achieved by one cohesive and overarching system which would allow for the reconstruction, improvement and modernisation of the nation as a whole. Each of the constituent parts of Labour's policies formed one organised and interrelated band of provisions and services which all worked together to deliver their vision of post-war Britain. Nye Bevan, Minister for Health stated in 1946 that "before houses can start going up in any kind of numbers, every industry has to be manned and organised" arguing that the "modern house" calls into action "every single conceivable industry" and these must all be working efficiently and cohesively to achieve housing aims and needs.[55] This makes Labour's programme of nationalisation just as important within the realm of housing as it was to the nationalised industries, and demonstrates the ideal functionality of the government's bold post-war plans. Fabian socialism, which saw a rise to dominance during the Second World War, created a context in which this nationalised and socialist drive for improvement was acceptable - and expected -

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[51] *ibid.* p. 192
[52] Lund, B. (1996). *Housing Problems and Housing Policy*. Essex: Addison Wesley Longman Ltd. p. 3
[53] Kynaston. (2018). Dual Britannia.
[54] Hennessy, P. (2006). *Never Again: Britain 1945-51*. London: Penguin. p. 2
[55] British Pathé. (April 13th 2014). *Nye Bevan Speech (1946)* [Video file].

and was to have a "hegemony [that] continued until the early 1970s."[56] This Fabian tradition supported the democratisation of politics, but importantly in this area, it did not promote the open participation of all in their democratic political system, favouring instead "that the role of the electorate was to choose between rival elites who would then be given the authority to run the country in such a way as to maximise the common good."[57] This begins to address a theme of inclusion and exclusivity that will be expanded throughout the following chapters. Ultimately, the notion that recipients of beneficial policies of the state in the post-war era should have any input into the creation or implementation of those policies was "alien to the Fabian approach" and so, resident inclusion was never on the "academic or political agenda."[58]

The Great Housing Problem

Tom Hopkinson's 'Plan for Britain' in the new year edition of *Picture Post* in 1941 outlines that housing was to heavily feature in the restructuring of society after the war. "A bold building plan – to start immediately war ended - to root out the slums" is what Hopkinson called for with slum clearance, and the redevelopment of demolition zones it created, was to create the stage on which modernist, utopian ideas of how future Britons should be housed could be played out.[59] The Labour Chancellor Hugh Dalton set out housing as the priority of the 1945 budget and pledged to do "the best job we can" of providing housing over the course of the following five years.[60] But the situation the Atlee administration faced was nothing short of a national housing crisis, with an estimated loss of 458,000 houses, and 250,000 seriously damaged as a result of bomb damage during the war, and the stagnation of building and maintenance of housing during the six years of war.[61] It was also

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[56] Lund. (1996). *Housing Problems and Housing Policy*. p. 6
[57] *ibid*. p. 7
[58] *ibid*. p. 7
[59] Addison. (1985). *Now the War is Over*. p. 9
[60] British Pathé. (April 13th 2014). *Chancellor's Budget Speech (1945)* [Video file].
[61] Lund. (1996). *Housing Problems and Housing Policy*. p. 39
Balchin. (1999). Housing in *British Planning*. p. 14

estimated in 1945 that there was a need for an additional 1.25 million dwellings, a figure which continued to rise through the population growth of the mid-twentieth century.[62]

The issue of housing was not free of party politics either, Nye Bevan in 1946 stated that not only did the Labour government have to "replace the consequences of the destruction of war… [and] to repair the houses that were damaged" but also had to "try and make up for the arrears of housing left by fifty years of Tory misrule in Britain."[63] Housing became a political point scoring arena like never before, and Labour sought to shine through its successes from bold housing plans, and resources were directed to ensure the deliverance of the promised homes. Local authorities were given priority for scarce building materials and housebuilding on their part was stimulated by subsidies and low interest government loans.[64] During the Atlee administration almost a million homes were built in Britain, with 80% of these being local authority dwellings.[65] Balchin tells us that "overall this was a great achievement in view of post-war material shortages, the need to reconstruct industry, curb inflation and correct the balance of payments deficits."[66]

Utopian Ideals in Housing Design and Planning

To achieve the bright new future promised to the people, central government needed to deliver a programme of housing development that embodied ideals of the modernism, healthy living, equality and progression that was expected after the war. Housing in this initial post-war period was intended to be of high quality and embody these ideals. In the 1930s the minimum fixed size of a three-bedroomed house was 750 square feet, but to improve housing quality in 1944 this was increased to 950 square feet by the Dudley Report with local authorities encouraged to exceed this where possible.[67] With these intentions of improving the quality of housing and quality of life local authorities enjoyed in the post-war

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[62] *ibid.* p. 15

[63] British Pathé. (April 13th 2014). *Nye Bevan Speech (1946)* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=03llA4xoAVw

[64] Balchin. (1999). Housing in *British Planning*. p. 15

[65] *ibid.* p. 16

[66] *ibid.* p. 16

[67] Balchin. (1999). Housing in *British Planning*. p. 16

period a huge degree of trust from residents of poorer quality housing to have their interests as a priority. These residents were hopeful for the change that would see their housing come under the care of the corporations rather than their private landlords who had bullied and intimidated them. Investigators in Ancoats found their discussions with residents continually cut short, interrupted and monitored by landladies who would threaten them with eviction for complaining, the result of which was a mass of residents too intimidated and frightened to demand repairs, speak out about high rents and poor conditions or to have any agency regarding their own accommodation.[68] Not only were councils in a position of trust, but residents also believed in their motivation to do good for wider society without motivations of profit, as well as their suitability as "the only institution with the resources and political will to carry out large-scale changes."[69] This meant that from the 1930s until the late 1960s, when this belief and trust began to disintegrate, local authorities were in a climate and position to be able to enact their plans *en masse* with the support of the wider public, reformers and even residents on account of their implicit trust in the authorities' desire to improve their lives.

The coming together of the dream for a utopian future, the socialist practice of a welfare state and the focus on town planning and the structured design of new, more efficient and healthy towns and cities created a unique period in the history of British housing and architecture. This set of circumstances arose at the time of the new revolutionary architectural trend of Modernism, and it was modernist designs and planning became the answer to many problems facing Britain after the Second World War. This school of thought was dominated by Le Corbusier, and his brutalist ideology was "enthusiastically received as an influence in England in the 1950s."[70] This style of architecture emerged as the dominant trend in design at just the right point in time to coincide with the ideals of the new utopian society. Modernism itself was not a wholly new trend within architectural circles, its roots stemming back to the rapid social, societal and technological changes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[71] The expansion of western cities and the rapid urbanisation of

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[68] Shapely. (2007). *The Politics of Housing*. p. 115
[69] *ibid.* p. 115
[70] Frampton, K. (2007). *The Evolution of 20th Century Architecture*. Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press. p. 87
[71] Gallagher, D. (2001). *Modernist Architecture*.

the machine age called for "cheaper, more efficient means of satisfying a larger population and a growing number of industrial clients."[72] But the Modernist movement attempted to go much further than simply supplying cheap, new buildings for the growing demand of industrial cities, it "claimed to be objective, the 'making it new' which could deliver the world from the deleterious effects of centuries of stifling tradition."[73] After witnessing the carnage and horror of the First World War, Modernist architectural thinkers chose to utilise their designs to turn their backs on the historic and created a wholly new, rebellious architectural identity which resisted the society and principles which they saw as the cause of the suffering of 1914-1918.[74] Modernist ideals and designs intentionally rejected and confronted what had come before, stripping away ostentatious decoration and adornment in favour of austere functionality, to embody efficiency and honesty within the buildings they created for the post-war world. As Higgot tells us "in Britain in the 1960s, it was generally believed that the nineteenth century had produced bad art and bad architecture… It was believed that, in terms of absolute quality, these buildings were bad."[75] Or put plainly, the concepts behind modernist designs and developments were in direct conflict with the preservation or rehabilitation of Victorian industrial housing found in Britain, and saw the path to the betterment and health of residents through the eradication of the traditions of construction that had come before.

That is what the disciples of the Modernist movement hoped to achieve. It is no exaggeration to allude to the fervent followers of this school of thought in biblical terms, as American architect Philip Johnson declared himself that "we really believed, in a quasi-religious sense, in the perfectibility of human nature, in the role of architecture as a weapon of social reform… the coming Utopia when everyone would live in cheap prefabricated flat-roofed multiple dwellings – heaven on earth."[76] Benton too argues that the modernist movement is better described as a religion or sect, with the heralded main thinkers such as

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[72] *ibid.*
[73] Higgot, A. (2007). *Mediating Modernism*. Oxon: Routledge. p. 8
[74] Thurley, S. (Presenter) & Viner, T. (Director). (2006). Modernism [Television series episode]. In Davies, K (Executive Producer), *Buildings that Shaped Britain*. London, England: BBC.
[75] Higgot, A. (2007). *Mediating Modernism*. Oxon: Routledge. p. 15
[76] Coleman. (1985). *Utopia on Trial*. p. 3

Pugin and Le Corbusier dubbed "prophets" of modernist design.[77] There pervaded unspoken assumptions in architecture of the time, and it was thought that "architecture was obliged to be a social practice, to make the world a better place"[78] Practitioners of Modernism and Brutalism in Britain, such as heralded "visionaries" Alice and Peter Smithson, were attempting to imbibe their work with "ethical possibilities", and by changing the way cities and buildings were created, they could ultimately change the nature of society.[79]

New technologies in construction were widely adopted to achieve the aims of the modernist utopian vision, and achieve the numbers of houses needed to address housing shortages. First of all, contractors of the modernist developments could sell an all-in-one package deal to local authorities, where he would fulfil the role of designer, provider of materials and supervisor of the project, which appealed to the government's ethos of "get it built".[80] Construction was then focussed on pre-cast concrete pieces which were fitted together on site, the structures needed no central frame and could be bolted together by an unskilled labour force, encouraged to work quickly by their piece-rate pay.[81] The pre-fab system utilised in many complexes using steel and concrete enabled brutalists to build "fast and cheap" to meet the housing demands of local authorities, and in the space of one decade were able to provide 750,000 flats that housed over 2.5 million people.[82] The developments created out of these new construction incorporated design features that intended to translate residents' lives in the terraced streets to modern style living. One common feature of blocks of flats was deck access to accommodation to replicate the streets that residents had been moved from. The Park Hill flats in Sheffield featured ten-foot-wide "street decks, named after the demolished streets they replaced," which allowed for chatting on the doorstep, space for children to play and access for milk and bread deliveries to residents'

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[77] Benton, T. (2006). *The Modernist Home*. London: V&A Publications. p. 7
[78] Higgot. (2007). *Mediating Modernism*. p. 5
[79] Henley, S. (2017). *Redefining Brutalism*. Bristol: Riba Publishing. p. 21
[80] Curtis, A. (Director). (1984). *The Great British Housing Disaster*. [Documentary] United Kingdom: BBC.
[81] *ibid.*
[82] Thurley, S. (Presenter) & Viner, T. (Director). (2006). Modernism [Television series episode]. In Davies, K (Executive Producer), *Buildings that Shaped Britain*. London, England: BBC.
Curtis, A. (Director). (1984). *The Great British Housing Disaster*. [Documentary] United Kingdom: BBC.

front doors.[83] These "streets in the sky" attempted to address an "ethical demand of providing settings for age-old practices of sociality" that were being destroyed as a result of the slum clearances.[84]

Modern living also demanded the inclusion of provision for the growing number of cars on the roads in Britain, and as such new complexes were designed to provide space for pedestrians and vehicles. New development areas were specifically geared towards providing better roads, easier and quicker access and a plentiful amount of car parking provision. In the City of Salford's plan for the Ellor Street redevelopment, there was an inclusion of the provision of 2,000 car parking spaces and all buildings within the plan included "extensive garaging at the lower level".[85] This also included a lot of planning to ensure "safe living in the motor age", and in line with the overall trends of the modernist design of developments such as this, the plans had a complex system of deck access, and raised "planks".[86] This provided "the citizens of the new Salford" the ability to either "drive off efficiently to work or else walk" without having to cross any roads at all.[87] This intended to create a safe environment in which pedestrians need never fear harm from traffic near their homes, and create an efficient and logical plan for traffic control within rapidly expanding towns and cities.

Modernism's favour towards the use of new technologies and materials, and championing of the industrialisation of construction processes, meant that modernist designs and techniques were seen as the ideal methods through which to tackle the "daunting task of housing urban workers", especially in "mass housing programmes".[88] However, what became evident is that "in the immediate post-War era, the functional requirement of architecture to service reconstruction had led to a swift corruption of the ideals of Modernism."[89] That is, the inherent need for housing to be cheap and quick degraded the

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[83] Highmore, B. (2017). *The Art of Brutalism*. London: Yale University Press. p. 256
[84] *ibid.* p. 257
[85] City of Salford. (1963). *Ellor Street Redevelopment Area*. Edinburgh. Bella Vista. p. 7
[86] *ibid.* pp. 7, 18
[87] *ibid*. p. 7
[88] Benton. (2006). *The Modernist Home*. p. 25
[89] Alison, J., Brayer, M., Migayrou, F., & Spiller, N. (Eds.) (2007). *Future City: Experiment and Utopia in Architecture*. United Kingdom: Thames & Hudson. p. 37

intents and aspirations of modernist designs. Modern designs sought to be symbolic and representative of a new age, instilling the ideals of what society in the new age should look like, with buildings having the effect on those who inhabit or view them that they are "feel[ing] the spirit of modern times."[90] But instead, modernist buildings became synonymous with the disappointments of post-war housing plans and the failure to address resident needs in the development of accommodation to rehouse those from the clearances. The rebellious and intentionally contentious nature of modernist designs evoked strong emotional opposition and even today is a contentious area, with English Heritage stating that the grade listing of modern buildings remains controversial.[91] Rather than Le Corbusier's vision to "establish an aesthetic which is rational, and therefore human", modern brutalist designs were a factor in the dehumanising effect of post-war housing policies, which left residents mere pawns in the experiment of government to create a better future.[92]

The Drive to Clear the Slums

In order to deliver their vision of modern living, planners needed space to build, and they needed vast quantities of it. Slum clearance was the tool through which local authorities could create the space needed for the ideology of modernity. By the time of the mid-1950s the dire housing shortage of the initial post-war period had been "sufficiently reduced" to a level where demolition of designated slum areas could once again be turned to as a significant programme for the improvement of the housing stock.[93] Now the focus of central government and local authorities turned to the urban concentrations of industrial workers' housing which still provided accommodation for significant numbers of the working class. These areas could be removed from the towns and cities of Britain and replaced by new complexes that would enable the betterment of the nation. Plans to reinvigorate demolition programmes that had been seen previously in the 1930s were set in motion, but this time

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[90] Darling, E. (2011). Finella, Mansfield Forbes, Raymond McGrath, and Modernist Architecture in Britain. *Journal of British Studies, 50* (1), 125-155. p. 126
[91] English Heritage. (2018). *Modern: Architecture*.
[92] Higgot. (2007). *Mediating Modernism*. p. 8
[93] Balchin. (1999). Housing in *British Planning*. p. 17

slum clearances were to be enacted on a much larger scale. Unlike the previous attempts by the government to tackle the poorer sections of the housing stock, post-war efforts were aided by a "daring piece of legislation" in the form of the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act.[94] This act allowed the fragmented and piecemeal approach of the 1930s to be expanded onto an industrial scale, bringing about sweeping demolition areas and comprehensive redevelopment of former neighbourhood sites. The terraced housing of industrial cities was now representative of the "dirty old past" and the design of this older style of housing was lambasted by critics for being cramped, unsanitary and not conducive to health, wellbeing and preventative of exercise.[95] Not only would widespread demolition allow for space to apply the new approach to housing, but it would also serve the dual purpose of removing from sight the reminders of pre-war poverty and overcrowding. By doing this, the post-war nation could define itself against the past it no longer identified with, or would tolerate in its towns and cities.

However, clearance of housing was motivated by more than merely the need for space for construction. Yelling tells us that "slum clearance was never just a common-sense approach to dealing with inherited housing problems, but a profoundly political act", and local authorities had a great deal of control in deciding which houses were deemed unfit.[96] He also suggests that "the incidence of 'unfit' housing [was not] straight-forwardly reflected in the incidence of clearance", showing that motivations to enact demolition was not solely dependent on the quality of the housing stock.[97] The populated community, with its familial connectivity and established community was itself part of the intended target of the clearance programmes. Fears over the relentless spread of the city, and the desire to contain it, led to policy focussed on creating new overspill areas to remove inner-city dwellers to new towns around the country. The consequence of this is a precedent in which the removal - in significant numbers - of residents of areas like Salford and enforcing their migration to areas outside of their established residencies was a desirable outcome. Balchin tells us that overspill policies were "crucial to the success of slum clearance programmes"

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[94] Rydin, Y. (1999). Public Participation in Planning. In B. Cullingworth (Ed.) *British Planning: 50 Years of Urban and Regional Policy* (pp. 184-197). London: Althone Press. p. 184

[95] Thurley & Viner. (2006). Modernism [Television series episode]. In *Buildings that Shaped Britain*.

[96] Yelling. (2000). The Incidence of Slum Clearance in England and Wales. pp. 244, 254

[97] *ibid.* pp. 244, 254

and Conservative and Labour governments "adhered to the 'filtration' strategy which involved the out-migration of households and employment and the subsequent clearance and redevelopment of vacated sites."[98] This makes the displacement of clearance area residents not merely a side effect of the perceived need to demolish inadequate housing, but a direct reason to clear an area in the first place. But sadly, the use of overspill estates and the shipment of inner city dwellers to new estates on the peripheries caused many issues for residents, including financial, logistical and emotional. What was succinctly summed up by once housewife from a condemned Manchester neighbourhood who had been rehoused into a peripheral estate "new houses aren't everything."[99] In fact, housewives from the cleared area of Miles Platting in Manchester stated that they actually returned to "sub-standard" homes as they were preferable to the new houses they had been moved to in the overspill estates of Heywood and Langley.[100]

The Salford Slum Clearance Programme

Post war clearance in Salford began after the 1949 Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report remarked that "having assessed the probable output of new dwellings to be erected for Salford people up to the end of 1952… the Council during this year decided to recommence slum clearance operations."[101] This follows the wider trends of the country that once central government and local authorities deemed the number of houses to be sufficiently growing in the early 1950s, attention was then turned to the demolition of housing deemed most unfit. A year later, the same report declared that Salford Council "must be ruthless" in dealing with unfit housing in the area, which the report claimed were "a liability from everybody's point of view" by which they were "irked by the futility of our daily endeavours to patch up".[102] Clearance could begin once again in 1950 and began with the council implementing a clearance scheme which encompassed 486 buildings over a 14.5

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[98] Balchin. (1999). Housing in *British Planning*. p. 20
[99] Shapely. (2007). *The Politics of Housing* p. 150
[100] *ibid.* p. 150
[101] Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1949. p. 16
[102] Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1950 p. 7

acre site, where the bulk of the property dated from "the beginning of the 19th century."[103] This was done under Part III of the 1936 Housing Act, using the same legislative framework of clearances in the 1930s, and on the cleared ground Salford Council planned to build a "neighbourhood unit comprising modern flats, shopping centre, etc."[104] This would then allow subsequent clearance programmes to progress as the "only option" in a "chequerboard system of clearance and redevelopment" that would "proceed with accelerating speed" as the hindrances of the aftermath of the Second World War eased.[105]

The first clearance area was the Trinity Clearance Area, which in included the above mentioned 486 houses, and was area no. 1 for Salford City Council, with the Compulsory Purchase Order becoming operative on 24th August 1951.[106] The first resident of the Trinity area was moved in the first week of November 1951, but the signs of delays and prolonged time spent by residents in designated slum clearance areas were already evident in clearance area no. 1. The Annual Report of 1951 already expresses disappointment at the failure to move residents with more rapidity, and puts the delays down to the inability of the Housing Committee to be "able to provide alternative accommodation as rapidly and to as great an extent as had been expected" and hoped the rehousing would be completed within the next eighteen months.[107] By the end of 1951, of the four divided sections of the clearance area, two sections had been served notices, and the first had been completely rehoused into free accommodation in council housing at Ladywell and Little Hulton - the latter being over ten miles away - and the second had begun with an expectation to be completed by March the following year.[108]

By 1963, the County Borough of Salford had a population of 155,000 and there were just over 50,000 occupied dwellings, a marked majority of which were the legacy of a city that rapidly industrialised during a vast expansion in growth of the industries in the area. [109] Of

[103] *ibid*. p. 22
[104] *ibid*. p. 22
[105] *ibid*. p. 22
[106] Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1951. p. 17
[107] *ibid*. p. 7
[108] *ibid*. p. 17
[109] City of Salford. (1963). *Ellor Street Redevelopment Area*. p. 24

the 50,000 dwellings present in 1963, 55% were a hundred years old, and an overwhelming 90% were over fifty years old, the bulk being constructed before 1875.[110] The housing was "almost entirely… rows of two-storey brick by-law housing of the 1850s interspersed with industry."[111] The plan for Salford, approved in 1957, had a fifteen-year scope to enact its strategies to remove the aging housing and replace it with modern housing complexes to rehome those displaced from clearance areas. The most expansive and noteworthy clearance and development in the Salford area was that of the Ellor Street redevelopment, which stretched from the Manchester docks up to the River Irwell at a total of 89 acres.[112] Sir Robert H. Matthew was invited by Salford City Council to consult in the preparation of the Broad Street Ellor Street Comprehensive Development Area, which was to provide around 2,500 dwellings in a 48 acre residential area.[113] The Salford Corporation relished the "elbow room" they had been provided by central government's plans for modernity to "clear large areas of land" as part of the Ellor Street programme, and display their enthusiasm for demolition throughout the redevelopment plans.[114] The plans also reveal the other main aim of the Corporation, having built in plans reduce the population size significantly, with an aim to move twenty thousand residents out of the area in the eight years that followed, over 10% of the existent population.[115] The Ellor Street plans demonstrate the points raised previously, that the two motivations of creating a blank canvas to create a new modern landscape, and the reduction and removal of undesired resident groups dominate the planning of slum clearances.

The area of clearance that Goodger's films and interviews take place is Ordsall, a part of Salford close to the docks. It is included in the 'North George Street" clearance area and was confirmed for demolition in November 1967 and was intended to be completed within three years.[116] The 1967 Salford Annual Report of the Medical Officer for Health shows that the year had seen a total demolition of 689 houses, home to 2,209 residents, which was a

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[110] *ibid*. p. 24
[111] *ibid*. p. 5
[112] *ibid.* p.1
[113] *ibid*. pp. 3-4
[114] *ibid*. p. 24
[115] *ibid*. p. 24
[116] Goodger, M. [Producer]. (1969). *The Changing Face of Salford Part 1: Life in the Slums*. [Documentary]

"disappointing" result compared to their target to demolish 1000 houses per year.[117] The total number of houses earmarked for demolition in that same report, including Ordsall would see the clearance of 2,133 homes, a significant increase in the numbers at the time.[118] This demolition area falls within the peak period of slum clearances nationwide and comes to an end in the early 1970s when the national trend turned away from wholesale demolition as the solution to older housing stock. Testimony from the oral testimonies show that many of the residents from this area were offered accommodation in the flats of the newly built Ellor Street development, or the more sought-after houses outside of the area at Little Hulton.[119] However issues with rehousing, which will be more thoroughly analysed later, meant that rehousing was slow, and some families resorted to finding their own alternative accommodation rather than wait the lengthy periods for the local authority to rehome them.[120] Overall, these plans were designed to completely reshape the built landscape, and as the Chairman of the Planning and Development Committee Albert Jones hoped "future generations of my fellow citizens will find in our new City a fuller and happier life, but a life still animated by the same civic pride and mutual helpfulness which has supported us in the past."[121]

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[117] Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1967. p. 20
[118] *ibid.* p. 21
[119] Oral history interview transcripts of Michael Goodger (1971), Archive Reference CFC/3, The University of Salford Archive.
[120] Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1967. p. 21
[121] City of Salford. (1963). *Ellor Street Redevelopment Area*. p.1

The Discourse of 'The Slum'

Now that the ideological foundation for the removal of old housing stock has been demonstrated in its societal context, attention can now be turned to the way in which designated slum communities were discussed and represented in order to rationalise, and make necessary, their eradication from towns and cities across the nation. As Lund tells us "housing problems are socially constructed", arguing that "the identification of housing conditions as social problems is the outcome of social processes involving ideologies, 'discourses'… the media and the use of political and economic power."[122] To demonstrate this point, Lund quotes George Orwell in a 1937, in which he asked a miner when the housing shortage in his area became a problem, the miner responds, "when we were told about it".[123] Lund goes on to suggest that "housing problems are not objective phenomena" and understanding "the values involved in the designation of certain conditions as problems, and the ideology underlying proposed solutions" was essential.[124] Within this section it will be demonstrated that the ideological construction of the slum, its residents and the mentality thereof, and their representation, were not only motivated by the ideologies of the time, but shaped by the policies that were carried out in the post-war era. These ideological motivations stretch back to the nineteenth century and are perpetuated in a paternalistic style which, in the twentieth century, allowed the enactment of utopian plans and the denial of agency to those at the receiving end of those policies. This meant that even by the 1980s "ideological assumptions pervade[d] housing practice."[125] Ultimately, the discourse surrounding poor housing stock and slum clearance was used to degrade the perceived slum dweller, in order to justify and enable the plans of progressives to remove them from the towns and cities of Britain.

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[122] Lund. (1996). *Housing Problems and Housing Policy*. p. *ix*
[123] *ibid.* p. *ix*
[124] *ibid.* p. *ix*
[125] Gallagher, P. (1982). Ideology and Housing Management. In English, J. (Ed.) *The Future of Council Housing* (pp. 132-153). London: Croom Helm. p. 149

The "National Evil"[126]

Representations of communities living within areas of poor housing have been constructed and shaped in a range of ways since the late 19th century. One of the primary uses of slum representation has been the establishment of an 'other' within British society, and this has fulfilled a number of uses, sometimes to shock the middle and upper classes into action, and sometimes to simply sell copy. It is important to highlight that this concept is nothing new to the discourse surrounding groups of poorer and poorly housed people within Britain, and the specific representation of slum dwellers as subhuman, immoral and a threat to civilised society, has been seen consistently since the 19th century. Crothall argues that since the 1840s "bourgeois discourse" has centred on the housing question due to the perceived threat and danger posed to their class, and ultimately their lives, by the "disease, decay and social discord" lurking in the inner city slums.[127] As Lund states, the 'slum' is "identified as the locale of disease, crime, mob violence and moral degeneration – the social evil epicentre" for the 19th and most of the 20th century, and this stereotypical and caricatured view of poorer communities and underprivileged spaces within cities was perpetuated in order to support policies which sought their outright destruction.[128] Early social liberalism called for the eradication of slum environments as followers believed that squalor "prevented the considered will of such people from emerging" and "potential citizens were being brutalised by their environment", and these perspectives are what will be seen perpetuated for the next century as a way of creating a stock 'slum inhabitant' in need of charity, excluded from agency, and in want of improvement to middle class ideals.[129]

Looking back to the 19th Century, the idea of a 'residuum' class developed in the realm of Victorian social science, also known in 1902 as "the Poor, the Submerged, the Proletariat, the Abyss" and their homes "Slums and Ghettos and Mean Streets."[130] The paternalistic

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[126] Medical Officer of Health. (1936). *Annual Reports 1933-36*. Salford: Peel Park Library. Accessed at Salford Local History Library.

[127] Crothall, G. (1999). Images of Regeneration: Film Propaganda and the British Slum Clearance Campaign, 1933-1938. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television, 19* (3), 339-358. p. 2

[128] Lund, B. (2016). *Housing Politics in the United Kingdom; Power, Planning and Protest*. Bristol: Policy Press. p. 61

[129] Lund. (1996). *Housing Problems and Housing Policy*. p. 5

[130] Lund. (2016). *Housing Politics in the United Kingdom.* p. 68

view towards residents of designated slum areas can trace its origins to this point, with the term "over-parent" becoming popular in reference to the relationship and approach adopted by the middle class towards the so-called residuum, who wanted to limit the propagation of the unfit through eugenics to produce "better human material."[131] Lund argues that the eugenicists classification of the "feeble-minded", whose reproduction should be discouraged or limited, was generalised and applied to many groups of people, one of which was the new "urban type" classified by Masterman in 1909, who declared this group urban dwellers "stunted, narrow-chested, easily wearied; yet voluble, excitable, with little ballast, stamina or endurance – seeking stimulus in drink, in betting, in any unaccustomed conflicts at home or abroad."[132] Victorian ideological assumptions about the "'control' of the working class" can be found demonstrated in 19th century philanthropy. Schemes such as that created by Octavia Hill, demonstrate the way in which social ideals were enforced onto recipients of better housing by "an enlightened, all-seeing, but omnipresent ruler" who would "constantly" interfere with the lives of her tenants", to make compulsory their social betterment, Hill would then "evict those who did not conform to her standards.[133]

The Imagined Slum?

The outwardly-viewed identity of the slum has been analysed extensively by Mayne, who in *The Imagined Slum,* established a step-by-step deconstruction of the slum narrative. His work, focussing on three cities in the Victorian era, highlights the representation of slum living within the contemporary press, which distinctly demonstrates the way in which journalists created stereotypical and archetypal stock characters within the slum environment who had definitive roles and characteristics within the social construct of the slum. These were made up of the "theatrical types" of the woman, the foreigner, the landlord, the child and the inspector, all with their roles established of how they speak for, represent and coexist within the slum social network, and all having the inherent implication

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[131] *ibid.* p. 68
[132] *ibid.* p.68
[133] Gallagher. (1982). Ideology and Housing Management in *The Future of Council Housing*. pp. 132-3

that without removal "they would 'only live to swell the dangerous classes of society'".[134] Reportage made clear the link that "clearing away rookeries removed the social as well as the spatial eyesores of the modern city", highlighting once again the social cleansing and removal of undesirable communities as a central part of the motivations for clearance.[135] He goes on to argue that the development and usage of these stock characters means that "the complexities, indeterminacies and, above all, the animation of social action are lost as lives from the past are cast into the roles of puppets and buffoons in order to sustain our own common-sense storylines of how it really was."[136] His analysis also demonstrates little evidence of "slumland self-identification", showing that the people of the areas themselves did not consider their neighbourhood to be a slum, and this is frequently backed up in the oral testimonies of Goodger, where residents insist that the deteriorating conditions around them were solely caused by the initiation of clearance programmes.[137]

slum environment itself was also under scrutiny in Mayne's analysis, and he displays the repetitive and structured journalistic outputs which consistently describe the slum in theatrical splendour. The way these articles were written sensationally and using the same narrative structure demonstrates, Mayne argues, the literary stage-dressing of the societally imagined slum. Key words associated with the representation of the slum include "dark, stench, hovel, den, tenement, rookery" and words such as these are not only littered through the reports analysed by Mayne, but also in the film footage of 20th century films from central government and Michael Goodger, and even in modern reports of council estates as analysed by Jones in *Chavs*.[138] The phenomena is far-reaching, and to be found internationally and up to the present day, with representations of poorer communities fraught with motivated interpretation from outsiders, although the terminology may change

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[134] Mayne, A. (1990). Representing the Slum. *Urban History,* 17 (1), 66-84. pp. 77-80

[135] *ibid.* p.75

[136] *ibid.* p.67

[137] Mayne, A. (1995) A Barefoot Childhood: So What? Imagining Slums and Reading Neighbourhoods. *Urban History*, 22 (3), 380-389. p. 380
Oral history interview transcripts of Michael Goodger (1971), Archive Reference CFC/3, The University of Salford Archive, Mrs Yardwood p.7

[138] Mayne. (1990). Representing the Slum. p.72
Goodger. (1969). *The Changing Face of Salford Part 1*. [Documentary]
Jones, O. (2012). *Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class*. London: Verso.

from 'slum dweller' to 'chav' or, as outlined by Darcy and Rogers, "houso".[139] The terminology surrounding the slum is also defined by its implication of age and the contrasting progress of the people and spaces outside of it. "As a measuring stick time becomes a demonstration of the progress made by the modern city", Mayne argues, and the repetitive use of age in defining the slums of Salford create an overall image of modernity and progress through housing policy, by defining the housing in question as from "'olden times'" and no longer part of the modern way of life.[140] An important point to note from Mayne too is his argument that "some of the most successful readings of the urban past have drawn less from history than from archaeology, architecture, geography, literary criticism, and cultural anthropology" and our readings of slum environments will therefore be severely hindered by the demolition of the area and the lack of physical elements through which to source analysis.[141]

Moving out of the Victorian era, the discourse surrounding the slum alters little. Shapely highlights that from the 1930s reformers interested in furthering the campaign of clearing the slums tended to be more affluent outsiders viewing residents from a somewhat condescending perspective. Labour councillors in Manchester held resentment towards these "middle-class do-gooders", who believed that similarly to the Octavia Hill scheme from decades earlier, that "once removed to the new estates, tenants should be encouraged to adopt good habits", driving Alderman Titt, ex-mayor of Manchester to plead with the council "for God's sake [do not give room to] these self-appointed social investigators who [go] about dissecting and vivisecting the life of the working classes."[142] This hits upon a key theme in the representation of residents at the time and displays that the accepted view of councils and reformers that "tenants were not trustworthy and that their behaviour needed nurturing", and garnering a view that "anybody who lived in such filth had to be re-educated."[143] This ubiquitous opinion of residents permeates discourse

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[139] Darcy, M. & Rogers, D. (2017). The Real 'Housos': Reclaiming Identity and Place. In G. Cairns, G. Artopoulos, & K. Day (Eds.) *From Conflict to Inclusion in Housing: Interaction of Communities, Residents and Activists* (pp. 167-180). London: UCL Press.
[140] Mayne. (1990). Representing the Slum. p. 73
[141] Mayne. (1990). Representing the Slum. p. 66
[142] Shapely. (2007). *The Politics of Housing.* pp. 109, 118
[143] *ibid.* pp. 110, 119

throughout the decades and was held in the highest authorities on housing and planning, as seen in the 1928 remark by senior official Townroe for the Ministry of Health "there is unfortunately a type of tenant who always makes a 'slum' and can only be prevented from wrecking a house by discipline."[144] This overall paternalistic and condescending attitude towards those who resided in designated slum areas is an essential contextual point which allows the disqualification of agency from those who would be displaced and removed under the clearance programmes. If councils, planners and the wider public believed that the typical slum dweller was of a lower intellectual or moral standing than everybody else, then it was acceptable - if not a charitable obligation - to force physical improvement and social betterment upon them. There is no logical or moral objection to the destruction of corrupting neighbourhoods or to the dispersal of a rotten community, and in that instance, it is easy to believe no reasonable individual would regret their consignment to the past. Once this pervading attitude is understood it is very easy to see how this social context created an environment in the period of post-war housing policy where it was totally acceptable to local authorities that "tenant views were not part of the equation".[145]

The 1930s saw the production of many documentary style films produced by or sponsored by groups with vested interest in demolishing the designated slum housing. These documentaries, "largely neglected" by historians, were created with the motivation to "propagate a cohesive and integrated vision of Britain in the near future" and to inform the British people that "the very health of the nation was dependent on the eradication of the slums and the creation of new healthy environments which could nurture a new generation."[146] Along with publications from medical officers, clerics and journalists during this period the middle class were shocked into a perception of the slums as a "national disgrace", "evil [and] Godless places, centres of filth, disease, sexual depravity and crime…which would have to be eradicated, smote by the powerful hand of moral righteousness."[147] In this same alarmist view, the slum dweller was seen as in desperate and unquestionable need of having to be "saved and converted to the path of middle class

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[144] Lund. (2016). *Housing Politics in the United Kingdom.* p. 69
[145] Shapely. (2007). *The Politics of Housing.* p. 110
[146] Crothall. (1999). Images of Regeneration. p. 1
[147] *ibid.* p. 2

respectability."[148] Urban growth was widely associated with these negative attributes by contemporaries, and therefore a pervading idea developed, that it was "easier to subsume everything that seems wrong as being a product of urbanism and more particularly of the 'inner city'."[149] In fact, Robson argues that this view goes so far that within the twentieth century at certain times "social policy and urban policy have almost become one and the same thing."[150] To wipe out the slums became synonymous with wiping out the threat of moral, physical and mental degradation that had been associated for so long with the areas of poor houses within the inner cities.

As discussed, the slum provided the ideological stage on which the pre-war outdated and un-modern British way of life could still be seen, as a reminder of an unfair society which people believed should no longer exist. By polarising this as an area of backward and degraded way of living with the new utopian modernist plans of central government and local authorities, it helped to define their ideals by highlighting what they stood against, what they were not, and what they fought to eradicate. Furthermore, the emerging and growing middle class was able to define its own identity by identifying tropes of slum life and opposing them. As seen in the interviews conducted by Goodger, to be explored in detail later, he sees a distinct separation between himself and the residents being interviewed, coming from two separate social backgrounds divided by class. Goodger frames his interpretation of the slum clearance programmes through this perspective, and expresses surprise when residents disapprove of untidy neighbours, stating "I'm surprised you say this because this is the sort of comment I would expect from middle class people like myself who say, look we're spending all this money to get people out of their hovels and they don't know how to treat [their homes]"[151] His comment exemplifies the opinion of outsiders that those within slum areas fell into the dirty and degraded stereotype as outlined, and to disapprove of typified slum behaviour was the stance of the middle class.

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[148] *ibid*. p. 2
[149] Robson, B. (1999). Vision and Reality: Urban Social Policy. In B. Cullingworth (Ed.) *British Planning: 50 Years of Urban and Regional Policy* (pp. 168-182). London: Althone Press. p. 169
[150] *ibid.* p. 170
[151] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mrs Heyes, Mr Heyes p. 1

The term 'slum dweller' had clear implications of moral standing. Just as seen in Victorian documentations of rookeries and courts in industrialising towns and cities, the post-war period saw low morality and a lack of self-moderation as the cause of becoming impoverished and finding oneself in a slum. The Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report for Salford in 1949 informs the reader of the impact of "handicapped families" who have the negative attributes of "bad social habits, poor morale, and often low mental condition."[152] The report argues that houses of equal condition, would be more dirty and suffer from pest infestation when inhabited by a family holding the negative attributes, while a morally and behaviourally upstanding family would live with "radiant health" in the same residency."[153] This report actually puts forward the suggestion that "where the physical structure of the houses is the same" it is parental standards which influence health and cause "part of the problem we face" rather than the actual condition of the housing resided in.[154] This highlights the fact that authorities were actually seeking to remove slum dweller of low morality and social depravity they believed to reside in older housing, as part of the demolition of the buildings themselves. It demonstrates that the Medical Officer of Health and their staff did not believe the structure of the physical houses in Salford to be the primary issue for social and health problems, instead blaming social habits and mental underdevelopment of the residents who lived within them. This shows that clearance was not merely a logistical or necessary plan to remove poor housing stock, but a plan to remove undesired residents and communities from the landscape of towns and cities around the country, and into a modern and more conducive position in society to be improved in the eyes of the state.

However, as early as 1929 E. D. Simon, the former Lord Mayor of Manchester was providing a counter-argument to disrupt the pejorative discourse surrounding the slum and its residents. His work *How to Abolish the Slums* directly challenges the notion that it is in fact "slum dwellers that make the slum" by attesting to the scrupulous cleanliness of some of the houses of the absolute poorest.[155] Furthermore, a survey of Chorlton in nearby

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[152] Medical Officer of Health Annual Report 1949. p. 114
[153] *ibid*. p. 114
[154] *ibid*. p. 114
[155] Shapely. (2007). *The Politics of Housing.* p. 113

Manchester found residents to be "friendly and communicative" and reported that remarkably "so many of the families in this district look healthy and are able to keep themselves and their houses clean."[156] Another nearby investigation into the Ancoats clearance area saw investigators keen to avoid the "negative connotations of the term 'slum dweller'" and reported that residents there were "certainly not slum-minded" displaying once again that when the actual areas designated as slums were entered and investigated, interaction with residents showed quite a different picture of life in the slum. Mrs Cross, a resident interviewed by Goodger expresses her annoyance at the perception of residents of clearance areas by saying "they go on as though you were dirty, filthy, you never did anything to clean your house. I thought mine was a little palace… but they never come to look inside your houses, why didn't they. These Councillors and so forth. Why didn't they. They push you in a little place. They never come to see you. We've never seen one."[157] She goes on to lament "they look at you sometimes… as though you're muck. We're not."[158] Similar to the arguments laid out by Jones in his more recent analysis of the representation of the 'chav' in today's media, slum representations were that of "a presentation of outsiders, in which paradoxically the presentation itself is the work of outsiders."[159]

What is remarkable of the pervading attitude throughout the entire period examined here, is that the actual social and economic factors which created the living conditions so alarmingly recounted to the general public are rarely – if ever – discussed as part of the discourse surrounding the slums. Crothall highlights that there was instead a chosen view that the housing conditions of the poor were instead simply a blip in national development, a "problem moment", and therefore a "temporary, soluble problem" caused merely by the rapid growth of the cities due to industrialisation. [160] The underlying social injustice, economic exploitation and chronic want of the nation's poor is left out repeatedly throughout documentary films of the time. Or as Mayne summarised "the blatant

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[156] *ibid.* p. 113
[157] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross p.7
[158] *ibid.* p.11
[159] Jones. (2012). *Chavs*.
Mayne. (1990). Representing the Slum. p. 68
[160] Winston, B. (1995). *Claiming the Real: The Griersonian Documentary and its Legitimations*. London: British Film Institute. p. 42

exploitation of the inner city poor by the urbanizing consequences of the commodification of labour and exchange was masked by labelling them as debased slum dwellers."[161] This leaves contemporary documentary style films that are a "depoliticised form devoid of any real social meaning", with the narrative structure ignoring completely "unemployment, poor wages, high rents, community dislocation…the relations of land, capital and labour; issues of who owns the slums, why slum lords have allowed their premises to fall into neglect and why workers are forced to live in such conditions the first place".[162] On the whole, sources show that British society simply blamed the slum dweller and their perceived lack of moral standing and abilities, rather than question the context in which their fellow citizens were allowed to fall into such poverty and need.

The interviews conducted by Michael Goodger for his *Changing Face of Salford* project also shows that during the period of clearance in the late 1960s, slums were still being used by the press to represent their own desired images, rather than detailing the truth about the areas to be cleared. Mr Heyes tells Goodger "if the Mayor comes round they clean up for him…You grabbed hold of the reporters and they told 'em why don't you put in a photograph of the Mayor driving this and how clean they've made it and then come down the entry and take a photograph of the entry where they've dumped all the rubbish in the back yards. And when you get the paper – the Reporter on the Friday – look at all these women looking at the Mayor building their future homes – not a thing about them complaining about the slums and the way they're doing it, which the women was there for, the sole purpose there not to wave to the Mayor of look at anything they're building."[163] The reality of the suffering of residents due to the experience of the clearances is excluded from the discourse in the press, which instead chooses to demonstrate the provision of a bright new future by the authorities. The representations in the press amounted to "a culturally skewed historical record of bourgeois opinion… encoded with the meanings of a dominant bourgeois culture… reformulated as spatial and social reality" and not an actual account of the conditions and reality of life in the area.[164] Ultimately the role of slum

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[161] Mayne. (1990). Representing the Slum. p. 68
[162] Crothall. (1999). Images of Regeneration. p. 5
[163] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes p.17
[164] Mayne. (1995) A Barefoot Childhood: So What? pp. 381-2

dweller changed little over the course of the period examined, they were treated as objects and listed in numbers and data in the historical analysis that came later, their forced relocation and losses of community and home described as robotically as them being "taken or put" into "what those with power regarded as better accommodation."[165] Stripped of their established streets, houses and neighbours, these residents also "for the purpose of the planning exercise [have] no gender, no tastes, no history, no values, no opinions or original ideas, no traditions, and no distinctive personalities to contribute to the enterprise.[166] They have none of the particular, situated, and contextual attributes that one would expect of any population and that we, as a matter of course, always attribute to elites."[167] To move past this two-dimensional representation of a designated slum area and its resident, it is essential to examine the reality of identity and culture within the area, rather than simply accepting the progressive narrative of degradation presented here.

Identity and Culture in Salford

Salford and its residents developed its own identity and culture, unique to its location and individual space. It is situated in the north of England, described by Samuels as holding "beauty, poetry and poignancy" and with that the identity of a "northern character" which has "dark humour, no-nonsense toughness, informality, pride, contrariness and rich cultural expression."[168] Salford even today is a place that establishes its individual identity and culture from the physical landscape of the environment. Like Liverpool, Salford takes deep pride in its dock based history, with Salford Quays unsurprisingly forming the epicentre of redevelopment and regeneration in the city, using the waterways which historically brought connectivity and capital to the city to breathe new life into the area. Aside from this, there are various symbols of the northern and Salfordian identity and culture, which manifest themselves in art, literature and memories of residents. These symbols heavily revolve around the development of Salford during the industrial revolution, and the industrial landscape, such as mills, chimneys, cobbled streets and terraced housing associated

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[165] Lund. (2016). *Housing Politics in the United Kingdom.* p. 88
[166] Scott, J.C. (1998). *Seeing it Like a State*. London: Yale University Press. p. 346
[167] *ibid*. p. 346
[168] Samuels, S. (2011). *Northerners*. London: Ebury Press. pp. 6-9

frequently with the character of the area and its residents. The cultural outputs form Salford or with Salford as a subject rely on these symbols heavily, as well as including themes such as community feeling in the streets, strong women and a deep sense of pride in their environment to depict the way of life experienced there.

The landscape of industry that was found in Salford was iconic in terms of its identity. The mills and chimneys which crowded the area representative of both the area's history and its development over time. Salford "underwent rapid and painful industrialisation in the nineteenth century and an equally difficult and agonising process of de-industrialisation in the twentieth" and this meant that "it has its own cultural history, much informed by the working-class people".[169] The mills of the textile industry which created the boom of industry in Salford, as well as the factories and cobbled streets became iconic to the areas identity, and representative of its past and its people. Terraced streets are a big part of that too, and many cultural products feature the distinctive housing and warren of streets as the focus for their setting in Salford. Examples of this include *Coronation Street, Hobson's Choice, A Taste of Honey* and *Love on the Dole*, which all heavily rely on the landscape of industry to portray the character of Salford. Areas of working class life that survived the demolition of the mid-20th century have become areas reminiscent of the way of life of previous generations of workers. In other areas the centre of industrial towns have become conservation areas to preserve "the tone of a place once at the heart of the Industrial Revolution."[170] It is unsurprising that people develop culture influenced by the space they inhabit, and Malphas tells us that "a connection to place is an essential ingredient of human development because it is integral to what it means to be human", but in Salford this is furthered by a shared experience of having lived through hard times in an epicentre of the industrial revolution, and the networks and sense of purpose that instilled created a defiant

[169] Schmid, S. (2007). Between L. S. Lowry and Coronation Street: Salford Cultural Identities. In C. Ehland (Ed.) *Thinking Northern: Textures of Identity in the North of England* (pp. 347-362). Amsterdam: Rodopi. pp. 347-8
[170] Samuels. (2011). *Northerners*. p. 22

and proud Salfordian character.[171] As Smith commented; "crowded and close the houses may have been, but there is a marvellously infectious enthusiasm".[172]

Depictions of Salford can also be found heavily utilised by the artist L. S. Lowry, whose representation of everyday life captured the working class identity of the area. Lowry lived in Pendlebury, on the "north edge of Salford's cotton spinning-core", and frequently said "I only paint what I see, you know", and during visits to Salford he painted many scenes which feature the people, buildings and landscapes that made up the area.[173] Lowry was exceptional in the fact that he was largely alone in depicting industrial scenes, and his body of work is "the best visual record" of Britain's recent history as "pioneer of the Industrial Revolution".[174] What is clear, argues Clark, is that a fact of recent culture "is how little the landscape and social fabric of industrialism have been allowed to appear in it.[175] In addressing this underrepresentation of life in the industrial north, Lowry captured forever symbols of Salford culture and identity, as well as scenes of the communities and housing to be cleared by programmes of demolitions. These symbols, found frequently in Lowry's work echo what has already been discussed, the looming mills, the rows of terraces, the communal spaces in between the rows of housing and the chimneys which rose from the town. Clark argues that Lowry's uniqueness in painting this subject stems from his position in the lower middle class, and his residence in a "thoroughly working-class" area, much like those making planning decisions in the post-war period, painters from the upper classes did not wish to put on display the environs of the working class.[176]

The residents of these older housing areas were not a transient ever changing group with no established links, on the contrary, The University Settlement's survey of the nearby neighbourhood Ancoats in Manchester found that residents had a "genuine sense of

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[171] Malpas, J. (2008). Place and Human Being. In F. Vanclay & A. Blackshaw (Eds.) *Making Sense of Place: Exploring Concepts and Expressions of Place Through Different Senses and Lenses* (pp. 324-331). Canberra: Australian National Museum Press. p. 326

[172] Smith, A. (1973). *Salford as it Was*. Lancashire: Hendon Publishing. p. 9

[173] Spalding, J. (1987). *Lowry*. London: Herbert Press. pp. 12, 56

[174] Clark, T.J. & Wagner, A.M. (2013). *Lowry and the Painting of Modern Life*. London: Tate Publishing. p. 21

[175] *ibid.* p. 21

[176] *ibid.* p. 46

community" and were "rooted in the slum area" which one surveyor noted as having a "village feeling" to it.[177] It also discovered that over half the residents of Ancoats had been there for over twenty years and were therefore a well-established community with great local pride, with over half also having relatives living within the neighbourhood.[178] This sense of community is central to the feeling of identity, the oral histories of Goodger (to be examined in more depth later) are full of testimonies of residents who highlight this. Furthermore, much of the artistic representation of Salford includes this communal theme, with photography and paintings frequently displaying the interaction of people in the streets, described by Roberts as a "great recreation room".[179] Street parties are iconic in the terraces, with special occasions marked by residents coming together in their communal space to celebrate events such as bonfire night and the annual Whit walks. Davies suggests that this communal street culture helped to develop and maintain neighbourhood ties and was more accessible than commercial leisure pursuits as most street activities such as "sitting out" cost nothing, and enabled impoverished residents to socialise and develop mutual support networks.[180]

The destruction of the built environment in Salford saw the eradication of many of the physical symbols of identity and culture within the area. Regardless of the other consequences or outcomes of slum clearance programmes in Salford, it is undeniable that the clearance of these symbols of the built landscape had a profound effect on the people within the area, and their disappearance caused long term regret and sadness for those who established their lives within and around them. This can be demonstrated through many cultural and literary sources. Firstly, take the poem *My Salford* by Salford-born Albert Armstrong detailing the missing social and cultural elements of his hometown, from the packed-out cinemas, the fifteen pubs located in a one-mile stretch and the hot potato seller on Cross Lane, Albert Lucetti.[181] With "an ache and a sigh" he reminisces about the lifestyle he once lived in Salford which has now been wiped out, and laments that "the city of my youth has gone, not destroyed by Hitler's bomb, the planners did what he could not, they

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[177] Shapely. (2007). *The Politics of Housing.* p. 114
[178] *ibid.* p. 114
[179] Roberts, R. (1973). *The Classic Slum*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. p. 124
[180] Davies, A. (1992). *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*. Buckingham: Open University Press. p. 109
[181] Armstrong, A. (2001). *My Salford*. Shetland Islands: Albert Armstrong. p. 6

pulled it down, destroyed the lot."[182] But the testimony of residents in the Goodger transcripts preserve a record of the pride and culture of the Salford identity. The intense pride of the Salfordian is seen in Mr Holloway's recollections "When I used to go to work they used to kid me a lot of the fellers from the other side of the town that came from round Blackley and Fallowfield and Didsbury way over Salford. I used to say to em – aye – its all right you swanking over your gardens and things but we can grow in Salford what you can't grow. They used to say what's that. I'd say bananas. In Bule Hill Park in the greenhouse there they used to grow bananas, you know it were very hot when you went inside there."[183]

[182] *ibid.* p. 6
[183] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mr Holloway. p.10

The Lived Experience of Slum Clearance in Salford

"These lickle houses, these are palaces to us not slums"

- Mrs Yarwood [184]

The slum clearance programmes which transformed the physical environment of Salford in the post-war era were a substantial catalogue of demolitions and complex redevelopment, which changed the fabric of the city forever. The people who were affected by these significant clearances and redevelopments were rarely given the platform to express their opinions regarding the upheaval to their neighbourhoods, communities and lives. In this analysis however, it is resident views that are the foundation of investigation into the lived experience of demolition and clearance. Using oral testimonies, documentary film from Michael Goodger's project *The Changing Face of Salford,* and the street photography of Shirley Baker, eye-witness and contemporary sources will be utilised to tell the personal story of slum clearance. The thoughts and feelings of the residents of a Salford slum clearance area, captured during the time of the programme will be used to demonstrate the deplorable conditions to which they were subjected, giving a personal, contemporary experience of slum clearance, rather than the numerical and data driven analysis outlined previously. Unlike much of the previous historiography, the opinions of actual residents living in a condemned slum will have their voices taken into consideration when discussing their own communities, homes and lives.

The post war clearance programmes in Salford followed wider national trends as outlined in the analysis of Yelling; rising, peaking and declining periods of demolition; beginning in the late 1950s, peaking at 71,586 demolitions in 1968, and steeply declining by the early 1970s. By the time these oral testimonies were collected by Goodger, and his filming began, Salford was in the second stage, with significant clearance taking place. The local authority in

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[184] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Yarwood. p.16

Salford echoed the message of nation-wide propaganda by juxtaposing the conditions of old, industrial housing with the modernist living style redevelopment plans championed by central government to encourage public opinion in favour of demolition. However, the reality of the impact that such a vast programme of change would have on the area and its communities was hard to mask. Even within the City of Salford's own publication, detailing the plans for the mammoth Ellor Street Redevelopment, showed concerns regarding the communities at stake, stating that the area which gives the "impression" of "depression and minimum living conditions" still held a "tremendous spirit and neighbourliness [which] draw[s] together the families who have grown up in these conditions."[185] However, this was not a priority on the list of council concerns, and the relocation of residents, the demolition of their homes and the development of modernist accommodation charged through Salford.

During the clearance of a slum, residents of condemned areas would undergo significant and protracted negative experiences that would have adverse effects on their wellbeing, emotions and health for a long period of time in both the short and long term. First and foremost, the impact of being forcibly removed from one's established home and community cannot be highlighted enough. Families were "forced against their will" to leave areas "where they and their ancestors have lived for generations, where ties of friendship and social intercourse mean[t] much in the lives of the inhabitants and when removal means the breaking of lifelong associations."[186] Furthermore, the council had a "high-handed approach" to this process and did "little to allay people's fears or smooth the process of transition", with the rector of Hulme, Reverend Chevassut, stating that the councils' treatment of residents was the "'upper limit of cynical brutality'", and asked if the council's approach was in fact intended to "cause the greatest possible inconvenience and misery".[187] By utilising the oral testimonies of the residents during this time, a variety of different areas will now be explored, highlighting the personal experience of the Salford clearance programmes in detail, as well as the physical conditions that residents found themselves thrust into. Analysis will explore the physical environment of the condemned area, failures in communication and dissemination of information from the local authority to

[185] City of Salford. (1963). *Ellor Street Redevelopment Area*. p. 25
[186] Shapely. (2007). *The Politics of Housing*. p. 125
[187] *ibid.* p. 125

residents, crime and anti-social behaviour, the position and safety of children during the process of clearance and relocation, the sense of community in the affected area and the loss of leisure opportunities and community feeling in the clearance zone.

The Photography of Shirley Baker

Between 1961 and 1981 Kersal-born street photographer Shirley Baker documented the clearance of designated slum areas in Manchester and Salford as they were erased from the landscape.[188] Baker empathetically documented the life and community she witnessed while walking through the streets of Salford's earmarked demolition zones, but without nostalgia, captured not only what life was like during the clearances for residents, but also the way of life that was being demolished along with the old terraces.[189] Baker's collection of documentary street photos were taken in the moment without prior arrangement or posing, meaning they contain snapshots of actual everyday life within the clearance areas of Salford, detailing authentic scenes rather than created tableaux of what people wanted to see in a stereotypical slum.[190] Her portfolios *The Street Photographs,* and *The Street Photographs: Early Colour* will be used to illustrate the oral testimonies of residents in this analysis.

[188] Shirley Baker Estate. (2017). *About*.
[189] Shirley Baker Estate. (2017). *The Street Photographs (Early Colour)*.
[190] Shirley Baker Estate. (2017). *About*.

The Physical Environment

Figure 2: Partial demolition in Salford clearance area, Shirley Baker

The first element to be explored is that of the physical environment of an area earmarked for slum clearance. The intention behind the demolition of the aging workers' housing in Salford was to remove slum conditions and ultimately improve the environment and health of residents who were relocated. However, in the process of clearing a site, the physical environment would deteriorate so drastically that that those who were left behind often faced extended periods of residency in desolate and dangerous wastelands. The charity Shelter, who investigated the conditions at the time, stated that "Life in a clearance area is indescribably appalling; conditions there would revolt and disgust anyone who spent a few hours walking through the streets and talking to the residents. It is abhorrent that such conditions should be allowed to exist at all; the fact that they should be allowed to persist for years is one of our society's greatest shames."[191] One resident in Goodger's *The*

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[191] Gee, D. (1975), *A Shelter Report on Slum Clearance*. London: Shelter. p.29

Changing Face of Salford film succinctly sums up the process by saying "they couldn't have made a bloody worse job of it if they'd've put bloody kids on it."[192]

One of the biggest problems of life in a slum clearance zone was that the process of relocation of residents was piecemeal and inefficient. Rather than moving the entire neighbourhood in one large relocation, families were moved as accommodation became available, and demolition of the vacated properties went ahead with some residents in situ. As Mrs Yardwood explains "It's only through these Corporation people and these demolition what's making it a slum cos they're pulling the houses down. They're not pulling them down proper. They pull one road down then leave some stood up and then some more" leaving "one or two people what want houses" left behind in the partially demolished clearance area. [193] Mr and Mrs Heyes tell Goodger in their testimony that local authority housing staff had explained to them that if they did not fill the high-rise blocks of flats or maisonettes with residents from slum clearance areas, they would lose the government subsidies for the projects, but due to their unpopularity and unsuitability, the Salford Corporation could not fill the newly completed blocks.[194] This increased the backlog of rehousing from clearance areas and meant that people from other areas were being offered accommodation further away from their original homes to fill the flats.[195] This left residents in the Salford clearance area left in their homes for even longer due to the lack of accommodation that suited their needs and was in their area.

Shapely tells us that this compounded problems within the area as "partial clearance in some areas made conditions even worse for those left behind, with houses suffering from structural collapse and even more vermin than usual."[196] Mrs Heyes had seen a huge increase in the number of mice and blackjacks, and wondered if they had become immune to poisons as nothing seemed to stop them, she complains "I can't leave fat in a tin if I've cooked meat, I have to empty it out straight away and leave the oven clear, because they're

[192] Goodger, M. [Producer]. (1969). *The Changing Face of Salford Part 2: (1967-1970)*. [Documentary]
[193] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Yarwood. pp.8-9
[194] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p.18
[195] *ibid.* p.18
[196] Shapely. (2007). *The Politics of Housing.* p. 158

in, you see traces of them".[197] Mr Heyes tells Goodger that contractors make "ninety per cent" of the rubbish in the clearance area and Mrs Ludlam explains that even work as small as "pulling the gutterings down" left huge amounts of dust coming towards the back of her home, while she was still inhabiting during demolition.[198] Mrs Heyes also discussed the huge amount of dust due to demolition around them stating "its all blowing in. You dust round, hoover round and by afternoon, its just layered again", the dust and grit would enter the home and cling to the walls, as well as meals laid out on the table.[199]They Heyes also suffered from feeling "like living on top of a wind tunnel" after demolition of the houses either side of them left "a tunnel underneath and the wind comes through one end and comes out the other" doe to the removal of the floorboards and lead piping in their old neighbours' homes.[200] The exposure to their own homes from the partial demolition next door, also meant the Heyes' on accommodation was now suffering from draughts, damp and the wind and rain coming in against the other side of their interior walls, causing more damage to their home and making it cold and uncomfortable to live in.[201]

Further to this, as the local authority had such large redevelopment schemes, the construction of the new planned housing couldn't commence until the entire area was cleared, which left some households marooned in a partially demolished neighbourhood, and local authorities with no sites on which to build much needed accommodation. Manchester Labour MP Harold Lever "felt that the council could do more by developing small cleared sites instead of waiting to clear huge swathes that would allow it to implement a grand plan."[202] This would allow the movement of residents into accommodation at an increased rate, and may have prevented the long delays experienced. These delays were criticised by the Conservatives in Manchester, who demanded an enquiry into the slow progress seen in redevelopment, and describing the council's lack of redevelopment on already cleared sites while residents were forced to remain in unfit housing a "scandal" and

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[197] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p.24
[198] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Ludlam. p.17
[199] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p.21
[200] *ibid.* p.19
[201] *ibid.* p.19
[202] Shapely. (2007). *The Politics of Housing* p. 159

a "disgrace to the city".[203] Delays and shortages of new housing meant that there are accounts of some residents waiting over twenty years on the housing waiting list before being rehomed from their terrace.[204] Mrs Heyes demonstrated her frustration to Goodger at the inefficiency of relocations by stating "I'm a bit annoyed with the Salford Corporation... they must either be idiots or there must be a reason for it but I think that Salford's idiotic though in what they've done. I mean they're pulling houses down the other side of Robert Hall Street and instead of clearing out the people facing the rubble, they're not they're clearing people behind the people that's facing it."[205] The account of Mr Heyes can illustrate the lack of clarity, of cohesion and of the inefficiency of the clearance and demolition quite nicely:

"Don't just say right, this lot's coming down. I mean they've took one house out of a block, they've left two up they've moved another block, they've took three down there they've left four up. If you go down there, it's like a maze, they've knocked so many down and left one up, there's one person over there on one block left, ther[e]'s one in Croydon Street left, there's one in another street left, and they're leaving one house because they can't satisfy 'em… And this is what's making everybody nasty."[206]

[203] *ibid.* p. 159
[204] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross. p. 2
[205] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher and Mrs Heyes. p. 8
[206] *ibid.* p.17

Figure 3: Living in a partially demolished neighbourhood, Shirley Baker

The situation that developed within the clearance area is best summed up by Shelter in their 1973 publication *Slum Clearance* which states that;

> "residents of clearance areas are very often "written off" as far as welfare agencies, educational authorities and town hall staff generally are concerned. It is considered not worth attempting to keep the area clean, free of rubbish, rubble and rodents; short life houses are deemed unsuitable for maintenance and repair. An area of generally unfit housing, once designated a clearance area, becomes an area of appalling and disgusting dereliction, whose residents suffer every kind of the most distressing social deprivation and physical discomfort."[207]

The lack of investment in the maintenance or repair of "short life" properties within Salford had dire consequences for the residents forced to remain there for protracted lengths of time before being relocated. Goodger's interviews reveal a multitude of issues facing those waiting for new accommodation, many of which were caused by an unwillingness of landlords or local authorities to repair homes due to their short lifespan. Mrs Jean Prince, of

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[207] Gee. (1975), *A Shelter Report on Slum Clearance*. p. 29

21 Mary Street, tells Goodger that she was left without a fire for a week in winter in a household containing "five little children", after her chimney collapsed after not being correctly repaired.[208] She explains "They hadn't fixed it properly you see and the bricks had lodged and it would stop the smoke going up, it was coming out instead" which was making her children ill.[209] Mr Gordon's home nearby suffered from extremely slow running water, as they were "the end of the stop-tap", and were unable to have a geiser to heat their water for a bath, but he informs Goodger that this would not be improved or fixed as in terms of housing repairs "they don't do anything for you these days".[210] This fear that the local authority would do nothing to fix problems with their homes is repeated throughout the oral testimonies of Goodger, Mrs Lees' home was next to two empty dwellings which attracted children who knocked bits of the walls down, damaging the walls to her own property. This damage got so bad that rain began to pour into the bedrooms making them inhabitable. Mrs Lees had put hardboard over the windows to prevent the rain going onto the bed, and yet Goodger's interview showed that "if you tell the Rates feller [*sic*] when he comes he just says well they won't do no repairs, they won't do nothing for you, because they're coming down. That's all you get, they're coming down."[211] This negligence of the properties in the clearance area meant that the environment deteriorated rapidly, leaving residents with the opinion that their house was "not a slum house, its only the Corporation what's made these slum houses now with pulling them down."[212]

Mr Gordon's anger towards the local authority stems from a lack of maintenance too, but in his case for a disregard of the pavements and roads which makes it difficult for him to push a wheelchair for his disabled wife. The lack of upkeep of the environment in this case directly hindered the mobility and ability to carry out daily activities of a vulnerable resident with accessibility issues. He states that "as for our corporation looking after the places it's a disgrace… I'd like any of the corporation of the high officials to come along and push a wheelchair in Salford in these streets… I've found it jolly hard to do irrespective of me theres thousands maybe that's pushing chairs about with sick people, but no, they've no

[208] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Prince. p. 2
[209] *ibid.* p. 2
[210] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mr Gordon p. 5
[211] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Prince. p. 8
[212] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Yardwood. p. 7

consideration now, they've just simply let it go.[213] His anger towards the corporation leads him to boldly state to Goodger in his interview that "I'll defy any of them if they'd like to come to 12 Manchester Road".[214] Overall, residents left behind in clearance areas were finding everyday life hindered by the drastic deterioration of the neighbourhood around them due to a lack of investment into maintaining or repairing their houses, and the infrastructure around them. This, rather than giving them the promised improvement in their living standards, meant that for months or years residents were in far worse accommodation than they had been before the programme began, and this directly affected their comfort, health and safety. Mrs Heyes was even directly advised by Salford Corporation staff to avoid carrying out repairs, decoration or maintenance, telling her "don't bother you'll be out inside three month[s]", but at the time of Goodger's interview, the Heyes had waiting up to a year since this comment to be moved out, and under advice not to improve their own home.[215] Mrs Prince demonstrates the futility felt by residents in this prolonged period of limbo in their condemned homes in her comment "One of these days we'll be waking up and it'll be on top of us. Then they'll praps [*sic*] move us then".[216]

On top of these issues the dirt and rubbish within earmarked zones increased significantly during this period of limbo. As Mr Gordon tells us "the back entry is a disgrace…. They're filthy… One time they used to be brushed right through, today, oh no" he then continues to add in regards to the local authority "they've no intentions of wanting to keep the places tidy… they never come round to see anything, your health inspectors or anything like that."[217] Mrs Heyes tells a horrifying account of a dead dog that had been dumped in an empty shop near her house; "the rats had been at it… it had no eyes, this dog was a terrible mess, and there was a dead cat further up the street".[218] Despite multiple appeals to the "Health" to come and remove them, the authorities requested that the residents themselves should put the bodies in their own bins, it was only after refusal and months of

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[213] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mr Gordon. p. 1
[214] *ibid.* p.1
[215] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p. 13
[216] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Prince. p. 4
[217] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mr Gordon. pp. 4-7
[218] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Hayes. p. 22

waiting that they were finally disposed of by the local authority.[219] Further to Mr Gordons claims that cleaning was neglected, Mrs Yardwood adds that bin men actually contributed to the refuse build up in the clearance area, "When these houses come empty what do the dustbin fellers do. Empty half the ruddy stuff in t'back yards and all the entries. These entries are a right disgrace… you could call these a slum now and its only the Corporation what's done it."[220] In contrast to the conditions seen once clearance had begun, throughout the testimonies, residents highlight the way in which their community had kept impeccable standards of cleanliness and pride in the streets they lived in. "We had lickle streets hadn't we and we swept them lickle streets. We were proud of our lickle streets and we'd sweep it. Get your dirt up. We'd clean us front flags and the step. [*sic*]"[221] Mrs Goodwin states similarly; "it was donkey-brown stone steps you know you used to come down, hands and knees, no mopping, that was lazy, hands and knees on the step we used to do from the steps right down to the edgings and do all round".[222] She goes on to explain that the coronation of Elizabeth II brought out a wave of pride in the neighbourhood "then people started painting… You know when the Coronation happened everybody brightened their houses up and painted all round… even now, round here you'll find all the brickwork painted up, trying to keep it clean and cream paint all round".[223] Mrs Cross explained that she too "used to whitewash mi [*sic*] yard, always liked it nice and white", and Mrs Ludlam also states that "we used to be nice and clean with scrubbed bows… everything was nice and clean.[224]

[219] *ibid.* p.22

[220] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Yardwood. p. 8

[221] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross. p. 10

[222] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Goodwin. p. 5

[223] *ibid.* p.5

[224] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross. p. 3

Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Ludlam. p. 16

Communication and Information

Figure 4: The queue for rehousing enquiries, Shirley Baker

During the time in which this area of Salford was being cleared, many residents expressed frustration at the lack of information they were being provided with and the unsatisfactory communication coming from the local authority. As the Shelter investigation reported;

"Much of the distress caused to residents of clearance areas stems from the high-handed attitude of local authority departments who show contempt for the feelings and fears of those whose lives are completely overshadowed by uncertainty about the future and depression over their present living conditions. There is a patent lack of honesty in local

authorities' dealings with these people and in many cases no information at all is forthcoming from the departments involved in decisions affecting these areas."[225]

This report is backed up by the oral testimonies of residence, who express great frustration at not being informed of the length of time which they were going to have to wait for relocation to new housing. This resulted in extended periods where communities had been informed of the intention to demolish the neighbourhood, but were provided with no timeframe for the commencement of demolition, or the highly anticipated day that they would finally 'get a key' to their new accommodation. Mrs Yarwood said it was a "waste of time" to go "mithering" the local authority, as all they would tell you was "oh you'll get a key when they're ready!"[226] When Goodger asked Mrs Prince if her house was going to be demolished soon she responded "That's what they keep telling you. They told us that two years ago. And we're still 'ere. So who can you believe?"[227] She claimed that the "Housing feller [*sic*]" had come to the street with the keys for some new housing, and promised to come back the following week with more for the Prince family, however "he's never been since."[228] Mrs Heyes recounts the absurdity of information available at time by explaining "when you try to get answers off anybody, they give you idiotic answers… the next 36 [houses available] we don't know because there might be an earthquake in Lower Broughton. Well I ask you, what was the last time an earthquake was recorded in Great Britain."[229]

The lack of information for residents was not improved by the political blame game that was being issued back and forth between local authorities and central government, or the party divisions between Labour and Conservatives, who used the clearances as an area ripe for political point scoring. Shapely tells us that in nearby Manchester significant delays were blamed on "Whitehall red-tape", which was then in turn blamed on the local council who the government claimed had asked for extensions on their plans.[230] Conservative MPs

[225] Gee. (1975), *A Shelter Report on Slum Clearance*. p. 29
[226] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Yarwood. p. 9
[227] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Prince. p. 3
[228] *ibid.* p. 9
[229] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p. 9
[230] Shapely. (2007). *The Politics of Housing*. p. 160

attacked undeveloped land not being utilised in Hulme, while the Labour council blamed slow progress on the Conservatives due to their opposition to the construction of peripheral new towns in the Cheshire area.[231] All of this bureaucratic and political squabbling left the residents in a state of prolonged frustration, impatience for removal to their promised new homes and for some certainty surrounding their neighbourhood and its future. Mrs Prince in her interview expresses this frustration to Goodger towards the authorities coordinating the clearance programmes by saying "Of course we're cross… Well we've been treated rough haven't we?"[232] She goes on the state that when trying to gain information on the status of their relocation "there's nothing you can do. If you go up to the Housing they just tell you there's none ready yet. There's no signs of you moving. That's all they [tell] you… I'm feeling bitter.[233]

Crime and Antisocial Behaviour

A common thread throughout the oral testimonies of residents feeling afraid in their homes since clearance had begun. The neighbourhood of the interviewed residents saw a patchwork effort to relocate people from their homes into new properties, meaning that others were left in ghostly streets, without many other neighbours left within the nearby houses and the deteriorating environment encouraged vandalism, crime and the build up of rubbish. Mrs Fisher states that "you're just living in fear now round here" and that "you're frightened to let your children play out" and highlights than the anonymity of new tenants in into the earmarked housing at lower rents had affected the ability to carry out antisocial behaviour in the clearance zone. [234] Knowing people in the street and being familiar with neighbours was important to a neighbourhood, Coleman highlights, and one of the issues with new housing estates and complexes was anonymity. In new developments criminals could rely on the fact residents would not know each other and therefore they would not be identified, and householders are "robbed of the power to question and deter intruders, as

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[231] *ibid.* p. 160
[232] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Prince. p. 2
[233] *ibid.* p. 3
[234] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p. 5

they are in no way suspicious or distinguishable from genuine residents."[235] In a typical Salford pre-war street, it would be impossible in the engrained community to achieve the anonymity described in the large new developments, therefore deterring crime committed in the designated slum areas. This is backed up by Mrs Fisher, who tells Goodger that "you may not know the person at all you know, and they don't know you" and they will "just walk down the street just smashing window after window"[236] Mr Gordon backs up these remarks, stating "there's more vandalism these days. You daren't go out of your house unless someone's trying to rob you."[237] Mrs Fisher describes one of these new tenants as the "shirt bandit", and explains that after her husband had hung out to dry his "beautiful shirts, not cheap, sea island cotton of all things", "comes back [and] all his shirts and socks have been pinched. And this cheeky devil large as life parading round the street in my husbands shirts."[238] She finishes off this story by summarising to Goodger that "you don't know your neighbours now. No."[239]

Figure 5: An empty house with smashed windows, Shirley Baker

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[235] Coleman. (1985). *Utopia on Trial.* p. 14
[236] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p. 5
[237] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mr Gordon. p. 10
[238] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p. 3
[239] *ibid.* p. 3

Another problem which blighted the clearance areas was theft of resources and infrastructure from the empty housing left behind, unsecured, once a household was relocated. Jean Prince of 21 Mary Street, told Goodger that she was afraid to leave her house at all due to the fear of being robbed, explaining "there's two [houses] in the next street been robbed, two on this road, one over the road been robbed in the last week so you're frightened to death of moving."[240] Besides being robbed of personal possessions, residents also feared that the valuable infrastructure of their homes would be stolen too, Mrs Prince explains that people were "stealing lead of (sic) the bays when you're asleep at 2 o'clock in the morning. And that's what you've got to live in, when they're coming down, people going in and taking fireplaces and lead", Mrs Fisher backs this up too, explaining that "they know just where to look for lead".[241] Furthermore, empty houses of relocated households were not secured to prevent children, vandals or thieves from entering or squatting in the vacated properties, leading to antisocial behaviour developing in the empty houses, "I mean it's dangerous," says Mrs Prince, "but they just won't do nothing to them, they won't even board them up for you."[242] Mrs Heyes also recounts that they were in a dead end due to their neighbours being relocated already, and the only noise she would hear would be in the "middle of the night" when people would come and steal the doors, the lead piping and cause the water to gush everywhere.[243] She further adds that people would come to take boilers out of the empty properties too, and she had been told "where to go" when telling someone to get out of an old neighbours house; they "start running the water off it and it leaves everybody else short of water and we've got to live amongst it" she complains to Goodger.[244]

Vandalism also became a significant problem in the neighbourhood once clearance began. Mrs Goodwin expresses her frustration to Gooder by saying "as soon as houses are empty,

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[240] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Prince p. 1
[241] *ibid.* p. 1
Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes p. 6
[242] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Prince. p. 8
[243] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p. 23
[244] *ibid*. p. 23

the children are coming round and breaking everything."[245] Mr Heyes also explains that the local authority moved single people and couples without children first, leaving young people in the emptying neighbourhood "breaking windows and [making] rubbish".[246] Mrs Heyes also tells Goodger that fly tipping became a huge problem in the empty houses too "they'll dump things in the houses…there's a house with all hay smells like pigs" and with no local authority intervention to clear it up, she was dreading the summer when the sun would increase the smell and flies of the area.[247]

Children in the Slum

Figure 6: Children climbing on rubble from demolition, Shirley Baker

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[245] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Goodwin. p. 1
[246] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p. 18
[247] *ibid.* p. 20

In the discussions of housing policy in the 20th century the dialogue that surrounded the desire to create a better world for the children of the slums. As seen in documentary style films like *The Great Crusade*, by housing the next generation in a better environment, housing plans could bring about the betterment of the nation.[248] However, it is clear from the contemporary accounts and footage that the clearance programmes in fact had a hugely detrimental effect on the children of clearance areas, and posed a significant risk to their health, safety and wellbeing during the demolition process. Beside the points already discussed of how new high rise living – the kind seen widely adopted throughout central Salford's new developments – was detrimental to children and families once relocated, the home they were being vacated from and the streets they had grown up in became fraught with fear and danger for protracted lengths of time. First of all, the street photography of Shirley Baker most frequently features children playing throughout the streets of the documented clearance area, which is no new or unusual thing. However, the areas children were playing in were now streets littered with the debris and rubble of partially demolished housing, cleared areas that had not been tidied or cordoned off, and these areas had no barriers or fencing to keep people out of the hazardous building sites.[249] Mr Heyes tells Goodger that "I've been chasing kids out of these houses left right and centre… One minute we're sat here and the next minute there's a rumble and the wall's fell down in between. So I've got to go chasing kids in case they get killed inside the houses", demonstrating that the prevention of accidents within the unenclosed demolition sites fell on the residents still housed in the neighbourhood.

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[248] Fleming, B & MacDonald, A. (1936) *The Great Crusade*. British Government.
[249] Shirley Baker Estate. (2017). *The Street Photographs*.
Shirley Baker Estate. (2017). *The Street Photographs (Early Colour)*.

Figure 7: Children play amongst the debris, Shirley Baker

Before the clearance of the neighbourhood, Mrs Cross explains that mothers would sit on their doorsteps and chat while "the kiddies played in the street."[250] But throughout the oral testimonies of the Salford residents this was now no longer possible, with Mrs Cross explaining that when she was young she "sat in the street having a sing-song. Do they do that now. Well there's no streets is there. Could they do that now. And the mothers would be talking and the kids ud [*sic*] be playing. My mother's turned rope for us many a time while we've been dancing."[251] Mrs Lee, Mrs Fisher and Mrs Hayes all state that parents were now afraid for their children's safety in the clearance area, with Mrs Fisher saying that it was "definitely" not safe for children "since the demolition" and "you can't let kiddies play out IN THAT."[252] What Mrs Fisher meant by "that" may be demonstrated in the testimony of Mrs Heyes, who details some entries being "a right tip with mattresses, dead birds and all sorts in it... when you think of the children coming off school onto holidays and they've got

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[250] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross. p. 13

[251] *ibid.* p. 9

[252] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Lee p. 7, Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes pp. 4-5

to play amongst all this".[253] Mrs Fisher goes on to state the fears people held about their children falling and "getting a bad cut" in the hazardous surroundings and informs Goodger that other children will "drag things out, smash things up, play in and out" of the empty and partly demolished housing in the area.[254] Mr Heyes also brings up this change in the neighbourhood saying "I go out and watch [my children] and it any other child's there I'll watch them. This is the way it used to be in the old days… they just don't let the kiddies go out on their own like they used to do."[255] Heyes goes on to say that the fact that none of the standing houses were being improved or decorated had an impact on children too; when it rained children had to play inside, and within his own home Mr Heyes thought "it's a waste of money" to carry out improvements such as splitting a larger bedroom into two rooms or fitting fold away beds for more space to play.[256] He believed that the children would be too old to benefit from changes like that by the time they get moved into new accommodation, and laments that "this is when they need it."[257]

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[253] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Hayes. p .20
[254] *ibid.* p. 5
[255] *ibid.* p. 12
[256] *ibid.* pp. 14-15
[257] *ibid.* p. 14

Figure 8: Children play in an unsecured, partially demolished house, Shirley Baker

Community within the Slum

One theme that is prevalent throughout the interview transcripts is that of the sense of community in the area felt by residents. Many of the interviewees describe a close-knit neighbourhood, where neighbours had known each other for a significant period of time due to the long established nature of the neighbourhood. Many of the transcripts reveal that residents had predominantly lived within a few streets of their current home since birth, with long periods of habitation in one street or even one house. Further to this, ties of family and kinship are also evident in Goodger's interviews, with many residents explaining to him that they had very close proximity to their relations, such as Mrs Yarwood who "had Auntie Jane next door". [258] Mrs Fisher and Mrs Hayes also discuss this familial network in the neighbourhood, describing that "these houses were handed down, say the daughter got married right well you look round for a house…it was 'oh our so-and-so's' getting married do

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[258] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Yarwood. p. 16

you know any houses that are empty. It may be the next street it may be six streets away but the people stayed near each other."[259]

Figure 9: Women 'sitting out' nursing children together, Shirley Baker

The new accommodation where many residents were rehoused were blocks of flats which increased isolation and deprived people of the social interaction they were used to in the terraced streets. Mrs Yarwood explains that "these flats. I think they're worse than ruddy Strangeways some of em. If all people go in them and they don't see anybody then do they for next morning unless they're coming out shopping. Where these lickle houses, these are palaces to us not slums. You could go down lobby and sit there and talk to anybody and they'd come out and some of em used to brew up… and have a drink of tea on the doorstep."[260] Mrs Cross tells Goodger of her loneliness in her new flat too, and that she would "rather be in mi [*sic*] old house without any bathroom than here. I were more happy… you never see anybody now in these flats do you? You could be dead. You very

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[259] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p. 3
[260] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Yarwood. p. 16

rarely see anybody along the corridors". Mrs Ludlam also talks of the interaction on the doorstep saying the men would "sit on your doorsteps and be sociable they'd sit on edgings and have a drink".[261] When Goodger bluntly asks Mr and Mrs Heyes the advantage of living in this style of terraced housing, they respond "your neighbours" who were "the best advantage in the world."[262]

Figure 10: Neighbours 'sitting out' in front of their homes together, Shirley Baker

Aside from social interaction, it is clear from the testimonies that within the former community there was intricate networks of cooperation and support between neighbours. Mrs Cross explains that "I took washing for people piled up and I had nine kids to wash for. But I've took other bits for old people" who would repay her by providing ad-hoc childcare when she needed it.[263] Mrs Goodwin concurs stating the old community was "more

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[261] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Ludlam. p. 15
[262] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p. 19
[263] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross. p. 5

neighbourly than they are now. They'd do anything for you, if anybody was in any trouble, they'd be the first to be there to help you out. It was rather nice really".[264]

"The old Salford people were good people. Believe me they were and they'd help one another. But you never have a neighbour now. You don't get a neighbour now."[265] Mrs Ludlam highlights that aid in sickness was there for residents too "if you knew anybody was poorly, you'd go and help em, but you wouldn't expect pay for it. You'd do it with a good heart… you'd look after, you'd do her washing do her cooking."[266]

Figure 11: Man swings rope for children at the corner shop, Shirley Baker

Mr Gordon lists that in his street he has friends at "number 10. No 6, no 4, no 13, no 17 [and] 15" who he speaks to, and in his interview with Goodger, laments the idea that they may all be split up.[267] "They all want to be near each other, so that they can come and have a chat to each other. That's everything," he states, and sadly adds "but if you get split up

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[264] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Goodwin. p. 1
[265] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross. p. 4
[266] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Ludlam. p. 15
[267] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mr Gordon p. 12

you're a prisoner."[268] These ties of friendship in the community of Salford were displayed in the street parties held for different celebrations throughout the early 20th century. "I think it was coronation day," said Mrs Cross, "and we had a big party in the street, I can always remember how long it was and then on V.E., V.D., V.J. day we had another big party".[269] Mr Heyes highlighted these community based celebrations too, describing "everybody was together" on coronation or Bonfire Night.[270] In *The Changing Face of Salford* Goodger also shows that after plans for clearance were made public, the residents held farewell parties in the street, bringing out their tables and chairs and joining together to say goodbye to their homes and communities.[271] The loss of this sense of community can be keenly felt throughout the oral histories collected by Goodger, and can be summarised in an interaction he had with Mrs Cross. Goodger asks Mrs Cross about the "bad old days…", and Mrs Cross defiantly responds "No the good old days, I don't care who said it. They make me sick because they were good old days."[272]

The Loss of Leisure and Culture

Another aspect of loss expressed by the Salford residents was that of leisure and enjoyment in their neighbourhoods. Mr Bracken, for example, talks about the fact that along with the old houses and streets, the social elements such as theatres and cinemas were also lost when the programmes got underway, and reminisces about how he used to see the "great stars" perform at the Regent Theatre and the Salford Palace.[273] Mr Holloway recollected that at the Regent Theatre he would "go running for people to get their coat to get the coppers" to pay the two pence ticket price to sit in the gallery or "what they call the gods" to watch variety shows.[274] These venues would also host comics, singers, impersonators and even gave residents the chance to experience the opera.[275] Dance halls too are a fond memory of those looking back on life before the clearance, Mrs Cross fondly remembers the

[268] *ibid.* p. 12
[269] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross p. 3
[270] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p. 12
[271] Goodger, M. [Producer]. (1969). *The Changing Face of Salford Part 2.*
[272] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross. p. 8
[273] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mr Bracken. pp. 12-13
[274] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mr Holloway. p. 10
[275] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross p.12

Empress; "I loved dancing there when I was younger", which had since been "pulled down".[276] The cinema in particular stands out in the oral testimonies as a big part of the memories of life in the Salford area for many of the interviewees, with most of them referencing the 'pictures' and reciting from memory the show times, ticket prices and the best seats. Mrs Cross displays her sadness at the loss of the cinemas in Salford with a lament of "we could go t'pictures couldn't we. Why did they close all the pictures."[277]

Mr Heyes highlights that other than the more cultural sites of the area, also locations for socialising and leisure were disappearing, telling Goodger that "round here now all the local pubs have gone."[278] He describes the pubs as a place of group entertainment, "you'd go in a pub and the piano would be going you know, you didn't have a lot to drink you could just have one and sit there and have a good sing-song."[279] Mrs Cross recounts her distress at the loss of the Prestwich Club too, and Heyes argues that this kind of community will not translate to the new housing developments "I don't think these flates and these maisonettes are going to do anything for that [community]. You can scrub that community straight away. I lived in a flat… and your community just goes."[280] Mrs Cross also highlights the destruction of the natural beauty of the redevelopment area too – that of 'Dornie's Hill'. She tells Goodger that "it was beautiful that, I nearly had a fit I took one or two of my grandchildren… and its absolutely spoilt… I think it's a disgrace to have spoilt a beautiful avenue of trees."[281] This removal of the natural elements of the area then deprives residents of the opportunities for leisure in the outdoors as well as in local pubs.

Aside from the destruction of leisure infrastructure in the demolition area, the increased rents of the new housing families were relocated into also meant less leisure activities were financially possible. Mrs Prince tells us that a maisonette was "three pound nineteen and six… and that's without your central heating… thirty shillings a week that", she highlights that her family would have to be "put about six pounds seven pound away a week before

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[276] *ibid.* p. 9
[277] *ibid.* p. 8
[278] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Fisher, Mr Heyes and Mrs Heyes. p. 11
[279] *ibid.* p. 12
[280] *ibid.* p. 12
[281] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross. p. 2

you start eating" and while her husband Arthur goes out on a Friday and Saturday it would be "worth stopping in to save that extra".[282] Compared to the large terrace of Mrs Cross, comprising of "three bedrooms, parlour, kitchen, scullery, lobby" which cost only ten shillings, before she was moved into a flat, it is clear to see the financial strain of relocation.[283] Mrs Yardwood believed that older people were even more financially affected, saying that "I think the old people really suffer… [they] get about six pound fifteen for two of 'em, and they go in these flats its two pound fifteen for rent then they have the electric and everything they're living on nothing and then they say these are good days, better than the old days, I can't see why they're better than the old days…well they were more happier because they could go out." This extra pressure on their household expenditure meant that social and leisure activities outside of the house were forced out of the budget, which over a community would reduce the time spent interacting in social environments such as the pubs, and result in a loss of leisure time for residents, making them less happy than before.

The new council properties also enforced rules on occupancy levels, for good reason, to prevent overcrowding as seen in the past. However, this pushed further financial strain onto rehoused residents, who would have to pay increased rents for the larger accommodation. As Mrs Yardwood explains "they've got to have a room for every[one], well we want three rooms now. I mean my lad'll be getting married in a bit but still we've got to have the three rooms. Well that'll be about three pound fifteen and odd. Well it's a lot of money out of one wage isn't it?"[284] One incident representative of the huge financial impact which relocation could have on residents was that of Mrs Caroline Goodwin. She explains that since she and her husband bought their own house there was "only rates to pay at the present moment. I've worked myself out to a system. I can carry on smashing. Can afford to go away on holiday."[285] However, the increased cost of living in the accommodation they were being rehoused into was set to change their circumstances drastically; "when we move and go into one of these places I think the rents are ridiculous. I do really. I don't think it should be. I'm sure they could make them cheaper – because, let's face it, it'll be about 5-6£ out of

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[282] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Prince. p. 11
[283] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Cross. p. 3
[284] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Yardwood. p. 3
[285] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Goodwin. p.1

your money before you can turn round – start on anything I don't think that's fair."[286] The Goodwins were close to retirement and were planning to "manage nicely" into their old age, but these plans were disrupted, their household occupancy was increased rather than decreased, and Mrs Goodwin was forced to "work – all the time" in order to make their budget stretch to the higher rents.[287]

[286] *ibid.* pp. 1-2
[287] *ibid.* p. 2

After Slum Clearance

"Less than a generation later it was pretty clear that families did not want to live in towering, cheaply built blocks of concrete flats with no back yard or sense of community. They gazed nostalgically upon their old Victorian terraced houses, which had now been done up by yuppies, and wondered how long they would have to work there as a cleaner before they could afford to move back." - John O'Farrell [288]

Despite all of the lasting consequences of the widespread demolition of the slum clearance programmes, it is not evident that it was even successful in achieving its aims of reducing the stock of poor quality housing in Britain. The 1967 House Condition Survey revealed that after the peak of clearances had subsided there still existed around 1.8 million unfit dwellings in England and Wales, not the 820,000 that was expected.[289] It was also starting to become more evident that it was more cost effective to repair housing individually than to clear and redevelop entire areas and so by the late 1960s the era of policy based on improvement began. Throughout the 1970s and 80s government grants were increased and made easier to obtain for residents who could then maintain and improve their own accommodation, what is remarkable is that grants had been available as early as 1949, but they were not "promoted as a mainstay of policy", as part of the wider motivation to enact the clearance programmes *en masse*.[290]

One possible way of assessing the way in which inadequate housing stocks can be dealt with successfully in a manner other than slum clearance is to examine the data from the 1967 English Housing Survey, after the clearance-led era of policy had ended and that of redevelopment had begun, in comparison with surveys from today. For example, according to the benchmarks of the 1967 survey, houses that "lacked a basic amenity" of "(i) a water

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[288] O'Farrell, J. (2010). *An Utterly Exasperated History of Modern Britain or 60 Years of Making the Same Stupid Mistakes as Always*. London: Transworld Publishers. p. 146

[289] Ministry of Housing and Government. (1967). *Housing Condition Survey, England and Wales, 1967*. London. UK Government. p. *xxv*

[290] Balchin. (1999). Housing in *British Planning*. p. 21

closet inside the dwelling; (ii) a fixed bath or shower; (iii) a wash hand basin; (iv) hot and cold water supplied to a bath, a wash hand basin and a kitchen sink" were eligible for newly provided Intermediate Grants to encourage and fund improvement of housing on an individual basis, rather than wholesale demolition.[291] From 25% of homes in England lacking basic amenity in 1967, by 1991 that figure had dropped to only 1%, with help from "access to these grants".[292] This drastic reduction of the number of houses failing to meet the standards of the 1967 survey displays that the introduction and implementation of individual improvement grants were effective in improving the housing stock, without the massive social and physical impact of clearance and without the creation of new dwellings which may have in turn caused housing issues as seen in many social housing developments.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s when slum clearance was seen as "no longer the answer" the programmes had already eradicated a significant amount of the houses in England and Wales, and yet it is impossible to suggest that there is an inherent problem with terraced industrial housing of the period targeted by clearance campaigns.[293] In 2015, terraced housing built between 1850-1918 was still the most prevalent type of housing in the UK, with almost a third of all houses in the nation being of this type, proving that with improvement, maintenance and in some cases renovation, these houses are still of a quality to provide the backbone of Britain's housing stock.[294] These houses, as it has been demonstrated, typically have a longer life than those built by local authorities to replace them, meaning that the circumstances residents were put through in the process of demolition and redevelopment of their neighbourhoods was done for expediency rather than any meaningful long term change. The plans in Salford meant that by 1981 the areas of Islington, Trinity, Adelphi, Flax Street and Blackfriars Road contained large areas of council housing, the consequences of which shall now be discussed.[295]

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[291] Ministry of Housing and Government. (1967). *Housing Condition Survey*. p. xxiv
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. (2017). *50 Years of the English Housing Survey*. London. UK Government. p. 12
[292] *ibid.* p. 12
[293] Yelling. (2000). The Incidence of Slum Clearance in England and Wales. p. 236
[294] Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. (2017). *50 Years of the English Housing Survey*. p. 17
[295] City of Salford. (1981). *Central Salford Local (District) Plan - Consultation Plan*. Salford. City Technical Services. p. 2

Utopia Fails

Sadly, the utopian ideal envisioned by town planners and architects was not to be, and even as early as the 1960s it was clear that most of the new housing estates and developments had been a failure, causing both social problems, and in some instances, physical danger to those housed within them. Dubbed the "great Utopian blunder", when the failings of the experiment into planned housing are highlighted, it is clear to see that the demolition of more traditional style housing in a sweeping wholesale manner as seen in the post-war era, was detrimental to towns and residents and the replacement housing that was built directly led to the suffering of residents and a legacy of social and criminal problems in the new designs.[296] The decline of the newly built modernist housing was remarkable in its rapidity, which is deeply telling of the inherent failures in the design and construction of the new complexes, which unfortunately were tested on the residents of clearance areas, who became the guinea pigs of this vast social experiment into modernist housing. First of all, the lack of regard for resident or public input was clearly a significant factor in the production of housing which was disliked and unsatisfactory for resident needs. Punter argues that until recently design has been static in its view, to create a "particular piece of built form" where it should be a dynamic, creative and problem-solving process, addressing the needs of all and producing a "functional, efficient and attractive" result.[297] With this in mind, he goes on to argue that therefore "notions of design 'control'" such as that seen by local authorities in this period, were "clearly problematic", as they fail fundamentally to address resident needs.[298] The way in which brutalist modern designs were adopted by the state as a mainstay of housing design and became emblematic of their post-war building policies displays how a supply of cheap and quick housing was the choice of government, rather than opting for residential consultation to ensure design quality in redevelopment areas. This "stampede" to build low quality tower blocks in the post-war reconstruction "unpicked" the confidence in modernist ideas and the grand scale that local authorities had

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[296] Coleman. (1985). *Utopia on Trial.* p. 4
[297] Punter, J. (1999). Design. In B. Cullingworth (Ed.) *British Planning: 50 Years of Urban and Regional Policy* (pp. 137-155). London: Althone Press. p. 138
[298] *ibid.* p. 138

used this method of design led to modernist designs becoming a cliché, rejected by residents and wider society.[299]

Financial restraints are a factor which cannot be forgotten in assessing the shortcomings of the utopian venture in housing and town planning by successive governments in the post-war era. Initial post-war austerity meant that the bold new modern world which was desired by Atlee's government and local authority planners had to be done in a way which also suited the tight budgets available from the exchequer. As discussed, one of the benefits of modernist designs and techniques for the government and local authorities is that they were quick to put up and cheap to produce, ensuring a budget-friendly and rapid provision of much needed housing. Because of this, modernist designs were the go-to of the state for its cost effective and more efficient approach, and as a result the school of thought became associated overall with underinvestment, shoddy building and poor quality the new housing estates suffered from. This meant that by the 1970s council estates were already hard to fill as tenants refused to live in housing that had become symbolic of failure, had established a reputation for being unsafe and were associated with delinquent behaviour and social problems. Where previously social housing was seen as providing improved housing for all through the framework of legislation set out at the end of the First World War, now it "had come to be associated irrevocably with the poor and the inadequate."[300] Furthermore, Ricketts states that political point scoring also had a profound impact on underfunding of new housing schemes, arguing that "once local authorities started to house a substantial proportion of the electorate, politicians regarded tenants as a specific voting interest to be encouraged to vote for a particular party by a policy of low rents."[301] By doing this, rents were kept so low that there wasn't enough financial provision for the resourcing or maintenance of properties, which saw that "the short-term interests of the politicians took precedence over the public good".[302] Lack of proper funding meant that plans were flawed from the outset and Coleman's extensive study of the "disadvatagement" points of social housing, taking place over five years and encompassing over 110,000 dwellings, distinctly

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[299] Benton. (2006). *The Modernist Home*. p. 93

[300] Robson, B. (1999). Vision and Reality in *British Planning.* p. 171

[301] Lund. (1996). *Housing Problems and Housing Policy*. p. 10

[302] *ibid.* p. 10

demonstrates that the failure of modern planned housing came down to fundamental design and layout.[303] By the 1970s, council tenants were seen as second-class citizens, and the dwellings built in the late 1950s and 1960s were already "seen as having produced more problems than they solved."[304] What is astonishing is that Coleman's extensive study shows that "design modification would need to bring about only a 10 per cent drop in levels of litter, graffiti, vandalism, excrement and the number of children in care to achieve more than all the Utopian efforts of government over the last 40 years", showing how little benefit the utopian plans really had on residents.[305]

Another factor in the failure of this type of design was the complete disconnection between modernist and brutalist styles with anything that had come before in Britain's towns and cities. The brutal, austere and clinical approach to buildings was something which was completely divorced from surrounding historical buildings in any given town across the country, where "mellow brick and stone" of traditional buildings met "grey unyielding concrete" of modernist designs.[306] By intentionally creating such a stark contrast between contemporary designs, and what had come before, modernist rebellion broke the trajectory of British architecture, shattering any sense of continuance or organic development, figuratively by developing the Modernist style, and literally with the eradication of the traditional housing stock. By doing this they hoped to create a new world, or "to make the world a better place" with their approach, but the British people wanted "buildings more familiar and less alienating."[307] The terminology in itself is evocative of the ultimate issues with the design of brutalist buildings, with 'brutal' representing "'inhuman', 'savagely cruel' or 'merciless'" in its basic definition, making the "connotations for architectural practice sound alarming."[308] The height of the new blocks were also nothing less than terrifying to older people being rehoused into them. One of the residents of Salford interviewed by Goodger explained that her elderly and nervous mother was offered a flat on the twenty-

[303] Coleman. (1985). *Utopia on Trial.* p. 2
[304] Lund. (1996). *Housing Problems and Housing Policy*. p. 7
[305] Coleman. (1985). *Utopia on Trial.* p. 5
[306] Thurley & Viner. (2006). Modernism [Television series episode]. In *Buildings that Shaped Britain*.
[307] Higgot. (2007). *Mediating Modernism*. p. 5
Thurley & Viner. (2006). Modernism [Television series episode]. In *Buildings that Shaped Britain*.
[308] Henley. (2017). *Redefining Brutalism*. p. 21

second floor of a new tower block, and due to its total unsuitability her mother had to move in to their house, which was also scheduled for demolition at a later stage.[309] But this example itself can trace its conception to the core ideologies of modernist accommodation. The prophet Le Corbusier himself encouraged the design of minimalist housing, with only the essentials of "a bed, a table and chair, and a beautiful view", which worked well for him in his self-designed bedroom with a reading space overlooking Lake Geneva.[310] But Le Corbusier's reading space was far removed from an elderly woman moved from a terraced street to the upper floors of a tower block in Salford. By the 1960s central government planning bulletins were advising the use of "more sympathetic materials and a more human scale of development" but despite this, high density and high rise developments were financially encouraged by government subsidies and promoted by housing manuals.[311] Through this, public sector modernist brutalist housing of the local authority was increasingly differentiated from those built by the private sector which stigmatised public opinion against both residents and the modernist movement overall, this negative view was then cemented by ongoing technological failures, poor maintenance and lack of investment.[312]

The failures of the utopian vision have been succinctly catalogued through a parody scene written by historical satirist John O'Farrell, where imagined town planners and architect's hold a meeting about a new fictitious block named Urine Towers. Their 40 storey tower block was to "bring together all the best of 1960s architecture and modernist design" including being constructed in "crumbling pre-cast concrete with a mildew finish" and also designed to be "alienating and depressing" to ensure a high tenant turnover and available flats.[313] Urine Towers was then to be "finished in a lethal asbestos and wafer-thin plasterboard, giving residents an extra sense of community as they listen to their neighbours fighting, sobbing or having sexual intercourse."[314] Satire aside, the problem with the rapidly declining conditions of the large number of local authority built properties was

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[309] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Goodwin. p. 2
[310] Benton. (2006). *The Modernist Home*. p. 93
[311] Punter. (1999). Design in *British Planning.* p. 141
[312] *ibid.* p. 142
[313] O'Farrell. (2009). *An Utterly Exasperated History of Modern Britain*. pp. 145-6
[314] *ibid.* 145-6

becoming a mammoth issue for councils. By the time of the 1980 Salford City Council's report into the Salford Central area, it stated that there was a "major problem" with "the poor environment around the housing and the lack of modern living standards in the Council-owned flats and maisonettes."[315] What is remarkable is that this was only seventeen years since the council's publication displaying the bold Ellor Street Redevelopment declared that their "magnificent plan" would contain "great buildings" and help ensure "that future generations… will find in our new City a fuller and happier life."[316] Furthermore, evidence to suggests that the failures of these properties actually delayed the rehoming of people from slum clearance areas. Oral testimonies from Salford residents during the slum clearance programme tells us that there was doubt about being able to secure a property in that area, founded on the fact that "the flats that's been built are coming down and they're rehousing all that lot."[317]

By 1985, Salford was once again facing a shortage of accommodation, but not due to a lack of built property or destruction as seen in the initial pre-war era, but from a failure to build enough actual houses and the "unpopularity of flats in the inner areas".[318] This unpopularity was so rampant that the council was finding it incredibly difficult to let accommodation within the blocks and the central areas.[319] The issues of "poor environment around the housing" outlined in the 1980 report begin to become more clear in the 1985 housing study. Improvement strategies outlined include "providing higher standards of security and janitorial services as well as improved basic maintenance" and "improving and maintaining the external appearance of estates, particularly such aspects as landscape maintenance, refuse disposal and street cleaning services."[320] This once again follows the wider trends in the decline of social housing projects in the failure to maintain communal areas resulting in a decline and decay of the appearance and residential pride in new complexes of housing. It was in fact not until the 1990s that central government saw that "the spaces between

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[315] City of Salford. (1980). *Central Salford Local (District) Plan Issues Report*. Salford. City Technical Services. p. 2
[316] City of Salford. (1963). *Ellor Street Redevelopment Area*. p. 1
[317] Oral history interview transcript. (1971). Mrs Yardwood. p. 1
[318] City of Salford. (1985). *Salford 3 Housing Study*. Swinton. Civic Centre. p. 2
[319] *ibid.* p. 2
[320] *ibid.* p. 3

buildings were as important as the buildings themselves, and that the public realm thus created had a critical social dimension as well as an aesthetic character."[321] Punter tells us that once urban design concepts broadened regarding this, public perception, gauged through public consultation has become the emphasis to prevent a repeat of past mistakes in planning.[322]

As said by Coleman, ultimately the modernist mass housing programme that was meant to be a "national salvation" was "conceived in compassion but has been born and bred in authoritarianism, profligacy and frustration."[323] Where these programmes aimed to liberate people from slum life, they incarcerated them into a "worse form of bondage" and where they attempted to beautify the landscape they "transmogrified into the epitome of ugliness."[324] Women in particular were to suffer disproportionately in the bondage of the new accommodation, where the design of the new modern flats which were consistently used throughout the country to rehome slum clearance area families, saw women "separated and isolated from social networks and opportunities for economic independence."[325] The post-war vision of Britain positioned family as the centre of regeneration and reconstruction and the nuclear family was the ideal.[326] However, the designs of high rise living and the relocation of families from their communities pushed women further into traditional gender roles, as distance and isolation led to a lack of "sociability" particularly through street life and the workplace, and saw them become completely "mother-focussed" in environments "inappropriate for small children leading to frustration and loneliness."[327] In previous generations, women based in established communities would typically live closely to their mothers, grandmothers and other female relatives, when this kinship based community was broken up in favour of creating a private family-based lifestyle, women lost the benefit of local familial childcare and Hannah Gavron

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[321] Punter. (1999). Design in *British Planning.* p. 137

[322] *ibid.* p. 137

[323] Coleman. (1985). *Utopia on Trial.* p. 180

[324] *ibid.* p. 180

[325] Abrams, L., Fleming, L., Hazley, B., Wright, V., & Kearns, A. (2018). Isolated and Dependent: Women and Children in High-Rise Social Housing in Post-War Glasgow. *Women's History Review*. p. 4

[326] *ibid.* p. 7

[327] *ibid*. p. 7

in her 1966 *The Captive Wife* argues that this meant "an almost complete submersion into domesticity, with perhaps less opportunity for escape than her mother enjoyed."[328]

The unsuitability of the developments built to rehouse families can be demonstrated from the changing demographic of residents in the Salford Central area, where from 1971 to 1978 residents under 14 years of age dropped from 25% of the population to 17% and that of residents aged 65-74 increased from 8.5% to 12.5%.[329] One person households constituted 35% of dwellings in Central Salford in 1978, with 22% overall being of pensionable age. [330] One staggering statistic demonstrating the change in the demographic of residents within Salford shows that where previously only 46% of the population lived in council-owned properties, in Salford Central a staggering 93% of residents were now in local authority accommodation.[331] The loss of families in particular was something that by 1980 Salford Council was greatly regretting, stating that the "ageing population puts increased pressure on welfare services and community support" and were now directing plans towards "even[ing] out the current imbalance in the population."[332] These plans, so soon after the completion of some developments in the Salford area, involved the "improvement of existing council dwellings", and incredibly, another programme of "selective demolition" to remove "the least attractive and successful Council housing".[333] Demolition no matter how selective, of housing projects which had so recently been planned and constructed can be seen as nothing else than an absolute failure in the design and implementation of housing ideals which were unsuitable and of too poor quality to successfully house residents or rehouse those displaced from clearance areas. The bold, game-changing and life-improving developments of the post-war era, which were proclaimed to eradicate the poor housing of the slums forever, did not last even a tenth of the time of the majority of the housing in Salford before becoming inadequate and in need of demolition.

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[328] *ibid.* p. 7
[329] City of Salford. (1980). *Central Salford Local (District) Plan Issues Report*. p. 2
[330] *ibid*. p. 2
[331] *ibid*. p. 2
[332] *ibid.* p. 3
[333] *ibid.* p. 3

Not only has the failure of these designs and projects had a detrimental social and personal effect, and caused further housing problems for local authorities after their construction, but they also surely cannot be seen as anything other than financial disasters too. Before some blocks were even paid for, they were declared uninhabitable and being demolished, at further cost to local authorities.[334] Local authorities are now lumbered with high density blocks and 'sink estates' which people are unwilling to live in, and the cost of renovating or demolishing these dwellings is still draining local authority budgets. The financial issues don't stop there, inflation of housing prices has been influenced by the shortages created by clearance and evictions during the post-war period and genuine choice in accommodation has been hindered by designs and rules implemented by the DoE.[335] While an improvement in certain aspects of housing quality has been seen, this is a "natural process of evolution which has not needed a vast problem-orientated bureaucracy to supervise it" and has actually created new slums "on an unprecedented scale."[336] It can be succinctly stated that the sad reality of housing reform in the post-war period was "seen in terms of fixtures and appliances rather than the fundamental issues that determine wellbeing such as the financial costs, the organisation of domestic labour and the care of children of all ages."[337] This ultimately meant that's residents' needs were never addressed when housing was being planned and designed, and resulted in "the brave new Utopia [being] essentially a device for treating people like children, first by denying them the right to choose their own kind of housing, and then by choosing for them disastrous designs that create a needless sense of social failure."[338] Put together, this information becomes a sad overall picture of the failures of government and local authorities through their plans, and one which may not have been necessary, as investigations into a slum area in Birmingham by the charity Shelter showed that at the cost of only £30 per head the houses could have been made habitable.[339]

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[334] Coleman. (1985). *Utopia on Trial.* p. 6
[335] *ibid.* p. 183
[336] *ibid.* p. 183
[337] Abrams, L., Fleming, L., Hazley, B., Wright, V., & Kearns, A. (2018). Isolated and Dependent. p.7
[338] Coleman. (1985). *Utopia on Trial.* p. 184
[339] Shelter (Organisation). (1971) *Balsall Heath Slum* [Video File]

The overall problems on a policy level of the drive to clear the slums and build modernist replacements have been well laid out by Coleman, who tells us that "housing shortages have been perpetuated by compulsory eviction, leaving large numbers of dwellings unoccupied for years; by massive demolition programmes; by diversion of potential building investment funds into lavish spending on housing bureaucracies; by insistence on pointless density standards; by planning delays; by the squandering of public money on superfluous common parts dictated by the obsession with flats; and by absorbing resources to deal with large-scale building defects that would not have occurred if we had followed our tradition of homes in individual houses."[340] In summation, the break from traditional architecture and housing, the forced displacement of residents from traditional housing areas, the lack of consideration of resident needs or consultation in new housing plans and the experiment by government into a modernist way of living led to the depressing reality of a failure in providing a long term solution for the housing problems of the post-war period. Rather than a supply of modern, healthy and homely accommodation, policy drove development into creating inferior houses and flats with a lifespan sometimes less than the houses demolished for their construction. In order to do this, the lives and communities of residents in the areas of clearance were irrevocably changed, altering the makeup of towns and cities forever, and disrupting the well-established communities that resided in them.

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[340] Coleman. (1985). *Utopia on Trial.* p. 183

Conclusions

To conclude, the drive to clear great swathes of older housing from the towns and cities of Great Britain in the post-war period was an ideologically driven attempt to eradicate the physical evidence of pre-war industrial exploitation and poverty from the urban landscape. By using programmes of demolition to remove the older housing stock in this manner, central government and local authorities hoped to create a 'new Jerusalem', with housing policy, designs and plans embodying Modernist theories which rejected the status quo and intended to create a drastic change from the society that existed before the Second World War. The desire to create a modern, more egalitarian state in the post-war era heavily influenced government policy, and housing in particular became a medium through which modernist ideals could be played out *en masse*. The Modernist movement intentionally turned its back on the traditions of housing and architecture, and through its use of industrial building practices, pre-fabricated designs and cheap construction materials meant that central government adopted this as its state-wide approach to housing. The great experiment into Modern living used slum clearance to gain space, and the poorest in society as its guinea pigs.

This ideological motivation was generated from progressives in society, and to justify and enable their plans remove housing and communities from the landscape degrading terminology and discourse was used to foster public opinion in favour of demolition. The residents of designated slum areas were seen as lesser, squalid others who did not fit into respectable society or suit its ideals. The slum dweller was therefore in need of improvement, through rehousing, dispersal and charity from their superiors, and because of this were denied agency and not included in discussions regarding their futures, their homes or their communities. Once clearance began, residents were subjected to prolonged periods of uncertainty, with little to no information provided for when or where they would be rehomed. Their once tightly populated and connected neighbourhoods became partially demolished wastelands, where they were forced to endure dangerous conditions, deteriorating housing, crime, anti-social behaviour and fear. Rather than improving their conditions, local authorities plunged these residents into an environment far worse than

before, removed their networks of mutual support and friendship, and treated them as pawns to be placed and displaced as seen fit by the state.

The Modernist experiment that was conducted by using these residents ended in absolute failure, with new housing and high-rise flats having a shorter life span overall than the housing that had been demolished. Residents faced deteriorating conditions there too, and many deeply regretted their relocation and craved their old communities. Due to their position in society as without agency and without a platform, history too has overlooked the residents of the slum clearance areas, and recorded their ordeal merely through data and figures, removing the personal from the story of slum clearance and instead continuing the treatment of these communities as objects to be moved and experimented with, or as fodder for the new housing estates. This analysis has utilised the opinions and testimony of the residents themselves, and provided the reality of life in a clearance zone, one of frustration, of sadness, while being surrounded by "rubbish, rubble and rodents", and given a platform hitherto denied to those who were subjected to this experience in the post-war era.[341]

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[341] Gee, D. (1975), *A Shelter Report on Slum Clearance*. p. 29

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